



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

5th Session

Day 10

15th Assembly

HANSARD

Wednesday, October 18, 2006

Pages 301 - 334

The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker

Hon. Paul Delorey
(Hay River North)

Hon. Brendan Bell
(Yellowknife South)
Minister of Justice
Minister of Industry, Tourism
and Investment

Mr. Bill Braden
(Great Slave)

Hon. Charles Dent
(Frame Lake)
Government House Leader
Minister of Education, Culture and
Employment
Minister responsible for the
Status of Women
Minister responsible for the
Workers' Compensation Board

Mrs. Jane Groenewegen
(Hay River South)

Hon. Joe Handley
(Weledeh)
Premier
Minister of the Executive
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and
Intergovernmental Relations

Mr. Robert Hawkins
(Yellowknife Centre)

Hon. David Krutko
(Mackenzie-Delta)
Minister responsible for the
NWT Housing Corporation
Minister responsible for the
NWT Power Corporation

Mr. Jackson Lafferty
(Monfwi)

Ms. Sandy Lee
(Range Lake)

Hon. Michael McLeod
(Deh Cho)
Minister of Transportation
Minister of Municipal and Community
Affairs
Minister responsible for the
Public Utilities Board
Minister responsible for Youth

Mr. Robert McLeod
(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

Mr. Kevin Menicoche
(Nahendeh)

Hon. J. Michael Miltenberger
(Thebacha)
Minister of Health and Social Services
Minister of Environment and
Natural Resources
Minister responsible for Persons
with Disabilities
Minister responsible for Seniors

Mr. Calvin Pokiak
(Nunakput)

Mr. David Ramsay
(Kam Lake)

Hon. Floyd Roland
(Inuvik Boot Lake)
Deputy Premier
Minister of Finance
Minister responsible for the Financial
Management Board Secretariat
Minister of Human Resources
Minister of Public Works and Services

Mr. Robert Villeneuve
(Tu Nedhe)

Mr. Norman Yakeleya
(Sahtu)

Officers

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Mr. Tim Mercer

Deputy Clerk
Mr. Doug Schauerte

Clerk of Committees
Ms. Tonia Grannum

Assistant Clerk
Ms. Gail Bennett

Law Clerks
Mr. Glen Boyd
Ms. Kelly Payne

Box 1320
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784
<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	301
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	301
28-15(5) - STANDOFF IN YELLOWKNIFE	301
29-15(5) - FISCAL UPDATE	301
30-15(5) - INTRODUCTION OF REGIONAL DIRECTORS	302
31-15(5) - STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT	303
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS.....	303
MR. RAMSAY ON IMPORTANCE OF THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES MINISTRY	303
MRS. GROENEWEGEN ON NWT HOUSING CORPORATION MANDATE AND ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK	304
MS. LEE ON OPERATIONAL ISSUES AT THE STANTON TERRITORIAL HOSPITAL.....	304
MR. MENICOCHÉ ON SUCCESSION PLAN TO REPLACE SKILLED WORKFORCE AND LACK OF APPRENTICESHIPS	305
MR. LAFFERTY ON TLICHO COMMUNITY SERVICES AGENCY IPAC INNOVATION AWARD	305
MR. BRADEN ON IMPACT OF FEDERAL BUDGET REDUCTIONS ON THE TOURISM SECTOR	305
MR. POKIAK ON ABSENCE OF FRONT-LINE SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS IN ULUKHAKTOK	306
MR. YAKELEYA ON CBC DOCUMENTARY ON THE HISTORY OF HOCKEY.....	306
MR. VILLENEUVE ON GNWT TENDERING, PROCUREMENT AND BUSINESS INCENTIVE POLICIES IN SMALL COMMUNITIES.....	306
MR. ROBERT MCLEOD ON YOUTH CRIME IN INUVIK	307
MR. HAWKINS ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATE PROGRAMS.....	307
HON. FLOYD ROLAND ON RECOGNITION OF BDC YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR AWARD RECIPIENT	308
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	308
ORAL QUESTIONS	309, 321
WRITTEN QUESTIONS	332
PETITIONS.....	332
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	332
ORDERS OF THE DAY	333

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, October 18, 2006****Members Present**

Honourable Brendan Bell, Mr. Braden, Honourable Paul Delorey, Honourable Charles Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Mr. Hawkins, Honourable David Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Honourable Michael McLeod, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Pokiak, Mr. Ramsay, Honourable Floyd Roland, Mr. Villeneuve, Mr. Yakeleya

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Please be seated. Good afternoon. Welcome back to the House, Members. Honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Point Of Privilege

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of personal privilege to clarify the response provided yesterday to the Member of Hay River South concerning parking stalls at the Yellowknife Airport.

---Laughter

---Applause

I wish to inform the House that there was, in fact, a stall provided for the Premier. However, since the Premier neither requested a reserved parking stall nor wants one, that sign has been removed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Members, I would also like to draw your attention to the Pages that are serving us today. They are from 825 Elk's Royal Canadian Air Cadets Squadron.

---Applause

Orders of the day, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister for Justice, Mr. Bell.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 28-15(5): Standoff In Yellowknife**

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday police and emergency personnel responded to a serious situation in Yellowknife. After many hours of emergency action, police were able to diffuse a standoff in a local residence and apprehend a young man before he could commit harm to others or to himself.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the RCMP emergency response team, personnel from the city municipal enforcement division, public safety department, the fire and ambulance department, Yellowknife Health and Social Services, Joint Task Force North, the local school boards, the media, and everyone involved in bringing this serious incident to a peaceful conclusion.

This incident took place in the riding of Yellowknife South. In order to ensure public safety, emergency personnel acted proactively to secure the area and provide

information to residents. The area around Finlayson Drive was cordoned off for several hours while the police conducted negotiations with the individual. The local schools ensured that parents came to collect their children directly at school so they would not be walking home. The RCMP, through local media, kept the public well advised of the situation and the need to keep the area clear while they took all available means to deal with this serious situation.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, we were reminded that potential threats to public safety are not unique to southern Canada. As elected officials, we must continue to find ways to ensure the safety of our families, our homes, our streets and our communities. We are also reminded of the brave men and women who risk their lives in the line of duty to deal with violent and dangerous situations. Yesterday the RCMP and emergency personnel in Yellowknife displayed once again how their training and dedication ensured the prompt and professional handling of a serious incident. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

Minister's Statement 29-15(5): Fiscal Update

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to provide an update on the government's fiscal position and outlook.

Later today I will be tabling the public accounts for the 2005-06 fiscal year. I am pleased to report that the government ended the previous fiscal year with an operating surplus of \$36 million, \$18 million higher than the amount projected in last February's budget. This is good news as a sufficient operating surplus is critical to the funding of our infrastructure plan.

The current interim territorial formula financing arrangements with Canada are scheduled to end on March 31, 2007. There has been considerable discussion of potential changes to the federal government's approach to formula financing, including the release this past spring of two important reports on the matter by the federally appointed Expert Panel on Equalization and Territorial Formula Financing and the Council of the Federation Advisory Panel on Fiscal Imbalance. These reports have received careful consideration by the provinces and territories since their release. We are pleased both reports support the joint recommendations of the three territories with respect to TFF.

Following the release of the reports, the Government of Canada indicated that it would be considering the

recommendations it had received and would be developing proposals both for TFF and for equalization for discussion with the provinces and territories. I had the opportunity to privately discuss TFF with the federal Finance Minister, the Honourable Jim Flaherty, and my provincial/territorial colleagues at a meeting of Finance Ministers in Niagara-on-the-Lake in late June. Canada's message was to expect measures to restore fiscal balance to the federation in the 2007 federal budget.

It has become clear that consensus regarding some critical aspects of equalization, such as the treatment of resource revenues, will be difficult to reach. However, both the Premier and I were able to secure the support of our provincial counterparts in calling for Canada to proceed with the development of TFF arrangements that would serve as the basis for federal transfers to Nunavut, Yukon and the NWT.

In addition to the review of TFF and equalization, Canada has been pursuing the consultation process laid out in the federal budget for other intergovernmental fiscal issues, such as the federal spending power, the allocation of unplanned federal surpluses, infrastructure and transfers for programs such as training and post-secondary education. These issues are also expected to be addressed in the 2007 federal budget.

We have requested Canada to lift the current \$300 million limit on our government's authority to borrow. Our intention in pursuing this change is to permit borrowing for careful investment in infrastructure across the NWT in accordance with the GNWT's fiscal responsibility policy. Infrastructure investment is vital if the government is to effectively support economic and social development in the NWT.

An increased borrowing limit will provide flexibility to meet our cash requirements in a fiscally sound manner. Minister Flaherty has advised me a response to our proposal on the borrowing limit will be provided later this year.

Mr. Speaker, in his speech in the Great Hall in August, Prime Minister Harper stated that he is committed to renewing and strengthening TFF. In September, Minister Flaherty stated the federal government is determined to be a government of practical progress on the crucial economic, geopolitical and social infrastructure priorities that reflect the values and principles of Canadians, including the restoration of fiscal balance. We are encouraged by these statements and look forward to renewed and strengthened TFF arrangements to help us achieve practical progress towards the priorities of NWT residents.

Until our future fiscal arrangements with the federal government are known, the GNWT must continue to exercise caution in spending. This means we must carefully consider all information, including input from legislative committees, before we confirm incremental growth to government spending.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to note the GNWT's intention, subject to anticipated federal increases to increase the dividend tax credit for NWT residents investing in Canadian corporations. The change to the NWT Income Tax Act will parallel measures announced in the May 2006 federal budget designed to minimize the incidence of double taxation of dividends. The higher dividend tax

credit will reduce the personal income taxes NWT residents pay on taxable dividends. In addition, a more comparable treatment of dividends, interest and flow-through disbursement will encourage NWT businesses to base their legal structures on solid business reasons rather than tax considerations.

This government remains committed to doing its part to manage GNWT fiscal resources wisely and to invest in the needs and economic future of NWT residents. We look forward to Canada moving forward on key fiscal issues, so that we can plan with certainty for the challenges we face. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Minister's Statement 30-15(5): Introduction Of Regional Directors

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, about this time last year we sought input from the Members on our options to improve planning and coordination at headquarters and in the regions.

An important component of this initiative was the creation of a regional director position while maintaining a ministerial order of government. These offices are critical to ensuring:

- government programs and services are consistently implemented within regions;
- effective coordination of interdepartmental initiatives within regions;
- improved communication on government strategic initiatives within regions; and,
- that the government gets the required regional input into planning.

Emerging self-governments and the creation of the Mackenzie gas project impact fund are two good examples of how critical increased coordination and communication within the government and with key stakeholders is at the regional level.

In setting up executive offices in the North Slave, South Slave, Deh Cho, Sahtu and the Beaufort-Delta regions, the government has taken a significant step forward in improving planning and coordination at all levels. Regional directors have been hired; Bob Sanderson for the South Slave region; Dan O'Neill in the North Slave; Andy Short in the Sahtu; Andrew Johnston in the Deh Cho. In the Beaufort-Delta, Helen Sullivan is acting regional director while staffing of that position is at the final stage. Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time today I will introduce these regional directors in the Legislative Assembly.

Their offices are now being set up and I am sure I can speak for all Members in welcoming these individuals to their new positions and that the government looks forward to working with them to advance our goals and priorities.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Minister's Statement 31-15(5): Student Achievement

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I would like to share some good news with you about education results from the 2005-2006 year and enrolment for this school year.

We have our high school graduation numbers for this past year and, Mr. Speaker, the results are excellent. Overall, our graduation numbers are up from 343 in 2005 to 359 this year. This includes an increase in the number of both aboriginal and non-aboriginal graduates. For the first time, Mr. Speaker, the number of aboriginal graduates is higher than the number of non-aboriginal graduates, moving towards a more accurate reflection of our total school population. Additionally, the number of graduates is up in our smaller communities, our regional centres and in Yellowknife.

Our students are succeeding beyond high school as well. Our overall enrolment numbers at Aurora College have increased and the number of northerners working towards a skilled trade remains strong. Additionally, over 1,400 northern students are currently accessing student financial assistance in order to complete a diploma, certificate or degree.

We are seeing increasing numbers of adult northerners returning to the classroom, including many who began with low literacy skills. Since 2001, there has been an increase in Aurora College adult literacy and basic education students successfully completing Grade 12 departmental exams.

At the NWT literacy awards at the beginning of this month, I presented the Council of the Federation Literacy Award on behalf of the Premier. The award went to Cindy Voudrach of Inuvik, a single mother of three. Two years ago, when her oldest child entered kindergarten, Cindy enrolled in an adult literacy and basic education, ALBE, program at Aurora College in Inuvik. Cindy completed the equivalent of nine years of schooling in just two years and is now ready for post-secondary education. She has become a role model for northerners and a great spokesperson for literacy. Cindy has also inspired her niece to return to school. Cindy's story is inspiring because she is achieving everything that is intended for adult learning programs. She will encourage many others in her community to continue their education.

Mr. Speaker, with examples like that set by Cindy, our overall education results and growing enrolments, we are making significant improvement in education levels. We still have a lot to do to prepare northerners for future labour market needs, but the numbers show that many more are working to develop their potential.

I congratulate all northerners who have taken up the challenge of pursuing further education and particularly those who have graduated in the past year. I hope they will serve as role models and inspiration for others in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time as well to acknowledge the important contribution made by parents,

families, friends, educators and others who support our students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ministers' statements. Colleagues, before I go on to the next item on the agenda, I would like to call your attention to the presence in the gallery of Mr. Hans Driesser and his wife, Marijki. Mr. Driesser is Consul General for the Netherlands and he's here visiting Yellowknife for the first time.

---Applause

Welcome to the Legislative Assembly. I hope you are enjoying your visit to Yellowknife and to the Assembly. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Importance Of The Health And Social Services Ministry

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am going to begin discussing a very important issue and that is the state of health care here in the Northwest Territories. This, for me, Mr. Speaker, will be a recurring theme over the next three weeks. A guiding principle for any politician is they always strive to do their best to represent their constituents. I take this principle very seriously and that's why, Mr. Speaker, I must stand up in this House today and say that I do not believe that we are, in fact, doing our best.

Is it fair or right that the Premier and the Members of this House are allowing the Minister of Health and Social Services to do double duty and also be responsible for the portfolio of the Environment and Natural Resources? In any other jurisdiction across this country, the Minister of Health is the Minister of Health and that is their sole responsibility. What does this say about our commitment as a government to our residents' health and well-being? Why is our government different? Why is this not so important to us as it is in other jurisdictions?

We spend close to 30 percent of our annual budget in Health and Social Services and the best we can do is have a Minister that is half time on the case and half time on the environment. Mr. Speaker, our residents deserve better and as a Member of this House I deserve better. Is this fair to our front-line health care workers who are struggling with numerous staffing issues and management who are not intent on listening? Is this fair to my constituent who has been living in chronic pain for three years waiting for a diagnosis and is no closer to help today than he was three years ago?

Mr. Speaker, last week I met with 17 constituents, all of them health care professionals, who had some very distressing and disturbing issues that they brought to my attention. These issues are occurring at Stanton Territorial Hospital. Now, more than ever, we need and deserve the Minister's undivided attention to correct the problems. These problems, Mr. Speaker, are eerily similar to those of 2002 when the Minister said that the problems would go away after an operational review was done. I'd like to know if any of the recommendations included in that

review were in fact ever followed up on. Judging by the current state of affairs at Stanton, I would say no.

If the Premier and the rest of Cabinet can't sort out priorities and responsibilities, then perhaps it's time that the Regular Members on this side of the House help them do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On NWT Housing Corporation Mandate And Accountability Framework

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NWT Housing Corporation has a role as a Crown corporation under the GNWT to provide housing and housing programs to northern residents in need. Their degree of accountability to this Assembly is different because their budget comes from various sources, only a portion of which is voted by this government. As such, the line-by-line level of information in accompanying scrutiny by committee or Members is different and far less than the regular line departments of this government.

In years past there was a board of directors to provide governance to the NWT Housing Corporation. This currently does not exist. They have a great deal of autonomy and, needless to say, some of the activities they have undertaken in the past are lacking in positive outcomes, and that's putting it politely.

As if that isn't bad enough, they forge ahead to implement and undertake more large initiatives. In my opinion, they do so without having been required to visit the failures and shortcomings of their past. This gives me no confidence that the results are going to be any more focused, targeted, or successful than the work that they've done in the past.

I know there's a comprehensive audit underway by the Auditor General's office. By the time these findings come to light I believe more resources and more efforts will have gone awry. I can stand here and list a long litany of past boondoggles, but one only has to travel to some of the small communities to see what I saw this summer to know that this corporation has serious problems.

During our pre-budget consultation tour in August and driving around the community of Fort Liard and seeing the number of yards that had pallets of construction materials piled up, stamped 2003, 2004, 2005, for housing construction and retrofit, just sitting there collecting dust, sitting in people's yards. In almost all the small communities we drive by boarded up dilapidated housing units. Why? And here we are having trouble finding developed land to build new units.

With this as a backdrop, imagine that the Housing Corporation is now embarking on a \$100 million affordable housing initiative. When I've asked the Minister for information about the basis of this initiative, he holds up a four-page, four-year-old Bureau of Statistics housing survey. We can't get straight answers to our questions. There's a three-year rollout on this affordable housing initiative and I'd like to ask the Minister where the community consultation is and where is the credible needs

survey? We do have housing needs in the North, but this continued approach by the Minister to throwing out plans and resources without sound planning and needs assessment...

MR. SPEAKER: Mrs. Groenewegen, your time for Member's statement is expired.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement, please.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, we cannot afford to continue to throw out resources in this shotgun approach without proper planning and consultation. We can't wait for the findings of the Auditor General to tell us that we have a problem. We need a concise mandate. We need a competent Minister who can answer our questions because there's too much at stake and there's too many people in need to be running this Housing Corporation the way it's being run now. I'll have questions later on in question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join my colleague Mr. Ramsay in speaking today about issues that need immediate attention by the Minister of Health and Social Services and this government. Mr. Speaker, that has to do with the general human resources and operation issues at Stanton Territorial Hospital that threatens to affect public safety and general health care delivery, not to mention the low morale and frustration of the staff that is resulting in a significant exodus of valuable long-term employees from the hospital.

Mr. Speaker, one that concerns us the most notably are the nurses and other health care professionals, but I must advise you that the problems are not limited to them. It seems to be pervasive throughout the hospital and they are losing long-term, life-long northerners, Mr. Speaker, in talking to the constituents, as Mr. Ramsay mentioned. I've met with a half dozen of them as well. What I can deduce from that, it has to do with the lack of staffing, largely due to ineffective recruitment and retention strategy, lack of resources at the hospital, lack of support for front-line workers, lack of means for the workers to express their view and have their views and opinions acted upon. As some employees have stated to me, Mr. Speaker, it's not everywhere, but in some parts of the hospital the environment is toxic.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you that I bring this issue up and I have talked personally with the Minister and the CEO of the hospital and I have confidence in them and the management of the human resources and the Minister of Human Resources. I believe there is good will in this hall that we can act on this, and if we can put our heads

together we could resolve some of the major issues at the hospital in the interest of saving not only our public health system, but also the workers that work at the hospital. I will be pursuing further questions for the remainder of the day and the session. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Lee. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Member's Statement On Succession Plan To Replace Skilled Workforce And Lack Of Apprenticeships

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I spoke about a new North, a prosperous North, a united North; a North that would be leading not only Canada, but also the world in many areas. Well, Mr. Speaker, this cannot be accomplished if we do not have the adequate skilled workforce and journeyman tradespeople.

In my recent tour of the constituency I was made aware that we do not have an adequate succession plan to replace our skilled workforce and tradespeople. Once our government was a model of training by providing each journeyman tradesman with an apprentice. For the last 12 years, Mr. Speaker, some trades have not had an apprentice. That's three skilled workers that this North does not have, and times that by the many missed opportunities and you get what we have today; a workforce that simply cannot keep up to the demand for trades and skilled workers.

I ask why, during an unprecedented economic growth and increasing national shortage of skilled workers, is this government continuing with policies that do not support this sector and support our own needs for journeymen and skilled trades.

It takes years of training, apprenticeship and commitment to have a skilled workforce. This lack of action to replace an aged and retired workforce will have long-term impacts directly on our government. I am encouraged to see our youth actively pursuing their careers and skills and we, as a government, must support them. Education and technical skills is very critical to progressive development and capacity building not only in the North, but also all over Canada. We must take issues such as worker shortage seriously or we will continue to see our youth go south for opportunities.

Investing in programs such as apprenticeship benefit our territory in several ways, but, most importantly, the skilled workforce for our future. We have all been hearing that in Fort McMurray, not so far away, people are receiving \$10,000 to \$20,000 signing bonuses just for an apprenticeship. As the Northwest Territories economy and natural resource activities increase, training opportunities must be available for all the residents through our government, Mr. Speaker. I will be asking questions regarding this issue at the appropriate time. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

Member's Statement On Tlicho Community Services Agency IPAC Innovation Award

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. (English not provided)

Mr. Speaker, it has been an exciting summer again in the Tlicho region. We are once again celebrating a victory. Last year it was the signing of the Tlicho land claims and self-government. Today we are being recognized for the managerial initiatives in receiving a silver IPAC award.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, the Tlicho Community Services Agency was awarded silver for innovative management by the Institute of Public Administration of Canada at an awards ceremony in Prince Edward Island on August 30th, 2006. Mr. Speaker, this award identifies and publicizes success stories to foster innovation by recognizing organizations and individuals for creative and effective management and to enhance the image of the public sector.

Mr. Speaker, Tlicho leaders have long understood the importance of education, health and social service issues in the Tlicho region, and the importance of integrating cultural, traditional culture into every aspect of the community.

Congratulations to all the staff of the TCSA. Your dedication and innovation have improved the health and well-being of all the residents in the Tlicho region, especially in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, once again Tlicho has proven and made a landmark in history here in the North and throughout Canada. We have made great strides and we're willing to share our experiences, stories and knowledge with other regions. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Member's Statement On Impact Of Federal Budget Reductions On The Tourism Sector

MR. BRADEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Literacy, volunteerism, tourism, museums, public health, are but a few of the programs here in the NWT which are devastated by the scattergun approach of federal cuts announced September 25th.

Mr. Speaker, no doubt there's room to find savings of a billion dollars in the federal budget that now tops \$200 billion, but once again the NWT is suffering disproportionately from ill-advised and uninformed federal program actions.

Mr. Speaker, we've seen rallies in the streets, postcard campaigns, letter writing. Few actions have caused such vocal and universal dismay among our people.

Mr. Speaker, one of the more ill-informed moves of this scattergun approach was the elimination of the Visitors' Rebate Program, which is shown to save potentially, or collect potentially, about \$78 million over the next two years Canada-wide. Mr. Speaker, the federal government has a strange sense of value if it's going to cut this

program and one of the really essential and, I think, effective ways we have of promoting our tourism industry. What this means is that as of April 1st offshore travellers and tourists who currently do not have to pay GST on some items and on hotel stays will see a six percent hike. Here in the NWT, Mr. Speaker, that means conventions and meetings, hunters, anglers and adventurers, will have an instant six percent reason not to come to Canada.

Mr. Speaker, a number of countries are actually increasing the number of goods and services that are eligible for this, but here in Canada we're going backwards. Every new tourism dollar that we get here in the NWT is hard earned. This is a step backwards. It will hurt us, Mr. Speaker, as the elimination of the Visitors' Rebate Program will require passage of new federal legislation. I urge this government and everyone here to take a strong stand against the elimination of the Visitors' Rebate Program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

Member's Statement On Absence Of Front-Line Social Service Workers In Ulukhaktok

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank Mr. Ramsay for bringing up the issue of health services. Mr. Speaker, on September 14th, 2006, I was able to travel to Ulukhaktok and speak with the local leaders and public in general. During this visit, Mr. Speaker, a concern was raised by the community leaders that the hamlet of Ulukhaktok has been without the following front-line workers for a number of months: social worker, mental health worker, and community wellness worker.

Mr. Speaker, front-line workers play a major role in small communities in terms of addressing and responding to social and family issues. Communities without front-line workers rely on the regional offices to respond to social and family issues, but at times a response may take up to a week or even longer, Mr. Speaker, depending on the weather. This is presently the case in Ulukhaktok.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services has advertised to recruit the positions of social worker and mental health worker in Ulukhaktok, but to date have not been successful in recruiting and filling these positions. Why is it, Mr. Speaker? Because of the shortage of qualified social and mental health workers, or is it because of the lack of accommodation in the communities?

Mr. Speaker, the Hamlet of Ulukhaktok would like to see these positions filled as soon as possible. This will give their community the comfort and relief that their concerns are being addressed in regard to social and family issues.

Mr. Speaker, I will pursue the matter with the Department of Health and Social Services to ensure the positions of a social worker and mental health worker and community wellness worker are filled. In closing, I will have questions for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Member's Statement On CBC Documentary On The History Of Hockey

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the last couple of months, couple of weeks, I was very disappointed, in fact very angry, when I first saw the CBC Television People's History - Hockey, and that the community of Deline and the people of the Northwest Territories were shunned by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in terms of their lack of integrity, respect to mention the birthplace of ice hockey in the Northwest Territories by the community of Deline in the Sahtu region. It's the first recording by Sir John Franklin that ice hockey was played in the Northwest Territories and Deline. CBC overlooked it. Shame on them for their type of research that they've done and to portray Montreal as being the first official game because they had an audience in the stands for hockey. Not knowing the history of the birthplace of hockey is in Deline, Northwest Territories, and not knowing that the people in that community at the time, maybe they were already watching hockey, you know? They overlooked everything. That's the southern attitude that the people in the Northwest Territories face from southern Canada. So, Mr. Speaker, I want to say maybe CBC should rename that history A Southern Canadian People's History, not the People's History, because they're not telling the people's history.

There seems to be many claims of ice birth of hockey in Canada: Nova Scotia; Windsor, Ontario, in the late 1800s. Mr. Speaker, the Society for International Hockey research has contested their claim. Montreal, Quebec, has the claim because it was again, as I said, the first time hockey was played in front of an audience and finally Kingston, Ontario, became the member of this claim by having letters being researched.

All these things have been contested. Why can't Deline have a rightful place in the birth of hockey? Mr. Speaker, I urge this government, and I'll have questions to the Minister, to put Deline on the map to promote the birth of ice hockey in Canada. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

Member's Statement On GNWT Tendering, Procurement And Business Incentive Policies In Small Communities

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to raise the issue of government policies in areas related to tendering, procurement and business incentives for our 27 small communities. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to see this government develop or make amendments to these outdated policies. All of these policies pretty much include all government departments in some form or fashion. The amendments I and many other northerners living in our small communities would like to see come into effect are ones that only apply to non-market communities; amendments which allow for the fair distribution of government dollars or public dollars being spent in these remote communities by our various government

departments, amendments that will provide for a fair distribution of government contracts and business opportunities in our small centres where small businesses rely heavily on government spending to survive. Changes such as these would be much appreciated by people struggling in the service industry in our smaller communities, but will only work if our public service makes it work by continuously monitoring and assessing where these government and public dollars are being spent, and who is benefiting, and ultimately ensuring that fairness and balance are a priority.

Mr. Speaker, we have over 30 public service employees who work on policy development and implementation for our government and I cannot understand why we do not recognize that many of these policies related to tendering, procurement and business incentive either do not work for the small communities or are not implemented in a fair and equitable manner. Mr. Speaker, this has to change and the first step is to take charge of our public service in our remote and small communities, and ultimately in our regions. Our public service are also these people who have the authority to expend these public dollars and I hope that...It's good to see that we have our five regional directors here in the gallery today and I hope that they take this message back to their regions and to begin to work on some recommendations for changes on these old government policies and we start to move toward more equitable and a fair distribution of public money in our small communities, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

Member's Statement On Youth Crime In Inuvik

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak on an issue that affects the NWT and recently has become a major concern in Inuvik. That issue, Mr. Speaker, is the dramatic increase in crimes committed by youth. During a meeting in Inuvik we heard many cases of youth committing criminal offences in the community. Crimes range from assaults to arson to underage drinking, and a huge increase in property crimes, including break and enter and thefts. Last year alone, Mr. Speaker, in Inuvik there was 771 property crimes. Out of those reported, 617, or 80 percent, were committed by youth. Unless we can do something about this, Mr. Speaker, sadly these numbers are going to increase.

During a recent meeting in Inuvik, concerned members of the communities, we tried to come up with some solutions for the increase in youth crime. None of the parents whose children are a lot of the major offenders of these crimes were present. That, Mr. Speaker, is part of the problem. Some parents don't care, so why should the youth?

Many residents, Mr. Speaker, work hard for what they own and should not have to worry about trying to always protect it and worry about if it's going to be there in the morning. There seems to be absolutely no consequences for crimes committed by youth. No one seems to be held accountable, and that's getting to be a favourite word of mine. Citizens are becoming frustrated, and I'm sure the

police and the courts are frustrated that we have to constantly release repeat offenders only to offend again.

Mr. Speaker, we as a government have a duty to protect hard-working, taxpaying citizens. I will have questions for the Minister of Justice, Mr. Bell, at the appropriate time. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Member's Statement On Energy Efficiency Rebate Programs

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Reducing fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions are some of the main ways that our government can help reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Having an incentive to switch to energy efficient and low-emission items such as hybrid vehicles, wood stoves, or pellet stoves, are just a few examples which we can help to reduce the harmful toxins and pollutants getting into our environment.

In provinces across Canada, as well as some states in the U.S., they have created tax rebate programs for people who buy hybrid vehicles. In British Columbia, Mr. Speaker, for a purchase of a leased or new hybrid vehicle the province allows you to be eligible for up to 100 percent PST to a maximum \$2,000. B.C. also offers tax reduction incentives for those who use public transportation, Mr. Speaker. Ontario offers a partial rebate on the retail service tax with the purchase or lease of a hybrid electric or alternative fuel vehicle, Mr. Speaker. These vehicles are also eligible for up to \$1,000 of the PST. Prince Edward Island offers a partial rebate for provincial sales tax and that's up to a potential \$3,000, Mr. Speaker. But Mr. Speaker, you'll notice that the Territories was not mentioned anywhere here in my list. Where are our environmentally friendly choices programs? Where are our incentives, Mr. Speaker?

Wood and wood pellet stoves are also effective and efficient for the environment, Mr. Speaker. Some provinces are offering incentives to switch to these. I wish we had incentives, Mr. Speaker, because I'll tell you Nova Scotia does. Nova Scotia offers a \$200 rebate for people using Environmental Protection Agency certified wood stoves or wood pellet stoves. The most important fact about these things is the CO₂ that it burns is actually neutral to the environment, Mr. Speaker, unlike oil and natural gas.

In the NWT our population is small, Mr. Speaker, but it's certainly innovative. I can tell you that there certainly would be a lot of people very interested in taking up opportunities if reasonable, smart, environmentally friendly choice programs existed. With a department that has a budget over \$50 million, we must be able to find some small amount of money to create a fair and reasonable program.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, this is not an incorrigible problem that places like Toronto suffer from with their smog, but Mr. Speaker, I believe in taking good and practical, decisive action, Mr. Speaker, and I think this Minister should too. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Recognition Of BDC Young Entrepreneur Award Recipient

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's not too often I get to stand up and get some good news out there. I'll take this opportunity today to mention some good news for us here in the Northwest Territories, as well as for a constituent back in Inuvik.

Yesterday in New Brunswick the BDC honoured top young businesspeople from across Canada at the 19th Young Entrepreneurs Awards Ceremony. Out of the 19, the Northwest Territories was represented by one of our own out of Inuvik, Ms. Holly Norris.

---Applause

She started, along with her partner, a business called Delta Sun Services in Inuvik. It's a catering business and started back in 2003. She saw the demand for those services grow, took over the concession contract at the local arena, and then as well, in 2005, purchased a restaurant and is doing great business in the community of Inuvik. So just to send a congratulation out to her and her family. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize the regional directors who are in the gallery today. Bob Sanderson from the South Slave region...

---Applause

Dan O'Neill, North Slave...

---Applause

Andy Short, Sahtu...

---Applause

Andrew Johnston from the Deh Cho...

---Applause

and Helen Sullivan, who is acting director and has done a great job over the last couple of years of piloting the return of the regional directors.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence, I'd like to also recognize two Pages who are with the cadets who are from Weledeh: Kelsey Martin and Jeremy Frankie, and I believe their moms may be in the audience as well, Violet Martin and Cathy Frankie. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Brianne Christison from Aurora College, YK Campus. Brianne is in her fourth year of nursing and is visiting the House as part of the Professional Growth V course on nurses influencing change. One component of this class is to learn about how politics shapes and influences health care and health care policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize two of my favourite constituents and people that I love dearly, my mom and dad.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Arlene Hache, who is an activist on behalf of northern families and victims and she's not my constituent, I believe she's Premier Handley's constituent, but I'd like to recognize her and the women with her and I'm sorry I don't know your names. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to recognize a couple of nurses in the gallery, Shelly and Vicky. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize a new constituent, a new regional director, Mr. Andrew Johnston, as well as former constituents Jim and Terry Villeneuve. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize and congratulate Mr. Andy Short for being the new regional director in the Sahtu region. He is the man. Thank you.

---Laughter

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the person's not my constituent but he's my brother, so I thought I better recognize my brother, Bob McLeod.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hey!

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to recognize a constituent from Fort Smith, one of the new regional directors, Mr. Bob Sanderson who a way back in 1963 was also one of the supervisors at Breynat Hall when I was there in the junior boys' side.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. I think we got everybody in the gallery today, but, if we didn't, if we missed anybody, welcome to the gallery. It's always a pleasure to have an audience. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 112-15(5): Public Housing Allocations And Replacement Strategies

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, and I know it comes as no surprise to the Minister that I have issues about his issues and affordable housing initiative is the next big one on the block. It's rolling out now as we speak. Then, of course, there's also the Novel housing, which may roll out as well. These are big initiatives. We need good planning. As a former Member on this side of the House used to say, we need "blue chip information." We need good, recent information that's accurate and current.

Mr. Speaker, I had a chance previously to question the Minister about the rollout of the affordable housing initiative. I would like to ask the Minister here today, for the public record, what information is he using when he is assigning or allocating housing units to the various communities in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question 112-15(5): Public Housing Allocations And Replacement Strategies

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as all government departments usually use the stats Bureau of Statistics that we do collect every four years. It was collected two years ago, along with Stats Canada and the NWT Bureau of Statistics. That is the basis of the information that we have used in determining exactly where the core needs are. But also internally we have done core needs surveys in all the communities in the Northwest Territories, as we had a long debate in this House where a motion was passed to increase our core needs in some 20 communities throughout the Northwest Territories where our core needs exceed 30 percent in the majority of our communities in the Northwest Territories. So through the core needs surveys and the Statistics Bureau's information that's been provided, that's the basis of us making our decision.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 112-15(5): Public Housing Allocations And Replacement Strategies

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I also mentioned in my Member's statement, when touring the communities we see boarded up houses, we see great numbers of pallets of building materials parked in people's front yards dated back three and four years. How can the Minister explain that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 112-15(5): Public Housing Allocations And Replacement Strategies

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I do admit we do have housing packages in our communities, we do have boarded up units, but the fundamental reason in the majority of the cases is we are having a challenge by way of land allocation, getting the appropriate leases to acquire land to build on. The other situation is that we are presently in the process of replacing the majority of our public housing units in regards to the boarded up housing units that we are presently...Through the Affordable Housing Strategy, 50 percent of those units will be replacing existing public housing units by way of making more energy-efficient units available to communities by way of multi-configured housing. I think it is a challenge we are facing, but, through the affordable housing money that we do have, we are able to deal with a lot of these issues. I have been working with the community leaders, the aboriginal groups, to try to resolve some of these land issues in their communities and also trying to get these houses built within the timelines that we've set. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 112-15(5): Public Housing Allocations And Replacement Strategies

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Krutko says that they have developed land availability issues in these communities, but he has a lot

of boarded up, dilapidated units that are scheduled for replacement. Doesn't it make sense that land will be made available when you demolish the units that are being replaced? Is that the plan, or what do you plan to do with those? In conjunction with that, is it true -- I've heard this rumour, I don't know if it's true -- is it true that the Housing Corporation is collecting some kind of a grant or contribution from the federal government towards utilities on these dilapidated units? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 112-15(5): Public Housing Allocations And Replacement Strategies

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, like I said earlier, we are having some land approval issues, especially where areas of unsettled claims are. There are presently lease-only policies in place, and there's also the question about having the capacity to build. We do have a number of public housing units that are boarded up. Because of the cost it's going to take to renovate or replace these units, we are better off building new units, acquiring the land that they're on so that we are able to deliver the 530 units that we are going to build in those communities and take advantage of the lands that are presently available in those communities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 112-15(5): Public Housing Allocations And Replacement Strategies

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Well, to the supplementary I tried to sneak in on the last question, let me ask that question again. Currently, today, does the NWT Housing Corporation have boarded up, unoccupied units in the Northwest Territories for which they are collecting operations, maintenance and utilities subsidy from the federal government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 112-15(5): Public Housing Allocations And Replacement Strategies

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, as we know, a majority of the houses were constructed under federal aboriginal housing or, basically, federal housing programs in the past. The criteria for those housing dollars are that we do receive a subsidy for housing by way of \$30 million. The \$30 million are for the 2,300 units that we have in place to pay for the O and M costs of those units. So the Member is correct; those units are presently being funded under the federal social housing subsidy that we presently received. But I think the Members also have to realize that the subsidy is now presently declining. In the next 30 years the \$30 million will be zero. So we are having to find new ways of having to offset the cost of operating the new units, but also realizing we do have to replace those units. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Question 113-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask questions to the Minister of Health and Social Services with regard to the statement I made and conversations I had with the Minister. Mr. Speaker, I am fully aware of the fact that as much as possible, we do not want to be sitting here talking about management and operations issues. That is not my intention to do micro-managing or anything like that. I am asking questions in the interest of maintaining the level of health care services that we do have and we cannot deliver the programs in health care without an acute care facility like the Stanton Territorial Hospital or all the employees who work within that.

It's very important for me to raise these issues with the hope that the Minister and the management will listen and pay attention to these issues and address them. The Minister is well aware of these issues. Could the Minister indicate to us what he has done since our conversations with him yesterday? Thank you.

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

Return To Question 113-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I have done, as Members are aware, as the honourable Member is aware, as is the Member for Kam Lake, I took notes on the issues that were raised to me. Some of them are labour relations, some of them are health and safety issues, about a page. I went from their office down to my office and I got on the speaker phone with the deputy minister. I went through the issues with him and talked about those issues and get together the information that we have to, to be able to speak to those issues. We are starting to look at the response. Some of the issues will probably require more detail, some of the labour relations ones. But, very clearly, we are very concerned and interested about the quality of care at Stanton and want to work with the Members and the general public, as well, to make sure we maintain the high levels of services that exist there. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 113-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, the deputy minister of Health just recently came from there. There must be issues he's aware of. I would think that the Minister would be well aware of this. My belief in this regard is that the regular reporting channel may not be the way to find out and address some of these issues. We are talking about very long-term employees, nurses, maintenance workers, front-line workers, leaving in droves because they feel very frustrated about the working conditions and lack of their ability to have input into the process. I would like to ask the Minister, aside from having the deputy minister and CEO looking at these issues, would he be willing to send an independent person to go in there? I don't want a long-term strategy or consultant's report, but would somebody

look at the toxic working situation and see if we could come up with a set of workable short list of recommendations that we could address right away?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 113-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member makes some very sweeping statements. She indicated in her Member's statement she met with six people at her constituency meeting. Stanton has over 500 employees. While I recognize there are employee concerns out there, very clearly we also have, for the most part, a facility that is running very well. What I am prepared to offer the Member is if the Member is interested as a chair of the Social Programs committee, I would be happy to set up a full briefing for the committee and bring in the deputy minister, we could bring in the folks from Stanton. We can work through the issues that have been raised, some of which are very sweeping. There is reference to some very specific labour issues which need more detail on to be able to address through those appropriate processes. Very clearly, we are more than willing to do that. I am not prepared at this point to bring in outside individuals to do something. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 113-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you I can pick up the phone anytime and talk to the deputy or CEO or the Minister. That's not the level of response I am looking for when we are dealing with issues like this in the House. Mr. Speaker, I think he shouldn't be taking lightly when at least 23 people between Mr. Ramsay and I, and there are other Members...We have had dozens and dozens of employees at Stanton Hospital raising the same issues. I do not jump at one person calling me until I verify the information. I am telling you, the Minister has got to be aware. There is a serious condition happening and I believe it can only be done by an independent look at what is going on. Could I ask the Minister, when is the last time -- and I am really surprised that he doesn't have an answer in 24 hours because I think if he wanted to, he could have it -- he looked at how many people are leaving the hospital, what was the length of their stay and what are the reasons why they are leaving? When is the last time he looked at that, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 113-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have four pages of some of the responses of some of the issues we talked about in terms of the chemotherapy, the staffing concerns, the job evaluation appeals, the strategic plans. I haven't been sitting idly by and I just didn't make a general request to the deputy. Yes, the deputy used to be the CEO of Stanton. Yes, he is aware of a lot of the issues. However, the Members talked to me and made a number of sweeping statements about labour relations issues. There

is a whole number of appeal processes. If they want me to pursue specific cases, then I can do that, but I would need more detail. If they are just opposed to the process or the classification, then we can have that debate. We monitor on a regular basis and I would be more than happy to give the whole raft of information we have on staffing, vacancies, exit interviews, length of service to look at. There are different vacancy rates depending on the type of profession, but very clearly we have a very full team monitoring all the time the work that's being done. If the Member is also implying that somehow I shouldn't be believing what the deputy is telling me or what the CEO is telling me and there are some other real facts out there, then I would have to disagree because I have every confidence, clearly, in the management of the CEO and the deputy and the work they do. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary To Question 113-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I might remind the government that this is exactly what we were told when we had issues with the correctional centre. I am telling you right now that I am not suggesting that the Minister should not accept what the deputy ministers are saying. What I am saying is I don't believe they are getting all the information they need to get from the front-line workers. I would like to ask a very specific question because there are a lot more questions here that I am prepared to pursue over the next two and a half weeks. I would like to ask the Minister, not just looking at the vacancy numbers, when is the last time he inquired as to who is leaving the hospital, what was their length of stay and why? Is there any mechanism in place for the Minister, deputy minister or CEO to know who is leaving and why? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 113-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that information is available and collected through the HR system. We monitor that on a regular basis.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Point Of Order

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to stand on a point of order. I think I clearly heard the Minister of Health and Social Services threaten my wife. She's an employee at Stanton Territorial Hospital. She wasn't one of the 17 health care professionals that showed up at my constituency meeting with these concerns nor was she one of the seven that showed up at my colleague Ms. Lee's constituency meeting, Mr. Speaker. I take great exception to the Minister threatening me and I think I heard him say my brother, who used to work at North Slave Correctional Centre. Mr. Speaker, I will go back and I will say this for the record, if the Minister doesn't want to take the word of his deputy, that's his business. What I am saying and I want to point out, for the record, is the former Minister of Justice didn't want to listen to the rank and file staff at North Slave

Correctional Centre. He listened to the senior bureaucrats. What happened there, Mr. Speaker? We went through a long, protracted human resource review of that facility. You know what? They came up with 63 recommendations. How have those recommendations been acted upon?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay, for your point of order. I am going to allow a little debate on this because I don't recall exactly the words that...Mr. Ramsay. I will allow some debate on the point of order. To the point of order. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, clearly, it's a matter of fact that the Member's brother did work at the North Slave Correctional Institute during that time period that he referenced. Clearly, his wife is an employee at Stanton Hospital currently. However, my intention is not to threaten the Member; it's to make a point just to reflect those facts. If I have caused him discomfort or caused him any unhappiness, then I would be very happy to withdraw that particular comment as it may be recorded in Hansard. My intention is not to drag his spouse into this, but just to point out that there is a clear connection. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. To the point of order. Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before the Minister got up and spoke on the point of order, I was thinking to myself I did not hear what was said, but if what the Member from Kam Lake is saying is true, that would cause me a great deal of concern, Mr. Speaker. We are well aware that every Member in this House has spouses, families, children. This is a small community. There are 40,000 people in 33 communities. I bet you there are not many degrees of separation between all of us. Two or three connections will connect us to everybody. It is paramount to our privilege as a Member that we are free of no intimidation or any limitation in discussing issues here. We should not be threatened in any way. If the Minister, if he said anything like what he said like I am understanding, if he made any mention of the fact, I would take great exception to that and I think that should be withdrawn and apologize and the significance of that sort of action should be taken note of.

It's so important for the work that we do that we are totally free from any sense of limitations that could come from statements like that, Mr. Speaker. I await your ruling on this very important point. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Ramsay, could you clarify under what rule you are raising your point of order?

MR. RAMSAY: Yes, thank you. It's under section 23(i). I believe the Minister was imputing false or hidden motives for my comments here in the House and I take great exception to that. My wife is a nurse at Stanton Territorial Hospital. I am very proud of the job she does there and, in fact, proud of the job that all the health care professionals that we have here in the Northwest Territories do. For the Minister to make comments like that, I take great

exception to them. Mr. Speaker, this isn't the last you will hear from me on that issue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. To the point of order. The Chair is going to take the point of order under advisement and we will return with a ruling at a later date. We have used up approximately five minutes of time on the clock with this point of order, so we're going to turn the clock back five minutes.

---Applause

Oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Okay, we're in question period, right?

AN HON. MEMBER: Yup. Go get 'em, Bill.

Question 114-15(5): Fiscal Update Statement

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question this afternoon is for Mr. Roland, Minister of Finance, and it relates to the fiscal update statement that was presented to the Assembly at the start of our day. Mr. Speaker, increasing our surplus for the previous fiscal year from \$18 to \$36 million is a positive sign. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister if he could explain, in brief, how did this happen? I'd like to think that it was upon the wise counsel and prudent management that committee has provided to the Minister, but I will ask for his answer to what happened. Why are we coming up \$18 million higher than expected on the good side of the books, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 114-15(5): Fiscal Update Statement

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, I'll have to say part of it is due to the fact in management of our budget as a government, Regular Members' advice, our own work as we looked at the fiscal environment we operate under and the numbers that have come in. We also end up dealing with some of the adjustments that come after the fact from the federal government on some of our corporate tax revenues, and that also has an impact on those numbers too. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 114-15(5): Fiscal Update Statement

MR. BRADEN: Okay. So to some extent it was a revision of federal transfers or payments or contributions, then, Mr. Speaker. Is any of this subject to clawback in future years, Mr. Speaker? This is an aspect of our formula financing deal with Ottawa that has caused us considerable disruption, so are we going to have to look at having any of this amount clawed back in future years, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 114-15(5): Fiscal Update Statement

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the existing system that we are now under until the next agreement is signed -- and we expect we should have an agreement in place by the time the new federal budget comes around -- the interim formula financing arrangement we are operating under, we get to keep 100 percent of the revenues; or, if it slides the other way, we lose 100 percent. So in this case, there's no further adjustments to those numbers. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 114-15(5): Fiscal Update Statement

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How, then, does this \$18 million surplus translate? What does it really mean for us here in the Assembly and for our communities and for the programs and the people that we serve, Mr. Speaker? Does this mean we will be able to look at some other options or some new options in initiatives or spending, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 114-15(5): Fiscal Update Statement

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this reference that we highlight the estimated surplus that we were targeting in the last budget reflects the previous fiscal year operations. So it doesn't have an impact on today's fiscal environment. It shows that through our final accounting and the measures taken and adjustments with the federal government, and those adjustments are not directly related to the formula, they're related more to the CRA, or Canada Revenue Agency, and how corporations file their tax and when those final adjustments happen there. So that's the impact. But the surplus we've identified for this year is something we're still working on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 114-15(5): Fiscal Update Statement

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, does this mean we have \$18 million in new funding that we can find some programs or some additional things to spend it on, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 114-15(5): Fiscal Update Statement

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, because it refers to our operating surplus of our last budget, there is some impact in the sense that we book previous year's earnings or revenue into the fiscal year. As well, throughout the year we do adjust our numbers based on revenue indications we get from the federal government. In this case, this money is again for previous year's surplus situation. Our fiscal responsibility policy, for example in this fiscal year, requires us to hold a

\$30 million surplus to fund our capital infrastructure program. So that's what that money would get to use offset on our capital programs. So it's good in the sense we get to keep the program that was on the books. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

Question 115-15(5): Federal Reductions To Literacy Program Funding

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the recent drastic federal cuts to literacy funding have hit the Northwest Territories Literacy Council particularly hard. They have depended on these program dollars for many years and have built important programs and services that communities across the NWT have come to rely on. These cuts will have a major impact on delivery of family community literacy programs and supports, and will affect aboriginal communities in particular. I understand the Minister will be meeting with his federal counterparts next Tuesday. Mr. Speaker, could the Minister please outline for the House his strategy to ensure our literacy programs are reinstated? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Return To Question 115-15(5): Federal Reductions To Literacy Program Funding

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I told the House yesterday, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada will be arranging a meeting with the Hon. Diane Finley, the federal Minister responsible for the literacy funding that was cut, next Tuesday. Our intention is to seek from the Minister some understanding of where the Minister is going. We've heard from the federal government that their intention is to fund federal programs, programs across the territorial and provincial boundaries across Canada. But I am hoping to make sure that she hears this, that is that if she is looking at expanding the programming available for aboriginal people that, if it is an on-reserve program, it won't have any impact in the Northwest Territories. I will be ensuring that she is aware that we need to see programs in the North that are not aimed just at reserves. We are hoping that we will hear about the way in which the federal government will be coming back into the field and that we will see some reinvestment in the North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 115-15(5): Federal Reductions To Literacy Program Funding

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear the Minister is outlining the NWT's perspective, that we are unique in the federal umbrella. The NWT Literacy Council has lost \$344,000 as a result of the cuts. This funding represents three areas, Mr. Speaker, coalition funding, family and community literacy development and aboriginal literacy research project. Mr. Speaker, I think it is obvious that we cannot depend solely on the federal government anymore for support for literacy. What plans has the Minister made to support the

NWT Literacy Council at this time to ensure that the essential services continue? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 115-15(5): Federal Reductions To Literacy Program Funding

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the Government of the Northwest Territories funds the Literacy Council to the tune of about \$440,000 this year. I have met with the executive director of the Literacy Council and have assured the council, through her, that we will look at what we can do to strengthen our funding. The total amount of money that this government is putting into literacy programming each year right now is in excess of \$6 million. So we are going to obviously take a look at whether or not we should reprofile some of that money to better support the Literacy Council. We are going to take a look at all of the programming in the literacy field and make sure that we are concentrating our funding in the area that we see as having the highest priority. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 115-15(5): Federal Reductions To Literacy Program Funding

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday one of our colleagues raised an issue about literacy cuts, and the Minister came back saying we are not in the position where I can reach into my back pocket today and replace the money that has been lost. Mr. Speaker, I feel that we, as a government, need to be on a standby where if there are drastic cuts then we need to be prepared for that. Also, the Minister quoted that we will not look at what we can do, or to see what he can do. I need to see some results action oriented. So, Mr. Speaker, can the Minister commit to providing core funding to the NWT Literacy Council so that they can continue providing uninterrupted programming to our communities? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 115-15(5): Federal Reductions To Literacy Program Funding

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do, in fact, provide some core funding to the Literacy Council right now. I have committed to them that we will look and see if there is an area that we can find and reallocate funds. But, as the Member knows, when we vote the money in this House, that money is parceled out. That is how it is designed to be spent. The millions of dollars that we have put into literacy funding, we have made commitments. There are commitments to the Literacy Council, to the college, to community groups, to all sorts of different areas where this money is being spent already. We don't, in the department, keep a slush fund. I know that the Members opposite would not want to hear that we did keep a slush fund that we could reallocate monies from. I will look, though, to see what we can do, but I have warned the Literacy Council that for this year it is going to be very difficult for us to find new funds. We are looking more for next year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary To Question 115-15(5): Federal Reductions To Literacy Program Funding

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Literacy Council is an important element in the Northwest Territories and also the smaller communities. I just certainly hope that the Minister will seriously look into this, or his counterparts in the federal government, and lobby the government and hopefully re-establish the funding that has been lost. I just want to make that statement. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Oral questions. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Question 116-15(5): Promotion Of Deline As The Birthplace Of Ice Hockey

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my opening Member's statement in terms of the original birthplace of ice hockey in Canada in Deline, I wanted to ask the Minister of sport in terms of what is his department or agencies he works with that can promote the birthplace of ice hockey in Deline and continue on with this campaign to try and get CBC to pull its head out of the sand and recognize Deline as the birthplace of ice hockey. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. McLeod.

Return To Question 116-15(5): Promotion Of Deline As The Birthplace Of Ice Hockey

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I think it was during the last session in this House we passed the motion supporting Deline as the birthplace of hockey. We have had some discussions with the community. The community is looking at it as somewhat of a marketing or tourism, or could be viewed as a tourism attraction for the community. We are also looking at ways that we can do some promotion as a department. We have looked at working with the community to possibly purchase some jerseys that would reflect that this is the birthplace of hockey, and in some team arm patches that would also do the same. I understand the community is working with ITI to look at some promotional initiatives through that department also. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 116-15(5): Promotion Of Deline As The Birthplace Of Ice Hockey

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess I am looking also for the truth in terms of recognizing Deline as the birthplace of ice hockey with this government. Get your team ready, Mr. Minister. Get your team ready so CBC can get the truth that Deline is the birthplace of ice hockey and to mention shame that they didn't do it in their People's History. We have to park the other issues, Mr. Minister. Give some promotion awareness again. What will he do in terms of working with his colleague Cabinet members to let CBC know and let the Territories know, let everybody know in Canada, the birthplace of ice hockey is in the Northwest Territories,

in Deline in the Sahtu region. That is the truth, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 116-15(5): Promotion Of Deline As The Birthplace Of Ice Hockey

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are certainly not contesting that fact. We have passed a motion in this House acknowledging that. We have not heard from the community requesting any support in the area of international recognition. We would be glad to sit down and talk to them along with maybe some of our partners and the Sports Council. Until that happens, we are not aware of what specifically is being requested. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 116-15(5): Promotion Of Deline As The Birthplace Of Ice Hockey

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The community of Deline, the people of Deline, have spoken to me and this is what they are saying. Maybe a little bit slow in terms of getting information over to the Minister's office in terms of letter writing, but I want to ask for the commitment by this Minister and his team of players over there in Cabinet to make a commitment that there is an action plan being discussed maybe with the people in Deline in terms of recognizing Deline and to show all of Canada the birthplace of ice hockey belongs here in the Northwest Territories. It belongs to the northern people. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 116-15(5): Promotion Of Deline As The Birthplace Of Ice Hockey

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we will certainly share that information for the important recognition for the community to be the birthplace of hockey. I will commit with talking to my colleagues, the Minister of culture and ITI. This has to be community driven. If there is a request from the community, we will certainly follow up on it. We will be glad to entertain any proposals from the community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 116-15(5): Promotion Of Deline As The Birthplace Of Ice Hockey

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you. I am going to ask the Minister if he would consider, through his Department of MACA, or as the Department of MOT, to put up some nice, shiny signs at the airport in Deline stating that it's the birthplace of ice hockey in Canada from 1825 until the present. I will ask the Minister if he could consider that suggestion from outside over here. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 116-15(5): Promotion Of Deline As The Birthplace Of Ice Hockey

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we will be glad to entertain any requests from the communities. We will certainly make the commitment to work with the community and involve other departments to move this important initiative forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Question 117-15(5): Ministerial Portfolio Assignments

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to get back to my Member's statement. I want to talk about the importance that this government places in the area of Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, what I think has been allowed to happen here in the last little while is the government is diminishing the value that health is in our territory. I don't believe it is fair to our residents that the government continues to allow this practice to happen. I mentioned it earlier. Across the country, a Health Minister is a Health Minister. His other responsibility is not the environment. I think it is such an important piece of this puzzle that I have to ask the Premier some questions today about how this all came about. I guess I would like to start, Mr. Speaker, with how did the Premier decide on the Cabinet assignments after the split of RWED? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 117-15(5): Ministerial Portfolio Assignments

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, let me say that we are not the only jurisdiction in which the Health Minister also has other portfolios. When I look at Prince Edward Island, it is Social Services and Seniors, but they are separate departments. I look at the Yukon; the Minister is also responsible for WCB. I don't know all of the jurisdictions, but, Mr. Speaker, whenever I assign portfolios, then I have to look at the interests of the Ministers and also whether or not I feel that they can carry the workload. All of the Ministers in our government carry at least two portfolios, including myself. Some carry three. Mr. Speaker, some even have four in terms of responsibility for specific issues. But, Mr. Speaker, I look at the interests of the Minister, the ability to be able to carry the workload and allocate accordingly. Of course, with only seven on Cabinet, it is a hard task to have everybody have a fair workload. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 117-15(5): Ministerial Portfolio Assignments

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it speaks volumes about the government's outlook on health and social services here in the Northwest Territories when we spend 30 percent of our budget in an area like health and social services and we don't have one Minister looking after it. I think that is appalling. It should just be completely unacceptable that a Minister can hold a portfolio of the environment in addition to something as

important and as critical as health and social services in our territory. It behoves me as to how this could be allowed to happen, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Premier, he talked about workload, does the Premier believe that the present workload on Cabinet is evenly distributed? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 117-15(5): Ministerial Portfolio Assignments

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I don't know. It is always of opinion on whether it is equal. I am sure some Ministers someday feel very overworked and others may feel that, well, we haven't had a lot of issues in my department or whatever recently. Mr. Speaker, it is as equitable as I can make it right now, in my view. Mr. Speaker, if I take the Minister of ECE's responsibilities, well, it is ECE, which is a big department and a very important department in our government, as is Health and Social Services, but he also holds the position of Government House Leader. He is also Minister for the Workers' Compensation Board, for Official Languages and the Status of Women. That is a big workload for one individual to hold. Is it equitable? Is it fair? In my view, I think all of the Ministers are doing an excellent job in being able to manage their portfolios and recognize that, at times, some do get very busy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 117-15(5): Ministerial Portfolio Assignments

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just last week the Minister of the Environment was away basically from his responsibility with Health and Social Services for a week attending FPT meetings, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Premier. How does his government go out to the people of the Northwest Territories and say health and social services is important when they don't have one Minister looking after something so important as health and social services? I think it is appalling, Mr. Speaker, and it shouldn't be allowed to happen. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 117-15(5): Ministerial Portfolio Assignments

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think all of us on this side view Health and Social Services as a very important department. There is no question about that. We also consider environment to be very important. I tell you, in the case of the Minister, the Minister is there. I can vouch for him. He is there at 7:00 in the morning. He is there at night. I will talk with the Minister about whether he has had to miss meetings of Health and Social Services or Environment because he is just too busy with other tasks, but, Mr. Speaker, I don't think I will have a perfect balance in terms of workload on Cabinet, but I am confident that the Ministers are all carrying their workload in a good responsible way. That is not trying to degrade the responsibility of health or social services. They are both very important. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 117-15(5): Ministerial Portfolio Assignments

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again I will get back to this. I think that the Premier and this Cabinet are eroding the responsibility that they have to the residents of the Northwest Territories by not having one Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. I am not saying that the Minister can't do the job or his work ethic or anything like that. What I am saying is that we need one Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. He shouldn't be saddled when other Ministers don't have as much of a workload. That is what I am getting at. I want to ask the Premier, if he is not going to take steps to remedy this, does he need some help from me or other Members across from him on this side of the House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 117-15(5): Ministerial Portfolio Assignments

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me say, as well, to add is that we do have other Ministers as well who take on responsibilities to health in the health field, as an example, as well as in other areas. If I look at the responsibilities that are health related out of the Department of Human Resources that Minister Roland, as well as being Minister of Finance, the Minister of Public Works and Services handles. I find that there are nine different areas where Human Resources has taken on some responsibility on recruitment, training programs, bursary programs and so on. But, Mr. Speaker, I will look at this. I always listen carefully to what Members are saying in this House and certainly take all of that as good advice on how we carry our workloads on this side. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

Question 118-15(5): Recruitment Of Front-Line Social Service Workers In Ulukhaktok

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement today I talked about the need for the recruitment of front-line workers in Ulukhaktok. It has been some time now since the recruitment has been going on for the past year or so. Presently, just last week on the radio, there is a petition going on in regard to the liquor, or they can't control liquor in the community. That is just one of the small cases that is being identified right now. I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services, I understand that the recruitment would go through Human Resources, through that department, but it is the Department of Health and Social Services' responsibility to make sure that these positions are filled. When will these positions for the social worker, the mental health worker and the community wellness worker be in Ulukhaktok? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return To Question 118-15(5): Recruitment Of Front-Line Social Service Workers In Ulukhaktok

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am aware that the Member has been in contact as well with the CEO of the Inuvik Health and Social Services Authority with these specific questions. I can commit to the Member that I can hand him that specific information. I haven't seen any copies of any replies that the Member may have received, so I will commit to the Member that I will have the information for him for the start of session tomorrow morning.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Pokiak.

Supplementary To Question 118-15(5): Recruitment Of Front-Line Social Service Workers In Ulukhaktok

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It will be good to hear what we get when we come back tomorrow in tomorrow's session. Again, I would like to find out. I don't understand it, but they are presently looking at recruiting these positions. I understand that Human Resources is looking at some of the names that were put forward. Can the Minister indicate on whether these positions will be filled not tomorrow, but within the next week or so? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 118-15(5): Recruitment Of Front-Line Social Service Workers In Ulukhaktok

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will give it to the Member before the start of the House tomorrow with information on each of those positions and the status of where they may be in the hiring process, recognizing that I know the importance of this. The Member is talking about this, and I will commit to do that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Pokiak.

Supplementary To Question 118-15(5): Recruitment Of Front-Line Social Service Workers In Ulukhaktok

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to ask the Minister, like I said earlier, it has been going on for the past six, seven, or eight months now. Why is it taking so long for the department to recruit these people? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 118-15(5): Recruitment Of Front-Line Social Service Workers In Ulukhaktok

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the reality is the social services professions are facing the same kinds of challenges in many cases as we are with allied health professionals. In fact, I just met with the Social Workers Association to talk to them about the extra efforts we are going to have to make to try to make sure that we ensure that we continue to have northern-grown social workers. We have graduated a class of about a dozen or so community wellness workers. But it is still not up to the demand of

what is there in the field. We are facing very similar pressures on the social service side as we are on the health side. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

Question 119-15(5): Emergency Ward Wait Times

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services just on the issue of emergency room waiting times. Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of people in the NWT that travel long distances to go to the Stanton Hospital to receive treatment at our emergency ward. Mr. Speaker, unless you are walking in there with your head cut off or wheeled in on your deathbed, you are not going to see a doctor for at least four to six hours. I know there was a national initiative a couple of years ago that our previous federal government rolled out some new health care initiatives that are aimed at reducing waiting times in our hospitals. Can the Minister inform this House, the general public and the people that are probably sitting in the waiting room right now, if there are any changes that we can foresee in the near future that is going to reduce these waiting times from four to six, eight to 10 hours, Mr. Speaker, that I have seen people in there waiting to see a doctor? Are there any measures that are going to be taking place here in the next while that are going to reduce those times? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return To Question 119-15(5): Emergency Ward Wait Times

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have been working on the issue of wait times for some time now. We have added doctors. We are putting in a new OR system. We have added nurses. We are trying to get more OR nurses. We have in the plans a consolidated clinic in Yellowknife that is going to, we believe, take significant pressure off of the emergency ward in Stanton. When it is complete, it will allow access for the very many people inside and outside of Yellowknife that come to Yellowknife looking for services to be able to go into the clinic and get a lot of the basic testing and work done right in the clinic that currently now ties up time in Stanton for diagnostic imaging or X-rays or simple blood tests, that type of work. So we, on a number of fronts, are working to reduce wait times. We are putting out in the regions rehab teams that are going to have the ability to work with children in a lot of very fundamental areas which now require them for the most part to have to come to Yellowknife and get on a list. So, Mr. Speaker, we are making a number of efforts in a whole host of areas. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

Supplementary To Question 119-15(5): Emergency Ward Wait Times

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. It is good to see that there is actually some initiative being taken to reduce all of these waiting times, especially with the X-ray stuff.

Mr. Speaker, I went in there to get an X-ray which took five minutes. I waited in there for five and a half hours for that X-ray, Mr. Speaker. I kind of thought that was really...I had to have a nap and everything just to wait for my X-ray. With this consolidated clinic, what is the plan? When are the doors going to open on this consolidated clinic that is going to take over all of this diagnostic imaging, X-ray and all of these other minor fractures that people are looking for, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 119-15(5): Emergency Ward Wait Times

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is currently some funds identified in the 2007-2008 budget to start that process. We have been working with the master plan development of Stanton and recognize that, before we should actually finalize the Stanton master plan, we should look at the consolidated clinic issue. So we are looking at putting resources into that for this coming business plan.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

Supplementary To Question 119-15(5): Emergency Ward Wait Times

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So we have to wait another couple of years, I guess, for seeing any reduction in any waiting times that are pretty long today. Does the Minister have any appetite, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that maybe out-of-town patients should get a little priority when they get to the emergency room? If they have travelled for eight hours or two days to get to the emergency room, shouldn't they be given some kind of priority over patients that are just walk-ins from Yellowknife? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 119-15(5): Emergency Ward Wait Times

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is clearly a medical diagnosis that is made. If there is an emergency medevac that comes in from a community, clearly that person, since they required a medevac and have some significant medical condition, would be given immediate attention over and above somebody that may have walked in because they forgot to get a prescription filled or have some much more minor complaint. So there already is that type of assessment process that is done by the medical staff at Stanton. It applies to all of the people that come in through the door to make sure that everybody that comes through the door can get the best service they need as fast as they need it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

Supplementary To Question 119-15(5): Emergency Ward Wait Times

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister provide this House, maybe the Members or even

if he knows right off the top of his head, how many doctors do we have in the emergency ward during the regular business hours? How many do we have in the evenings and weekends? Is there any plan to make more doctors available at the emergency ward in order to ensure that these waiting times are actually going to be reduced in the near future? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. There are a couple of questions there, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 119-15(5): Emergency Ward Wait Times

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will commit to providing the Member with the level of detail in regards to the staffing schedules for the emergency clinic. I would also like to point out that one of the intents of the consolidated clinic is to have a clinic that is open past five o'clock so that people that would normally have to go to emergency to get a very simple concern taken care of will now be able to go to a clinic and get that procedure done and not tie up the time in the emergency ward, which would be another way to shorten and alleviate the pressure of the emergency ward. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Hawkins.

Question 120-15(5): Energy Efficiency Programs

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I was reading my Member's statement earlier today to talk about other provinces offering smart environmental consumer programs, hopefully I was beginning to make it a little obvious that the NWT was lacking from that list, Mr. Speaker. So everyone is doing something but the NWT. Mr. Speaker, I believe in good environmental practices. I certainly believe in good environmental programs that speak to that. So, Mr. Speaker, with that said, I would like to hear from the Minister of Environment. Can he tell me today what incisive actions his department is taking to help the everyday person reduce fuel consumptions and greenhouse gas emissions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return To Question 120-15(5): Energy Efficiency Programs

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, some of the examples are the participation and the development of community energy plans from Norman Wells, Yellowknife and other communities, including Fort Smith, Enterprise, Gameti, Deline and Fort McPherson. This is a critical first step that will allow communities to look at what their energy consumption patterns are. What is also on the list. They are sort of a model community of all of the steps they have taken to try to save energy in terms of efficient furnaces, low energy and low water, fluorescent bulbs and those types of things. We are working with photovoltaic solar power and energy solutions and options in Colville Lake. We work with people to get their houses assessed to see where the energy leaks may be and what kind of simple steps like re-caulking may be required to cut their

efficiencies. The other published information gives people very simple tips such as possibly turning down the temperature of your hot water tank. If you leave town for any length of time, turn it off. I would also like to commend the Member. I know he drives a hybrid vehicle, which combines gas and electric which is another step towards conserving energy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 120-15(5): Energy Efficiency Programs

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, those were excellent answers from the Minister, except we were talking about linking program money to get actions. The Community Energy Program is certainly one of them and this government is leading that initiative to get that done, but it's lacking in the funding to actually implement it. So, Mr. Speaker, speaking of implementing new programs that help the everyday person, Mr. Speaker, can I get a commitment from this Minister to look into developing a program that would develop financial incentives for people to buy things like hybrid vehicles, wood stoves or wood pellet stoves? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 120-15(5): Energy Efficiency Programs

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member raises a good point and I know that we can give the same incentive that B.C. does. For sure, the incentive will be we have no sales tax and that won't be a burden on the purchase of the vehicle, the very same incentive that B.C. is giving. It would be one step that we could make. I would also like to point out that when it comes to energy savings, conservation and protecting the environment, in my opinion, part of the incentive should be that virtue should be its own reward in this case where you know you are doing the right thing for very little money.

The one problem we do have, Mr. Speaker, is the resources that we do have are fully subscribed for. It would be nice to be able to look at something in the boreal forest area, for example, in terms of incentives for wood heat. That is an issue that we have out there. It's just depending on the resources available. We are still waiting to hear from the federal government what their new Green Plan II is going to be, their Clean Air Act. Minister Lund from NRCan has indicated that they do have funding that was formally booked from the Liberal government that was there. It was to help communities and jurisdictions with environmentally friendly energy solutions. That, as well, has not yet been rolled back out so that we know how to subscribe to that. Should that occur, we will definitely have those kinds of options on our list. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 120-15(5): Energy Efficiency Programs

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess I would have to ask the Minister if he could explore the B.C. solution. He was saying something along the lines that we could do that. He did point out that we don't offer PST and they do and they look at rolling back the PST, so the consumer can save. So I am not sure where we can really benefit from that. The Minister did say something along the lines of resources being a problem. I will tell you, I put my priorities in order personally and I think the government should. Mr. Speaker, we have a department that spends over \$50 million, at least 40 percent of that is wages. We know through the Finance/Human Resource Minister that there is always a general, territorial-wide 17 percent average on employees. So there must be a little money that isn't being spent. So, Mr. Speaker, I am asking the Minister for the Environment, could he look into that and commit today that he will find ways to make small programs available to the regular person? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 120-15(5): Energy Efficiency Programs

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the Member will recollect, last year there was a package of programs and subsidies and incentives that we did have. That money was voted by this Legislature to do the very things the Member asked. There were a lot of good ideas in there and the ideas the Member has mentioned are good ideas. We have them on our list and we are always looking for ways to implement them. As I indicated, if there is an opportunity to access federal money that will allow us to do that, we will do that. I will ask the deputy, as well, to check to see if we have some unsubscribed programs that may be better reprofiled in the areas the Member has suggested. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 120-15(5): Energy Efficiency Programs

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we always have lists that we study to death. What I am asking for is a clear commitment from this Minister today. Yes or no; will we put action behind this? Will we make this a decisive decision in this House today to find ways to find good sensible programs for people to help them make environmentally sound choices? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 120-15(5): Energy Efficiency Programs

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we want the same thing and I believe we have a number of initiatives that are addressing that. The Member has asked for another basket of incentives over and above that. I have committed to try to identify that. If we have ways of reprofiling any of our dollars and if there are any other

federal dollars that may come available, we will look at trying to access those. I do believe that community energy plans, minor hydro projects like they are looking at in Whati and Lutselk'e, are very important and will affect the man on the street, the person who lives in the communities in a very clear, immediate way. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Question 121-15(5): Apprenticeship Programs Under The Department Of Public Works And Services

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the honourable Minister of DPW with respect to the apprenticeship programs within the government department, particularly Public Works and Services. We do have tradespeople and journeymen people there. At one time, we did have an Apprenticeship Program where all our staff members would have apprentices. Is that program still in existence for our government, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 121-15(5): Apprenticeship Programs Under The Department Of Public Works And Services

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at one point, Public Works and Services was the largest, within government, producer of tradespeople through the Apprenticeship Program. For many years, the government, past governments, have taken a different direction and the staffing levels within the trades side of our department was privatized and that initiative wasn't used as much. What we have done within the Government of the Northwest Territories, though, recently was to look at the Apprenticeship Program, the involvement that we have. Each department already has, through a number of programs, apprentices in place through the Housing Corporation, as well as the Department of Transportation and Education, Culture and Employment, which holds the Apprenticeship Program right now. We were directed through new initiatives to look at the Apprenticeship Program, so the Department of Public Works and Services, the Housing Corporation, Transportation, Education, Culture and Employment and Municipal and Community Affairs did a review of our levels of apprentices and looked at what we could try to do. That's one of the areas. Unfortunately, right now, it would be categorized as a new initiative besides existing programs within Education, Culture and Employment and existing departments' staffing levels that we have apprentices in. However, right now we are looking at it on a government-wide basis to see where we can try to improve in that area of apprenticeships. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 121-15(5): Apprenticeship Programs Under The Department Of Public Works And Services

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely, there is a gap there when we want to address our front-

line workers. We spent many months talking on the management side of things, the succession planning for our managers, the MAP program, et cetera. We have spent very little or no time at all how we are going to replace the front-line workers and that's one of them. There is no one to replace the front-line workers. So if the Minister could tell me again if that policy is gone, is that what he's talking about when he says it's a new initiative, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 121-15(5): Apprenticeship Programs Under The Department Of Public Works And Services

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Apprenticeship Program still exists and is operated through the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. However, as a new initiative, we are looking back at trying to step up the Government of the Northwest Territories in the area of apprenticeships and training. We've looked at that through all those departments, came up with a number and put it forward to FMB. Unfortunately, it falls under new initiatives. It would be future year requirements and would require some new funding in that area. However, the existing programs are still operated through the Education, Culture and Employment.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Time for oral questions has expired. However, I will allow the Member a supplementary question. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if...May I seek unanimous consent to extend item 5, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Menicoche, you can finish your line of supplementary questioning. Mr. Menicoche.

Supplementary To Question 121-15(5): Apprenticeship Programs Under The Department Of Public Works And Services

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to know further from the Minister, I think the Department of Public Works is taking on more and more of a workload because it's getting very expensive out in the marketplace and their workers are being pressed to be out in the communities more and more servicing equipment. So will the Minister look at extending this program to his department and look at extending it throughout the government to train our northern workers in this gap, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 121-15(5): Apprenticeship Programs Under The Department Of Public Works And Services

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Right now within the Government of the Northwest Territories, the existing program we have, through the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, wage subsidies and so on for a private sector, as well as departments, to help fund if they are going to go into the area of hiring more apprentices. Within the Department of Public Works and Services, as I stated earlier, we have struggled in that

area. At one time, we provided all of the maintenance, O and M in communities. Since then with hamlets and community governments taking on more and more of that responsibility, Public Works and Services has stepped out of there. Some of our staff have gone on and been hired by communities and what we would have in a number of our communities now, for example, would be some of our Public Works and Services staff who would be there to overlook maintenance and contracts and things in communities to ensure that our schools and health centres are functioning properly.

We have looked at getting back into that area. Unfortunately, it would require more funds to step up to that program level that we feel is necessary and we don't have that at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

**Supplementary To Question 121-15(5):
Apprenticeship Programs Under The Department Of
Public Works And Services**

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to make note that out of the 300 apprentices registered in the North each year, I don't believe very many of them work for the government and I think our government should take the initiative and make spaces and time available to continue to train apprentices. Will the Minister commit to that, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 121-15(5):
Apprenticeship Programs Under The Department Of
Public Works And Services**

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated earlier, we have, jointly through a number of departments, looked at the Apprenticeship Program and the training side to try to step up to the plate in that area and we are continuing the work on that initiative to try to see if we can bring something forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Time for oral questions has expired. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, may I seek unanimous consent to go back to item 6, oral questions?

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 6, oral questions. Are there any nays? There are no nays. We will return to item 6, oral questions. However, the Chair is going to call a short break before we go into oral questions.

---SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER: Before we go back to orders of the day and question period, I would just like to once again remind Members your rules around question period and the answers to oral questions. In the hour that we spent in oral questions previous to right now, we had nine Members who were allowed to ask questions and we had to extend the time to get the answers to those nine questions. I would ask Members to keep your preambles a bit shorter and the answers as well.

Oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

REVERT TO ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

**Question 122-15(5): Impact Of Federal Budget
Reductions On Northern Programs And Services**

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question at this time is for Mr. Handley as the Minister responsible for the Executive and it relates to the broad swath of cuts to numerous programs that the federal government announced late last month. The question I would like to ask, Mr. Speaker, is, from a government-wide perspective, what is the overall impact on our territory of the federal cuts on programs and services here in the NWT, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

**Return To Question 122-15(5): Impact Of Federal
Budget Reductions On Northern Programs And
Services**

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I don't have an exact number. We have done an analysis across our departments and it is well in excess of \$1 million. Mr. Speaker, I might be able to, in a minute, give you a detailed breakdown by department. The biggest one, of course, is with literacy as the one that affects us most, and the Status of Women who would be the other group who would also face a fairly big...and volunteerism. Mr. Speaker, off the top of my head, I don't have the exact amount. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 122-15(5): Impact Of
Federal Budget Reductions On Northern Programs
And Services**

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The quantitative assessment of how much and where is something I would pursue a bit later on, in fact in a written question. I guess I am seeking more an assessment of the qualitative impact on us. Is this something that through the Executive office, through other government ministries, what is the depth of hurt, of impact, of deterioration in our communities and in our programs because of these cuts, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 122-15(5): Impact Of
Federal Budget Reductions On Northern Programs
And Services**

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, our Financial Management Board Secretariat has done that kind of analysis department by department. As I said earlier, the biggest cut certainly for any department or program is with the literacy programs. That is a major concern to us.

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

Supplementary To Question 122-15(5): Impact Of Federal Budget Reductions On Northern Programs And Services

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, what steps has the government taken to tell Ottawa how angry we are with their actions?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 122-15(5): Impact Of Federal Budget Reductions On Northern Programs And Services

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Dent has written a letter to the Minister responsible for literacy programs. That has gone out. Mr. Dent is planning to attend a meeting next week on Tuesday with the same Minister on this issue. A letter is being drafted from myself to the Prime Minister on this issue as well as other issues, and this is certainly being a core piece of that letter. That letter should be going out of here very shortly. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 122-15(5): Impact Of Federal Budget Reductions On Northern Programs And Services

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I hope the Premier doesn't hold back the horses in expressing just how upset and angry, as I said earlier, we are, and by we I mean the collective community on the impact of these. Mr. Speaker, my final question is one of the steps as it relates to the tourism impact that I addressed earlier today and the requirement for new legislation to be passed forward in Ottawa. Will our government formally protest the passage of legislation regarding the GST and the Visitors' Rebate Program, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 122-15(5): Impact Of Federal Budget Reductions On Northern Programs And Services

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, certainly the tourist rebate issue is one that will be raised for sure. On the GST, I don't know if we have raised that one, but I will certainly take it under consideration. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 123-15(5): Redistribution Of Ministerial Portfolio Assignments

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Premier in follow-up to somebody's questions here today about the distribution of work amongst the Premier and the seven Cabinet Ministers. I observe what is happening in the Cabinet and I don't sense that everybody is pulling the fair share of the weight, as the Premier indicated in an answer to an earlier question. He spoke to the even distribution of the work. I don't think it is evenly distributed. I think some Cabinet Ministers are doing more than their share of work. I could go down the line one by one and tell you who I think is doing a lot of work, and who is doing a lot of good work

and who isn't. I could do that, too. Anyway, I won't go down the line today, but I will tell you when I look at the workload, the only two people that I see who do not have a full plate, from my opinion, would be the Premier himself with Executive and Aboriginal Affairs and Mr. Krutko with the Power Corporation and the Housing Corporation. I think that that is too light and I would ask the Premier if he would seriously take into consideration a redistribution of the workload to ensure that priorities in our government are given the utmost attention. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 123-15(5): Redistribution Of Ministerial Portfolio Assignments

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The assessment of workload is something that is complicated. My assessment is that people are busy. I can tell you personally I don't end up with a clean desk very often in terms of my role as Premier, as well as Minister for the two departments and the work I do in supporting other Ministers on various projects, whether it's on some of the hydro initiatives or other projects. Very often I am the one that has to take that final step in terms of pushing something with Ottawa, or with aboriginal governments, or wherever it may be.

Mr. Speaker, I'll continually be looking at Ministers' workloads and if there's a better way of redistributing it, then I'm open to that. We are late in our government and we have to recognize if we start doing that in the final year with a lot of learning that goes on and a lot of catching up to the issues within a department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 123-15(5): Redistribution Of Ministerial Portfolio Assignments

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, perhaps there's more to the workload than meets the eye, and I can see that that may be the case. However, I have heard a rumour, I don't know if it's true, but I've heard that Mr. Krutko has gone to Calgary 72 times in his tenure as Housing Minister and I don't know if that's true or not. But if that is true, I would suggest that Mr. Krutko doesn't have enough to do and I don't know what you could do to address that, but I have a concern with that. I do think there is not an even distribution of the workload and I would like to see the Premier come forward with something. One year left in our term is 25 percent. That's one-quarter of our term in office and it's a long time, and if the Premier can't see fit to do that, well, then maybe we need to offer some assistance from this side of the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. I don't know if I heard a question there, but I will allow the Premier to respond.

Further Return To Question 123-15(5): Redistribution Of Ministerial Portfolio Assignments

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I didn't hear a question either, but one comment I'll make is that a Minister's travel is distributed. It's on the website, I

believe. So we can make it available, and certainly I will check into whether it was 72. That is an awful lot of business done in Calgary. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 123-15(5): Redistribution Of Ministerial Portfolio Assignments

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That was one of the questions I was going to ask. There used to be a practice of tabling Ministers' travel in this House and it helped us gauge the kind of work that was being undertaken by the Ministers, and it was informative material. So what happened to that practice and is that still done? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 123-15(5): Redistribution Of Ministerial Portfolio Assignments

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That information is still posted four times a year on the website. I don't think we distribute a paper document anymore, but it is on the website; it's done quarterly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen. Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Question 124-15(5): Dialogue With Employees Of The Stanton Territorial Hospital

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my questions to the Minister of Health and Social Services again. I'd like to just state that in listening to the workers, I just feel that there are so many issues wrapped up in this about the hospital, at the Stanton Hospital, and various issues that are coming out of that. It involves many different units, many different professions, and whatever it is that's happening there is causing an exodus of very valuable, long-term not only health care professionals but hospital staff in general. Now, I understand this is a very sensitive issue and I don't think it's to the benefit of all of us if I get all the details in the House here. What I am interested in though, and the feeling I get, is that those workers need to be able to express what is going on without fear of being reprimanded or without feeling in jeopardy of their jobs. They have gone through all the procedures. They have gone to the union, they have gone to the management, and I don't think enough is happening in that regard and it shouldn't be. The Minister, of course, has to listen to his staff and he listens to us, but how is he listening to what's happening at the ground level? I'd like to know if the Minister would be willing to then ask the deputy minister and who's sending that, whatever they do, that they must prove or they must have a mechanism there that they're talking to the front-line workers. I want to know, I want to get assurance from him that he will make sure that he'll get a direct report from the front-line workers at the hospital, every one of them, every group anyway. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return To Question 124-15(5): Dialogue With Employees Of The Stanton Territorial Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll commit to the Member that I'll work with the deputy and we'll ensure that steps are taken so there is consultation in a free and open environment with not only the management but the staff; as she indicated, unit by unit. We will compile that information and we will look at what comes out of that and how best to respond to that particular feedback. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 124-15(5): Dialogue With Employees Of The Stanton Territorial Hospital

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I could tell you that these issues have been going on for quite a while. I have been listening to it for about a year and a half and, you know, it's just building and building and I don't think it's in the interest, actually, of the operation of the hospital and delivery of the health care services that this be continued any longer. I understand the extra impetus that the Minister and the department put on when session is on. It's nice. We could use this productively to shed light on issues that have been going on for a long time. So I want to set some time frames to the tasks that the Minister has undertaken. Could I get a commitment from the Minister that he would provide to us preliminary findings within the next two weeks? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 124-15(5): Dialogue With Employees Of The Stanton Territorial Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we will provide our preliminary findings within two weeks.

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

Supplementary To Question 124-15(5): Dialogue With Employees Of The Stanton Territorial Hospital

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to add one more thing to that, Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the Minister's willingness to work on this. I need to mention the fact that there are some employees, and it's the case anywhere, where they are scared of bringing points forward. If consultation is to take place in an effective manner, and a substantive manner, in a positive manner, all efforts have to be made to make sure that people feel free to talk and that they are part of the building process and not fingering or blaming. So could I ask the Minister for a commitment to work with the DM and the senior management, that they will take the necessary steps to make sure the workers feel not intimidated and that they're free to put their input into what they think is wrong with the operation of the hospital, or what their working environment is like? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 124-15(5): Dialogue With Employees Of The Stanton Territorial Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Clearly the Member must have been a negotiator at one time. I'm not sure how many questions she has left, but, yes, I'll commit to that as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary To Question 124-15(5): Dialogue With Employees Of The Stanton Territorial Hospital

MS. LEE: Thank you. I'm going to go by very good...You know, sometimes we succeed here and sometimes not, and I have to tell you that the survey or whatever the HR department did in working out the questions to get at the concerns of the correctional services I thought were excellent. So I'd like to ask the Minister if he could review with us about sort of detailed methodology about how...He should talk with the senior management, whether it's by survey, or by interview, or by meeting; if he could work with us, from the Members on this side, as to what the plan is so that we could have some input into that process. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 124-15(5): Dialogue With Employees Of The Stanton Territorial Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're going to be compressing a lot of activity here in a relatively short time frame, but as soon as we have an outline of how we intend to proceed, I will share that with the Member as the chair of Social Programs for her use and to be able to disburse to share with the other Members and for their feedback. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Question 125-15(5): Territorial Power Support Program And Community Power Rates

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, recently I received a call from Nahanni Butte and the topic, of course, is power and continues to be a concern over there, the power rates. Absolutely, the single biggest impact for granny from Nahanni is the high cost of power. I'm not too sure who to ask this to there, Mr. Speaker. I know that we have a territorial power support. Is there anything in the plan, are we going to augment it, add to it to help our people in our communities, especially another way of helping out the elders in there? With that, Mr. Speaker, I'll pass it over to the Minister of Finance. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 125-15(5): Territorial Power Support Program And Community Power Rates

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the area of the Territorial Power Support Program, that program continues to grow just by the fact

of volume of people in their own homes and the subsidy we provide to residents outside of the capital. We have no plans of changing that program. It is set at 700 kilowatt hours at the Yellowknife rate, and then the rate zone is charged per community. That's the best we can do at this point and that program has now crept over the \$8 million mark. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 125-15(5): Territorial Power Support Program And Community Power Rates

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess one of the other ways that I have been trying to address this issue is the one-rate power zone and it's typically done through the general rate application. I don't know if the Minister of Finance has the information before him, but is there a general rate application going into the PUB shortly or this fall? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 125-15(5): Territorial Power Support Program And Community Power Rates

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the past the government has worked through that and I am aware, from the Minister of the Power Corporation, that, indeed, there is a general rate application going forward in November. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 125-15(5): Territorial Power Support Program And Community Power Rates

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just with ways of reducing heat and power rates in the communities, again I'm not too sure if I'm asking the right Minister here, but converting the heat from power plants is a possibility but they're saying the cost is borne on the communities. So is there assistance that our government can help the communities convert the energy that's lost in the power plants? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Roland. Honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, that is really a question that should be directed to the Minister for the Power Corporation, so, if I can, I would refer it to him.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Honourable Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 125-15(5): Territorial Power Support Program And Community Power Rates

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we do have a program that we have joint ventures, of partnerships, through the residual heat concept. Again, it's all based on the costs and it is burdened by the community by way of the way that we bill our communities. It's based on the actual cost to produce that power, but it's also charged on the number of residents in those communities. But we are looking at

communities and looking at new initiatives such as residual heat, but also through the new technologies that are out there we are looking at that and we are open to the possibility of seeing exactly what's the economic costs associated with doing these. Again, because of the size of a lot of the small communities, it's just not economically viable to do it; but in the larger communities, it possibly is. Again, we are open to looking at these different possibilities. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 125-15(5): Territorial Power Support Program And Community Power Rates

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe this will be back to the Minister of Finance, it's just with the territorial power subsidy. Maybe just for clarification, does that include the commercial power rates in the Territorial Power Subsidy Program? Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Krutko.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Sorry, Mr. Speaker. That question, again as the Member pointed out, should be redirected to the Minister of Finance. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 125-15(5): Territorial Power Support Program And Community Power Rates

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Territorial Power Support Program is aimed at residences, so 700 kilowatt hours per month. I might say, Mr. Speaker, my home in Inuvik with my family, I worked hard at keeping consumption below that because once you get above it you start paying your community rate and that can go up significantly. We do have a commercial portion of it. It is very small and it is application based. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Question 126-15(5): Policing Services In Small Communities

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to direct my questions to the Minister of Justice, the Honourable Brendan Bell, about the policing situations in the communities that do not have a police station there, don't have police officers, which they visit from time to time. I want to ask the Minister, can he give me a brief description or a brief update as to how many communities do not have a police officer in the community, how safe it is in those communities, what's the process of them reporting crimes -- you know, some of them may, may not -- and what type of services are they receiving? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. I think the Member has asked all four of his questions, but I'll let the Minister answer one or more. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Bell.

Return To Question 126-15(5): Policing Services In Small Communities

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a dangerous answer for me to give a comprehensive one. I'll try to be brief and concise. I think as Members know by now, there's a CBC contest running on the radio that seeks to interpret an answer I might have given to Mr. Ramsay yesterday. I think they've decided it was the most obtuse and confusing answer they've ever seen, so hopefully I can do a little better here. We are meeting with the RCMP and communities to come up with strategies for policing in small communities. We're doing a number of things. The old Special Constable Program that used to be very effective in the North is no longer. They are talking about a next generation program of community safety officers. We're optimistic that that will work in the North, but we want to make sure that it's relevant for our smaller communities. The RCMP are also increasing their patrols and tours to our smallest communities, recognizing that they need help especially when they don't have detachments. So we're doing a number of things; we're consulting, and we'll continue to talk to Members about them. But, yes, we believe that the communities are safe, but we will work as diligently as possible to improve safety. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 126-15(5): Policing Services In Small Communities

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell me how many communities do not have RCMP officers in their community today? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 126-15(5): Policing Services In Small Communities

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Speaker, thank you. They all get visits from RCMP members from the larger communities and the regional centres, but there are 13 communities that currently do not have detachments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 126-15(5): Policing Services In Small Communities

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is unacceptable in this day and age; 13 communities without RCMP officers. Not acceptable today in the Northwest Territories. Can the Minister work really hard with this Cabinet to get extra dollars to put community safety officers, community justice peace officers, special constables? That's crazy to talk about not having any special constables in the Northwest Territories. That's what saved the lives of the RCMP officers and they say there's no more justification for it? That's crazy. I ask the Minister again, go to his Cabinet, ask for some real dollars for the RCMP officers for those communities, 13 of them.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 126-15(5): Policing Services In Small Communities

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The challenge with providing officers and having a permanent presence in all our communities is that, as Members know, we need two in each community now. That's the labour standard. We think community constables, or whatever the program will become, makes a lot of sense and will be well used in the Northwest Territories. We'll continue to lobby the federal government in that regard. It's not about, at this point, coming up with more money from this government for officers. The feds pay the tab when it comes to capital. We are looking at capital for Sachs Harbour. We think we have a federal commitment there. So we're moving, Mr. Speaker, but we will continue to send the message that community safety officers make sense in the North, but they do have to be relevant and they do have to have some powers and be useful for our smallest communities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 126-15(5): Policing Services In Small Communities

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I certainly support the Minister. I know he's been working very hard with his federal government of the Liberal government and now the Conservative government, and also in the last three years in this Assembly in terms of getting RCMP officers in our communities in the Northwest Territories. I again urge him and press him. There's a strong need to have officers in our communities. You know, we have to get creative. Get those communities that have no officers. Thirteen communities in the Northwest Territories. All the money will be in the North. It's a crying shame that we have this today in society here. We need officers in our communities. It's unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. Again, I ask the Minister to really press hard with his counterpart and this Cabinet to get some money, get the RCMP officers in our communities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 126-15(5): Policing Services In Small Communities

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the Minister on this point.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Member, member.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: I agree with the Member.

---Applause

A promotion. I agree with the Member, Mr. Speaker. I share his concern. It is of highest priority that we are able to establish some detachments in our smallest communities. There are communities that are very remote. It's difficult to provide and ensure safety. We know that there are weather concerns. So, yes, Mr. Speaker, it's a priority. We will continue to make sure the federal government understands that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Question 127-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services and it gets back to the status of Stanton Territorial Hospital and what is going on there. You know, these problems are not new. The Minister was the Minister back in 2002 when, in fact, he ordered a review, an operational review, a full operational review to be conducted in the fall of 2002. I mentioned in my Member's statement today that the scenario that played itself out in 2002 is very, very similar to the one that is here today, and the problems haven't gone away. The first question I'd have for the Minister is, according to this operational review that was conducted in 2002, there were a number of recommendations in that review and I'm wondering if the Minister can tell me what recommendations were followed up on, and why are we still having all these difficulties with staffing, especially staffing and morale at that hospital? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. A couple of questions there. The Minister can answer one or both. Honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return To Question 127-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the majority of the recommendations were followed up on. I've asked the department to dig out the last report that was done in terms of reporting on that particular consultant's documents. I'd just like to point out as well that, yes, there are some issues that continue to be of great concern at Stanton, but we've also made significant investments and progress in the services there and I don't believe that they are the same, as extreme as they were back in 2001. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 127-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the Minister had the opportunity to attend my constituency meeting two weeks ago, he'd understand that the scenarios and the level of concern at Stanton Hospital is, in fact, probably worse than it was in 2001, 2002, and something, Mr. Speaker, needs to be done. I'd like to ask the Minister, there's been some talk of a staffing review. We did an operational review in 2002. Recently, in April of this year, we've gone and done another staffing review of the same facility. I'm just wondering where exactly is this phantom staffing review. I've heard rumours that there's a draft of it somewhere. Where is it and what are you going to do to address the staffing issues at Stanton Hospital? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 127-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we did a review of all hospital facilities across the Northwest Territories, we worked with Dr. Peache and the medical association to look at do we have the appropriate mix of doctors, not only Stanton but in all the other health facilities that have doctors. As we were doing that, it quickly became clear that we also needed a similar kind of review done with the nursing complement as well in Inuvik, Yellowknife, Fort Smith, Hay River and Simpson. So that review is looking at all those particular facilities to make sure that the mix is right for the type of services provided, for the type of shift work coverage that's required, and for the level of care that's provided in the different communities. There is a draft that has been done. It was reviewed and there were some gaps to the point where it was felt that it wasn't appropriate to release it until we had a complete document, and that work is now in its final stages. I have now just received a copy of the initial rough draft. I haven't had a chance to look at it yet, but the intention is to have that done by next month. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 127-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My colleague, Ms. Lee, made a point that it's not just the front-line nursing staff here. We're talking about maintenance, we're talking about laundry, we're talking about cleanliness, the janitorial, we're talking about top to bottom. There's something wrong at Stanton Hospital. The Minister has been the Minister of Health of Social Services for five years. Some of these problems, to me, are very systemic. Why can't something be done with the morale at this hospital and this institution that provides such a valuable service to this community and this territory? Why is it taking five years and why are we going to have to do another study? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 127-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's also a lot of things that are right in Stanton, and I think there is a lot of good work being done. I've committed to the Member from Range Lake that we will set up a process where there can be consultation with the front-line workers to get feedback unit by unit on issues that may be out there. We are addressing a lot of the issues. For example, the janitorial contract has recently been rewritten and the standards increased. That is in the works. So we continue to work on this on a regular basis. This is not only a staffing review that's taking place in Stanton, but we're looking to make sure we have the adequate staffing complements in all the places that have hospitals and doctors, and it is a fairly complex undertaking. But like a lot of the work that was done with the facilities review, it's very important to get that work done in terms of how we define beds, the number of acute care beds, the number of community service beds, and we're doing all that work and it has lead

to a lot of the decisions that have been made to tie in the long-term care as well as the development of what health services and hospital services are provided in the various communities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 127-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister, when exactly can we expect a report or a status report on where this work is at? I thought I heard him say two weeks, but what are we going to get in two weeks? This is something that needs urgent, urgent action; tomorrow. There is going to be a major incident at this hospital, whether it's with an employee or whether it's with a client and it's going to happen if we don't do something about it. So I'd like to ask the Minister when. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 127-15(5): Operational Issues At The Stanton Territorial Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member has an obligation to raise the issues with his constituents, and my responsibility as Minister is to look at that and make sure that we respond to circumstances and to issues in a very measured and careful way. We are doing that. I've committed to the Member for Range Lake that we would have an outline of how we intend to proceed to honour the commitment to have the staff consulted in a free and open environment where they could get full feedback, and we would provide the preliminary feedback that we are getting within two weeks. So it's within that time frame we're looking at in regards to that particular feedback on the issues that the Members have had raised to them in their constituency meetings here in the last number of weeks. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Question 128-15(5): Northern Residents Income Tax Deduction

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions this afternoon are for the Minister of Finance and it regards the motion that this Assembly passed last February regarding the northern residents income tax deduction. Mr. Speaker, this is recognition by the Government of Canada, the higher cost of living in northern regions. We currently see a level of deduction of \$5,475 but this has not been changed since 1991.

AN HON. MEMBER: Shame.

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, it is something that in our motion we recognized as something that could have an immediate impact on wage earners here to manage the cost of living. Mr. Speaker, we requested that the Cabinet work with other territories, northern provinces and Ottawa to enhance this tax deduction, but we have not seen anything. In fact, in my question in June, the Minister said that we were waiting for further progress on territorial

finance measures and resource revenue sharing. My question, Mr. Speaker, is have we got to the point with these two big issues that the government can now advance the northern residents income tax deduction, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 128-15(5): Northern Residents Income Tax Deduction

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have looked at this area in more detail. In fact, I'm bringing forward a discussion paper to the next Cabinet/FMB meeting to look at this issue in a little more detail. We've looked at the costing of it. It will cost our government money as well by increasing our portion or share of it. So we are looking at that area, as well as looking at how we would work with other jurisdictions, not only the Territories but other provinces that would fall into that rate zone that we fall into as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 128-15(5): Northern Residents Income Tax Deduction

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is encouraging to hear that we are putting together a paper. The motion of this Assembly in February requested quite specifically that the government initiate this with the other territories and the northern provinces. I am wondering if that specific request has been acted on at least in more recent weeks, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 128-15(5): Northern Residents Income Tax Deduction

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are beginning our plans in the sense of how we would communicate and what sort of support we could build across other jurisdictions. More importantly, before we can do that, we need to know and understand the parameters of our own decisions we go forward on; how large to increase or push for an increase in a northern residents tax deduction. That portion of it. So we have to build our case of what we would like to do and move that forward. So we are coming with a discussion paper to Cabinet to follow up on this, as well as to come up with a plan to communicate that with other jurisdictions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 128-15(5): Northern Residents Income Tax Deduction

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, Members of AOC engaged in pre-budget consultations with a number of communities this fall. The cost of living was one of our central themes. In one community with the Members that I was with, we were approached very directly by a worker who said this was something that would make a considerable difference for them. This has broad, broad support, Mr. Speaker. The work that the government is doing now, I guess I

would like to ask to what extent will the government be sharing that with other committees and, more important, with the broader community here in the NWT to test the acceptance and the adequacy of any such plan, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 128-15(5): Northern Residents Income Tax Deduction

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I stated, I am bringing forward a discussion paper to Cabinet/FMB. Once I have given them information and had some discussion as to how we will target this and bring it forward to what level of increase in that northern residents deduction we are looking for, then I would be happy to meet with Members and go over where we have come with this and begin a plan of rolling out from there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Braden. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

Question 129-15(5): Installation Of New Backup Generator At The Behchoko Seniors' Home

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is the third time I am standing here speaking on an important issue. I am speaking on behalf of the elders in Behchoko. The Jimmy Erasmus Seniors' Home does not have a backup generator. I stressed this in February, June and now today, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to know from the Minister of the Housing Corporation, what has the department done to date since then to install a backup generator at the Jimmy Erasmus Seniors Home in Behchoko? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question 129-15(5): Installation Of New Backup Generator At The Behchoko Seniors' Home

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department has looked at it in conjunction with the Power Corporation and looked at the cost of putting a generator in that facility. The Power Corporation has installed new diesel generators in the community to ensure they have a secure power base. As we all know, Behchoko has two sources of power, hydro and also it does have a backup generator system which is new. We replaced the engines in the old power plant and it should avoid the blackouts and ensure we have an adequate source of power in that community. So through those discussions between the two corporations, we were able to come to the conclusion that there is an adequate source of power in the community to ensure that the community will have a safe source of energy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 129-15(5): Installation Of New Backup Generator At The Behchoko Seniors' Home

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister outlined the cost. We talk about the elders' lives here. People who are 80 and 90 years of age cannot be transported to Yellowknife if there is an emergency in the community. He also talked about the backup that is currently installed and it should avoid, he was saying. I don't see that being a remedy. We can't say "should." We cannot guarantee that this will assist the elders in the seniors' home. So, Mr. Speaker, we have witnessed the first snowfall, as you can see. It's time the government started listening to our elders, our respected elders in the communities. I would like to know if the Minister can commit today in this House that a new backup generator will be installed this winter before it gets too cold. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 129-15(5): Installation Of New Backup Generator At The Behchoko Seniors' Home

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, we have had a power outage with regard to the incident last winter because of the hydropower that caused the outage. Because of the old diesel generator backup system we had in the community, it was not functioning properly and we made the decision to replace the generator that is there, so we won't have the situation we had last year. The idea of having two systems in the community is to ensure we have an adequate source of power, so that when the power does go out, you have a backup system. The system that is there now will serve the community for many years to come with the new generator that has been put in Behchoko to ensure that when the power does go out through an outage because of the hydro line, we do have the backup system that will take care of this problem. Because we made that investment in the community, that should allow us to provide the adequate power that will be needed for community residents along with the seniors.

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

Supplementary To Question 129-15(5): Installation Of New Backup Generator At The Behchoko Seniors' Home

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am still not satisfied with the answer I am getting or any answers I am getting from the Minister. This is a real fragile situation we are faced with today. The Minister is stating that this could avoid a power outage or there is a backup system in place, but I highly doubt that. Can the Minister commit to this House that in the future if there are incidents in the community where there is a power outage, there are costs associated, would he cover the cost of transporting individuals or elders to the community of Yellowknife or wherever the place may be? Will he cover the associated cost to that factor? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: The question may be a bit of a hypothetical question; however, I will give the Minister an opportunity to answer. Mr. Krutko

Further Return To Question 129-15(5): Installation Of New Backup Generator At The Behchoko Seniors' Home

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we all know, when there are emergencies or power outages or fires or power plants burn down, there is a backup plan in place in every community by way of the emergency measures that are in place through the municipalities, through the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and other government agencies to ensure that we have evacuation plans in place, so when we have these instances, we are able to respond. So there is an emergency plan in place that will allow the transportation of the elders or seniors to the appropriate accommodation either here in Yellowknife or elsewhere to ensure that that situation doesn't happen. Again, it is under those emergency situations that we will find ourselves having to enact that plan. There will be resources available to transport people out of the community at the appropriate time if we have to do so. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 129-15(5): Installation Of New Backup Generator At The Behchoko Seniors' Home

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have been approached on several occasions from the elders. I usually visit the elders in the seniors' home and they are still concerned even though there is a backup generator. So just with respect to that, can the Minister and department make a commitment to meet with the Tlicho Community Services Agency if there is a current emergency plan in place? If not, can they establish one immediately before the winter comes? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 129-15(5): Installation Of New Backup Generator At The Behchoko Seniors' Home

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I commit to the Member that I will sit down with him and the community to review the emergency measures plan, what investment we made in the community by upgrading the existing power plant to ensure we avoid these situations. More importantly, we will assure the seniors that we do have a safe and secure power distribution system in the community so that we do not have the situation we had last year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Question 130-15(5): Deh Cho Bridge Loan Guarantee

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Premier and it's with regard to the Deh Cho Bridge and the loan guarantee to the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation. We just recently received a letter saying the loan guarantee was going to be again bumped up another \$100,000. I distinctly remember saying the tap had been turned off on the Deh Cho Bridge project, so I was quite surprised to receive a letter like that. The project costs have gone from \$50 million to \$60 million to \$140 million

to \$150 million. I am not sure why we continue to allow the tally to build up on this. I would like to ask the Premier if he didn't mean the tap was really turned off, when is he going to turn it off? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 130-15(5): Deh Cho Bridge Loan Guarantee

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, no further work is being done on the Deh Cho Bridge. The work has stopped. It's on hold. Mr. Speaker, when I say there is nothing being done, we, though, still have the interest and bank fee costs of the outstanding loan that is made, loan guarantee. Mr. Speaker, that is the only cost we are bearing now. We have chosen to keep this on hold in light of Minister Cannon's statement that he would be laying out a national infrastructure program and that we would be included in that. We have yet to find out what would be available to us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 130-15(5): Deh Cho Bridge Loan Guarantee

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't know why we continue to put our dollars at risk while we wait for a decision from the federal government. That's for certain.

The other thing I want to ask the Premier is what exactly are the other costs that are associated? If you are saying that it's \$100,000 in interest, I can see a loan guarantee of \$3.55 million costing much, much more than \$100,000. What is going to be the final tab on the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation and what is it going to cost the residents of the Northwest Territories?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 130-15(5): Deh Cho Bridge Loan Guarantee

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, all of the cost, the additional costs we have now for the time that this loan is extended to, are bank related. It's interest, bank fees, bank charges. That's all there is. There is nothing more going on. The loan is roughly \$3.5 million. The work that has been done is not wasted. It doesn't go in a wastebasket. It's there and it's work that's been done and it's ready to go. If we were to just fold up everything and say we don't need to look at that project anymore, the heck with it, it would cost us roughly \$3.5 million to pay off the loan and clean this up. Mr. Speaker, it's our view that there is infrastructure money coming and we should not jump the gun here and be premature. Let's wait to see what the federal government has to offer. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 130-15(5): Deh Cho Bridge Loan Guarantee

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think we would be jumping the gun by cutting off the risk of the territorial government in that loan guarantee. Why

wouldn't we just pay it out? We are going to get the information anyway. The decision from the federal government might be years away. Again, I don't understand why we continue to bleed. What other costs is the government going to incur on this loan guarantee? There has to be other costs out there. What are they and will the Premier let us know what they are? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 130-15(5): Deh Cho Bridge Loan Guarantee

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, we still anticipate that we will be successful in getting additional money to make this bridge possible. If the bridge goes ahead, if we get the money and the bridge goes ahead, then that money that we have loaned or guaranteed to the Bridge Corporation is rolled into the cost of the bridge. So there is no cost to the government at all. If we were to assume that the bridge is not going to go ahead and pay the \$3.5 million, then in that scenario it costs us, as public government, \$3.5 million. It's our view that we are better to wait and not fold up the Bridge Corporation now. There may be money coming in. This money can be rolled into the price of the bridge and no cost to public government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 130-15(5): Deh Cho Bridge Loan Guarantee

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members have been asking, for some time, for a detailed costing on where this \$3.5 million has gone and exactly what it's been spent on. We haven't received that level of detail yet on where this money has gone and what it's been spent on. From what I hear, the Premier -- and I would like again to ask him this question -- is there going to be anymore money spent on the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation? Is it going to cost the residents here any more money? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 130-15(5): Deh Cho Bridge Loan Guarantee

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, again, I will say there is no activity at all, no additional cost to the Bridge Corporation. The only additional cost that we have accruing now are bank interest and other fees. There is no more activity with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation and there won't be until we have the revenues to be able to proceed with this project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Question 131-15(5): Lack Of Progress On The Devolution And Resource Revenue Sharing Negotiations

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask questions to the Premier with regard to following up on the statements and questions I asked the Premier about yesterday. It's with regard to a lack of progress this government and the Premier is making with regard to the resource revenue sharing. Yesterday the

Premier committed to providing me with proof of the progress and this morning I appreciated the fact that there was a letter sitting on my desk that is supposed to be proof. I am going to table this letter in the House, but could I just ask the Premier exactly what part of this letter is supposed to be proof? I am telling you, nobody on this side of the table could see anything that could even be construed in any way as proof that the federal government is moving on this file. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I think you are referring to a document that is not before the House. I disallow the question.

---Ruled Out of Order

Oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Question 132-15(5): Update On Wilderness Camp In The Sahtu Region

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask for an update on the Minister of Justice on this wilderness camp he has up in the Sahtu and also thinking about starting one in the Tlicho region. I would like to ask the Minister for a brief update. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Bell.

Return To Question 132-15(5): Update On Wilderness Camp In The Sahtu Region

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have piloted a wilderness camp initiative in the Sahtu. It was very successful the last time around. We are preparing to do it again this year. In the Tlicho region we have also been working with the MLA in the region to talk about a model that would work there. I think we have discovered that exactly the same model can't be transferred. We have to look at a slightly different approach, but we are talking to the region about that. So we are looking forward to the pilot again being rolled out in the Sahtu and we will have an evaluation after that's done, but I think this has been a very effective program. That is my sense so far. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 132-15(5): Update On Wilderness Camp In The Sahtu Region

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister inform the people in the Sahtu, maybe the community of Fort Good Hope because that's where the pilot project is being initiated, is there a number or percentage of inmates who are going to participate in this year's pilot project? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 132-15(5): Update On Wilderness Camp In The Sahtu Region

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have that information. What we do is go through our facilities and see who would be eligible. First of all, we have to make sure the person is not a risk to the camp operators or to the general public before they are eligible

to go out on the land, because it doesn't have the same type of security that we have our facilities. Next, Mr. Speaker, they have to want to participate. I am sure that our staff and the facilities are going through measuring the people there based on those two criteria, but I can certainly provide the Member with more information when I have it. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 132-15(5): Update On Wilderness Camp In The Sahtu Region

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister inform me in the House, is there a good connecting program with the pilot project and the communities that these inmates are expected to return to in terms of an aftercare program in the jail if they have to go back? If they have to go back, are they going back to strengthen their families and children in terms of this pilot project? I think it's one of the best projects that this government has started up in the last couple of years anyway. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 132-15(5): Update On Wilderness Camp In The Sahtu Region

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member for his support of this program. It has been instrumental in helping us get this up and running in the Sahtu. Yes, there is programming available and we do work with the inmates to make sure there is a plan upon their release to help them be reintegrated into their communities. We use the community justice groups locally to help us achieve this as well. So there is both programming in the institutions and upon release for the inmates and we think this corrections on-the-land camp model helps us deliver much of that program as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 132-15(5): Update On Wilderness Camp In The Sahtu Region

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this morning on CBC, I heard that the aboriginal people were well overrepresented in the justice system and that a project like this that we start in the Northwest Territories, a lot of credit has to go to the Minister on this one in terms of listening to the people, and putting this project out on the land for the people, and people on the land are mostly aboriginal people. I want to ask the Minister, in the bigger picture, what type of programs does he have that will connect on-the-land programs that have institutions like the North Slave Correctional Centre, the centre in Hay River and Fort Smith? We have to get these programs into these institutions because that's where it will work. I want to ask the Minister, what type of big picture initiatives are going to happen for people in institutions similar to on-the-land projects? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 132-15(5): Update On Wilderness Camp In The Sahtu Region

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would agree and it is troubling, obviously, that aboriginal people are overrepresented in our institutions. We have been working well with on-the-land programming. We continue to make efforts in our institutions. Members in committee will be aware that we have some what we believed to be culturally relevant programming at the institution. We made some change and improvements. We now have elders from many regions coming to the institution to work with inmates from those regions to talk about what went wrong, how they can make improvements, how they can make changes in their lives. We know these people are coming back to our communities. It makes sense to have them welcomed back to the communities after they've made amendments, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to work in the institutions to improve our programming and I will have more updates for the Members and for committee as we work in that fashion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Time for question period has expired. Written questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 12-15(5): Impact Of Federal Budget Reductions On NGO And Government Sectors

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier:

Provide a written assessment of the impacts on the NWT of the federal government cuts announced September 25, 2006, and actions to mitigate these impacts in the following areas:

- jobs in NGO and government sectors
- funding and court solution changes
- economic impacts
- social service impacts

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Written questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Written Question 13-15(5): Leakage Of Resource Royalties In The North

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier:

1. Can the Premier provide the amount of royalties leaving the North and staying with the federal government, and our return from these resources in the last 10 years?
2. In terms of our financial fiscal imbalance, what does the North need to do to begin having our revenue from our resources managed by the North?
3. Will the GNWT provide an opportunity to discuss post-revenue sharing in the North? Who or when will the North sit down to discuss federal resources revenue management framework?

4. Can the Premier outline a strategic plan that demonstrates how northerners will react should we not get a satisfactory resource revenue or devolution agreement within the next year?
5. What will be the process to get the aboriginal governments a fair share of the resource revenue agreement and the devolution agreement?

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Written questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Written Question 14-15(5): Stanton Territorial Hospital 2002 Operational Review - Status of Recommendations

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services:

From the operational review conducted in 2002, can the Minister provide the House with updates on what has been done to address all recommendations contained in the review?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Replies to opening address. Petitions. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

ITEM 10: PETITIONS

Petition 2-15(5): Community Security Services For Behchoko

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just recently I received a notice of petition for a community's security and bylaw services in the community of Behchoko signed by youth, elders and community members of Behchoko. There are 116 signatures. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Petitions. Reports of standing and special committees. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Tabling of documents. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 40-15(5): Public Accounts 2005-2006

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled Public Accounts Northwest Territories 2005-2006.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Tabling of documents. Mr. Clerk.

Tabled Document 41-15(5): Response To Petition 1-15(5)

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a response to petition provided by the Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Minister of Health and Social Services, in response to a petition tabled by Mr. Robert McLeod on June 1, 2006. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Tabled Document 42-15(5): Trip Report Of The Canol Heritage Trail Leadership Walk 2006

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to table the trip report on the Canol Heritage Trail Leadership Walk 2006.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Motions. First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Report of Committee of the Whole. Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Thursday, October 19, 2006, at 1:30 p.m.

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
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 9, Write-off of Assets Act, 2006-2007
 - Bill 13, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No.2, 2006-2007
 - Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No.2
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 6, Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act

- Bill 7, Pharmacy Act
- Bill 8, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2006
- Bill 9, Write-off of Assets Act, 2006-2007
- Bill 10, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2006-2007
- Bill 11, Tourism Act
- Bill 12, Garnishment Remedies Statutes Amendment Act

20. Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, October 19, 2006, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 17:10 p.m.

