



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, February 10, 2011****Members Present**

Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bromley, Hon. Paul Delorey, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Sandy Lee, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Michael McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Hon. Floyd Roland, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:29 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

Ministers' Statements**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 99-16(5):
ELECTRICITY REVIEW PROCESS**

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to highlight the progress this government has made toward reducing the cost of living in the Northwest Territories. Reducing the cost of living, and in particular energy costs, is a key priority of this government's strategic plan.

On December 1, 2010, lower electricity rates were implemented in many of our Northwest Territories communities. The electricity rates in the thermal community zone are now approximately 40 cents per kilowatt hour for businesses and 47 cents per kilowatt hour for residents. These rates are far different from the previous rates that ranged from 50 cents up to over \$2 per kilowatt hour. Also effective December 1, 2010, was an increase in the threshold of the Territorial Power Subsidy Program from 700 kilowatt hours per month to 1,000 kilowatt hours per month during the winter. This change was aimed at families. Lower electricity rates and support for families will significantly lower the cost of living and help us to reach this Assembly's goal of creating sustainable, vibrant communities.

Two years ago we embarked on a review of electricity rates, regulations and subsidy programs in the Northwest Territories.

Through extensive public consultation we heard about the challenges faced by Northwest Territories families and businesses in small communities. We know these challenges are real and we know that this government wanted to make a real change.

The Public Utilities Board provided the Government of the Northwest Territories with some recommendations to improve the Electricity Rate Policy Guidelines before the rates can be finalized. I am pleased to inform this Assembly that today I have issued these revised guidelines to the board. The Public Utilities Board will now undertake a brief process to finalize the electricity rates established on December 1, 2010, and this will be the final technical step in establishing new electricity rates.

This new approach to our electricity system was the result of the collective efforts of many. I would like to thank all the Members of this Assembly who, through the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning, have been extensively involved in this effort from the beginning. We had a great deal of discussion and debate and I feel we can all be proud of the fundamental change that has been brought to the Northwest Territories electricity system.

I would also like to thank the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, Northland Utilities Limited, the Public Utilities Board, the Northwest Territories Association of Communities, and all the community governments that participated in the review.

If anyone has any doubt of the impact this change will bring across the Northwest Territories, I have in my hand a recent electricity bill for the Nahanni Butte General Store. From December 22, 2010, to January 4, 2011, the store used 2,468 kilowatts of electricity for a total charge, including GST, of \$1,156.80. This is a savings of \$4,343.20. Before the change in electricity rates this bill would have been well over \$5,500. The Government of the Northwest Territories will work with the businesses to ensure that reduced costs for business will lead to lower prices for consumers overall.

Going forward, there is still more work to do as we strive for continual improvement within our electricity system. I am confident we will be able to address any challenges that lie ahead as we work together to continue to lower the cost of living for Northwest Territories residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 100-16(5):
FAMILY VIOLENCE –
RESULTS OF THE STRENGTH-BASED
COMMUNITY INQUIRY

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report the release of the DVD documentary "Non-Violence: A Strength-Based Community Inquiry" which was developed as part of the GNWT Family Violence Action Plan, Phase 2. Implementing phase 2 of the plan was one of the activities that the Government of the Northwest Territories identified under the Building Our Future initiative of our strategic plan as a way to achieve this Assembly's goal of sustainable, vibrant and safe communities.

Violence has a devastating effect on our people and communities and is compromising our collective future. Over time we have learned that finding the road back to our healthy ways isn't going to happen by focusing on what is wrong or broken in people. We will find our way back by recognizing and building on the strengths that people have, Mr. Speaker. A strength-based approach listens closely to what is important to people in their decisions to live a non-violent life.

This documentary was premised on a strength-based approach and looks at what works in a person, a family and in a community. It is a wonderful collection of northern men's personal experiences of non-violence, compassion, strength and human potential. This documentary confirms that deciding to use non-violent behaviour is a personal choice and taking responsibility for one's own behaviour is the first step.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the people who participated in the making of the documentary, especially those who shared their personal knowledge and experiences. It is my hope that this documentary will serve as a useful tool to any person or organization addressing violence in the North and helping people, families and communities to support the choice of non-violence.

The documentary video is being distributed across the Northwest Territories and is also available on our website at the Department of Justice. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 101-16(5):
MENTAL WELLNESS WEEK AND THE
INTEGRATION OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This year we recognized NWT Mental Wellness Week from February 6 to 12, 2011, with the theme Mental Health for Everyone. It is an opportunity to raise

awareness about the importance of maintaining good mental health and to work towards reducing the stigma of mental illness.

The NWT celebrates Mental Wellness Week several months earlier than the rest of Canada. We can all appreciate that during the cold dark days of February, good mental health should be on our all our minds.

Mr. Speaker, in Canada, one in five people will experience a mental health issue such as bipolar disorder, depression, psychosis or schizophrenia at some point in their lifetime. More than 70 percent of adults living with a mental illness say the onset developed before the age of 18. Mental illness is a health issue that we cannot ignore.

Mental illness affects people of all ages and from all walks of life. Most individuals find ways to live with their illnesses, but how they are treated by others often proves to be more of a challenge than the illness itself. This stigma and discrimination are key barriers that stop people from seeking help. Those who experience problems with their mental health should not feel alone or embarrassed to seek help. It is important that residents of the Northwest Territories know help is available and where they should go to get the support they need for any type of mental health issue.

Mr. Speaker, through the Community Counselling Program, health and social service professionals are available to provide support and referral services to all communities in the Northwest Territories. Anyone who wants help to maintain their good mental health or who would like to access mental health or addictions services can call their local health centre or go onto the Department of Health and Social Services website for more information.

For others, assistance can be found through speaking with elders or religious leaders. The important thing to remember is you are not alone and there are people willing to listen and help.

Mr. Speaker, within the Health and Social Services action plan, A Foundation for Change, the department is committed to ensuring people have timely access to appropriate health care providers.

The Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority in partnership with the Stanton Territorial Health Authority and the department have integrated its community-based mental health services into one community mental health team that provides services locally and coordinates specialized services for the entire Northwest Territories. This is the first step in building a stronger mental health system from the ground up.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, one of the priorities of this Assembly is to improve the effectiveness and

efficiency of government operations. This restructuring is a good example of how we are supporting the sustainability of our system by focusing on administrative and program efficiencies to manage our costs and improve the delivery of mental health services.

It is critical that persons with mental health concerns receive the services they need at the appropriate time. Integration of services also provides seamless support for those with mental health issues in Yellowknife, leaving the psychiatric unit and returning to the community.

The new integrated mental health team, Mr. Speaker, is located in the former Gibson Medical Clinic site in Yellowknife. It includes a total of eight mental health counsellors, a psychiatric nurse, support from a psychiatrist, two adult service case managers, one receptionist/admin staff, one team leader for mental health integration and a manager of community mental health and addictions.

Mr. Speaker, Northwest Territories residents are well served with timely access to the services they most need. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON STANTON TERRITORIAL HOSPITAL DEFICIT

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to talk about the continued deficit at Stanton Hospital. Between the budget years of 1999 and 2000 to the budget year of 2009-2010, which is 11 budget cycles, Stanton has all but one fiscal year been in deficit. That is one year that they did not have a single deficit, Mr. Speaker. It is hard to imagine 11 budget cycles. From what I can tell, it was the one budget year that the Stanton board fired itself, oddly enough.

For 11 years, what have they been doing over there? Adding up each unbudgeted deficit year after year, Stanton has accumulated, if you add those 11 cycled years together, a \$33.6 million deficit when you add them and stack them up.

So what is this telling me or what should it be telling the administrators of the hospital that certainly something is going wrong? Is the budget for Stanton Hospital appropriate? Are they budgeting well? What is happening with the administration over there?

The staff are taking a beating as we complain about this hospital, but the real people who should be getting the message are either the Minister's office or the administration of the hospital. Mr. Speaker,

just like the big banks in the U.S., thanks to Obama, Stanton has received a one-time bailout not that long ago. It was referred to as relief funding as they try to do it to brush away or hide under the carpet the deficit problem. It received a generous \$22.7 million from this government to hide, bury or cover up the deficit problem.

Mr. Speaker, the deputy minister of Health had stated in Committee of the Whole that, on February 7th, page 49 of the Hansard -- or perhaps maybe the Premier wants to finish my statement, Mr. Speaker, because he might have something to say about the deficit -- but she said that there has been a zero-based review on Stanton. Well, I am not sure what her definition is, but I looked it up from my definition and budgeting means starting from a blank sheet of paper, building up from the bottom so you know what is going on and knowing where it should be going. But, Mr. Speaker, it seemed when I asked about where was that detail, they watered it down, diminished it, started to hide the work, talked about how old it may be, rather than standing behind it proud of that work and trumpeting what they are doing, to save themselves from this continued embarrassment. They find more reasons to deny what is happening over there rather than trying to solve the problem.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions later today to ask about that so-called zero-based budgeting and how it actually really worked out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON V-DAY NORTH CAMPAIGN TO STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I spent this past week raising issues related to family violence. Today I wanted to speak about V-Day.

V-Day is a global movement in over 140 countries to stop violence against women and girls by promoting creative events to increase awareness and raise money. In 2010, volunteers from around the world produced over 5,400 interactive V-Day events educating millions of people about the reality of violence against women and girls.

Mr. Speaker, in 11 years the V-Day movement has raised over \$75 million worldwide and reached over 300 million people. V-Day North is the fourth V-Day North campaign. Every V-Day North benefit will donate 90 percent of its profits, split evenly amongst Alison McAteer House and the Centre for Northern Families. The remaining funds will go into the V-Day 2011 Women and Girls of Haiti Spotlight Campaign.

The Alison McAteer House provides a home for women and children who are experiencing violence. Women and children have access to counselling and other support mechanisms while there, and stays at this facility can last up to 6 weeks. The Centre for Northern Families provides an invaluable service as a temporary shelter for women in crisis, one-on-one counselling for clients and referrals to other helpful agencies in the community. The centre also runs a healthy baby club, a toddlers' club and a walk-in clinic once a week. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the staff and management of these facilities for all the great service that they provide to the residents here.

Mr. Speaker, events like V-Day are so very important to addressing incidents of family violence. Getting the message out there, educating people and overall awareness is paramount in curbing domestic violence in our Territory. The funds raised certainly will go to a great cause.

I'd like to encourage everyone to attend the planned fundraising events taking place over the next few weeks. I'd also like to thank the organizing committee and Ms. Nancy McNeil, the V-Day North coordinator, for providing the information to Members.

Mr. Speaker, I wish V-Day and V-Day North organizers all the best in their pursuit. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ULUKHAKTOK ARTS AND CRAFTS CENTRE

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A couple of weeks ago I had the honour of heading into the community of Ulukhaktok with the Minister to open up our new facility for arts and crafts with the Co-op. We provide the venue for traditional crafts and fabric and other sewing materials that are hard to get.

Currently the arts and crafts centre employs two people and plans to be expanding soon. The possible applicants eventually will work on the arts and crafts in the centre. They will require some training. These workshops are taking place now and start within a week; knitting qivuit right in the community of Ulukhaktok, which is really good to see; printmaking and carving, carvings being made right on site. Eventually the community hopes it will employ six printmakers, three knitters and hopefully 10 carvers, which is all good employment and I really want to commend the Minister of ITI for all the hard work he's put into this project.

The connections between arts and crafts and the Inuvialuit tradition are deeply connected. Traditional patterns and images on everything from cloth we wear, the sleds that we build, Mr. Speaker. When

the community has pride in arts and crafts that we create of our ancestry, these creations result in a prouder community. This arts and crafts centre will be critical in preserving and promoting skills in traditional arts and crafts. If we lose these skills in the community, we lose it forever. Mr. Speaker, that would be a big loss for the Territory.

Mr. Speaker, Ulukhaktok Arts and Crafts received funding from the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation under the Subsidy Companies Program to operate and manage costs. BDIC also provides accounting, marketing and operational support as the arts and crafts centre goes through the early stages. The arts centre will be governed by the directors selected for the community, by the community: Louie Nigiyok, Warren Wright and Pawan Chugh and Joseph Perry. Under the governance of these dedicated people -- and also Nellie Cournoyea, our CEO and chair of IRC, who was a big help in this program -- will provide employment to residents and exposure for the community...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Jacobson, your time for your Member's statement has expired.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. The Arts and Crafts Centre will be governed by dedicated people and the crafts centre will continue to provide employment for the residents' exposure, community pride in our arts and culture and preservation in traditional skills.

Again, I'd like to thank the Minister, Bob McLeod; MLA Hawkins; chair of IRC, Nellie Cournoyea; and the Co-op board, and all who have helped in this project. I know in the whole Territory, my carvers and printmakers are the best in the Territory.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MENTAL WELLNESS WEEK AND THE EFFECTS OF MENTAL ILLNESS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister of Health and Social Services has already delivered her Minister's statement, this is Mental Wellness Week. It is encouraging that so much more awareness today is being brought to this topic of mental wellness. When we see Olympic athletes like Clara Hughes in a media public service announcement talking about her struggle with depression, that was once considered something to be shrouded in secrecy can now be talked about openly.

As a young mother I suffered with postpartum depression and anxiety. Unless you have experienced depression, it's very difficult to understand. It's not something you can just snap out of. Although it's so frustrating for people who are around you and love you and support you to want to say snap out of it because they see you suffering, you cannot always just snap out of it by yourself.

When you're in the depths of depression, it's hard to think outside of it. When you're outside of it and moved beyond it, it's hard to imagine what it was like being in it. It is such a surreal illness.

When I was diagnosed I was referred to a specialist who, through our discussions, was able to determine that I had a genetic predisposition to anxiety and depression. I would not have known that until I hit a rough patch in my life, as I said, as a young mother. When I was a kid I didn't understand why my dad would sometimes disappear into the basement and just be gone, sitting in a chair down there, for an extended period of time. I was a kid. I didn't understand it. I didn't try to figure it out. But I was able to share with the doctor that I had observed this as a child and he said most definitely that he was probably suffering from the same thing that I was struggling with.

I've never shared this publicly, but my own sister three years ago struggled similarly with postpartum depression. It went on for many years with her. She committed suicide three years ago; actually, right during this budget session, and I had to go home.

It affects many, many of our friends. It affects many, many families, if not all. It is encouraging to me that through family support and by the grace of God, I was able to overcome it. People may look at me and think I have accomplished a lot in my life, but I want to tell you, I've been there. I've been in the depths of depression and anxiety and I was able to overcome it.

We all respond differently. I'm not a person that doesn't fight back. I don't suffer in silence. When I've got something biting me, most everybody around me is probably going to know about it. But not everybody has that personality. They need our support and our understanding and I appreciate the awareness today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
NAHANNI BUTTE AND CANADIAN ZINC
SIGNING IMPACT BENEFIT
AGREEMENT FOR PRAIRIE CREEK MINE

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Communities all across our North strive

towards self-reliance and self-sufficiency. I'm pleased to speak about Nahanni Butte today, the community in my riding that took a big step towards this.

Last month the community of Nahanni Butte and Canadian Zinc signed an impact benefit agreement for the development and operation of the Prairie Creek mine. There was a commitment for jobs, training and community contributions. This impact benefits agreement is an example of how First Nation communities and industry can work together to advance interest on both sides.

The agreement is thanks in part to the hard work and dedication of Chief Fred Tesou and former Chief Morris Vital, the Nahanni band council, and many community members of Nahanni Butte. Our people have a lot to bring to this project and I believe that both Canadian Zinc and community leadership have made a wise decision to work together for mutual benefit.

Like other leaders in my region, I hear every day about small communities that struggle with unemployment and lack of economic development opportunities. Canadian Zinc has already established an office in Fort Simpson and continues to advance the mine towards production, which is currently undergoing environmental assessment by the review board. The mine's lifespan is estimated to be about 20 years but the company has identified potential for many more years after that.

In operation, the mine will directly employ about 220 people and be an economic boon to the region. Now that the agreement is in place, it is up to the people to make the most of the opportunity it offers, especially our youth. Leadership needs to ensure continued communication and collaboration with Canadian Zinc to ensure that the impact benefits agreement, opportunities and benefits are delivered as intended.

Achieving the objectives of the IBA will need the support of the Government of the Northwest Territories in training and business development programs to help the community to take advantage of the employment and business opportunities from the project. I am pleased that Nahanni Butte and Canadian Zinc were willing to move ahead with this agreement and I look forward to the benefits that this mine project has to offer to Nahanni Butte and the Deh Cho region, and the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ENERGY ISSUES IN NORMAN WELLS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's official: the town of Norman Wells is losing its natural gas. I spoke about this topic earlier and I'm

going to speak to it again because it's a serious issue.

Norman Wells is facing an energy crisis. The Town met in January to form a natural gas committee and discuss options for alternative energy sources. So far the options available are: woodchips, wood, solar, hydro, wind, diesel and propane. The Town is hiring a consultant to help choose the best one.

Later this year all natural gas stoves in Norman Wells will be replaced with electrical models. Already there are concerns about the adequate power supply and the cost of converting to electricity. Restaurants are concerned that the electric stoves will be too expensive to operate. Dryers and other appliances will increase the load. Where is the Government of the Northwest Territories in helping the community meet this demand?

The Town has approached the government and NTPC to investigate the cost of converting to diesel. Earlier in the life of this Assembly the government spent a lot of money and time to reduce the cost of utilities in our small communities. We talk about how we need to get communities off diesel. Now we are proposing to put diesel into a community. This is a step backward that will come at an enormous cost not only to the residents of Norman Wells but to all taxpayers and to the natural environment.

The Northwest Territories Power Corporation mandate is to be responsible for electrical generation and distribution in the Northwest Territories, and that includes Norman Wells. We're facing some big challenges here. All commercial users will be off the system by June 30, 2013, and gas supplies will shut off to the residents as of June 30, 2014. We have a deadline. We can't count on the Mackenzie Gas Project to solve this problem. We need the Power Corporation to step up and work with the people of Norman Wells to find the solution.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
MENTAL WELLNESS WEEK AND
THE EFFECTS OF MENTAL ILLNESS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we've heard already, this is Mental Wellness Week and I want to speak on it as well.

It's no secret to any of us that in the NWT our communities and our residents struggle with the issue of mental health. We struggle for any number of reasons: the after-effects of residential school, drug and alcohol addictions, the aftermath of child apprehensions, family violence, stress from parenting, caring for elders or parents, and just from being a kid in today's world. As a government

we struggle to help our people be mentally well, especially our youth. Incidents of youth suicide are all too prevalent in the NWT.

The government says it recognizes the need and provides for programs and services in the area of mental health and addictions and, yes, we do provide supports to and in our communities. But it's not enough. The needs are many; the resources are few. We have far too many residents who are mentally ill but can't get the treatment they should. They are the homeless living on our streets or in our shelters. They commit offences and crimes and end up in our jails. What they really need is proper treatment but we don't have the programs, services and facilities to provide it for them.

Too often the critically mentally ill are admitted to hospital only to be released a few short hours later and released without any consideration for their after-care. Several non-government organizations here in Yellowknife assist in these situations as much as they can. They provide impromptu after-care but they do so without targeted funding to do it. Most of the time the client is released and left totally on their own and the result is that these clients do not get the medical assistance they need. They reoffend and end up right back in the hospital or jail. We have to stop this vicious cycle of repetition.

I'm pleased that Health and Social Services is currently reviewing the mental health and addictions programs and I was earlier pleased to hear the Minister announce the coordination of mental health services here in Yellowknife between the hospital and the primary care clinic. Both actions should give us positive results but more is required. This government currently spends just \$8 million of its \$344.5 million health and social services budget on mental health programs and services; that's 2.3 percent and it is inexcusable.

We lack permanent psychologists and psychiatrists. We lack facilities for addictions treatments and for day-to-day consults and appointments. We lack mental health workers.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. BISARO: We lack mental health workers. The larger communities don't have enough and some smaller communities have no workers at all. The list is seemingly endless.

The GNWT budget needs to place a greater priority -- and by that I mean money -- on mental programs and services for our residents. The benefits, both human and financial, that accrue are immeasurable.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ALCOHOL ADDICTION IN TU NEDHE

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to speak on a very important issue in Tu Nedhe. When I speak to addictions counsellors and local health officials, they advise me that the number one cause of health and social problems in small communities is excessive consumption of alcohol.

The Department of Health and Social Services must make the shift from treating people for the causes of heavy drinking to preventing them from drinking. Some of the people are drinking alcohol to a point where it's affecting their health, their family and their employment, and in some cases worse than that: drinking affects their entire life and in other cases there is even loss of life.

The communities need help and the Department of Health and Social Services should work with local governments and local stakeholders to provide that help. I feel that each community must have an overall community addictions strategy that places the resources and responsibilities at the community level. However, communities cannot do it alone. They need more resources, both financial and human, at their level. They need support from the Department of Health and Social Services to develop those strategies. Moving forward on a strategy with the communities to address this serious issue will have many long-term benefits for both communities and the entire GNWT as far as cost and wellness goes.

A big part of the reason our corrections system is filled with Aboriginal people is the overconsumption of alcohol. I think we all know how much it costs to house one inmate for one day. That is only one example not necessarily directly related to health.

As you can see, prevention work in this area will have long-term benefits for wellness for our communities and huge cost savings for our government, specifically the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Justice.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
MIDWIFERY SERVICES IN THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 24, 2008, I made a statement and asked some questions in this House on the value and importance of midwifery services in the Northwest

Territories. Since then, no additional support has been made available to these services in the Northwest Territories.

In 2008 there were three midwives practicing in the Northwest Territories: two in Fort Smith and one in Yellowknife, Ndilo and Dettah. Unfortunately, as predicted back in 2008, the workload for a sole midwife in Yellowknife was very exhausting. This has resulted in the incumbent having to go on an extended leave, which will hopefully allow her to revitalize and build up some reserves so she can return to this highly demanding position. Hopefully she will be able to and choose to return.

The Midwifery Profession Act proclaimed in 2005 provides for licensing, registration and regulation of registered midwives in the Northwest Territories. Midwives are health care professionals who provide low-risk women with the necessary support, care and advice during pregnancy, labour, delivery and after birth. Their care includes preventative measures, detection of complications in mother and child and accessing further medical assistance if there is a need.

The midwife has an important role as a health counsellor and educator, not only for the mother but also for her family and her community. Midwives may practice in any settings, such as in homes, clinics or hospitals. Women in midwives' care do not normally see a physician unless complications arise. That reduces the workload on GPs currently performing routine examinations on expectant mothers. Obstetricians and gynecologists are open to partnerships with midwives to make sure that mother and child receive quality care.

Mr. Speaker, midwifery is publicly funded in five jurisdictions, including the Northwest Territories. The province of Alberta has recently allowed insurance coverage to midwifery services. In Holland, England and New Zealand, midwives manage 70 percent or more of all births, compared to only 3 percent in Canada. There is a growing popularity for midwives here in the Northwest Territories and an increasing number of expectant mothers are being turned away due to limited funding for midwifery programs. We need to take a proactive approach and focus on long-term results.

I believe that midwives can, and do, provide a valuable service which will save the system money in the long run and increase positive results for pre- and postnatal mothers and families in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
MIDWIFERY SERVICES IN THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Later today I will be tabling the written portion of the petition calling for expansion of the Midwifery Program in Yellowknife and the extension of this programming throughout the Territories. Taken together with the Assembly's first ever on-line e-petition, of 304 signatures, a total of 377 persons -- 161 from Yellowknife and 176 from outside the capital -- are calling on the government for increased support to midwifery.

We recognize midwifery as a regulated profession through the creation of legislation in 2005. This action only formalized the ancestral tradition of home-assisted birth that has been the basis of child delivery as long as there have been children. Midwives have been honoured community caregivers in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal society. Demand for this service is in resurgence.

In the NWT Hospital Services 2006 Report, childbirth and pregnancy were reported as the top reasons for hospitalizations, at an estimated cost of \$4.4 million per year. The vast majority of hospitalizations were for labour, delivery and aftercare of mothers. Add to this the huge costs of travel, medical, ground transportation and complicated staff services.

As the letter of support for the petition from the NWT and Nunavut Public Health Association says, the GNWT now needs to prove its commitment to the continuation of midwifery services by providing sufficient resources. I fully support the actions called for by this petition. Here's another case where, based upon the community health and nursing centre delivery model, we have an opportunity to pursue improved care, respond to community wishes and needs, with a prospect of enormous cost savings.

I haven't seen any departmental analysis of the case for midwifery. This is bad business. It is basic practice when offered the prospect of an improved customer service model that a cost-benefit analysis is performed to nail down the facts. That's an important piece of staff business we could start today without the devotion of any new resources.

I will also be tabling a written question today, asking for basic information on the cost and volume of hospital and midwifery birthing. I urge the Minister to use this question to kick-start a thorough review of this opportunity. The faster we get this information, the faster we can stop paying operating costs and start putting money into good public health care jobs in the communities. Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister questions on how soon she can start. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge the two Pages from Fort Smith: Marcus Bourke and Ferron Beamish; and, of course, thank their mother, the chaperone, Ms. Melinda Bourke. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize two Pages from Yellowknife South: Stephanie Thibault and Monique Chapman. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 7, acknowledgements. Item 8, oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 426-16(5):

STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask my questions to the Minister of Education today. Over my time as MLA I get lots of inquiries over the Student Financial Assistance program. There's always been a call to increase it and I understand the department is reviewing it. I'd like to ask the Minister of Education exactly where we are with this process. Thank you.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. We are in the process of conducting an overall review of our SFA program. It's going to be happening this year and early next year. Mahsi.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: It's not only for those that travel to other communities, even though their needs are just as great, but even in their home communities, those rates, they feel it's still a little bit low. What is the scope of the review of the Student Financial Assistance program, Mr. Speaker? How encompassing is it? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, once the review has been undertaken, I guess this year, we want to look at all areas. I want to reach out to the students, to the parents, to the community

members. I want to hear their views, because those are the people who are impacted, those are the students who are impacted. We, as the department, would like to hear directly from them. Those are just some of the work that will be within the frame of the review, but I will be keeping the Members posted on it as we move forward. Mahsi.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I think the Minister is on the right track. He does have to get out to the communities, get to the colleges, get to the community education programs and speak to the students and parents. I believe that there should be a strong communication plan when that work begins, so I'd like to ask the Minister what kind of communication strategy will they have in place before they begin their consultations and review of the SFA. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, once we go through the process, definitely there will be a communication plan, a document that will be going out to the general public, the students, the communities, to the MLAs and the members-at-large. We're going to have a dialogue with the general public. This is an area that has always been of interest to the general public, so, definitely, those are some of the key initiatives that will be undertaken. There will be thorough communication dialogue with the general public. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Your final supplementary, Mr. Menicoché.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The single students, the single-family students, the couple's students with children all are waiting for this review. The most important question: will it be completed enough to impact students who are going to return to school this coming fall? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, this particular review, once it's undertaken this year, will take some time because, as I stated, I want to reach out to the students. We have students across Canada and we have students in the Northwest Territories -- the vast Northwest Territories -- so it will take some time. I can't guarantee that it's going to be by this fall, but definitely we will push for late this fall and start working towards next year's budget. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 427-16(5):
MIDWIFERY SERVICES IN THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Following up on my statement earlier today, I'd like

to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services about her plan for the expansion of midwifery services and extension throughout the Territory.

When we recognized midwifery as a regulated occupation in 2005, we laid the foundation for the establishment of this service throughout the NWT or in the NWT. Initial and important steps have been taken but they haven't kept up with demand. The Minister points out that midwifery practice is essential to the integrated service delivery model and that there are special requirements for meeting the Canadian standards of care. What is the Minister's vision for the future of midwifery service in the NWT, a vision that accommodates these challenges? Mahsi.

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

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Member for the question and I do look forward to receiving those petitions, which I am aware of.

Mr. Speaker, the department is engaged in doing a business plan analysis for expansion of the Midwifery Program across the Territories. The business case analysis would also include the more traditional midwives use that has been used in Nunavut, which is in line with what the Member spoke about, about bringing back the traditional knowledge. We need to look at the training options and obviously this is part of the Foundation for Change action plan. We are doing the analysis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Speaker, midwives have been a vital part of our families and cultures for thousands of years. Obviously we have moved away from that. Meeting the advanced accreditation licensing training requirements, as the Minister mentioned, will need to be part of an integrated plan, especially for extension of services to regional communities. Will the Minister commit to working with the Minister of ECE and consider, in any review, the opportunities for training, employment and cultural support that expanded midwifery offers? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, I will make sure that that is part of our review process. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the commitments of the Minister here. I would like to refer specifically to the Yellowknife situation where we are not meeting the Canadian standards for care, having only one midwife. Will that commitment be made to bump this situation up to what is required by our Canadian standards? Mahsi.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, the plan we are working on is a territorial-wide model. While we have a situation that we have in Yellowknife as the Member described, I also believe that greater benefits could even be had by having some midwifery assisting with delivery of babies in many of our communities where there are not permanent doctors or doctor services. It is one that we need to look at from a territorial-wide perspective and our business plan analysis is looking at that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, I appreciate the Minister's comments. Will the Minister commit to working with our public partners to mine the best ideas they have and contribute that to the analysis for improving this service? We have a number of partners out there that are experienced in this area. Mahsi.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, yes, we would obviously do that. I would commit to do that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

QUESTION 428-16(5):
MIDWIFERY SERVICES IN THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to just follow up on my colleague's questions just after the Minister of Health and Social Services. I would like to thank the Minister for her previous responses as well. To be sustainable, any Midwifery Program needs to have at least two midwives, otherwise the workload would be just too over-consuming. In order to determine the capacity in a business case, whether or not a Midwifery Program is feasible in a community, we need to understand the number of births or the number of pregnancies in a community. Has the department begun the process or have we in the past collected statistics on the number of pregnancies by community through the Northwest Territories?

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

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe we have data on birthing by communities. I will undertake to get that information for the Member. Thank you.

MR. ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, that information is incredibly important in building a business case. I look forward to seeing the information.

I am curious if the Minister can confirm for us whether or not that data is being utilized to help determine what is a reasonable number of births to justify a midwifery service in a community. If she does, can she tell me how many pregnancies in a community justify the business case scenario for midwives in a community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, the Member is making correlation of analysis on this data. I am not sure if it is a connection that experts who look at these things make, but I would be happy... I have no problem looking at what the Member is suggesting.

I could tell you that in Fort Smith, since we have had a Midwifery Program, there have been 200 births and about 54 percent of those births have been attended to by the midwives. Within the Territories, Fort Smith has the most comprehensive complement of midwives and even then we have about only 50 percent, or a little less than 50 percent births still happen at Stanton. Midwifery model is designed in a way that works and it has to work with the medical model. Thank you.

MR. ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, in 2005-06, when I sat on the Midwifery Implementation Committee for the Northwest Territories, they were talking about Fort Smith. What they determined -- and I would like the Minister to confirm these numbers for me -- but what I think they determined in order to justify a midwife in a community, they needed to have a community that had X number of pregnancies per year. I believe that number was about 45 or 50 pregnancies a year to justify midwifery services in a community. Can the Minister confirm that number for me and let me know whether that is the type of number that we are using to help determine a business case for midwifery services for other communities in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, that is going back awhile. I need to look at that, but I am not sure if the business plan that we are working on midwifery is looking at this issue in that way.

As I stated earlier to MLA Bromley, I think what I would like to see is to have midwifery services available especially for women in communities without the full complement of medical and health services that are available in Yellowknife. It is looking at less medical model, medical-based model, which is what we seem to be practicing in both Yellowknife and Smith, but using a more traditional midwifery model that could be made available in communities which would not be based on the formula that the Member is suggesting. This is something that I just need to make sure that everybody knows we are looking at the option of a territorial-wide model. We need to do a lot of work. Our timeline is 2011-12. We need to make the case

for resources. As the Minister of Health and Social Services, I would love to see midwifery programs expanding, with the focus on small communities. Thank you.

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

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think ultimately we both want the same things. I agree with what the Minister is saying. We need to have services available for people in communities because midwifery does not only provide birthing services, they also provide pre- and postnatal care. What I am concerned about is maximizing dollars. If we have a community that only has three or four pregnancies a year, it does not justify midwifery services. I want the Minister to provide me with some of the data on what justifies, what level of pregnancies justifies a business case which does involve money and it would be territorial money. What number justifies a business case for actually putting midwifery services which includes two midwives in certain communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, as we are all aware, we have 31 communities in the Northwest Territories. I think the communities like Inuvik or Fort Simpson, Hay River, Norman Wells, are good candidates for having midwifery services where mothers could be supported from surrounding communities. Obviously I don't think we could do it in the smallest of communities where there might be two or three births. I believe originally the Midwifery Program was targeted for Hay River. The community chose not to take that on and that position started in Yellowknife.

So this is an important issue and it needs a comprehensive look. It's a direction that we have to take for the future, but we are engaged in looking at a full-scope analysis. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

QUESTION 429-16(5):

FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to continue today asking some questions to the government about how it intends to address the incidents of family violence in our Territory. Mr. Speaker, I've been asking questions here all week and I was reading the CBC site this morning and it looks like we've got a new family violence treatment program coming along set to open, as the story indicates, next month. I've asked a number of questions this week and neither the Minister of Justice nor the Minister of Health and Social Services said anything about this new program. I'd like to ask the Minister of Justice what he knows

about this new program and when it's going to be started. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. When I outlined the programs that were being offered at corrections, I did mention various different programs that are available. Also, the Member is referring to the domestic violence, I believe. I'm just looking up the information here.

Mr. Speaker, this is a program that's going to be scheduled to be delivered as of March and we are looking forward to that. That's the Domestic Violence Treatment Option through court. So I did mention that when I was highlighting all my programs, all of the programs that are being offered to those individuals. It is an option for low-risk offenders who are willing to take on the responsibility for what they've done and participate in the treatment program. So that is the program that the Member is referring to. Mahsi.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you. I must have missed that, this new family violence treatment program that the Minister says he talked about. I'll have to go back and check Hansard. I don't believe I heard that. I also didn't hear the family violence court process like the Yukon has that is supposed to be implemented here in the Northwest Territories sometime down the road. That's something else I'd like to ask the Minister about, but perhaps while I can, I'm going to ask the Minister, he did mention some programming that is currently in place at the North Slave Correctional Centre, one that deals with emotions and anger and the other one that deals with family violence. Mr. Speaker, last year the program that deals with anger and emotions was offered one time, a six-week program offered one time in a year. The other program that deals with family violence was offered one time in a year.

Mr. Speaker, again, I'm going to ask the Justice Minister will he review the frequency, content and the quality of the programs being offered to people that are incarcerated in our correctional system? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. From time to time we do offer different programming at the North Slave Correctional Centre. In 2010, in October, we also offered the National Sex Offender Program. This is a federal program. Also, different programs are being offered at corrections. I have the list here. We have programs that are being delivered and I can definitely share that with the Members around the room. This is an area of interest for us, how we can rehabilitate those individuals back into the communities. The Member is asking for a review of what's out there. Again, we have done that review.

We can look at those programs that we have currently and the programs that we've delivered in the past and possibly bring back some of those programs that have been successful. Those are the areas I can look at. Mahsi.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you. My intent in all of this is to work with the Minister and work with the government in ensuring that we make sure that public safety is a priority here in our Territory.

Again, I want to take issue with the fact that we've got two programs that are running out there. The Anger and Emotions Program, a six-week course, and the family violence course. Both of those courses, Mr. Speaker, were offered once last year. That is not enough and it's little wonder people are ending up in our court system 16, 17 and 18 times. The system is failing, Mr. Speaker. Again, I'd like to ask the Minister if he'll review the frequency, the quality, the content, the full gamut of what programming and services are available out at North Slave Correctional Centre and the rest of the corrections system here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. I did already commit to the Member that I will have my department look at these programs that were offered. Those programs that the Member is referring to, if they've been successful in the past, definitely they can be brought back. I need to work with the Members on that and also with corrections. Those that are not on the list, we need to explore those areas as well. I know several Members have raised other programs in the past and those are programs that we're also looking at possibly delivering in the correctional institution as well. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Your final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Also in that news story it talks about the Family Violence Treatment Program being the first of two new programs that the government is going to bring forward to address domestic violence in our Territory. I'd like to ask the Minister when the work towards the establishment of these programs was brought to the Standing Committee on Social Programs and whether or not the government sought the input of the standing committee, Mr. Speaker, and where the money is in the '11-12 budget to accomplish these two new programs that apparently are coming along. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. The Member is asking for detailed information. I can definitely provide that to him. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

QUESTION 430-16(5):
ALCOHOL ADDICTION IN
SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I spoke of addictions in the small communities. I have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, does the Department of Health and Social Services have a strategy to address the issue of heavy alcohol consumption in the small communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have various components of the programs that we have for the issue that the Member is raising. We do provide assistance for residential programming, whether within the NWT, Nats'ejee K'eh, or outside of the NWT or some of the community programs. We have mental health and addictions workers. We've spent \$6 million and we have 62 people working in that area right up to more acute care right out of the hospital. So we have a vast spectrum of services that we provide on this issue. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you. The issue of addictions varies from community to community and what I think the Minister and the department need to do is to develop a specific community-by-community strategy to combat alcohol addictions, and need to consult. I'd like to ask the Minister if using money for those programs, start a process of consulting community governments and local stakeholders and actually develop a strategy for each community on a strategy on addictions and wellness. Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you. I don't have all of the information for all of the communities in the Territories in front of me, but for Lutselk'e we provide \$186,000 for Lutselk'e mental health and addictions. We also provide \$23,000 for Lutselk'e cultural programs; \$76,876 for Deninu K'ue First Nation to fund their addiction counsellor position in Fort Resolution, and in addition we provided \$23,000 to Deninu K'ue First Nation for youth addiction initiatives. That's just an example of the different programming funding that we provide to smaller communities.

I take the Member's point that maybe we should look at this and work with the community to see how it is working and if we can do something differently and get input from the community. I'd be happy to do that.

MR. BEAULIEU: To start with, can the Minister have her department facilitate, coordinate some community meetings with the end means of

developing some sort of community strategy on addictions and using some of the money she's indicated already to begin the process of developing? I think that the community will build some momentum towards addressing addiction issues.

HON. SANDY LEE: I would be happy to make the commitment to ask the staff to maybe start discussing with the Member's constituency; seeing as we have 30 communities and we can't start them all at once. I'd be happy to do that.

I do want to note that we are doing some work in the North, as I indicated earlier. We've been working with GTC and IRC and we are making some progress in that area. I am planning on making an announcement on that which is more community-based. We are doing that work but we have a vast Territory and we have very regional, different, unique characteristics. I agree with the Member that we need to be flexible in how we work with our communities and regions.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister consider shifting resources, both human and financial, in the area of addictions as opposed to residential treatment to community-based treatment in order to provide much needed support at the community level?

HON. SANDY LEE: Yes, I am willing to look at that. We need to be mindful of the fact, though, that addictions and mental health programming needs to have a spectrum of services and there is a place for residential and more acute care. We have been looking at some of the money we are spending on sending people down south to institutional settings and we have been refocusing our energy on seeing if we can use that resource better within the Territories. This is what we are doing in the North. So yes, I'd be happy to discuss that further with the Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

QUESTION 431-16(5):
ULUKHAKTOK ARTS CENTRE AND
ARTS AND CRAFTS IN NUNAKPUT

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my Member's statement was on the arts and crafts centre opening up in Ulukhaktok. It would be a huge loss if we lose any skills necessary to continue our traditional arts and crafts; therefore, will this government ensure the resources are in place for the community-based workshops to increase awareness of these areas?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are quite pleased to be invited to participate in the official opening of the Ulukhaktok Arts Centre. It's been about a 20-year hiatus since prints were produced in what is formerly Holman Island. The prints are world-class so we'll certainly work very closely with the community arts centre to make sure that we can promote as many workshops as we can so that the artisans and printmakers can expand their skills and learn some new, modern techniques.

MR. JACOBSON: The initiative such as the Subsidiary Company Program with the NWT BDIC is an excellent way to create jobs in the communities; development services promote traditional arts. Will this government look at providing similar assistance to other community-based businesses to service the export of products?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: In this 16th Assembly, this government, when we looked at one of our priorities of developing a diversified economy, what we decided early on was to promote development in every one of our 33 communities. Our focus was to get at least one development in every community. We are certainly trying to make sure that happens in every one of our 33 communities.

MR. JACOBSON: Really good job, Mr. Minister. But now the point I'm trying to bring up is Tuk needs one now. We need an arts centre in Tuk because between Tuk, Ulukhaktok and Sachs, Sachs has the muskox, Ulukhaktok has the print shop and carving shop, now will the Minister help me to work with a committee out of Tuk to get a carving shop in Tuk? We had it about 10 years ago but it failed. Now I think that the community is looking at trying to help out the younger generation of carvers. Will the Minister commit to helping me get a carving shop in the community of Tuktoyaktuk?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: When I look at the Member's riding of Nunakput I know that there are four communities there, and in Ulukhaktok we have the arts centre, and in Sachs Harbour we have the muskox subsidiary, and in Paulatuk we have Darnley Bay. In Tuk, in addition to having the largest reserves for oil and gas, we have a building there and we can work with the Member to develop a carving centre, if that's what the community wishes.

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

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Minister. I look forward to going home and telling all my carvers

that I'm going to have a carving centre opening up. No, he is right; I do have all the oil and gas in the Territories. We're open for business.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I have to remind Members that question period is for questions, not for statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 432-16(5):

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS REVIEW

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Health and Social Services. I talked in my statement about mental health and addictions programs and services in the NWT and about the needs that we have and that we don't have the resources to meet those needs.

I mentioned the mental health review that the Minister mentioned to us in the last couple of days. My first question to the Minister is if she could advise what the focus of this particular mental health and addictions review is.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The focus is to review how we are delivering our mental health services. Over the many months now, Members are talking about the need for more focus on communities. There are those who feel that we could do better with the \$6 million that we're spending through our mental health programming. More recently we've had lots of issues being raised about the more acute mental health services being delivered out of Stanton. We are looking with the experts and people involved to see how we can do better what we already do.

MS. BISARO: I'd like to thank the Minister for the response. I have to say that I noted in there that there was no reference to an increase in funding, which is very unfortunate. I talked in my Member's statement about the needs of the mentally ill when they are released from hospital particularly, or some other area. To me it's an area where our residents and patients are particularly vulnerable. I'd like to know if the review will look at the after-care needs of the patients once they are released and will it also look at the after-care needs in light of the service providers who try to assist patients at this time.

HON. SANDY LEE: That issue was raised and I spoke about that when MLA Bromley asked. I think we need to be... I understand what the Member is saying, but we should be aware of some of the clinical decisions that clinicians make. There is some legislation in place that has a bearing on when the people are being discharged. There are

limitations on how long we can keep some of these people in treatment places. There are Charter issues and Freedom of Rights issues as well. So it's not always just about money that our clinicians make their decisions based on their clinical expertise as well as their legislative obligations.

The purpose of this review is to come up with an action plan to ensure -- and I think that should please the Member -- that we are reviewing to see how current and how accessible and how well we are meeting the needs of people that we serve within the Mental Health Program as they are currently structured. I look forward to having some action plan out of that to improve the services we deliver.

MS. BISARO: I thank the Minister for, I guess, being very... She answered my next question before I asked it, but I didn't get an answer to the first one. I'd like to know from the Minister whether or not this review will look at the after-care needs of patients and look at the service providers who try to provide that after-care. I would also like to know relative to patients being released early, which is where the Minister went, is can we look at legislation and change our legislation to assist in that particular area of difficulty.

HON. SANDY LEE: I believe those two issues that the Member raises are part of the review and I hope to have the results by April-May and we can have further discussion on that. After-care is obviously a part of the needs of our community and when we are talking to the people that are delivering it, I'm sure that's being raised, as well as some of the legislation that might need to be changed.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to hear about the legislation being looked at, because to me that is the crux of the issue of why we release patients way too early. They're not ready to be released but they can't be held. Can the Minister advise if there are recommendations to change the legislation and when that might come forward?

HON. SANDY LEE: I think we're being a little ahead. I don't know what the action plan will say and what recommendations from the review will speak about. I am thinking, and I think that recommendations would include after-care and seamless transition of the people in mental health services and how we can fill some of the gaps. I'm hoping they'll identify the gaps and how we could fill some of the gaps. I'm hoping they'll identify the gaps and how our providers that are providing services already can do things differently. I expect those options to be available. I don't know if they're going to recommend legislative change, so I think

we should wait until the review comes out. I will be going to standing committee and we can work through them together.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 433-16(5):
ENERGY ISSUES IN NORMAN WELLS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Minister responsible for the Power Corporation. I understand the Power Corporation was scheduled to meet with the Town of Norman Wells on February the 1st to discuss the situation the community is facing. I want to ask the Minister if he can comment on the outcome of the meeting.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue of the natural gas situation in Norman Wells has been one we've been working on as the Government of the Northwest Territories in a number of fashions. The Power Corporation itself has recently had a meeting with the mayor and council of Norman Wells to discuss some of the work that's ongoing and concerns with outages and so on and the distribution of power. They've also engaged in the work that's going on for the conversion to either diesel or another form of energy in the community. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: I spoke to the mayor this morning and he was quite pleased with the meeting they had with NTPC. Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister if there has been any cost estimated on converting Norman Wells to diesel power.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The specific area there would be one that is more directed between the community itself and Esso, as Esso right now is the generator and the Power Corporation is the distributor of that energy. We are directly involved in that work going towards conversion and we'd have to look at alternatives, depending on what the community would decide. I would have to get more up to speed on that. I know that the Power Corporation, the CEO and the staff who were at the meeting are aware of the concerns and I'll look to them to see the work they're engaged in. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Has the government, within its other departments, within the Energy Coordinating Committee, looked at the whole issue of Norman Wells going through this conversion once the natural gas has been cut off to the town, in terms of the commercial and the residential units? Do they know or have an estimate as to what kind of dollars that possibly the Town of Norman Wells will be

seeking to help the community, both the commercial and residential users?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Again, I know from the Power Corporation side on the energy distribution and working with Imperial Oil, that that work is ongoing. From an overall Government of the Northwest Territories perspective, when this issue first came to our attention, a number of departments were pulled together to look at what needed to be done and the alternatives that could be looked at, and some of the initial work was to convert some of our larger buildings to diesel so that there would be less of a draw on the natural gas supply that was remaining, to allow a longer transition period. There hasn't been a commitment for dollars at this point. We've been, through the Department of Public Works and Services, for example, supplying technical support to the community to help go through the work that it's looking at doing. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Your final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister, in terms of the Power Corporation or the other departments that are working on this issue here, I know there could be some solutions. Have they been working with the Arctic Energy Alliance to look at different types of renewable energy sources in Norman Wells, or have they been looking at other sources, for example, maybe a natural gas line from Colville Lake to Norman Wells, in terms of alleviating some of the situations in Norman Wells?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm informed that the Town of Hay River, the council, has a working group between the Town, Imperial and, I believe, another firm, Global Technical Services, looking at their operations. We'd have to go to them to see what alternatives they may be looking at. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 434-16(5):
STANTON TERRITORIAL HOSPITAL DEFICIT

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services regarding the Stanton deficit, which harkens back to my Member's statement where I am significantly concerned that Stanton has missed 10 out of 11 budget years in the sense that they've found ways to create deficits without stopping them. Mr. Speaker, they need to be applauded for that one year that they let the board fire itself. It seemed they knew what was going on, because it showed that they weren't in deficit that year, but they

continue to accumulate with no one willing to stop it.

Mr. Speaker, during Stanton's zero-based review, as highlighted by the deputy minister, what inefficiencies were discovered, what did they do about it, and certainly, what did it cost? Thank you.

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

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I answer that question, I just wanted to comment that the Member mentioned something about that the administration is denying or somehow hiding the deficit. I want everybody to know that we do regular reporting of the deficit situation of the entire structure. Every three months Members get briefed regularly about the deficit situation, so nobody is denying anything about the deficit situation.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, while I believe it's important for us to have important discussions here, it is important for us not to be abusive towards the staff. Mr. Speaker, we have the A-Team at Stanton, with the CEO and the medical director and everybody who works really hard to keep one of the most important institutions, the territorial health care system, afloat. While I'm paid to take abuse, I would ask the Member to refrain from... I have to tell you, every time I go to FPT all of the Atlantic Ministers keep asking when are we going to send the CEO back to Atlantic Canada, because they want her back. We are lucky to have her.

Mr. Speaker, the administration is well aware of how much it costs to deliver the services they are delivering. Over the years, as the Member knows, we have put in cash infusions to clear the deficit. But we all understand, and the management understands, that that is not a way to go. We need to figure out what services we need to deliver at Stanton and what should not be, and how do we do things better so that we get to the cause of it before we put the, you know... So the focus is not getting to the black, but the focus is about knowing what Stanton should deliver and making sure that we do it well. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Well, Mr. Speaker, financially, it's like the government wants to run this ship to the ground. I mean, 10 out of 11 budget years a deficit and we're not even including the one that's just past, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with all this so-called review that they don't care about how much money they spend, what has the management learned and done? In other words, what management and financial controls have been put into place to ensure that we have that so-called zero-based budget review that was done, that it was not money out the window and a waste of

time? What are they doing to plug the leaks? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: There are no leaks in the hospital. The hospital is the only territorial acute care hospital in the Territory. They deliver services that have deficit inherently built into them, such as medical travel. One of the options we are looking at is to transfer out of that. The medical directors and the CEO are looking at finding efficiencies with the specialist delivery. We are understanding that the deficit at Stanton is not just a Stanton deficit. Stanton takes on a lot of work that is attributable to other authorities.

As I've said for the last four days in the budget review, Mr. Speaker, we are looking at it as a system. The deficit at Stanton and Beaufort-Delta are not Stanton and Beaufort-Delta deficits, it is a system deficit; and for us to address those deficit situations, we need to change the entire system. The Foundation for Change is doing that. We are looking at the physician model, we are reviewing the medical travel and we are reviewing the mental health and addictions service. We have also made item-by-item cases for some of the underfunded programming at Stanton. I am very proud of the hard work that the management and the CEO are doing. We need to make very well-considered, methodical and long-term view changes to the system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I have said many times that I believe Stanton is underfunded. I think a zero-based review would actually clear any air or question on that particular problem. The problem is everyone seems to know that there are problems but no one is doing anything about their problems. We hear about we have done a review. Now, we hear, out of the blue, a zero-based review is done through the years. We have no facts on the table where they have stopped the leakage. By the way, all it is is just an accumulation of protecting the process than it is about doing anything. Mr. Speaker, is Stanton or is the Minister's office approving or rewarding overspending and ineffective budgeting? That is what it looks like over the last 10 years. We are going into 11 years this year. Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, I have said on many occasions that we believe, yes, all of our authorities are not necessarily under right budget. We are working toward right budget for all of the authorities. You can't be looking at Stanton and Beau-Del separately, Mr. Speaker. The Member has said that we all know that Stanton is underfunded and if you do a zero-based review, you will know. I have to disagree with the Member on both accounts. We do not necessarily know. You can't just make a statement that Stanton is underfunded, and a zero-based review would only tell you how much money you are spending to do

things that you are doing the way you are doing it now.

We know exactly how much it costs to operate the programs and services we do at Stanton. What we are trying to do is we want to move programs around so that if there are things that could be done in other places, if things can be done more efficiently, we would like to do them outside of the hospital. We want to keep the hospital being the most acute care facility that it should be. We want to make sure that all of the doctors, nurses and everybody that works there are doing exactly what they should be doing and not anything more and that they get exactly the right budget. I have had new management there for a year and a half and we have been working really hard on that. We are making progress. This is not something that you could fix in one day just by saying, okay, they are underfunded, let's give them \$10 million and we don't want to know why. That is not the way I would like to manage the health care system. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The way this Minister and the previous governments have been managing the health system is supplementary appropriation. That is how they are managing the funding problem.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister seems to hearken quite clearly about you have to do zero-based budget review. She is the one who has a deputy minister who said they did this. So they should know on what positions cost and they should fund them properly. They should know what all of these items cost and fund them. That is the issue.

Mr. Speaker, how many unfunded positions are not accounted for? How many physician costs are we paying for the region that should be the regional costs, not Stanton's costs? That is the type of mismanagement. Allowing this to happen is allowing Stanton to have a reputation of mismanagement and this Minister is letting them be saddled by that, which could be cleaned up as job one. She has been here 12 years. There should be no surprise. It's not like it just showed up today. Thank you. She should be doing something about this particular issue.

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have a question, Mr. Hawkins?

MR. HAWKINS: She should be doing something, Mr. Speaker. What has she been doing?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 435-16(5):
ENERGY ISSUES IN NORMAN WELLS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister responsible for the Energy Coordinating Committee, in terms of the energy issue in Norman Wells, if the thought has ever come around to the Minister of looking at a possibility of running a line from Colville Lake to Norman Wells on a natural gas line just as a possibility. I know there are other assessments out there looking at energy or using some of these dollars to look at providing alternative energy to the communities. Is this a possibility that ever arose within the Minister or coordinating committee?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for the Energy Coordinating Committee, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Ministerial Energy Coordinating Committee has been working largely with new energy initiatives. We have been dealing with the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline through normal government procedures, normal government responsibilities, and through the Joint Review Panel process we have been, as a government, disposing alternative energy proposals ranging from hydro to gasification of communities. We have undertaken a number of reports or commissioned a number of reports to identify those communities along the right-of-way that would or could be converted to utilization of natural gas. Also, there was some review of biomass and the fact that there will be a significant amount of trees that would be made available because of being on the right-of-way of the pipeline. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I asked because there was a public meeting in Norman Wells on the 20th of January. The public was asking about this, how maybe this government could help us in terms of looking at alternative sources of energy. We want to have the gas talk and see if this government here has any type of discussion in terms of looking at an assessment as to running a line from Colville Lake to Norman Wells to help them alleviate some of the issues that they are facing now.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, as a government, we invested approximately \$60 million to review our reliance on fossil fuels. As part of that investment, we looked at alternative energy, renewable energy, and so we looked at all of those different aspects. Most of them have been on a pilot project basis.

As far as running a line from Norman Wells to Colville Lake, I think our preferred approach, if we were to do that, would be... I think Colville Lake is close to being on the right-of-way for the proposed pipeline, so I would have to go back and check the

reports as to whether it would be feasible to convert or gasify Colville Lake with using the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline natural gas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I think the Town of Norman Wells was very pleased that the Minister can look at the possibility. It is not saying we are going to go ahead with it, but the feasibility to see what it looks like, if you can convert or have a line from Colville Lake to Norman Wells. I know there are dollars being spent in other areas. I wonder if this one here can be looked at to help out with this issue here. There are no guarantees that this is going to be done.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my understanding is there was discussion earlier. There is a committee in Norman Wells looking at all of these different options. We will provide our information, whatever information we have through Public Works. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister, once he provides the information to Public Works, brief the Standing Committee on this issue and see what else can be done in terms of helping the town of Norman Wells in terms of this energy crisis?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we will be pleased to provide a briefing and we will make a request to committee to see if they can fit us in their busy agenda. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 9, written questions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 19-16(5): OBSTETRICAL AND MIDWIFERY CARE

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

1. What have been the total NWT costs and volumes by year for the 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10 fiscal years of obstetrical and midwifery services, including:
 - a. the average number and cost, including travel expenses and accommodation, of admission days during prenatal, birth and one year postpartum care for those mothers attended by midwives versus those not attended by midwives;
 - b. the average number and cost, including travel expenses and accommodation

outside home communities, of admission days during prenatal, birth and one year postpartum care for those mothers attended by midwives and who birth at home versus those not attended by midwives who birth in hospital?

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

WRITTEN QUESTION 20-16(5): BIRTHS IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES 2007-2011

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

1. Please provide the statistics outlining the number of births in the NWT over the last four fiscal years; i.e., 2010-11 to date, 2009-10, 2008-09, 2007-08.
2. Please provide a breakdown of the number of births, identifying the home communities of the mothers.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

WRITTEN QUESTION 21-16(5): LOCUM AND AGENCY NURSES EMPLOYED BY THE DEPARTMENT

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

1. How many locum and agency nurses are currently employed by the department and health authorities in the NWT?
 - What positions are they in?
 - What is the length of time each position has been occupied by locum or agency nurses?
2. By year, what is the hiring priority of new students entering the Northern Nursing Program for the past seven years?

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The Honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 3.

---Unanimous consent granted

Members' Statements (Reversion)

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RECOGNITION OF PAGES IN THE HOUSE

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been such a long time since I've done a Member's statement, I thought I'd recognize the two young ladies who have been Pages here down from my constituency of Inuvik Boot Lake. We have Pages Meagan Ross and Paisley Day. I have to thank Mr. Robert C. McLeod's constituency assistant who has travelled down as their chaperone and has been helping them as they help us do our job here in the House. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 9, written questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

Written Questions (Reversion)

WRITTEN QUESTION 22-16(5): STATISTICS ON ADMISSIONS AND GRADUATION RATES FOR THE AURORA COLLEGE NURSING PROGRAM FROM 1999 TO PRESENT

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

1. Could the Minister in cooperation with the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, please provide the complete statistics on admission and graduation rates for the Aurora College Nursing Program from 1999 to present?
2. Please identify the affirmative action status of these students and graduates by year.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Item 10, returns to written questions. Item 11, replies to opening address. Item 12, replies to budget address. Item 13, petitions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Petitions

PETITION 10-16(5): EXPANSION OF MIDWIFERY PROGRAM

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition dealing with the matter of expansion of the Midwifery Program. Mr. Speaker, the petition contains 33 handwritten signatures and 304 electronic signatures. Of those, 150 signatories

identified themselves as residents of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, the petitioners request that the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Health and Social Services fund additional full-time indeterminate positions for the Midwifery Program in Yellowknife and identify communities other than Yellowknife and Fort Smith to receive midwifery care by 2012. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 14, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 15, tabling of documents. Item 16, notices of motion. Item 17, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 18, motions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

Motions

MOTION 31-16(5): SETTING OF SITTING HOURS BY SPEAKER, CARRIED

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting days and hours as the Speaker, after consultation, deems fit to assist with the business before the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called.

---Carried

The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MOTION 32-16(5): EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE TO FEBRUARY 14, 2011, CARRIED

MS. BISARO: I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on Thursday, February 10, 2011, it shall be adjourned until Monday, February 14, 2011;

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to February 14, 2011, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

MR. SPEAKER: There is a motion on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called.

---Carried

The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MOTION 33-16(5):
SUPPORTING VETERINARY EDUCATION,
CARRIED

MR. BROMLEY: WHEREAS citizens of the NWT have identified the need for services of qualified veterinarians with northern knowledge and cultural awareness for the care of all domesticated animals;

AND WHEREAS the public service of the Northwest Territories requires the services of veterinarians for the administration of its wildlife management responsibilities;

AND WHEREAS public consultations on amendments to the Dog Act have further emphasized both the scarcity of and increasing need for veterinary service providers;

AND WHEREAS the University of Saskatchewan reserves one seat each year in its Western College of Veterinary Medicine for a candidate from the three territories, and offers sponsorship of the seat at a reduced rate compared to provinces, in recognition of the special need to promote graduation of northern veterinarians;

AND WHEREAS in the past, the Government of the Northwest Territories has budgeted funds to pay the cost of sponsoring a placement for an NWT student the Western College of Veterinary Medicine, but has discontinued this funding;

AND WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to promoting and supporting the advanced education of its long-time residents and to pursuing opportunities to expand the range and quality of professional services available to NWT communities and the public service;

AND WHEREAS opportunities to promote the advancement of NWT candidates in veterinary medicine should be pursued aggressively;

AND WHEREAS funding of \$25,000 per year in each of four programming years for a total of \$100,000 is required, but can readily be reallocated to other uses in years where candidates are not available for entry into the Veterinary Medicine Program;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Kam Lake, that this Legislative Assembly recommends that the

Department of Education, Culture and Employment reinstate the policy of sponsoring a placement in the University of Saskatchewan's Western College of Veterinary Medicine;

AND FURTHER, that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment fund that placement;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the reinstatement of this policy includes a requirement for return of service by the graduate practicing in the Northwest Territories or repaying funds expended on the sponsorship.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the mover of the motion, I will offer remarks on reinstating funds to ensure NWT students are considered for placements in the University of Saskatchewan's Veterinary Medicine Program.

As the motion points out, the University of Saskatchewan is offering a student from this Territory the opportunity to occupy one of the much sought after seats in its prestigious Veterinary Medicine Doctoral Program. Not only does the University of Saskatchewan make a seat available to a non-resident applicant, they offer this seat to the GNWT at a reduced rate, greatly reduced rate of sponsorship compared to other provinces. We used to budget funds for this purpose so we'd recognize the value of this action in the past.

For NWT students looking to become veterinarians, the University of Saskatchewan is the only game in Canada. No other province with a school of veterinary medicine will accept registrations from anyone who is not a resident of that province. To be accepted in other provinces' schools, our students would have to give up their territorial residency and their eligibility for NWT student financial assistance with it and become provincial residents to gain acceptance.

I will note that the University of Calgary has recently established a program. Alberta has taken residents of the NWT as residents of Alberta in the past. When I contacted the university, they said that only residents of Alberta could apply, but I've asked the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to seek further information and confirm that.

Members may also know the student development programs the U of S delivers in the NWT where veterinary students come to the Sahtu communities to practice their skills on a by-donation basis only. This gives tomorrow's vets exposure to a region where they might eventually decide to set up practice and it brings veterinary services our remote communities would not otherwise enjoy.

We also know that our current wildlife veterinarian is approaching retirement within the GNWT. We've seen from the recent crisis and concern with caribou populations and wildlife diseases associated with climate change, that we're going to need northern veterinary expertise more than ever.

We are just concluding a major committee review and public hearings for the modernization of the Dog Act. Again and again in those hearings we've heard we don't have enough veterinary services and the demand continues to grow.

What kind of money are we talking about here? As the motion says, sponsorship of a seat would cost us \$25,000 a year for four years. In years where we don't have a veterinary student at the U of S, these funds could be reallocated early in the fiscal year to other purposes. The motion includes provision for the student to pay back the cost of the sponsorship in addition to the repayment provisions already in the Student Financial Assistance program for graduates who don't return to the NWT to work.

By refusing to allocate funds to take advantage of the occasional opportunity to back an NWT student for an advanced degree at the only school in Canada accepting out-of-province applicants, we put our students in the position of having to renounce their territorial residency and compete for seats in other provinces. You can imagine how eager these students will be to return here to practise, with that vote of support from their own government.

Saskatchewan places a priority upon meeting the veterinary care needs of the Northwest Territories. We need to place the same or hopefully greater priority on NWT students that the University of Saskatchewan does. Creating high-income earners whose lifetime taxes would pay us back many times over on the initial investment in education seems like a wise investment.

I've been pursuing these arguments for more than a year now with the Minister of Education on behalf of a student looking for what would be the least support we can give. Lately I've received information that given this government's disinterest, the U of S may even be reconsidering the worth of offering preferred status to territorial students.

Having been unable to sway the Minister directly, I am asking Members of this House to vote their support for a simple low-cost step with no financial risk, great fiscal benefits, specifically answering our need for a vital service and fulfilling our stated objective to promote the advanced learning of our citizens.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Item 19, first reading of bills. Item 20, second reading of bills. Item 21, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project; Tabled Document 30-16(5), 2010 Review of Members' Compensation and Benefits; Tabled Document 38-16(5), Supplementary Health Benefits – What We Heard; Tabled Document 62-16(5), Northwest Territories Water Stewardship Strategy; Tabled Document 75-16(5), Response to the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project on the Federal and Territorial Governments' Interim Response to "Foundation for a Sustainable Northern Future"; Tabled Document 103-16(5), GNWT Contracts Over \$5,000 Report, Year Ending March 31, 2010; Tabled Document 133-16(5), NWT Main Estimates 2011-2012; Tabled Document 135-16(5), Response to the Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the Child and Family Services Act; Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act; Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act; Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act; Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Evidence Act; Minister's Statement 65-16(5), Devolution Agreement-in-Principle, Impact on Land Claims and Protection of Aboriginal Rights; Minister's Statement 88-16(5), Sessional Statement, with Mr. Abernethy in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, committee. I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. In front of us today are tabled documents 4, 30, 38, 62, 75, 103, 133, 135; Bills 4, 14, 17, 20; and Ministers' statements 65 and 88. What is the wish of committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that we report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): I will now rise and report progress

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. A motion is on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

---Carried

Item 23, third reading of bills. Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan): Orders of the day for Monday, February 14, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Replies to Budget Address
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
14. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
15. Tabling of Documents
16. Notices of Motion
17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
18. Motions
 - Motion 34-16(5), Small High School Staffing Funding Formula
19. First Reading of Bills
20. Second Reading of Bills
21. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project
 - Tabled Document 30-16(5), 2010 Review of Members' Compensation and Benefits
 - Tabled Document 38-16(5), Supplementary Health Benefits - What We Heard

- Tabled Document 62-16(5), Northern Voices, Northern Waters: NWT Water Stewardship Strategy
- Tabled Document 75-16(5), Response to the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project on the Federal and Territorial Governments' Interim Response to "Foundation for a Sustainable Northern Future"
- Tabled Document 103-16(5), GNWT Contracts over \$5,000 Report, Year Ending March 31, 2010
- Tabled Document 133-16(5), Northwest Territories Main Estimates, 2011-2012
- Tabled Document 135-16(5), GNWT Response to CR 3-16(5): Report on the Review of the Child and Family Services Act
- Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act
- Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act
- Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act
- Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Evidence Act
- Minister's Statement 65-16(5), Devolution Agreement-in-Principle, Impact on Land Claims and Protection of Aboriginal Rights
- Minister's Statement 88-16(5), Sessional Statement

22. Report of Committee of the Whole

23. Third Reading of Bills

24. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Monday, February 14, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 3:28 p.m.