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The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Great Slave)

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(Tu Nedhe)

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Mr. Michael Nadli

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, October 22, 2014****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Hon. Tom Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Blake, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Dolynny, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Hon. Jackie Jacobson, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Moses, Mr. Nadli, Hon. David Ramsay, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:32 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Good afternoon, colleagues. Before we begin today, I'd like to take this opportunity to extend the condolences of this Legislative Assembly, our Members and our staff, to the families of all those affected by the ongoing and tragic events in our nation's capital earlier today. Our thoughts and prayers are with you during this difficult time.

Colleagues, I want to draw your attention to the presence at the Table today of the Honourary Clerk of the House, former Speaker, Minister, Commissioner, Sergeant-at-Arms and Honourary Captain, Anthony W.J. Whitford.

---Applause

Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

Ministers' Statements**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 100-17(5):
ROAD SAFETY**

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, the safety of Northerners is a goal shared by Members of this Assembly and the Department of Transportation as we strive to build safe communities and a safe transportation system, in all modes, for the benefit of our residents.

Mr. Speaker, Parachute Canada is a national organization dedicated to preventing injuries and saving lives. Parachute has declared this week to be National Teen Driver Safety Week. Although young people only make up 13 percent of licenced drivers nationally, they account for 24 percent of road fatalities. Additionally, 40 percent of speeding drivers in fatal crashes are between the ages of 16 and 24. These shocking statistics have to change.

Learning to drive and earning a driver's licence marks a key milestone in life, and new drivers across the Northwest Territories are benefiting from our graduated licensing program. New drivers are required to earn experience before receiving the privilege of a full driver's licence. Our objective is to

ensure new drivers have experience and comfort behind the wheel, making NWT highways safer.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators is the steward of the National Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims, which takes place on Wednesday, November 19, 2014. We must never forget the victims of motor vehicle accidents and to continue all efforts to make our highways, winter roads and community roads as safe as possible.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation has several road safety initiatives including the new Alcohol Ignition Interlock Program that prevents drivers from starting their vehicles if their blood alcohol level is above a pre-set limit. This keeps impaired drivers away from the wheel and leads to greater safety for all road users.

Highway transport officers work closely with the RCMP to patrol all of our highways to keep drivers safe. But changing behaviour takes time and persistence. I am pleased to see partnerships with community groups and industry that remind people that we can all do more to reduce injuries and fatalities on our highways.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to publicly acknowledge the ongoing efforts of SADD, Students Against Impaired and Distracted Driving. This student organization is an important partner in encouraging youth to make healthy choices that help to keep our highways safe. I offer my best wishes for success to SADD as they take part in events planned this month to encourage their peers to make positive choices.

Distracted driving is an issue the Department of Transportation takes seriously. In Canada, distracted driving contributes to more serious injuries than impaired driving and speeding. Research has shown that a texting driver is 23 times more likely to crash than a non-texting driver.

Since passing legislation in 2012 to discourage the use of hand-held electronic devices, 673 drivers have been convicted for using a hand-held electronic device while driving. We have also nearly tripled the fine for distracted driving from \$115 to \$322. The department will continue to impress on drivers that distracted driving is just as dangerous as impaired driving.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation holds public safety as a high priority. When it comes to road safety, the best tips are obvious: don't drink and drive; don't speed; don't text and drive; and always buckle up. We can all do our part to make our roads and trails safe. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Ramsay.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 101-17(5):
GNWT FIRST EVER CALL CYCLE –
OIL AND GAS

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, now that the Government of the Northwest Territories is responsible for administering the territory's onshore petroleum resources, we are looking ahead to effectively plan and manage the NWT's world-class oil and gas potential for the benefit of all residents.

To encourage future exploration and responsible development of oil and gas reserves in the territory, the Department of Industry, Tourism and investment is preparing for its first ever call cycle for oil and gas exploration rights.

Mr. Speaker, at this stage, the petroleum rights issuance process is moving forward with the call for nominations, which may then be followed by a call for bids. During the call for nominations phase, interested parties have four weeks to recommend parcels of land to the GNWT that should be made available for oil and gas exploration. Once the results of these submissions have been assessed, the government will decide which parcels will be made available to prospective bidders in a call for bids. The Petroleum Resources Act requires that the call for bids must remain open for a minimum of 120 days.

I want to emphasize that receiving a nomination for a particular parcel does not automatically mean that the GNWT will offer it up for future oil and gas exploration or a call for bids. Nominations are a first step in a broader call cycle process, which can take up to a year for the entire process to be completed, including the issuance of exploration licences. The process allows our government to manage the pace and scale of oil and gas development in our territory in a clear and consistent way that reflects northern priorities. At the same time, the certainty provided by clear processes helps promote the territory's competitive position and improves business and investor confidence.

Mr. Speaker, the GNWT is careful to consider the views of the public, stakeholders and Aboriginal governments in its decisions on oil and gas development. With the NWT's unique interests, ITI has engaged with Aboriginal governments and organizations that may be directly affected by new

exploration projects. During the month of September, officials from the GNWT met with representatives of the Tulita, Deline and K'asho Got'ine district land corporations, the Gwich'in Tribal Council and the Inuvialuit Game Council to seek their views on the issuance of petroleum exploration land in their respective areas. This is one of the more important and critical parts of preparing the call for nominations. The consultation and engagement process gave us a better understanding of what lands must not be opened up for development. We will continue to engage with Aboriginal governments and organizations in our decision-making, reflecting the crucial role they play in the future of the NWT.

In going through the consultation and community engagement and the call for nominations process, our government also learns more about the suitability of our lands for petroleum development and our level of attractiveness as a jurisdiction for industry investment that will help inform future plans and decisions.

The information gathered during the call cycle is also valuable as we proceed with the development of an NWT Oil and Gas Strategy, as recommended in the NWT Economic Opportunities Strategy. The Oil and Gas Strategy will serve as the blueprint for oil and gas development in the territory for the next 20 years and is a key component of this government's vision to build a strong and prosperous territory that provides opportunity to our regions.

Mr. Speaker, devolution was a major step for this government, one which could not have been completed without great effort and collaboration with our partners. The call cycle builds on these partnerships with a collaborative process that demonstrates this government's ability to move forward and foster a supportive environment for responsible, sustainable development. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FUEL PRICES IN THE NWT

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday in my Member's statement, I talked about the cost of living in the Northwest Territories. As we watch the news, we can see the price of crude oil has dropped 25 percent in the very last weeks and months. I would challenge the retailers of these petroleum products in the Northwest Territories, to ask them why the prices for our home

heating oil and our fuel at the pump has not gone down accordingly.

They used to say that it was inventory in their tanks and they only got it in every so often, so although the price of crude may change or the price per barrel of oil may change, that it was a long delay before we'd see the change in the price. But, Mr. Speaker, now we have the Deh Cho Bridge. They can bring the fuel in every day if they want to.

I would like to ask questions later on today about what our government is doing. At the beginning of the 17th Assembly, I posed a question to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, as the consumer affairs Minister, and asked him what our government was going to do to protect consumers of the Northwest Territories from unfair prices, price setting, prices that are not reflective of what world prices are. At that time the Minister committed to begin tracking within his department the correlation between the price of crude oil and the price that we were paying as consumers at the pump and at the truck when they deliver home heating oil to our homes. I would like to ask the Minister later today how he's doing with that correlation and that report. I'd like to see what it looks like.

I also raised, at that time, that in the Atlantic provinces of Canada, they actually have price regulation. I think these are things we have to think about. When we talk about the cost of living, the Government of the Northwest Territories has intervened to shield consumers of the cost of the anticipated increase in the cost of power with a \$20 million injection so that consumers wouldn't have to bear that. Yet we have a seemingly essential commodity like petroleum products which people can put any price they want on it with literally no restraint, no monitoring and no regulation by this government whatsoever.

As I said, later today I'm going to be asking the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, in his role as protector of consumer rights, what this government has thought of doing, because we are not seeing the decrease in the price that we are seeing on the news and this is a big issue. Winter is upon us. We need cheaper fuel. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
TARGETED INVESTMENT FOR
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our territory has experienced very limited economic growth in recent years and our maturing diamond mines have reached their end of life cycle. Coupled with the decline in mining, oil and gas exploration, we have seen the NWT decline in investment

spending in the last six years. In fact, since our peak of investment spending in 2007, we are down by 27 percent. As a result, our NWT gross domestic product, that is our GDP, has fallen to pre-2002 numbers.

Another way to look at this decline is to look at our mineral exploration, which has fallen from 6.8 percent of the total Canadian mining output in 2007 to a whopping low of 2.2 percent in 2011, and we are only slated to be at 3.3 percent of the Canadian total this year. In the end, it's abundantly clear, the NWT has been slower to recover than all three northern territories and we should ask ourselves why.

The public has been led to believe the new Mineral Development Strategy and a new Economic Development Strategy are expected to ensure sustainable growth and balanced benefits across the NWT, yet we are left to imagine on how this will happen. Strategies don't secure success, but targeting investing does. So I ask, even with yesterday's tabling of the Mineral Development Strategy Implementation Plan, where are these strategic and meaningful investments in the current budget. I can assure the residents of the NWT, there are very few.

The current budget reflects very little in new spending in support of ensuring our economic freedom, to promote NWT as a place of business, to create jobs and, of course, prosperity. In fact, the oversubscribed Mining Incentive Program, which was touted yesterday as being overwhelmingly popular, is in reality the only economic stimulus of sort this government has done for some time.

Ironically, Cabinet's claim of wanting to implement even more to achieve this Assembly's vision of a prosperous territory is plagued with a huge problem. The issue – and if you're not aware by now – is that we are riddled with debt, both short-term and long-term, with no light at the end of the tunnel.

Clearly, spending ourselves into a corner with an out-of-date fiscal and macroeconomic policy is in no way garnishing our vision of a prosperous economic territory. In fact, it's doing the exact opposite.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. DOLYNNY: Mr. Speaker, if mining is truly the pillar of the NWT economy and it represents the largest private sector contributor to the NWT economy, then let's stop the current piecemeal approach and let's stand together with measured, meaningful and strategic financial solutions to secure a more robust mineral-based future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
AVENS RENOVATION
AND EXPANSION PROJECT

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have an increasingly urgent need for seniors housing in the NWT. My community, Yellowknife, is blessed with a visionary, committed organization whose reason for being is care for seniors. I speak of Avens – A Community for Seniors.

Avens is unique in the NWT's health system as it is the only independent organization that runs a health care facility in the NWT. The Aven Campus has four facilities which house seniors across the continuum of care. Aven Manor, the oldest and the original Avens facility, will soon be declared unfit without a major retrofit.

To prepare for the retrofit or the upgrade, Avens engaged in more than 25 formal conversations with stakeholders, to gauge the needs of seniors across the NWT. Three messages were heard.

First, the needs of seniors have increased and Avens is integral to ensuring that infrastructure and programs exist to serve our seniors.

Second, investment into the existing infrastructure at the Aven Campus is important to keep employees and residents safe from harm.

Thirdly, they heard that Avens needs to ensure that their vision aligns with the current realities of our health care system.

More and more every day, Avens gets calls from NWT seniors and their families, asking about options for either affordable housing or extended professional care here in the North. Many of these calls are desperate, a family with an immediate and pressing need, but there are very few options available to our seniors. Avens is full and has no room for any more residents, whether they are local people or from other parts of the territory.

The results of several studies undertaken lately, and some by the GNWT, on seniors demographics and their continuing care needs shows numbers that are frightening. By 2026 the seniors population in the NWT will have doubled. In Yellowknife it will almost triple what it was in 2011.

The current infrastructure plan of the Health and Social Services department will not provide the needed facilities in any sort of reasonable time frame so that the increasing number of elders in the NWT can be properly accommodated. Health and Social Services and, by extension, the government, seems to be placing emphasis and our scarce dollars on an Aging in Place Strategy and not on the development of facilities to house seniors who can no longer live on their own.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. BISARO: I'm very concerned that the badly needed Avens expansion and renovations will not get the government support it needs to begin construction in earnest next year.

The government needs to find a way to support the Avens project. It's imperative that they assist them to find the necessary funding so that Avens can advance their vision for seniors and their expansion project. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CONSTITUENCY UPDATE
FROM THE DEH CHO

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

We had quite a summer in the Deh Cho. The record-breaking fire season had a significant impact on communities in my riding, as they did across the NWT, leading to smoky conditions and difficulties in travel.

Kakisa had a very close call when the fire came within 100 metres of some homes. Despite this scary experience, I'm happy to say that no structures were lost in or around Kakisa and residents began returning home from a weeklong evacuation on July 4th.

On behalf of all people in my riding, I want to thank everyone who assisted with the evacuation of Kakisa and a special thanks to the hardworking fire crews who put their own lives at risk to ensure minimal property damage and no loss of life in the 2014 fire season.

Fire renews the forest, and morel mushrooms are one of nature's bounties brought by fire. This is proving to be a big year for morels as a result of fires in the Fort Providence area in 2013. Next year's crop of morels should be even better.

Morels are highly prized to the food industry where they are known to fetch as much as \$240 US per pound, highlighting the need to regulate the harvest of mushrooms and other non-timber renewable resources to the benefit of the people of the NWT.

I also want to mention the Deh Cho's promising biomass industry that holds for the Deh Cho communities. My constituents will be excited to see progress be made to the advancement of projects in wood pellet manufacturing and similar initiatives.

On June 4, 2014, the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources signed an MOU on forest industry development with the Deh Gah Got'ie First Nation chief, Joachim Bonnetrouge, and the Fort

Providence Metis president, Clifford McLeod, paving the way for a forest management agreement to be signed this Friday in Fort Providence.

This is an important time of the year for those who live a traditional lifestyle, and many people in the Deh Cho are taking advantage of the mild autumn to take part in the fall hunting season that will sustain us through a long winter. It is a time for elders to pass on their knowledge to young people in their communities, and it is a time for families to harvest the country foods that will sustain them through a long winter.

I wish everyone a safe, sustainable and prosperous hunt. While the Deh Cho is a wonderful place to live and raise a family, its residents continue to be concerned with problems such as substance abuse, family violence and a lack of job opportunities.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Mahsi.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. NADLI: As I was saying, our residents continue to be concerned with problems such as substance abuse, family violence and the lack of job opportunities, especially for local youth and people who are not available to work in the mining sector. In the final year of the 17th Assembly, I strongly encourage community members, leadership and governments to work together to reach the goals of healthy, vibrant and sustainable communities in the Deh Cho. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REFLECTIONS ON TRAGIC EVENTS IN OTTAWA

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are so many important issues before us to talk about; however, I feel emotionally compelled to say a few words about the horrific tragedy in Ottawa today. Truly a very difficult day for all Canadians and our Armed Forces who, truly, we are all very proud of. I'm really saddened by the passing of the soldier who was honestly standing up for Canada. This attack wasn't just on him, it was an attack on all Canadians and I'm confident we will rise in his name again to stand strong.

Anyone I've talked to today, without question, has found this an incredibly emotional and disturbing issue. It's very hard for someone like myself not to feel emotional about those attacks. All of those folks attacked were innocent and they did not deserve anything like this.

To my knowledge, the attacker's motives are not known, and in many ways may never be understood. However, the families hurt by this will deserve answers, some of which may be difficult to

get. I am certainly sending my prayers to the family of the affected soldier who was standing there for us. He was on guard for Canada in front of our National War Memorial.

I call upon all Northerners to pause today to appreciate the dedication, the risks and the service our armed service personnel put forward each and every day in our nation and across the world for all of us.

I know this isn't over yet and our RCMP are doing their very best to catch all those involved, and I have every confidence in their service as well.

Thank you to Kevin Vickers – he's the Sergeant-at-Arms in Ottawa, a distinguished man in his own right – for taking down this horrible person in Parliament today. His actions probably could have saved many other lives, not just politicians but many staff who devote themselves to this country and the democracy we all fight so hard for.

This action of this terrible person has made me very angry. It's made me angry in a way of saying, why would someone do such a horrible thing to another person? This can only be described as a horrific act. I feel no other way to describe it. I feel awful. I can't believe he would do this.

I am grateful that I live in Canada, and I know many of us are as well. We have an amazing Armed Forces personnel, who each and every day I am grateful we have for all of us as Canadians. So, as they daily stand for us, whether it's in Yellowknife, in Hay River, whether it's in Ottawa, whether it's in Afghanistan, they are there for us. So now, more than ever, we need to make sure that we are all there for them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN IMPLEMENTATION

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're embarking on a big project this fall and it's the first phase of our Junior Kindergarten. Twenty-three communities will be taking it on, and as the Minister stated, it is optional to all those schools who want to do the Junior Kindergarten program. I understand the importance of this, getting our four-year-olds ready for kindergarten, getting them into the schools; however, there are still a lot of issues that have come to the forefront as we brought this program into the schools in 23 communities. We were not sure if the schools were ready, if the staff were ready, in fact, if the communities were ready.

Some of the issues that have been brought up: whether or not we have enough materials for the students, the Grade 4s; whether we have enough adequate space in the schools. Other things that have been brought to my attention are enrollments at daycares, enrollments at daycares like the

Children First Centre, where four-year-olds will now be able to go into the schools in the second phase of this program. Plus, the added extra duties put on our educators who, in some cases, might become sort of like a babysitter – changing diapers, taking kids to the washroom – when they didn't go to school for those things.

I see the importance of this in the small communities where there are no daycares, where we want to get our students ready for kindergarten. However, when we get into the regional centres and the city of Yellowknife, we do have a lot of daycares out here that do rely on the revenues for the four-year-olds that attend their facilities. The Aboriginal Head Start programs that rely on federal funding based on the amount of enrollments that they have in their programs.

Yesterday I made a comment about how this government donated funding to an infrastructure for children, the Children First Centre in Inuvik. This government is footing money, gave money to a building, only two years later to take kids out and put them into the high school. This is an organization that relies on the revenues from the students that are coming in there. Now we're taking out one of their ways that they make money and put them into a financial situation, putting financial stress not only on the Children First Centre but on all other daycares, all other facilities in the regional centres as well as those in Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions today for the Minister of Education on how he is consulting with these groups to ensure that when we go into phase two that we are ready to implement Junior Kindergarten and that we do support daycare and early childhood development. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CARIBOU CONSERVATION FAILURE

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our natural environment has been taking a beating lately. Unprecedented wildfires, debilitating drought, these changes in our climate have yielded increased costs of firefighting and electricity, lost homes and loss of income because of tourism impacts.

A particularly tragic loss is the additional blow to already severely depleted caribou populations from the extensive loss of their winter habitat. The collapse of one of our most valuable and culturally important resources, our once strong and life-sustaining Bathurst and Bluenose-East caribou herds, may be one of the greatest concerns to all people of the North.

Recent UN studies have shown that since 1970, worldwide wildlife populations have been reduced by half, half as many fish, half as many mammals, half as many birds. We see this trend in the NWT; in particular, we are losing two of our great caribou herds. For thousands of years these animals have sustained First Nations people of the NWT. If conservation efforts fail, the herds may soon be gone.

Mr. Speaker, it doesn't look good. When I see community hunts planned, despite chiefs knowing the desperate plight of these herds, I know we do not yet grasp the situation. When I read that communities are simply resigning themselves to wait until winter to hunt because they haven't seen any yet, I know that hope of recovery is dwindling. When I hear that cow caribou are being shot, any at all from these herds, I know that the children of today may very well not have the privilege of living in a time of caribou plenty as we have done. They may not get to practice their caribou culture as their First Nations parents have done until recently. We must act now to reverse these trends to avoid the horrifying reality of no more caribou.

Step number one is to stop shooting caribou. It may be all kinds of factors that caused the decline, but until we stop the killing of the remaining animals, the caribou will not recover. This is immensely sad and a tough reality, tough on elders whose very bones are made from caribou and cry out for them, tough on chiefs who must lead their people, a travesty for children meant to grow up with caribou abundance and all it means to people of cultures.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BROMLEY: I ask the Minister to call everyone to the table to find a solution to a loss that will now affect generations to come. First Nations, long-time Northerners, those who hunt for food and scientists all have important perspectives to offer and a stake in finding a path that will allow our caribou to bounce back and eventually thrive.

But first, stop shooting caribou from these decimated and declining herds. A world without caribou is too horrible to contemplate. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MONITORING WATER QUALITY

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I got up this morning at 5:30 to make my coffee, I was pouring the water and was wondering: how safe is this water here in Yellowknife? I thought about that after the coffee was percolating, I drank it and was thinking: how safe is our water in the Sahtu?

Hearing about the fracking issue with oil and gas, who is monitoring our water? I know we have a Sahtu Land and Water Board, we have a Sahtu Land Use Plan, we have a constitutionally protected treaty, called the Sahtu Dene and Metis Land Claim Agreement, we have provisions in there, we have people from the region, from our communities who are on these boards who make these decisions, we have scientists, we have traditional knowledge people about the water. Actually, the water, Mr. Speaker, is very powerful. Powerful, powerful. It is a living entity to our people. It is alive and it is so powerful that it heals itself.

But you know what, Mr. Speaker? A lot of people are saying, how come the water is so low this summer. There were areas that, when we went caribou hunting or moose hunting this fall, there were low waters. Even a good old jet boat couldn't go around some of the islands, and they only take about two inches of water, because I own one and have driven from Fort Simpson to Fort Good Hope with my son, and believe me, the Mackenzie River is powerful. God's creation is powerful. So I want to know about who's monitoring the water, who's looking after it.

In Great Bear Lake in the early days of the mining, there was 720,000 tonnes of hazardous material dumped into that lake. If you look at Imperial Oil's water licence for the next 10 years, they're taking billions of litres out of the Mackenzie River that will run through its plant system. They'll put billions of litres back into the Mackenzie and it will flow down to Good Hope and further down. Who's monitoring the quality?

I want to ask the Minister, at the appropriate time, because water is life, there's no doubt. Ask any of my people how precious it is. You can take a bath and you cook with it and you have your good, fresh coffee in the morning at 5:30. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON BISON MANAGEMENT PLAN

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Constituents of Fort Liard, Nahanni Butte and Lindberg Landing have had a summer of discontent with the Nahanni bison herd in that area. The bison have been ruining property, digging up gardens, ruining plants and trees and being a significant hazard to the residents. In fact, one resident was literally trapped in her car as a large single male rested against her car door, damaging it and also trapping her inside. She is elderly. Her family and friends fear that she may be injured if this happens again.

The Minister of Environment and Natural Resources committed to the development and implementation of a bison management plan in the spring of 2013. The strategy suggested two years to prepare a plan specifically for this Nahanni herd. In the short time, it states that the ENR will increase its efforts to keep bison out of the communities, including increasing public education materials. Residents are discontented that there appears to be little effort since then to help them.

Increasing the quota for harvesting is another measure that they were considering. I was advised by a resident of Fort Liard that to the south in northern BC, the Champaign and Aishihik First Nations had similar bison problems. Once again, harvesting the bison near and close to their communities, the bison are smart, and then they were shy to enter these communities and private property areas. So, Nahendeh residents would like the ENR department to seriously consider harvesting near their communities and private property areas, such as Lindburg Landing, for protection.

Nahendeh residents continue to expect more and continued action from the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources to help with this serious bison problem.

I will have questions for the Minister at the appropriate time. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TRADITIONAL HARVESTING VOYAGE ON THE PEEL RIVER

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak today about a boat trip that happened in Fort McPherson last month. On September 23rd a total of 12 homemade boats, which we call scows, and 38 people, young and old – the youngest being three years of age and the oldest in their late 70s – travelled from Fort McPherson up the Peel River some 75 miles. All boats were back home on Sunday, September 28th.

Our people have always been nomadic. We travel where food is, or we follow where the food is, depending on the season. This huge group of 38 people were successful in harvesting moose, catching fish and, at the same time, taught the youth how to butcher the meat and how to preserve the meat for future use.

This trip was made in order for the younger travellers to see the great country of ours and to visit historic sites along the way.

The Peel River has many legends and many historic points to visit along the way. For example, The Lost Patrol of 1911. One of our greatest leaders from the Gwich'in Nation, Chief Julius Salu,

travelled extensively in the area. He hunted, trapped and fished in the Peel River and the Peel River Watershed. This great man has significant ties with each family in the Fort McPherson area, his traditional territory. During this trip the elders told stories, and a trip can't be complete without laughter. Many jokes were told along the way.

The youth were engaged in the lessons from long ago. They were taught basic survival skills and they were there to assist the elders when they needed it.

Whether it be in the Mackenzie Delta or in any other riding, more of these trips need to take place. There is nothing that can compare to being out on the land away from the community. Peace and quiet and a place to collect your thoughts, but at the same time working from morning until night, setting up your camp, gathering wood, setting your nets, cooking meals, and the list goes on.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BLAKE: These trips and future trips up the Peel River will have a lasting effect on anyone who travels there for the first time and witnesses how beautiful our land is. Let's continue to support initiatives such as these and keep our culture alive.

I'd also like to thank all of the departments that contributed to this on-the-land program. Thank you, mahsi cho.

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

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize a number of people in the gallery today. First I'd like to recognize some second-year contemporary social welfare policy class from Aurora College and they are Phuong Bui, Alyssa Carpenter, Kyla Cherwaty, Noel Hernandez, Gerri Hunter, Alanna Menard, Lauren Moir, Stephanie Rabesca, Cassandra Spoelder, Jordon Moffitt and Rhea Kaye, and I apologize if I got any of those names wrong.

I'd also like to recognize a number of fourth-year nursing students. Allison Andrews, Alyssa Bird, Michael Bishop, Caro Cheiner, Jessica Harrison, Samantha Hicks, Simone Julien, Stephanie Kranci, Sabine Kruse, Caterina Marrai, Julie Purcell, Chelsea Thior, Marteen Silverson, Joanne Spencer, Sari Valensky and Ginny Wainwright. Once again, I apologize if I pronounced any of those names wrong.

Thank you and welcome to the gallery.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I made another statement on the students in the gallery today for Students Against Impaired and Distracted Driving. In the gallery today we have Colton Rieger-Steed, Mitchell Rankin, Ryan Kendall, Dylan Pye, Denika Anderson, Shania Tymchatyn. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize a constituent, a strong proponent for agriculture in the Northwest Territories and also the proponent for Polar Eggs, Mr. Kevin Wallington, and I also recognize Wendy Morgan, former Hay River resident and my adopted constituency assistant. I know she's Jane's, but she helps me out lots here too. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too wish to recognize the SADD group. I'll recognize them as a whole and I'll thank the Minister of Transportation for highlighting them in his Minister's statement today. They do great work.

I'd also like to recognize one of our distinguished Table Officers, and I'm sorry to say, my favourite Table Officer – sorry, to the present company – yes, it's you, Mr. Anthony W.J. Whitford. It's always great to see you. Although you're not my constituent, what I'd say is you're a constituent of every MLA in the North. We all truly dearly love you, sir. Good to see you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome the SADD group who were here earlier and left. I think the work that they do is much appreciated and it's extremely valuable.

I'd like to welcome all the students from Aurora College and particularly mention Ginny Wainwright, who is a resident constituent from Frame Lake; and Geraldine Hunter, who is the student representative on the Aurora College Board of Governors. So, welcome to all.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize a former resident of Inuvik, Ms. Alyssa Carpenter, whose family made a big contribution to the community of Inuvik before they moved and resided here in Yellowknife. I just want to wish her best of luck in her studies and welcome her to the House and welcome everybody here to today's proceedings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too want to recognize the Aurora College students. We had a meeting some months ago and it was very informative, and I'd like to say how much I appreciate listening to them.

I'd also like to recognize Kevin and Wendy, Mr. Bouchard's constituent and constituency assistant, in the gallery.

More importantly, I'd like to recognize the special guest we have sitting in front of us, Mr. Whitford. From time to time there are certain words that people tell you that continue to grow on you, and thank you, Tony, for those kind words that you gave me a long, long time ago.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too wanted to recognize the Students Against Impaired and Distracted Driving that were with us earlier today as well as all the students from Aurora College. It's great to see you here. Good luck with your studies.

I also wanted to recognize my constituency assistant, Ms. Morgan. I didn't realize she was moonlighting for my colleague Mr. Bouchard.

---Laughter

But I'm happy to see her here and I'm happy to share her services. I want to recognize the services that Ms. Morgan provides my office with. She does a great job, so thanks to Wendy.

I also wanted to recognize Mr. Kevin Wallington for helping bring agriculture where it is here in the Northwest Territories and for bringing Polar Eggs to the store shelves across the territory. Thank you very much. I know you are exporting them, too, so good luck and best wishes with everything. Thanks.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. I'd like to welcome Ms. Morgan, too, because she moonlights for me too. ... (inaudible)... Anyway, thank you for coming today, Wendy. Ms. Carpenter, I'd like to welcome you to the House. I watched her grow up as a kid in Inuvik, because her Dad and I grew up together and went to high school. It's always good to see you here and I'm real proud of you guys and all the nursing staff, social work, going into a field that we really need across our great territory. So, thank you.

Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd also like to recognize a member of the Weledeh community who we all know as Tony. I think he's been well-recognized in the House today. You know, it's great to hear all the words of renown for this gentleman. Welcome, Tony, to the House.

I'd also like to recognize SADD and the students and their supporters and the very important work that they do.

Finally, the incredible amount of time that Ms. Morgan contributes to Weledeh, and with the assistance and stuff that she does, it's also great.

---Laughter

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to also recognize a Hay River resident, Mr. Kevin Wallington, who is also a very dear family friend of ours. I would also like to recognize Wendy Morgan. We couldn't get her in here for her 60th birthday last Friday but we got her here today.

---Laughter

Oh, did I say 60? Sorry. Anyway, you will notice on her door it says, "Wendy Morgan, Constituency Assistant to Jane Groenewegen, Hay River South." Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Wendy, we are going to strike that from Hansard, your age.

---Laughter

I would like to welcome all the visitors here today in the public gallery. Thank you for taking an interest in our proceedings.

Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 419-17(5): AVENS RENOVATION AND EXPANSION PROJECT

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to follow up on my Member's statement and ask some questions of the Minister of Health and Social Services around the infrastructure needs for seniors in the NWT. I mentioned some statistics in my statement, and the numbers of seniors that will be increasing are really quite scary, particularly here in the city of Yellowknife where we can expect the number of seniors to triple in the next 10 or 15 years. Yet it seems to me that Health and Social Services is ignoring the results of their own studies and the recommendations from their own reports. We see very little indication that they are working on providing infrastructure for seniors housing.

I would like to first ask the Minister a bit of a background. The cornerstone of the Avens renovation and expansion project is Aven Manor and the renovations to Aven Manor, and they have been identified for quite some time. Soon Aven

Manor kitchen may be actually declared unfit for use.

So I would like to ask the Minister initially, where the renovations to this territorial facility, Aven Manor, are on the capital planning list for Health and Social Services. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister of Health, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have been working closely with Avens on their desire to increase their facility as well as improve the current facility. We have put together a committed team, a steering committee that consists of the Department of Health and Social Services employees as well as some proponents from Avens itself, and we have contributed \$25,000 to this initiative, to Avens, so that they can have their individual participate.

We are doing a number of things, exploring opportunities for funding and trying to come up with the most appropriate way to move forward with the construction of this new facility and the renovations to the current facility. It isn't yet on the capital plan. We are waiting for this particular work to be done and we are waiting for that group to submit a proposal to Cabinet and the Regular Members so that we can figure out how to move forward with this project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. I appreciate the work that the Minister is doing. I know that he supports the project as much as I do.

The Avens kitchen has long been known, and it has been evident, that it's deficient – it's been many years now – and it is in need of upgrading. If Avens does not get the funding that they require to renovate this facility and to do their expansion project, which is an integral part of it, it may be closed down by the very department which is actually responsible and funds the whole facility.

So if that comes to fruition, what will the Minister do to avert such a closure, a closure of the kitchen, and a closure which would then force shutdown of the whole Aven Manor facility? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We are aware of the desires of Avens to expand the kitchen and improve it. We are working closely with them to make sure that we can find a way to move forward collaboratively together. We will continue to do that. We are waiting for the report to come from this committee, this steering committee, on the whole plan for the Avens facility, and we look forward to seeing it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, in terms of funding, I know it certainly has been an issue for the board when they discuss this plan that they need to get a guarantee of use of their new facility in order to get the backing that

they need from the bank, and it's my understanding that the Avens board of governors, board of directors, can find mortgaging, can find funding for the facility, but they need to get a guarantee from the government that they will actually use the facility once it's built.

So I would like to ask the Minister, why is it that I haven't yet heard that the board of directors has gotten that assurance from our government that once we build a facility for seniors that we will guarantee that we will actually put people in there? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The funding to actually run the Avens for their O and M comes primarily from the Government of the Northwest Territories. We provide about \$3.6 million per year for O and M to run the Avens facility as well as about \$3.4 million for the Dementia Facility. If we move forward with the expansion together with Avens, we are also going to likely be on the hook for the additional \$3.6 million to run that facility. If this facility gets built, it's fair to assume that northern residents will be utilizing that facility.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think I heard an answer to the question there. We can assume that residents will be there, but in order for Avens to go to the bank, they need some kind of a guarantee from the government that, yes, we will actually put people in there and yes, we will provide the funding for operations and maintenance. I know that the Minister knows that the need is there and I don't yet understand why we can't get that done.

My last question, my usual question, has to do with timing, and the Minister says that he is looking at getting this renovation, this expansion into the capital plan. I had no indication of any kind of timeline. I know it takes a while, but I'd like to know from the Minister if we're talking about a year or if we're talking five or 10 years.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We are committed to working with Avens. We will continue to work with Avens. We're waiting for them to come forward in this collaborative team, this steering committee, to come forward with a plan and a suggestion on how we should move forward. We don't know that that's going to be full-on GNWT capital or whether there are going to be some other opportunities. We're exploring all of those opportunities at this time, and obviously, we'd like to see some partners come in on this.

At the same time, this report, this work that the committee is doing will come to us shortly. But the Member knows that we have an extensive capital process and the Member knows that there are a large number of projects on this capital list that are

on the line, schools, health centres, hospitals. All these things are in the works, so we need to fit that into the plan. I can't say where Avens will fit in the plan, but we do know that we need to increase the number of beds in the Northwest Territories for seniors, and we will do that in the fullness of time.

MR. SPEAKER: Order! Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mrs. Groenewegen.

QUESTION 420-17(5):

RISING COSTS OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today, I talked about the rising costs of petroleum products. Everything we do in the North, it seems like we rely on these products to drive our vehicles, industry depends on it, subsistence harvesting, we heat our homes with heating oil. Even in Hay River where we use propane, that's tied to the price of oil, that's how they set the price of propane.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs if his department has been doing any monitoring and research to look at the correlation between the prices on the world market and the prices that we are charged on a retail basis here in the Northwest Territories where we are a very captive market at the end of a long road.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was driving down the road today, I was passing a gas station, and I noticed the price on there was \$1.38.9, and I thought, well, geez, I'm sure the rest of the Northwest Territories would love to pay that even if it was reversed, \$1.89.3, because that's what a lot of people are paying in some of the higher Arctic communities or the community I represent.

But in 2013, October 2013, we tabled a report that we had commissioned comparing the prices in the Northwest Territories to the rest of the country. We had a lot of different prices across the country. Here in the capital, actually, the price is lower than some of the southern jurisdictions. That, I was quite surprised to find. The conclusion of the report was that we didn't feel that there was a need to regulate gasoline prices in the Northwest Territories.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: The world price for oil has gone down substantially in the last few months. It is the leading story often on the evening news as markets respond to this declining price.

What's the lag or delay time between when those prices appear and when we might actually see some relief in the prices that we pay at the truck and at the pump here in the Northwest Territories? How is that regulated?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: In a lot of the market communities, a lot of these are driven by what the actual owners of these gas stations pay for the product that they bring in. I'm sure if they bring product in at a lower price, then that price will also be reflected at the pump. I've seen it firsthand where our supplier got some gasoline a little cheaper and our prices actually had gone down by a few cents. My understanding is the prices here in the capital have been fairly level for the last 18 months.

---Interjection

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Four years. They've been fairly level for the last four years.

There's an opportunity for consumers out there if they feel that there's price fixing or price maintenance, there's an opportunity for them to contact Competition Canada, because they enforce the Competition Act and they would be able to do an investigation into the concerns of the consumers that call them.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: As the only government department that is involved in the protection of consumers through, I don't know if it's an agency or secretariat, consumer affairs in the Northwest Territories, does the Minister see his department having any role with respect to that federal Competition Act? Is that something that he, through his department, could be involved in on behalf of consumers in the Northwest Territories if those complaints were raised to him?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I'm sure the role we can play is if we were to get some complaints, I'm sure we can forward those on to the Competition Bureau of Canada, or we can put the information on the website that we've just developed where we've provided a bunch of information to people. We can make it known what their numbers are, if people have a concern. But again, we've had one complaint, I believe, in the last year.

Obviously, being consumer affairs and people expecting us to assist them when they have concerns is something that we should have a look at to see if we can forward their concerns to the Competition Bureau of Canada.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not here to launch any kind of attack on retailers of petroleum products, but I guess we're so attentive to these costs and the cost of living in the North that it's something that catches our attention and we think that we should also realize the benefits when the prices go down.

When the GNWT buys petroleum products and then redistributes them to the small communities where there is no private retailer involved, what's

the lag time? Like, how far ahead do they buy or fix those prices?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: That, I wouldn't be able to answer. I would have to consult with the Minister of Public Works, who is responsible for bringing fuel into the communities. I will have that conversation with the Minister and share the findings with the Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 421-17(5):
BISON MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to follow up on questions to the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources with regard to the Bison Management Strategy and, most particularly, the Nahanni bison herd that's causing grief to the residents of Fort Liard, Nahanni Butte and Lindberg Landing.

Has the draft Bison Management Strategy been completed?

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do apologize to the Member for the protracted process that that strategy has, and I will commit to him that we will have a final strategy for him before we come back for the winter session.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Certainly, it's a concern for the residents. One of the unique things that a resident had brought to my attention was that he had visited his neighbours down in BC, the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, and they have managed to curtail a lot of damages to private property by harvesting some of the bison there. Is that something that the department can consider?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: That is an option that we have used in other locales and we are definitely looking at that. We're looking at the possibility of finding somebody with a tag that would be prepared to harvest one of the animals that are nuisance animals or, failing that, we would look at doing such an emergency cull on our own. So we are actively looking at that.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much. I was wondering: would the Bison Management Strategy, once implemented, have, say, a 1-800 number that the residents can call specifically for this Nahanni bison herd? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. The intent would be to use the ENR staff that is available in the communities in the Member's riding to be contacted within the nearest specific community. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to the updated strategy as the Minister had committed. As well, if he can get that to the community leadership that's been affected as well. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. We will ensure that we continue to touch all the appropriate bases as we provide the finished management plan to the Member as promised.

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

QUESTION 422-17(5):
ACTION TO MITIGATE
DECLINING CARIBOU POPULATION

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for Minister Miltenberger of Environment and Natural Resources. I just gave a Member's statement speaking about a horror of a world without caribou. The sliding caribou populations are scary and worrying. Rather than slowing down, unfortunately, it's actually accelerating, echoing the loss of wildlife worldwide.

I'd like to start by asking the Minister what actions has he taken to reverse this trend, since the most recent counts pointed out the grave dangers posed to both the Bathurst and Bluenose-East herds. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First let me say that I appreciate the Member's statement and we share the concern of the Member. We have had to call back, or we called together all of the Aboriginal governments, scientific staff and our folks. We've had one meeting with the political leadership a few weeks back to look at the results from the Bathurst herd survey, which indicates the herd has continued to decline now into the range of 15,000 animals, down from a high in the mid '80s, 1986, from about 460,000 animals. As well, we look at the numbers of the Bluenose-East, which had declined in the area of 30,000 animals and we believe still dropping from about 160,000. So we've brought the political leadership together to convene in basically an emergency gathering to look at these dramatic, stark numbers.

Subsequent to that, we brought together all the technical people about a week ago to sit down and look at the information, go over the numbers and talk about options. There's another meeting next week, and then in early November the political leadership will gather with the intent of making appropriate and necessary decisions about what

we need to do to help protect and save the caribou, both the Bathurst herd and the Bluenose-East.

Currently, there is a tag limit of 300 animals in the Bathurst. In the Bluenose-East there's a voluntary limit of about 2,800 animals, which was singularly unsuccessful in terms of curbing a harvesting past that. So we're going to be looking at some very hard choices here in the next couple of weeks. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister. The Minister has indicated the severity of the drop of caribou and the obvious possibility of the loss of these herds. Yet he's also said it's still open, go out and shoot, you can shoot 300 here and 150 there and however many you want with the Bluenose-East. That's pretty unbelievable. I read in the paper, community hunts, they're out there trying to find these caribou and the only reason they're not shooting is because they can't find them. There is a major gap here. Obviously, we must support these populations to enable recovery, and it seems the one thing we can control is hunting.

Is the Minister prepared to ban the hunting of caribou in these devastated herds? At least stop killing and get together and make these decisions.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. Once again, I appreciate the Member's concern, and I can assure the Member that the intent here is by the very first part of November before the winter hunt really takes effect that we will have decisions made that will protect the caribou. There is a process for us to follow. This is a very complex area. We have the Yellowknives, we have the Northwest Territories Metis, we have Akaitcho, we have Tlicho, we have the Sahtu, we have the Inuvialuit as well as the territorial government and interest in the Northwest Territories Metis plus all the other southern and the Deh Cho, all that have an interest and have been harvesting this herd for many years.

So we have a need to follow a timely, compressed process, which we're doing. I can assure the Member that by the early part of November there will be the necessary decisions made to protect the herds, both the Bathurst and the Bluenose-East. It's clear with the Bathurst, with a tag limit of 300, that there's not many options left when it comes to harvesting.

We also have to deal with the fact that the Bathurst herd also extends up into Nunavut and the Nunavut government still allows commercial harvest, outfitters, which to us is unacceptable. We've been in correspondence and communication with them to make the necessary changes, to work with us and all the other Aboriginal governments and co-management boards to protect the herd. That's one of the other things we have to look at. We're going to look at predator control, we're going to look at a whole host of things, but clearly, hunting is one

area where there is the single largest impact. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. It seems that every question I ask these days, the answer is: It's a complex situation; we've got great intentions. If that was true, we wouldn't have the services deficits that we have, we wouldn't be in the fiscal situation we are, we wouldn't have the wildlife deficits that we have. Community hunts are still being contemplated as we speak and reported in the paper. Plans are being made for winter kills as soon as the ice is safe.

Given the drastic declines, what action has been taken to alert people of the horrible consequences of such activity?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: There's been extensive contact and involvement of the media in this issue. I've just laid out a very comprehensive plan that we've taken to involve all the communities and Aboriginal governments and the public government to sit down in a very timely, compressed way to make decisions and to come up with options for the leadership that's going to gather early in November. There will be decisions made early in November that will allow us to make the necessary decisions to protect the herds, the Bathurst and the Bluenose.

I would point out that the Member is very, very big on process and consultation, endless consultation sometimes, and now he wants me to just stand up and rule by fiat and dictate and decree. The necessary decisions will be made and they will be made in basically a couple of weeks actually. We'll have those decisions made.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's the other feedback I get all the time, is the best offence is a defence, or the best defence is an offence. That's the Minister's strategy now.

I'm not worried about being politically correct here. I'm worried about the caribou and the consequences of their disappearance to generations of First Nations and other resident families to whom the caribou are critically important.

The Minister and co-management boards have had several years to effect conservation. Instead, the caribou are going down the tubes. The Minister has the authority. We have invested the Minister with the authority. The nation has invested the Minister with the authority.

I understand stakeholders are meeting in November, as the Minister has mentioned. Obviously, all stakeholders should be at the table, all stakeholders.

Who has the Minister invited to participate in talks about emergency recovery actions to ensure that all

perspectives are there and considered? Yes, let's consult properly if we're going to do that. Mahsi.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I am very aware of my authorities as Environment Minister, and I have in fact used them in the not-too-distant past. The steps are being taken to deal with this issue. All the people of the Northwest Territories, all the governments of the Northwest Territories share a concern about the caribou and the need to make hard decisions, and it's time not to worry about anything else but who speaks for the caribou or who speaks for the continuation of the herds. That's going to be the people in this room; it's going to be the Aboriginal governments and the leaders when we gather to make those hard decisions.

Again, I want to assure the Member and this House and the people of the Northwest Territories, those decisions will be made. No matter how tough they are, they're nothing we've never dealt with before. The issue of bans has been talked about before, herd limits. We will make those necessary decisions.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 423-17(5):

AURORA COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is very fitting we actually have wonderful representatives of our college here today, and I'm very proud to see so many of them. So, it's great.

One of the issues that I'm going to raise, and I've continued to raise, it all boils down to one word: accountability. That's it. Nothing fancier than that, accountability.

I've asked the Minister of Education repeatedly about demanding that the Aurora College boards be, guess what, accountable. How so? Accountable by providing an e-mail address so our students can contact them and, at the same time, have a meeting with each of the three colleges, and to put all of that responsibility on the student rep, I think, is unfair.

I've asked this. I've demanded this. I've even written to the Aurora College president, trying to get some action on this. Sorry, chair that is.

So, at the end of the day, what has the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment done for accountability for those folks sitting in our gallery here today and every other college we support with great enthusiasm here? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I do believe it was Ms. Bisaro who highlighted a student representative that is with us.

When it comes to representing those students, whether it be social work, nursing and other business programming, we do have a student representative. It has been vacant for a bit there, but we did hire a student representative. Not only that but the Board of Governors are accountable to the students as well as to the population of the Northwest Territories. What has been shared with me in the House, I've also shared with the Board of Governors. They integrated that into their communication dialogue with the general public. So, being accountable, they are accountable to the GNWT. They are accountable to the general public as well. Mahsi.

MR. HAWKINS: By virtue of inaccessibility, they're accountable to no one. They're not even accountable to the Minister. May I use the wonderful occasion to educate the Minister responsible, it's Section 7 under the Aurora College Act, "The Minister may give direction to the Board respecting exercise of its powers and the performance its duties".

So, if it's dutiful and responsible and, guess what, that one word again, "accountable" to its students, it would be accessible to those students, every one of them up there. Frankly, putting all that on one person is baloney, and everybody here knows it.

So, would the Minister of Education finally do his job and direct the Aurora College Board of Governors to have an e-mail address and certainly hold some public meetings, because they are accountable to no one. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Through the Board of Governors and also the senior staff that we have, the president, the VPs, the councillors, the student support, all those mechanisms are in place and they do have e-mail addresses. The Board of Governors are there as well.

I work very closely with the Board of Governors, and I shared this very concern with them as well. They are developing a plan of action to deal with those matters. But the president of Aurora College and the VPs are always available. If there are concerns from the students, concerns from the general public or from the community, the regional perspective, they are there to represent that as well. Whenever there are issues or concerns brought to my attention, I immediately deal with it through the college venue, through the chair or the president in that matter. Mahsi.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, we continue to waste the public's time on this by the defence of the status quo by this particular Minister. Section 7.(2)(a) of the Aurora College Act says, "The Minister shall determine the policy respecting the operations, programs and priorities of Aurora College".

Mr. Speaker, stop sharing the darn concern; direct it – you have the authority, you have the power – and do it in front of everyone here today. That's it. You could do it today. It is time he actually showed some leadership and just tell the college, you have an e-mail and you are going to be accessible to the students, because I can tell you every darn hamlet council, city council, school board trustee, I mean, the list goes on, MLAs, even senators, for goodness sakes, in Ottawa are accessible by e-mail addresses and certainly phone numbers. There is zero of that on the Aurora College website. Today is the day to be accountable and certainly useful.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I did share all that information with the Board of Governors. Mahsi.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, followed by my favorite phrase: Who is in charge? According to the Aurora College Act, the Minister may give direction to the board. I am not going through it again. The Minister knows this because I told him repeatedly over the years; I have even told him a couple of times today.

---Interjection

MR. HAWKINS: Well, if you want the question, then answer it.

Will you today have the courage to call the Aurora College president and direct an e-mail be publically provided for every single one of those board of governors so they are truly accessible, not hidden in the fray and out of touch?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We are in a position of power in this House when it comes to Cabinet Ministers, and at the same time, I am not in a position to dictate to the various organizations. We are here to work with them, work with those organizations so they can best meet the needs of the communities and best meet the needs of the students as well. I am also committed in this House that I would share that information with the Board of Governors, and they are developing a plan of action towards that to deal with those matters. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

QUESTION 424-17(5):
RCMP WAIT TIMES

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this fall the NWT Native Women's Association raised the concern of unusually long wait times for RCMP to respond to calls in various communities. In events of this concern, it was suggested that this was more of a GNWT issue than RCMP. There is such a thing as emergency call logistics, contract

services and language barriers. My questions today are going to be for the Minister of Justice.

Currently, the RCMP emergency call system for all communities is dispatched through Yellowknife. This seems to be a frustration point for many.

Can the Minister indicate why is Yellowknife used as a hub for emergency dispatch? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister of Justice, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Operations and Communications Centre is located here in Yellowknife. It provides services to every community across the Northwest Territories. The centre currently has 21 employees, which includes four operators and one supervisor per 12-hour shift.

The OCC is able to make direct contact with at least one officer from each detachment across the Northwest Territories at all times. We have an operation that is centrally located. It's the most cost-effective and efficient way to operate a very specialized 24/7 policing operation. Calls from communities are taken, as I mentioned, 24/7 by OCC and dispatched on a priority basis. If there is an urgent call, an RCMP officer will be dispatched. Non-urgent calls will be taken, recorded and dispatched when the next member becomes available. Urgent and priority calls are dealt with in a triage manner. There are specific OCC operators who are assigned to each area, north, south and in Yellowknife.

Establishing an OCC in other communities would be cost prohibitive due to factors such as the cost of specialized equipment, salaries, expansion of infrastructure, housing for employees and yearly operating costs. Recruitment and retention of these specialized positions is often difficult in Yellowknife and major centres across the country. Staffing these positions in smaller communities would be much more difficult as the positions are very stressful, require specialized training and high security clearances. Having administrative support in all detachments 24/7 to answer all categories of complaints would come at a very significant cost to the government. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: With that thorough answer, some of my questions are going to be almost answered. I will try to rework some of them here.

Clearly, having some form of auxiliary dispatch in communities, if not regions, I believe could better deal with language and urgency. We have just heard from the Minister that cost seems to be a prohibitive issue, but can the Minister indicate why has the department not explored this or alternative solutions for an improvement in RCMP response and wait times?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: As I mentioned in my previous response, it is very difficult to recruit staff here in Yellowknife for those OCC positions because of the type of work, the specific skills required and the level of security clearance that's required. Again, recruiting staff in smaller communities and regional centres is going to be even more difficult.

Recruitment of community members for auxiliary dispatch program could face similar or greater obstacles due to the lack of capacity in most communities, and the lack of willingness to volunteer, and high stress, high demand and occupations for no pay.

In the past, RCMP "G" Division has advertised and held career presentations in order to recruit and hire NWT residents as regular members and OCC operators with NWT official language skills. To date, the interest on this from the public has been low.

Establishing an OCC in other communities or regions would range from \$1 million to \$2 million, depending on the site selected and whether the centre is constructed new or whether it's retrofitted. In addition, annual staffing and maintenance expenses would be estimated to cost well over \$1 million. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: Mr. Speaker, what we haven't heard is a common theme, and that theme is language, and this has been a concern in communities where they feel that the delays in wait time are the barrier of language.

Can the Minister indicate to the House, what has improved with communication in our nine official community languages with respect to breaking down such barriers? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: To accommodate the translation needs, the department has arranged for the RCMP "G" Division members to have access to language line services, or CanTalk. It's a 24-hour translation service for most languages, including many Aboriginal languages. In addition, OCC maintains a list of the languages spoken by "G" Division members and employees.

The RCMP "G" Division has on staff an Aboriginal person who is a recruiter specifically for the Northwest Territories. The role of the recruiter is to travel to communities and make RCMP career presentations to interested individuals. While there, there are many roles in the RCMP that are explained. The recruiter's focus in the NWT is on regular member officers and OCC operators.

I should mention that since April of 2014 there have been 17 recruiting sessions held across the Northwest Territories in a number of communities. Thank you.

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

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NWT Native Women's Association has challenged this Minister, has challenged his department with this call for action. Clearly, there is still concern regarding unusually long wait times with respect to RCMP calls to various communities. We have heard a very detailed forensic reply to a lot of the questions here today, but of course, there is still some concern.

What, if any, are the future steps of this government, and what is the Minister prepared to do to ensure that we can improve our response times for the public and safety of our community residents? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The Government of the Northwest Territories is currently working with key stakeholders and industry to identify viable options for implementation of a territory-wide 911 system. This work will inform future decisions concerning 911 implementation in the Northwest Territories, and a draft implementation plan, I believe, is coming forward to this House before December of this year.

Of course, this topic is nothing new to Members. It was studied by the City of Yellowknife in 2008. The intent is to build upon that examination and to consider how we can implement such a system on a territory-wide basis. The examination will take into consideration all options involving the necessary infrastructure, resources, equipment, governance, funding, start-up and maintenance of a 911 system. A 911 response system would be part of a broader system. It is very important that we continue our efforts to strengthen civil emergency preparedness, fire protection, ground ambulance and highway rescue here in the Northwest Territories.

I may also recommend to the Regular Members, if they're interested in a tour of the OCC and the operations facility, that we have at "G" Division here in Yellowknife. I would be more than happy to help arrange a tour of that facility for any Member that wants to take part in that tour and see the good work that the OCC puts in, in protecting our communities and our people.

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

QUESTION 425-17(5):

SAHTU WATER QUALITY AND MANAGEMENT

MR. YAKELEYA: In my Member's statement I talked about the water, and I want to ask the Minister about the water usage. The oil and gas sector has over 100 applications for water permits. We know Canada has tried to cut back on the monitoring.

Do we have the capacity to take over these positions and who are our front-line monitors? ENR has the responsibility. I wanted to ask the Minister in regard to these two questions.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do have the responsibility and the capacity. Coming out of the Water Strategy that took four years to do, there were two major issues. One was get the transboundary agreements done with Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and the Yukon, and the other one was to come up with some good water monitoring, community-based water monitoring so we could do the work at the community level, work with the communities, which we've done, incorporated traditional knowledge, which we have done, to set up a community-based water monitoring system that would allow us to take the best equipment we can have with local folks that have been trained to gather that data so that we can start assessing and doing that water monitoring at the community level.

Specifically, I point out that there are four sites at Norman Wells, two on the Mackenzie River upstream in Norman Wells and downstream in Norman Wells by Radar Island, and two additional sites on Bosworth Creek. In addition, there are two sites at Fort Good Hope, the Mackenzie River up the Ramparts, the Rabbit Skin River. There is also one site at the Sans Sault Rapids on the Mackenzie River, one site on the Carcajou River, near the mouth, five sites at and near Tulita, the Mackenzie River at Tulita, the Great Bear River at Tulita, McKay Creek near to the mouth, Slater River at the mouth, and Bog Creek at the mouth. There is other ongoing monitoring that is associated with the enforcement of water licences and the investigation of spill activities and incidents.

MR. YAKELEYA: That's an impressive list of monitoring for water quality in the Sahtu. The Minister rapidly fired off 13 sites in and around the communities that are looking forward to it.

I want to ask the Minister, in our land claims under Chapter 20 is the water rights and management of the Sahtu Land Claim Agreement. Section 21.8, I believe, talks about the quality and the quantity of altering our water in the settlement area.

I want to ask the Minister, are there increases to ongoing funding to know that this provision of the chapter will be honoured and respected and enforced if need be.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: There has been about \$4 million spent in the Sahtu since 2013 tied to baseline information, a lot of it tied to water in different areas, which is the information I'd be happy to share with the Member. We've taken over

the Taiga lab from the federal government as part of devolution. That's a \$600,000 operation, and they provide a lot of critical scientific support. We have all the work done by Dr. Erin Kelly and her water staff in terms of spearheading and maintaining this community-based water monitoring. There has been an increase from the territorial government in work we're doing not only in the Sahtu, but specifically to the Member's question, in the Sahtu, to make sure that we can provide assurances to all the constituents and all the people that live in the Sahtu that they have some of the best water in the world coming down the river and flowing into the Mackenzie. It is a big issue. It is a big issue and we're putting a lot of attention to this.

MR. YAKELEYA: With the government and with the contributions that have been happening in the Sahtu with regard to the funding and the specific sites, I want to ask the Minister, given that Imperial Oil's 10-year water application licence is going through, they are going to take out billions of litres of water, run it through their system, bring it back, pour billions more back into the Mackenzie River that will flow down towards Fort Good Hope and Tsiigehtchic and the other communities along the river system.

I want to ask the Minister, knowing this and knowing that 720,000 tonnes of hazardous material was dumped in Great Bear Lake when they had the mining operation, now we are talking about the new oil and gas exploration happening in the Sahtu with these hazardous waste materials or the hazardous waste materials that are on our lands, is there any type of discussion with this government here talking about a hazardous waste site in regard to monitoring just environmental hazardous sites such as the water and the land?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: There has been some activity in terms of working to acquire lease land near the community of Norman Wells to put in a waste treatment site in anticipation of the need that may come with oil and gas development. It is a very big issue. The idea of having a proper waste treatment facility would be a great asset to the Sahtu and to the Northwest Territories. Most jurisdictions now are not very receptive to having wastewater and other substances imported into their jurisdictions for treatment, so there have been some initial discussions. It's something I know that industry is interested in as well as is the government, ENR, ITI, Lands. It would all be seen as a next step in terms of being able to better manage the impacts of whatever oil and gas development is going to evolve in the Sahtu.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister inform the House and inform the

people in the Sahtu as to when will the baseline studies of the water use or the water monitoring in the Sahtu, because there are concerns about groundwater consequences of the technology of hydraulic fracking.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: There have been hundreds of thousands of dollars put into baseline work. We know that we need it on a regional basis, but clearly, we're looking at starting near where the proposed activity, or potentially, will be. There has been work ongoing over the last couple of years, and that work is slated to continue as we work to get that critical information not only on baseline for water, groundwater, surface water but also for wildlife.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

QUESTION 426-17(5):
JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN IMPLEMENTATION

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just going to follow up with some questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment on my Member's statement today. I'd just like to ask the Minister, seeing as it's our first year of the Junior Kindergarten program and next year we're going to be going into phase two where we're going to be taking the Junior Kindergarten program into some of the regional centres such as Inuvik, I'd like to ask the Minister has he consulted with the DEAs and the DEC's as well as other private daycare facilities and businesses on how this Junior Kindergarten program is going to affect especially the private daycares? Has he done that consulting and has he talked with them? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. On the second phase approach, when it comes to regional centres on the deliverance of Junior Kindergarten, there's going to be a lot of engagement that is happening right now. I've already presented to board chairs; district education councils and also DEAs are aware of that as well. They're in line for a second phase approach, also the daycare operators. The Children First Society is part of the process. We've invited the daycare operators, I believe the beginning of last month, to have a workshop, and it has been very successful to date, just to deal with the outcome of the JK. Not only that, as we move forward, having an engagement of these various organizations is very critical and we need to involve the community members, the community organizations as we roll out the program in the regions. Mahsi.

MR. MOSES: The workshops sound great to the daycares. Members, committees have heard about all the good work that would come out of Junior

Kindergarten. We heard all the statistics and research. What I'm trying to get at here is whether or not the daycares have expressed concern that when we incorporate Junior Kindergarten to the regional centres that there's going to be all the four-year-olds moving into the schools, which would result in lost revenue for the daycares. It's not only going to happen in Inuvik, it's going to happen in all the communities that have daycares. It's going to happen here in Yellowknife as well.

Has the Minister heard those concerns, and is the Minister willing to make it optional, as well, for the regional centres and the city of Yellowknife to implement Junior Kindergarten like he did in the first phase, making it optional? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. As I stated, there will be various forms of engagement with the organizations at the regional level. This is the second phase approach when it comes to delivery of Junior Kindergarten.

My understanding is that my staff will be meeting with the Children First Society and the community of Inuvik on the specifics of Junior Kindergarten program delivery, I believe, within the next couple of weeks. So there will be a full-blown discussion of any concerns, issues or ideas, suggestions that will be coming forward by operators and community members. Mahsi.

MR. MOSES: Thank you. A couple of years ago, this government contributed funding to the Children First Centre in Inuvik to early childhood development and to give these children a place to learn and to be educated. Then two years later we say we're taking all the four-year-olds out, possibly.

Would the Minister be looking at creating some type of provision within the Junior Kindergarten program where the funding that goes to the district education authorities be flowed through to the daycares and the daycares get the funding so they open up spots for people in the community with children who are four years old? Would he look at a provision in the Junior Kindergarten program for the funding to get flowed to the daycares? The businesses would stay open and kids would have a spot to go, rather than going to the school. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: As I stated, not only Inuvik but in Yellowknife, as well, there's been engagement with the daycare operators and we continue to provide funding, whether it be the daycare operators, the Aboriginal Head Start program. There's other early start programming that we will continue to offer. This week my staff will be in Inuvik and highlighting some of those areas of opportunities. Also, if there are concerns brought to our attention, then we need to follow up on those concerns. This will be a second phased approach. So we will re-evaluate our first approach of 23 communities, the pros and cons moving forward, what have we learned, so we don't reinvent the

cycle within the second and third year approach. Mahsi.

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

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the four-year-olds go into the school system and educators who went to school to be educators now take on an extra responsibility for these four-year-olds, has the Minister created some type of training program, looked at supports that are needed for these educators? Has he approached the kindergarten educators and given them the support they need, the training that they need and the materials that they need to ensure that this Junior Kindergarten program is successful, stuff that daycares have? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. Those are particular programs that will be in place. We have provided the training program for the teachers in the springtime and also late fall for those individuals that didn't partake in the training when we first initiated it in the 23 communities. When it comes to the second phase of the regional centres, most definitely. Those particular trainings will be delivered to those teachers that will be delivering JK in those communities. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

QUESTION 427-17(5):
BEAVER POPULATION MANAGEMENT
IN THE MACKENZIE DELTA

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of ENR. As you heard earlier, there are a lot of concerns about low water levels, especially up in the region of Beaufort-Delta, Mackenzie Delta, and a lot of this when we're travelling throughout the river system what we notice is there are a lot of beavers in the region, but the price on the pelts are so low that nobody is trying to trap them.

I was wondering if the Minister is open to putting a quota on the beaver in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We, of course, would be interested to talk to the Member more about his thoughts on that. We have co-management boards we'd want to talk to and other involved stakeholders. So, of course, we'd have to look at the financial implications, but we could talk further with the Member about it. Thank you.

MR. BLAKE: It's pretty clear that the population has skyrocketed, and I'd like to ask the Minister

what steps his department is doing to ensure the beaver population is controlled. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We deal with the beaver as we do with any other animal under our Trapping Program. There's a price that's there for fur, and people are encouraged and we support trapping and all the trapping initiatives to make sure that we do have folks that trap and that they pass those skills on to the children. We don't have a specific program specifically targeted at beaver. We do have some special attention paid to wolves, trying to encourage folks to harvest them and receive some benefit from that.

The Member made a comment about the populations skyrocketing. I'd have to check that with our staff, of course, and see in fact if that's the case and where.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

QUESTION 428-17(5):
TAX RATES FOR PETROLEUM PRODUCTS

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to follow up on my colleague's questions about gas. I guess one of the questions that I have to the Minister of Finance is the taxation side of gas.

What percentage of gas prices is the taxation on it?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have some of the lowest gas taxes in the country and we, as well, don't charge for non-motive fuel. Thank you.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you. I'm just wondering: is that percentage, or that amount, has it gone up over the last few years, or has it been maintaining? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The tax rate has not gone up. Consumption has tended to increase over time. So the taxes have gone up, but the tax rates haven't gone up since the '90s. Thank you.

MR. BOUCHARD: I'm looking to see if it's a flat rate or percentage, the amount that we charge, and have we considered changing that amount at all.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We haven't touched the price of fuel, motive or non-motive. We haven't touched those for years, as I've indicated. The concern is the impact on the cost of living where we already have the highest cost of living and highest cost of goods and services in many cases in the country.

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

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How much money do we collect each year in gas taxes?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I don't have that specific number, it would vary by year, but I will get that information for the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Time for question period has expired. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Mr. Ramsay.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 135-17(5):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND
INVESTMENT CORPORATION
2013-2014 ANNUAL REPORT

TABLED DOCUMENT 136-17(5):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND
INVESTMENT CORPORATION
2014-2015 CORPORATE PLAN

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table to following document, entitled "Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation '13-14 Annual Report" and "Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation '14-15 Corporate Plan." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 137-17(5):
2013-2014 60TH ANNUAL REPORT –
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LIQUOR LICENSING BOARD
AND LIQUOR ENFORCEMENT

TABLED DOCUMENT 138-17(5):
2013-2014 60TH ANNUAL REPORT –
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LIQUOR COMMISSION

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents, entitled "2013-2014 60th Annual Report, Northwest Territories Liquor Licensing Board and Liquor Enforcement" and "2013-2014 60th Annual Report, Northwest Territories Liquor Commission." Thank you.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 139-17(5):
DENE LEADERSHIP MEETING
OCTOBER 25-27, 2011,
MOTION NO. 11/12-008 -
HYDRAULIC FRACTURING IN DENENDEH

TABLED DOCUMENT 140-17(5):
GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL
31ST ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
AUGUST 19-21, 2014,
RESOLUTION NO. 006:2014 AGA –
ANTI-FRACKING

TABLED DOCUMENT 141-17(5):
THE SAHTU SECRETARIAT INCORPORATED
2014 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING,
RESOLUTION NO. 1 –
PROTECTION OF LANDS AND WATERS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table three instruments of the voice of the people. The first one is the Dene Leadership Meeting Motion No. 11/12-008 from their meeting on October 25-27, 2011, in Fort Smith. It's on hydraulic fracturing. It calls for a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing.

I'd also like to table Gwich'in Tribal Council 31st General Assembly Resolution No. 006:2014 AGA, entitled "Anti-Fracking," from August 19th to 21st of this year.

I'd also like to table, finally, the Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated 2014 Annual General Meeting Resolution No. 1 on fracking, which calls for a comprehensive review, study and consideration of the risks and benefits of hydraulic fracturing in the Sahtu Settlement Area. Mahsi.

TABLED DOCUMENT 142-17(5):
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
EQUAL PAY COMMISSIONER FOR THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES FOR THE PERIOD
JULY 1, 2013, TO JUNE 30, 2014

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Colleagues, pursuant to Section 40.23(2) of the Public Service Act, I wish to table the Annual Report of the Equal Pay Commissioner for the Northwest Territories for the period of July 1, 2013, to June 30, 2014. Thank you.

Item 15, notices of motion. Mr. Bromley.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 29-17(5):
EXTENDED CARE FACILITIES

MR. BROMLEY: I give notice that on Monday, October 27, 2014, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that the government develop a long-term action plan for the provision of

the necessary long-term care beds, indicating the steps they will take in the areas of resources, facilities and timing to meet this urgent need for facilities for seniors, including possible partnerships to serve those seniors who have some financial independence, in both large and small communities;

And further, that the government provide Avens Society with the assurance of support needed to enable construction of their proposed new 60-bed territorial facility and renovation of existing facilities to begin next spring;

And furthermore, that the government respond to this motion within 120 days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Education Act; Bill 27, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014; Bill 29, Human Tissue Donation Act; Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act; Bill 32, An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act; Committee Report 7-17(5), Report on the Development of the Economic Opportunities and Mineral Development Strategies; and Tabled Document 115-17(5), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates 2015-2016, with Mr. Dolynny in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We wish to continue consideration of Tabled Document 115-17(5), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates 2015-2016, with the Department of Health and Social Services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Okay. Committee, we'll resume after a short break.

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CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Welcome back, committee. I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. With that, we'll continue, as indicated by Ms. Bisaro, with Tabled Document 115-17(5), Capital Estimates 2015-2016. We are going to start our proceedings with Health and Social Services on page 31. With that, we'll turn it over to the Minister of Health and Social Services and ask if he has any witnesses. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I do, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort the witnesses into the House. Thank you.

Minister Abernethy, if you could introduce your witnesses to the House, please.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With me today on my right is Perry Heath, director of infrastructure planning; and Debbie DeLancey, our deputy minister.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. I will welcome our guests back in the Chamber today. With that, our convention was to forego any opening comments and go directly to general comments. I will call general comments on Health and Social Services. General comments. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm pleased to have the department before us today. They have quite a huge infrastructure budget. I want to make my comments specifically to the small communities I represent in the Sahtu.

I'm looking forward to the day when the infrastructure in the small community of Colville Lake will be improved, the renovations of the health centre. I know it took me awhile, with the help of the previous Health Minister, to have running washrooms in the facility in that community in the health centre. I had several Ministers in there before. They came, they saw and they left. They didn't quite get the essence of a good health care facility such as having running water, toilets and sinks. There was only a honey bucket in the corner. It has taken eight years to have this facility come to that stage.

I was looking at the Colville Lake Health Centre as an example as to the type of infrastructure assets we have in the small communities. I know that I spoke to the people who work in Colville Lake as I made my visit there, and they are quite concerned because the materials and supplies are stuffed everywhere. There is no real proper storage for that facility. I am looking under the infrastructure as to something that could happen in the future that this Minister would bring something forward to the House or have some plans to start looking in that area. It would mean a lot. This community does not have a full-time nurse in residence in that community. So I am hoping to see some improvements in the area of the health care in Colville Lake.

I do want to thank the Minister for some of the improvements that we have seen in Fort Good Hope in the improvement of the health centre

residence. We still do thank the department and staff for making those provisions. I was quite concerned as to the low water and the barge not getting there; however, I have been advised that that wasn't an issue and the work was already done and the supplies were already in Fort Good Hope, so I do want to thank you for that.

I am looking forward to the Health department here cutting the ribbon in Norman Wells for the new health centre and the long-term care facility. It's a good fight, a worthwhile fight to get that one on the books and get to the beginning of the construction. I understand the material will be hauled over the winter road to start the construction next summer with the contractors. At the same time, I am very happy to get a briefing from your colleague, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, on the training of the personnel, workers and essential staff people for that facility. Things seem to be moving slowly. Sometimes they want them at lightning speed, but sometimes it doesn't happen. I am quite happy that these things are moving in that community.

I do want to relate some concerns. I have talked to the Minister already and am slowly getting my research material together and I do want to talk about the Tulita health centre. It is really busting at the seams. We are getting additional staff, well-deserved staff that is in the community because of the programs that are needed and programs that the department has responded to by adding extra staff to fulfill the needs of the people. The additional staff has now moved into some of the rooms that were used for medical purposes because we do not have enough space in there and it's getting quite crowded. Especially if the eye doctor or the dentist makes their visits to the community, it gets really busy and it gets overcrowded, along with the regular health care clinic programs that are going on. I just want the Minister to know that I am looking forward to and am going to strongly support any type of movement beyond a peer review of the Tulita health care centre and actually see some construction or something on the books that would say they are actually going to start building a new health centre. That would sure help the community and help the nurses there. God bless their souls for working under these types of conditions in our small communities.

The storage facility in Tulita, it is unbelievable that we have gone this far, this long without having proper storage. There isn't a floor on the storage building; it's just gravel. They just put up the building and they didn't even build a floor for it, it's just mud, and there is some equipment and materials that are right there. There is not even a light; it's not even heated.

I took it upon myself, when I was in Tulita, to visit the health facilities and see the conditions the

nurses are working in, and they were quite surprised. I was really surprised when I got the tour and asked questions. I talked to the Minister already about this; the Minister is well aware. I am thankful the Minister is listening to me and I hope he can do something with that. The priority of my visit became shocking to me when I saw the residences we have our nurses in right now in Tulita. The Minister knows what I'm talking about. It's not the ideal condition to have our nurses in in our northern communities. They work hard and they are on call like we expect, but they are also under these conditions that we want them to provide the best quality care. They are doing their best, and I'd like to see that there is some priority being given to looking at their living conditions, and that's why I state about the new health care centre that is being planned right now. It is under peer review to be built in Tulita so that we can eliminate some of these issues for the nurse. Take the best care of them because they are under extreme working conditions and they are there for six weeks alone, depending on their contract and how things work out. I know the Minister was attentively listening to me when I spoke to him about these conditions, and hopefully he can do something very soon. Number one is on their living conditions; that's a priority. The Minister knows what I'm talking about.

The last point I want to make on the infrastructure is in Deline. I have asked the Minister and the previous other Ministers, and finally this Minister has come back, and we want to look at palliative care beds in Deline. We have been asking for a while, and the Minister has indicated that there has been an assessment going on. The Deline people, when I saw them last week, some people were happy that we are getting somewhere. I know the federal government, the federal Minister, is high on this. She made a statement that palliative care is something that she wants to look at. The people in Deline are also very happy that we are getting a bit of movement. It's slow but it's moving. We want to have the palliative care and bring our people back to our communities. In the Sahtu we have big families; it's not like in some of the other centres. The Sahtu, like any other... (inaudible)... has large families and they like to see their loved ones and be with them when they pass on to the other world.

Those are my comments, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the Member's comments. In this capital plan you will find a number of things we're doing. There are some upgrades to some flooring in Fort Good Hope; we are finishing the construction of Fort Providence; we are beginning the construction of a health centre in Fort Resolution; we are continuing and hopefully, well, we're intending to

complete the construction of the Hay River hospital. There are also some upgrades in some facilities like the Inuvik Hospital, the continued construction of the Norman Wells Health Centre, which includes a new long-term care facility with 18 new beds in the Northwest Territories, which is helping us address the shortages of beds throughout the Northwest Territories as a starting point. There is medical equipment to evergreen; we are doing some work around electronic medical records; and there is also the Stanton Renewal Project in here.

There are a number of other things that are priorities for the department that we are trying to address, and small health stations like the one in Colville Lake is certainly one of them. We have a number of health stations in the Northwest Territories where we are experiencing some frustrations with the buildings themselves and the ability to provide the services that we are expected and intending to provide. We are looking at ways of moving forward on some of those projects as well.

With respect to Tulita, Tulita is a facility that the Member and I have had a number of conversations about, the Tulita health centre. I am looking forward to seeing the documentation and pictures that the Member is pulling together and sending my way. We have completed a functional plan for the Tulita health centre, we know what we need, and the next step is to do the planning study, which we intend to complete in 2015. We're hoping, assuming that all things move forward according to plan and, according to the capital planning process, we hope that we can see the Tulita health centre in the '16-17 budget. That would be the earliest that we could actually move on that project.

With respect to palliative care, I have had a number of conversations with the Member and we are currently doing a bit of a study and exploring options. They don't all necessitate beds in communities but maybe programs and ways to support people to come back to the communities. Beds may be an option but it may not be the only option, so we're continuing to explore that to see how we can support residents who wish to return to the communities for some palliative care.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Continuing on with general comments, I have Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a couple of questions for the Minister. First off, starting with Tsiigehtchic, it's been quite some time since the health centre there was built. I would like to ask the Minister, when are the plans to have a new health centre built in Tsiigehtchic.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like just a touch of clarity. Health stations

and health centres are different things. Is the Member referring to the health station?

MR. BLAKE: Health centre, health station, same difference. It's the place where everyone goes for health care.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: It's my understanding that we actually have a health station in Tsiigehtchic as opposed to a health centre, which by definition is a slightly different thing, but I understand the Member's point. It's where people go to meet with the health professionals. The Tsiigehtchic health station is not currently in the five-year plan. There are a number of facilities throughout the Northwest Territories, health stations throughout the Northwest Territories where, actually, the buildings are in rough shape and it's impacting the ability to provide services at this point. I understand that the facility in Tsiigehtchic is of such a standard and condition that we can provide the care that we need to provide in that facility. But we will certainly monitor that building, and if the Member has any additional information he would like to share, I would certainly be happy to listen.

MR. BLAKE: Just so the Minister is aware, the sign at the health centre says, "Tsiigehtchic Health Centre," but that's just for the record.

Moving on, next, as you may know, a few years back the Joe Greenland Centre closed down in Aklavik and many of the elders really want to stay in their home communities, whether it's Aklavik, Fort McPherson or Tsiigehtchic.

As we move forward and talk decentralization, what are the plans the Minister has to build another long-term care facility in the smaller communities such as Fort McPherson or Aklavik?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: As we move forward with our...(inaudible)...communities what we're hoping to do is actually enhance services for individuals so that they could stay in their homes. I've travelled throughout the Northwest Territories and talked to people in almost every community, actually in every community, including Yellowknife, and what I've heard is people want to be able to stay in their homes, in their communities, in their regions for as long as they possibly can. Moving forward, that is part of our priority, but we also know, in time, individuals, even if they want to stay in their own homes, may eventually have to move out of their homes, and the first logical step would be moving into independent living. In cooperation with the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, who is taking the lead, the NWT Housing Corporation is building a number of independent living units throughout the Northwest Territories, and at the current time they're either already building or about to build five different seniors independent living units through them. Those are in Whati, Liard, Fort McPherson, Fort Good Hope as

well as I believe they're almost done the one in Aklavik.

The nice thing about these facilities that the NWT Housing Corporation is building is they are actually including a bit of a program room area where we can come to that facility with our home care workers and other professionals to provide some independent living like supports to those individuals so that we can keep them in their communities as long as possible. We do know that, unfortunately, even with that option, people may transition to the point where they are no longer able to live independently. We believe with home care supports and other supports we'll be able to support that independent living paradigm a little longer than we have been to date. Hopefully, we'll be able to delay that. But we do know that some people will hit a point where they can't stay in independent living, so then we're looking at long-term care facilities.

In the Northwest Territories our first goal is to get long-term care facilities in every region of the Northwest Territories. We do have a number of beds in the Inuvik hospital for long-term care. We are currently building the Norman Wells facility that's going to provide us with 18 beds, long-term care beds, beds that have never existed in the Sahtu region as that next step for the people in the Sahtu as well as people for the entire Northwest Territories. We have expanded the number of beds in the Tlicho by eight by expanding the facility in Behchoko, so those are long-term care. We do have a number of long-term care beds in Simpson to cover the Deh Cho. We have long-term care beds in Fort Smith, and we have long-term care beds in Hay River. We had a little bit of a blip there that we were concerned that we might lose 10 beds that are in Hay River, but through committee we've been able to get the funding to make sure that we actually maintain those 10 beds, keeping our total at 25 in Hay River.

In Yellowknife, the Government of the Northwest Territories has funded Avens to construct beds. Obviously, there's a lot of concern about the number of beds in Yellowknife and the need to do some upgrades there, and I'm committed to working with Avens to increase the number of beds available in Yellowknife. Four years ago we opened the Dementia Facility, which would be the last step, the last ability for us to provide services. It would be independent in homes, then if you have to, it would be independent living facilities with our support, then you might have to move to a regional centre for long-term care, and if you, unfortunately, proceed into a state of dementia or are suffering from dementia, your next and last step would be moving into the territorial facility here in Yellowknife, which is the Avens Dementia Facility which we opened four years ago here in Yellowknife and fully fund the operation of that facility.

There are a number of steps that an individual would go through and we're committed to looking at the number of long-term care beds in the Northwest Territories. We recently had a study done that suggested, rightfully, that the need for beds is going to increase. We believe we're going to start helping these people at the front end and hopefully delay their need to go to a long-term care bed where they have full supports, and hopefully, we'll be able to delay and help people not have to go into something like the Dementia Facility earlier in life. More supports at home, the longer we'll be able to help people to stay where they truly want to be, which is in their communities, in their homes, in their regions, and then, ultimately, Yellowknife, if need be.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Continuing on with general comments, I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Just a chance to address some of the capital issues regarding... Maybe I can begin in Fort Simpson. I think it was last year I remember the Fort Simpson health budget was actually on the capital plan. I had thought it was in the capital plan, but it certainly is a red flag now. I know that they've done the initial work. I think they've done a peer review of the project and now they're looking at doing an RFP for the planning study. I just want to get some details on that. I know that the community is anxious. There has been a lot of discussion in the community and the leadership with the village, the band and the Metis about the potential location of a new health centre, the type of health centre they're interested in, the building plans, what's in there and what it's going to accommodate. They're really interested in seeing that and they're waiting for engagement by the Department of Health to move this forward. It's a pretty significant replacement of their existing health centre. The existing health centre has been known for the past five years of having a crumbling foundation and it's a much needed replacement. I think that's why they listed it as a red flag.

As an MLA, you always get concerned when there are other projects in other areas, and you're wondering why theirs got done, and my health centre didn't get done in this case. But I'll use this opportunity to ask the Minister and the department about the importance of replacing the Fort Simpson Health Centre. It's our own technical report that said that it's almost in immediate need for replacement and yet there it is, we're still operating with it.

So those are some of the initial questions that I'd like to ask about the replacement of the Fort Simpson Health Centre. It's been red flagged publically. Maybe you could help me and tell the

public exactly what that means as we move to replace the facility in Fort Simpson.

As well, the health cabins in the smaller communities are in need of replacements. On behalf of Trout Lake, I've written to the Minister about the health cabin in the community of Trout Lake. It was infested with ants for the summer and bats were getting in there. It's not really a sanitary situation, especially when you're treating residents and even when the doctor comes in, that's the facility he has to use to meet and assess his patients there.

I did note that in the case of Jean Marie, because these are actually leased facilities, but in the case of Jean Marie they've got the same scenario. They've got an older building owned by the band and it's too much for them to replace. They've got limited capital and no room to replace old and build new. So the department did step up and say, okay, we're going to build a new health cabin in the community of Jean Marie. So that's something that the community of Trout Lake's immediate needs would be in terms of constructing a new health cabin for the community of Trout Lake.

So I'll just stop there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Fort Simpson Health Centre is on the books for something that we still need to do. We've done the functional review; we're still in the middle of doing the planning assessment. I've had a number of conversations with the Member as well as the community about this building and I'm committed to having some of our staff come into the community to meet and talk about their concerns, location being one of their concerns, but also the building itself.

We have some prototypical designs that were prepared in the 16th Assembly and shared with Members at the time, talking about the different types of facilities, and the facility in Simpson would be a B/C type facility. So there are certain programs and space requirements and technical requirements that must be in the building. Those are things that we ensure in the building.

So although there is a prototypical design, we do appreciate the opportunity to make some tweaks, some minor modifications to accommodate some of the community desires, needs and whatnot.

We are continuing to move forward. I would like Perry just to quickly talk a little bit about some of the results of the planning study and some of the additional assessment that was happening on that building and then we can come to me for a little bit more. So, if you don't mind, Mr. Chair, go to Perry.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Mr. Heath.

MR. HEATH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A few years ago, back in 2010-2011, there was a growing concern that the piles in the foundation in the Fort Simpson Health Centre was in a sad state of repair. We've since done a very close assessment on that and have determined that the piles and the foundation aren't as critical as we originally thought they were. We are proceeding to do the planning work in Fort Simpson and we're actually actively in conversation and communication with the Town of Fort Simpson to set up the meeting. We've just been trying to coordinate schedules to do that.

That being said, the Fort Simpson facility seems to be challenged from some electrical/mechanical issues, but nothing that's urgent. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Heath. We'll continue on with Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wanted to just mention, but to be clear, it doesn't mean that there isn't a project in Simpson with the electrical, mechanical and other issues and some more concerns around infection control and stuff like that and the fact that standards have increased so much since that building was originally built. We still believe that Simpson has to be a priority.

At the same time, the Member has brought up concerns about the health stations that exist, the health cabins/health stations. I'm going to refer to them as health stations. We have two that the Member has addressed. One is in Trout Lake and one is in Jean Marie River. The one in Jean Marie River is a government asset while the one in Trout Lake is not a government asset. It is a band lease. Unfortunately, the one in Trout Lake is the one with the significant ant and other problems. We feel that both of these facilities need to be addressed and we are moving forward. We've been out to assess them. We are having conversations in the communities trying to figure out what our next logical steps would be.

As far as build or addressing them, I would say that given the current state and our ability to provide safe, competent, quality care to those facilities is more hindered than it is at Simpson. I would say that these two facilities would have to be a higher priority moving forward than Simpson, but it doesn't mean that Simpson isn't still on the books. It's something that we're working towards. But in Trout Lake we need to make sure that we can provide care in a safe environment, and we're working with the community. Whether we move forward and try to find a new lease opportunity or whether it's something we have to bring in there still gets to be determined, and we are doing that work now. I will certainly keep the Member and the community informed as we move forward and try to figure out what the best course of action will be.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much. I think they have indicated that the foundation was reassessed. That's contrary to the document that I have. So, maybe the Minister can commit to sharing with me the engineering reassessment, because it's also the HVAC, or the heating ventilation, air conditioning system, too, that had some serious concerns. Still, meeting with the community is certainly a priority and I urge the department to continue to do that, meet with the Village of Fort Simpson, the mayor and the chief, as well, and the Metis Council.

Just for clarity for the request for proposal for the planning study, I think the Public Works Minister says it will be issued here shortly. So, when would the actual planning study get underway then? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm absolutely happy to share that report on the pilings. Yes, we know that there are some other challenges with the facility for it to continue as a health centre, which is why the health centre is still in the planning process. We are, I believe, currently doing the planning study and it will take several more months to complete, but I believe that's happening in this fiscal year. So we'll be able to come forward with more information on that as that planning study moves towards completion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Continuing on with general comments, I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a few general comments and I feel the need to pretty much repeat the comments that I made yesterday when we were considering the Housing Corporation's budget. It follows up on my statement and my questions to the Minister earlier today, and that's my concern for seniors' housing.

The Minister has advised that yes they are, they recognize that the numbers of seniors are going to increase, that they are using an Aging in Place Strategy, but he has yet to recognize, in my view, that we have seniors right now who need supported living and there is no space for them. We're building facilities, I appreciate that, but we don't have space right now and even with the facilities, once they're completed, we will still have, particularly in Yellowknife, no space for seniors who need supported living and/or who need extended care.

The issue of the expansion and the renovation project at Avens is a really big issue for me. I appreciate that the department is working on it, but again, I think that there must be something more

that the department can do to get this project moving forward.

Again, I appreciate that they're waiting for this working group, but when I look at the projects that are in this budget, there are several projects which are going to be completed in '15-16 and I think one or two that might be completed in '16-17, but there is nothing in this budget which is a new project, whether it's for seniors or otherwise. There are no projects which are going to be started in either '15-16 or, I think, in '16-17. We're not starting any new major projects. There's some small stuff but there is nothing new, and it tells me that the department hasn't yet recognized or they can't get Cabinet to recognize that infrastructure must be started not five years from now but now in order to accommodate the numbers of seniors that we're going to have who are going to be needing supported living and particularly extended care. I don't know quite how to get the message through. Maybe it is there and maybe it's just that the government doesn't support the funding for these capital projects, but I would certainly hope that in the next capital budget, '16-17, we're going to see at least one new building construction project that will facilitate accommodation of seniors. At the moment, I don't see that there's anything there and it doesn't sound as though there's going to be anything there, from what I'm hearing from the Minister.

To the issue of aging in place, absolutely I want to age in place, but I also recognize that there comes a time when I cannot, and the Minister knows that full well, because he has family members who are currently in a situation that is very close to that. Somehow we have to assist, particularly in Yellowknife. We have an organization in the Avens Society who is willing to build 60 beds for various purposes, but they're willing to build 60 beds and to accommodate seniors in varying places across the continuum of care. We know that a NGO organization such as Avens can build a facility cheaper than the government can. That's been proven with the Dementia Facility, and we know that they are willing to take that risk and they are willing to find the financing. They simply need a guarantee from the government.

When I asked the question earlier, the Minister said that there's presumably, if the building is built then it would be funded by GNWT to the tune of some \$3.5 million or something. I can't quite remember the number. That's not the kind of thing that Avens is going to be able to take to the bank and get a mortgage. If I went to my banker and said, well, you know, um, they said that there's going to be maybe money to help me build my house, but I'm not really sure, there's absolutely no way I'm going to get any kind of a mortgage based on that kind of a vague promise. If we've got an organization that's willing to take on a mortgage, that's willing to build us a

60-bed facility, I'm struggling to understand why we are not bending over backwards to find a way to accommodate them. I know that things are not firm yet, but it would seem to me that we know we need the beds, we know the spaces are required, we know we don't have current spaces, and yet I just don't hear the words coming out of the Minister's or the government's mouth that says yes, we're going to get on that and we're going to get on that not today but yesterday because we know that it's an urgent need.

That's my biggest concern with this budget. The projects that we're currently finishing and we're sort of in the middle of are great projects. They're definitely required. We need to be upgrading our health centres, replacing our health centres and providing for seniors facilities which are coming through the Housing Corporation, but we need to accept the urgency of the need for housing for seniors.

I have to comment on the total amount of this budget. It says, I think it's \$84 million. Yes, \$84 million, almost \$84.5 million. But of that \$84 million, a huge amount, I think almost half is identified for Stanton Hospital. The Stanton Hospital project, again, is a very needed project, but we're not going to start construction on that until I think it's 2018-19. It's well down the road.

Really, if you look at it, we're talking about a department which is 25 percent or more of our operations budget and we're spending \$48 million or so in capital expenditures. Like the difficulty that I had with Education and their budget, this is better, but it's not a heck of a lot better, and we need to start putting a bigger priority on the departments that deal with our people, Education, Health, and Housing. Now, Housing, I'm reasonably pleased with the focus we've put on housing because we've put some extra money in there over the last couple of years, but I have the same concerns with the capital dollars we're putting in Health and Social Services that I did with Education. That's it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are committed to ensuring that our seniors have the beds and the supports that they need in the Northwest Territories. I hear the Member saying that we're not doing anything, and obviously, she knows I disagree. Today the Housing Corporation has in their budget money to move forward on five independent living homes in the Northwest Territories. That's new projects and new things that are being done by the Government of the Northwest Territories. We also know that every public housing unit is available to seniors if they qualify and if they wish to use them. We are building 18 new beds, beds that aren't available today. They do not exist today. Eighteen new beds

in Norman Wells that are going to support the Northwest Territories. We have pretty much finished construction of nine new beds, beds that don't exist today, in Behchoko, which are going to help reduce the demands everywhere in the Northwest Territories because we have one Territorial Admissions Committee. These beds are going to help. Is it enough? Not yet. We know that more is necessary and we're going to continue to move forward to find ways.

I want the facility at Avens. I want those additional beds. I think everybody does. We recognize that there is significant value to the Northwest Territories in having these beds. We do have a capital process. Avens, on many occasions, has come to us asking us to explore many, many different options, and the option of guaranteeing beds and supporting them in getting a bank loan is just one of the options that they have presented. It isn't the only option they have presented. I could count probably four different alternatives that they wish us to explore. We've asked them to help us break it down into one. Let's break it down into the one that will give us the best results and work together to find a way to get this facility built. We are exploring those options with the steering committee that I mentioned earlier today. We have already kicked off the process in cooperation with the steering committee to do the work necessary to get it into the capital plan, and as the Member knows, getting projects into the capital plan, we have to answer specific questions. Is the facility going to help us with the protection of people? Is it going to help us with the protection with assets? Is it going to help with the protection of the environment? There are a number of things that we have to do to build a case for including it into the capital plan. We're working with Avens to help them help us develop a plan that will help us get it into the capital plan.

The first step, obviously, is a planning study, which is basically the technical assessment of the current facility. We need to make sure that all that's complete, all the information is there to allow us to have something to bring forward to this House for consideration. I want this facility as much as everybody else. I believe this facility adds significant value to the Northwest Territories, but there are steps we have to take, and for the Member to say why don't we just guarantee these beds, that is only one of at least four options that have been presented. We need to clarify which one they wish to pursue. We are doing that work and we will continue to do that work because we know the importance of increasing the number of beds in the Northwest Territories to meet our current and long-term needs.

I would like the deputy minister, Ms. DeLancey, just to talk a little bit about some of the analysis that's gone on with respect to beds. We have a bit of time

here in order to get this done and get it done right. If we can go to Ms. DeLancey for just a few comments.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Ms. DeLancey.

MS. DELANCEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the Minister is referring to the continuing care review which Members have seen. A lot of work with the Bureau of Statistics went into trying to do some projections on the growing seniors population. We know the number of people age 70 and over is going to triple from in the period of time between 2011 and 2031. We know that it's happening at a much faster rate in Yellowknife.

Based on the regional population projections, our consultants did some modeling in terms of how many long-term beds we would need. According to the modeling projections, we don't anticipate a shortage of long-term care beds in the NWT until 2021, but we know that there are people today that are on waiting lists. Even if we don't have an overall shortage of beds, we know that in some cases people on the waiting list will decline a bed in another region because they want to stay closer to families. We know that some people on the waiting list need specialized services whether it's extended care or the Dementia Centre. There really is an urgency and we feel that urgency, but the reality is that over the next few years, with the beds that we are putting in with Behchoko, with Norman Wells, we do believe that in the short term there are enough beds in the system. The reality is they are not always going to be in the communities where people want them, and that's part of our next step, building on the continuing care review. Developing the next tranche of capital submissions for long-term care is to address that need. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. DeLancey. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you. I'm not saying that it's all done, because we know that we need to continue to move forward to ensure that the beds meet our future and long-term needs.

I can say that over the last eight years we have invested around \$86 million in developing and expanding long-term care facilities in the Northwest Territories, so we continue to plug at this, we continue to address this. Like I said, I, as much as anybody, want to see that new facility and the upgrades of the existing Avens facility done. I would like to see those 55 beds available in Yellowknife.

The next topic that the Member discussed was Stanton and the \$40 million. I'm going to go to Mr. Heath to talk a little about the \$40 million and how it's intended to be utilized. I just want to say that Stanton is a \$300 million to \$350 million project. It is the largest capital project ever undertaken by the Government of the Northwest Territories. It is a

significant asset to Yellowknife, to the Northwest Territories, and I don't think that can be taken away from the entire process that we are discussing here today. We are looking at one year of a multi-year project, but it is a \$350 million build in the Northwest Territories, the largest capital project that we have even undertaken. I think it's necessary, I think it's important. It is a facility in dire need of this upgrade. So, \$40 million is a portion of the project, it's not the whole project.

If we could go to Mr. Heath, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Heath.

MR. HEATH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We absolutely appreciate that the Stanton budget is a huge component of the Health and Social Services budget over the next couple of years, but the intention of the capital money is to essentially reduce the financing cost of the P3 over the first couple of years and reduce the overall interest that will be burdened by the government. The remainder of the facility will be covered under availability payments which are tied to a performance contract, so the original estimate is, again, intended to minimize our financing costs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Heath. Continuing on with general comments, I have Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Welcome to the House to the Minister and staff here for this review of Health and Social Services.

The first thing I am interested in is what the status is of our telehealth and associated technologies, radiology, perhaps there is a pharmaceutical aspect to it and so on, across our 32 communities with respect to helping with both emergencies and managing medical travel. I know the Minister is aware that that is a steep source of the demand on our resources and much of that is unnecessary and there is potential for dealing with that. I think there is a good strategy in place, but we have been well aware of that since early in the 16th Assembly. It just seems to be very, very slow unfolding. Maybe an update on that.

I have to follow up on my colleague Ms. Bisaro's comments on the Aven Campus. I know the Minister is aware it is full. The waiting lists are long and getting longer. Rapidly there is an urgent need, now. Hopefully the Minister has heard that.

We also need work, either through partnerships with private enterprise or incentives perhaps, to foster the provision of facilities for seniors that have some financial independence and yet high care level needs. High needs for high level care with no current facilities to meet those needs. I know a lot of families are struggling with that.

I have heard the Minister's response to Ms. Bisaro, and Members have raised this issue for years without any concrete commitments, and now the need is critical. The Avens, obviously, has a proven track record, high standards and performance. They achieved a very high level in their move to accreditation most recently. They are an organization that accomplishes what it sets out to do. It's a can-do organization that attracts support and investment from the community, businesses and individuals, and I don't think there is any argument they are very efficient at providing services and putting infrastructure in place compared to other projects the government has taken on.

We continually hear from this Minister, "We do have a capital process." Not just this Minister, every Minister. I am looking; it's not there. We've been at this for years. I am looking at the capital plan; it's not there. The Minister says Avens has presented many options and then specified four options. Well, why would they have presented all those options, Mr. Chair? They are presenting all those options because every one fails. The government has failed to move until we are now critical. What can we say about this? I don't know how they keep their sanity and keep going, but these seniors are tough people.

It needs to get into the capital plan "just now." Again, I am looking at the plan. But indeed, does Avens need capital dollars? I would say Avens now recognizes that it's going to be way too late if we go through the capital planning process. I would say the Minister must agree to that, given the current need and the rising need. Creatively, I would say, and through a lot of work with the community and their own resources, they are now saying we don't need capital dollars, please keep us out of this capital process, it's failed us at every turn we've attempted, keep us out of it. We need a bankable commitment that the department will support residents that use the campus. The bottom line is, they are poised, they are moving, and I know the Minister has worked to help them do that. I recognize that and I thank the Minister for that. But let's complete the equation and get this happening.

Stanton Hospital, I still have serious concerns and reservations about the P3 aspects of Stanton Hospital. I know that the government is aware that similar efforts in Canada and other countries, Britain in particular, have in fact cost the residents hundreds of millions of dollars more than it would have under a public project approach, and along with that are some of the social aspects such as privatization of jobs and so on and the potential race to the bottom. I know the government is committed to this track. We'll see what comes in. But I asked the government to take a very close look and particularly given, again, the intentions of government to seek a greater borrowing limit and

consider whether or not we could avoid that risk and take it on ourselves.

I am very happy to see some of the facilities that we are getting in place. The Minister mentioned the elders facilities in Norman Wells and Behchoko. Those are great to see and those are big projects. I think we have done some good work in standardizing the formats of those so that we can be efficient with those and so on, albeit the costs are pretty extreme on a per bed basis, especially compared to the Avens facility.

The health centres, I watch methodically the discussion between Fort Providence and Fort Res. Fort Res kindly stepped aside and we went ahead with Fort Providence. We are into completion and now we are moving on with the Fort Res one. Those are great to see and I know that the Minister is aware that we need to keep going with that, not just in Yellowknife. I am going to leave it at that and I'm going to speak to some specifics as we go through detail. Some of that I know is repeat, but it bears repeating. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With respect to telehealth and a lot of the other eHealth or e-social services systems that we're working on, there are a number of things in place and we continue to move forward with a number of initiatives. In this budget you'll see some money for CFSIS, which is the upgrade of the Child and Family Services Information System which, no doubt the Member knows and we all know, has to be done. It is a critical piece of technical infrastructure that we need to get up and running in a useable way. Not just there but it has to be useable and functional for our staff. It is a couple-year project as we move forward, but it's essential.

We do have telehealth in all of our community health centres and we are using them. We do know that we are using them for things like TeleSpeech and a number of things, doctor/patient interactions. I have travelled throughout the Northwest Territories, as I said, since I have become the Minister of Health and Social Services, and I have visited a large number of health centres. Some of them are using it more effectively than others are, and some are using it in more creative ways. We need to continue to push all of our health authorities to find and utilize it as much as possible because it continues to be a great tool. But it's not the only thing that we're using. We have invested, and we continue to invest, in things like DI/PACs, and we have been able to acquire a whole lot of money from organizations like Infoway.

We are continuing to move forward with EMR. It's in Yellowknife Health and Social Services, Hay River Health and Social Services, Fort Smith Health and Social Services. We're in the process of trying to

get it into Stanton right now. There have been a few little hiccups as we are rolling that out but we will work through those. We will make it happen. We are going to get it into all the health centres in the next, I believe, two to three fiscal years is our plan. Tlicho would be the last one on our list to get done, but we continue to move forward. EMR is a huge tool for all of us in the health care system.

We have a number of other tools that we're using throughout the Northwest Territories, so we continue to move forward. These are actually going to be enhanced once we get the fibre optic line down the valley. We'll have higher speeds, higher times. It's going to improve our telehealth response in the valley and in the communities that are receiving services along that line. So there's a lot of good news on that front. But based on my journeys, clearly we have to work a little harder with the authorities to get them to use telehealth to help us reduce things like medical travel. That is something that the department is keenly aware of. This is one of those things that we believe will be easier once we move to a single authority so that we can have the interaction without some of the barriers that we've created for our own design.

I hear the Member about Avens. There is no question that I am supportive of this project. I have been Minister of Health and Social Services for one year. I have been an MLA for seven years. In the last Assembly, Avens was very keen to get the Dementia Facility built, and we all worked together to find a way to do that. I did not hear anything about this new facility. The Member says it has been years and years, but I just don't see that exactly as the Member does. I didn't have anybody approach me in any capacity as Public Works and Services or Health and Social Services until I actually became the Minister of Health and Social Services a year ago. It's the first time somebody approached me and said, we need to make this facility. I understand that they did go to Members for that, but since I've been the Minister I've been working hard with Avens to find a way to make this happen, and we're going to find a way to make this happen.

The Member says, what about having them be able to charge higher rates? This is one of the options that they approached us with and said, how about if we can charge higher rates for individuals in our facility? The problem is, if we provide them a loan guarantee or if we fund this project, our policies and procedures have to be utilized, which limits the amount that an individual can pay. We actually have a set criterion what people will pay in our facilities. We are actually exploring some policy options around that to see if we can amend that based on requests from Avens. So we are exploring all of these things that the Member is talking about. We are wanting badly to find a way to work with Avens to make this facility a reality, but there are

some limitations. We need them to help us come with a final, solid ask of what path they want to take, and we're open to whatever they want. At this point we will find a way. Some ways will take longer than others, but we are open to any options that they want to explore.

We have invested in them. We have given \$25,000 so that they can have some consultants work on this project with us and with them. So, we're involved. We are working with them closely, and we are going to continue to work with them, and we will find a way because we recognize the importance of this facility and we are committed to helping them do it.

With respect to Stanton, as a Regular Member in the 16th Assembly I sat with my colleagues, many of them still sitting on that side of the House, and we strongly recommended that the GNWT develop a P3 policy, so they did. The GNWT developed a P3 policy in the last government. The GNWT's P3 policy requires that all projects over \$50 million be reviewed for delivery as a public/private partnership. As a result, the detailed feasibility analysis and a business case was completed which clearly showed that delivering Stanton under P3 would be the most cost-effective project delivery method following our P3 policy that is in place. Delivering Stanton as a P3 is anticipated to deliver significant value for money to the Northwest Territories. Canada is a mature P3 market with a robust P3 model that has been proven to safeguard the public interest in project delivery.

I am going to go to Mr. Miltenberger, who is the lead for this project, but before I do that, I would like to just be very clear – and hopefully everybody is going to get this – we are not privatizing health care in the Northwest Territories and there is no expectation or intention on our behalf to privatize health care in the Northwest Territories. We will not do it. It's not our plan and it's not something we are interested in doing. We will not privatize the delivery of health services in the Northwest Territories.

When it comes to P3 projects, I would like to go to Minister Miltenberger, the Minister of Finance, who is leading this Stanton Renewal Project.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Before we do so, I would like to draw everyone's attention here in the House. Joining us in the gallery here for this afternoon's proceeding is our Conflict of Interest Commissioner, Mr. David Jones.

---Applause

Welcome to the Assembly, Mr. Jones. Continuing on with our response to the questions, we will go to Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The business case for Stanton as a P3 project was done last March and shared with the

committee last March. There is a process underway. There has been no contractor picked or signed yet. A lot of final decisions have yet to be made in terms of what will exactly be included in the P3 project, what kind of hard services will be potentially part of that project. So, there is still a process underway.

I don't have much more to add to what the Minister has already stated other than that, as he has pointed out, this P3 process is very prevalent now across the country. The federal government has a multi-billion dollar P3 project office. This P3 approach has been used successfully now all over the country. The Mackenzie Valley fibre link is in fact going to be a P3 project as well. So, this is a good way to proceed. We have done the groundwork and can have discussion with the committee about any specific concerns that they may have as long as it doesn't jeopardize the timelines of the project. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you. The Health and Social Services has obviously been participating in the working group that's moving forward with this Stanton renewal, and our objective is to make sure that that building meets our clinical and functional needs and we continue to make sure that all the proponents, including Public Works and Services and Finance, are aware of our technical needs because we need to make sure that that building meets our functional needs today, tomorrow and into the future.

I just want to go back to Avens for a second because when I mentioned that the first time anybody ever approached me was a year ago, I saw the Member laugh a little bit. Our records show that the first time we were ever contacted by Avens about Avens expansion was June 2013, and since that time, that first discussion in June 2013, they have come to us with three or four alternate options. That obviously is something we are working with them on, is finding the alternate options of finding the one that suits. They never approached me and nobody talked to me until October 2013, when I became...

---Interjection

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Nobody approached me as an MLA, Bob.

---Interjection

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I am. Nobody approached me and said, we want to build Avens. The first I became aware of it is when I was approached by Avens and they said, we want to build and extend Avens, and that is something that I am committed to working towards. They first approached the department. Their first discussion with Avens was October...no, June 2013. So it's

great that they were talking about it for years. It might have been great if maybe they had started to engage with the department sooner.

In the meantime, Bob, I mean MLA for Weledeh, we are committed to working with... We are working closely with them. I've had many, many meetings with the president. I've had many, many meetings with the staff. I've directed the staff to make progress and to find a way to make this a reality in time. We have to work with the processes we have available to us, and I am exploring, we are exploring all opportunities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. I do sense a lot of passion in the room here today, but I would really caution all Members to actually direct your questions and responses through the Chair so we can record this accordingly. With that, I will go to Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move we report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): I would like to thank Minister Abernethy today and Mr. Heath and Ms. DeLancey. Thank you for joining us today. If I could get the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort our witnesses out of the Chamber. With that, I will rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Good evening, colleagues. Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, Mr. Dolynny?

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Tabled Document 115-17(5), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates 2015-2016, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Do I have a seconder to the motion? Mr. Beaulieu.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

PRINCIPAL CLERK, CORPORATE AND INTERPARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (Ms. Bennett): Orders of the day for Thursday, October 23, 2014, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements'
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees

5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Acknowledgements
8. Oral Questions
9. Written Questions
10. Returns to Written Questions
11. Replies to Opening Address
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
 - Motion 25, Appointment of Chief Electoral Officer
 - Motion 26, Appointment of Human Rights Commission Members
 - Motion 27, Appointment of Two Members to the Human Rights Adjudication Panel
 - Motion 28, Extended Adjournment of the House to October 27, 2014
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Education Act
 - Bill 27, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014
 - Bill 29, Human Tissue Donation Act
 - Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act
 - Bill 32, An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act
 - Committee Report 7-17(5), Report on the Development of the Economic Opportunities and Mineral Development Strategies
 - Tabled Document 115-17(5), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates 2015-2016
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, October 23rd, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:00 p.m.