



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

5th Session

Day 87

17th Assembly

HANSARD

Friday, October 2, 2015

Pages 6621 – 6658

The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker

Hon. Jackie Jacobson
(Nunakput)

Hon. Glen Abernethy

(Great Slave)
Minister of Health and Social Services
Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities
Minister responsible for Seniors

Hon. Tom Beaulieu

(Tu Nedhe)
Minister of Human Resources
Minister of Transportation
Minister of Public Works and Services

Ms. Wendy Bisaro

(Frame Lake)

Mr. Frederick Blake

(Mackenzie Delta)

Mr. Robert Bouchard

(Hay River North)

Mr. Bob Bromley

(Weledeh)

Mr. Daryl Dolynny

(Range Lake)

Mrs. Jane Groenewegen

(Hay River South)

Mr. Robert Hawkins

(Yellowknife Centre)

Hon. Jackson Lafferty

(Monfwi)
Deputy Premier
Minister of Education, Culture and Employment
Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

Hon. Bob McLeod

(Yellowknife South)
Premier
Minister of Executive
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations
Minister responsible for Women

Hon. Robert C. McLeod

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)
Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs
Minister of Lands
Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation
Minister responsible for Youth

Mr. Kevin Menicoche

(Nahendeh)

Hon. J. Michael Miltenberger

(Thebacha)
Government House Leader
Minister of Finance
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources
Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation

Mr. Alfred Moses

(Inuvik Boot Lake)

Mr. Michael Nadli

(Deh Cho)

Hon. David Ramsay

(Kam Lake)
Minister of Justice
Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment
Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board

Mr. Norman Yakeleya

(Sahtu)

Officers

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Mr. Tim Mercer

Deputy Clerk

Mr. Doug Schauerte
Malinda Kellett
Rutland

Principal Clerk, Committees and Public Affairs

Mr. Michael Ball

Principal Clerk, Corporate and Interparliamentary Affairs

Ms. Gail Bennett

Committee Clerk Trainee

Mrs. Danielle Mager

Law Clerks

Ms. Sheila MacPherson
Ms.
Mr. Glen

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

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER.....6621

MINISTERS' STATEMENTS.....6621

228-17(5) – Retirement of Hilda Camirand (B. McLeod).....6621

229-17(5) – Progress on Changes in the NWT Corrections Service (Ramsay).....6621

230-17(5) – Health and Social Services System Transformation (Abernethy).....6622

231-17(5) – State of Communities (R. McLeod).....6623

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS.....6624

Employment of Post-Secondary Graduates in the NWT (Bouchard).....6624

NWT Revenue Growth Concerns (Dolynny).....6624

Funding for NWT Addictions Treatment Centre (Nadli).....6625

Deh Cho Bridge Project Analysis (Bisaro).....6625

NWT Seniors' Issues (Moses).....6626

Localized Sustainable Economic Development (Bromley).....6626

Housing Issues in Sahtu Communities (Yakeleya).....6627

Transformation of Health Services in Nahendeh (Menicoche).....	6627
Expansion of NWT Seniors Facilities (Hawkins).....	6628
Medical Travel Policy (Groenewegen).....	6628
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY.....	6629
ORAL QUESTIONS.....	6630
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS.....	6641
NOTICES OF MOTION.....	6642

Motion 49-17(5) – Dissolution of the 17th Legislative Assembly (Yakeleya).....6642

FIRST READING OF BILLS.....6642

Bill 69 – An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2.....6642

SECOND READING OF BILLS.....6642

Bill 68 – An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act, No. 2.....6642

CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS.....6643

REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE.....6656

ORDERS OF THE DAY.....6657

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Friday, October 2, 2015

Members Present

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

The House met at 10:03 a.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Good morning, colleagues. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 228-17(5): RETIREMENT OF HILDA CAMIRAND

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we often talk about the people of the NWT as being our greatest resource. I think it's fair to say that our Government of the Northwest Territories' public service is made up of many of those remarkable people who dedicate themselves to public service. Today I would like to acknowledge one of those public servants who has dedicated 25 years to this government and the people of the NWT.

On December 4th Hilda Camirand will retire.

---Applause

During her career she has supported many Premiers and Ministers. All of them, including myself, have benefitted from her wise counsel, expert advice and impressive organizational skills.

Hilda has seen many changes over the course of her career, including division and devolution. In fact, she started her career with the GNWT in 1990, working for the then devolution office. It is fitting that she has been with the GNWT long enough to see devolution become a reality.

Hilda has inspired others around her to meet a standard of public service and professionalism that will be her legacy. There will be more information about Hilda's retirement celebration available in the coming weeks. I expect it will be quite the event and that's where all the juicy stories will come out.

---Laughter

On behalf of the GNWT, I would like to thank Hilda and wish her the very best in her retirement. It will

not be the same without her. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 229-17(5): PROGRESS ON CHANGES IN THE NWT CORRECTIONS SERVICE

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, providing our residents with opportunities to make healthy choices is a priority that has strong support from this Assembly and the Government of the Northwest Territories.

This support extends to all citizens, including those serving sentences in a correctional facility. Progress made by the Department of Justice over the past six months will mean inmates looking to make better choices and return to their communities as healthy, contributing members will be better supported.

In March of this year, we received a report and recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General on the corrections service. This report was reviewed by the Standing Committee on Government Operations, and later today, at the appropriate time, I will be tabling the Government of the Northwest Territories' response to the Standing Committee's report including an updated progress report on action taken.

Progress on improvements resulting from the Office of the Auditor General's recommendations has been substantial. Of the original 106 individual action items the corrections service outlined in their action plan released in May, over 75 percent are now complete, and we expect that most items will be completed by the spring of 2016. Today I would like to share some of the highlights of that progress with you.

All 194 corrections directives, setting out how the service operates, have been reviewed and necessary amendments made in each priority area. These changes have been communicated to staff and they are making improvements in their day-to-day operations as a result.

Every inmate is now receiving appropriate case management, including individualized release plans. This includes those on remand and those serving sentences that are less than 120 days.

Changes have also been made which allow corrections officers to focus their efforts on true contraband items such as drugs and items that present safety risks. Staff recognized the definitions being used to describe contraband were not focused on those items that could cause harm or disrupt the safe and orderly operations of facilities. In fact, 85 percent of the items were actually nuisance items such as cups or pillows. We will be examining types of contraband closely to be able to react to changing trends as they arise.

I am also pleased to report that progress has been made on training. Through established mandated training, standards have been set and tracking processes are in place to provide a safe and secure working environment for staff and inmates. As crime

evolves, so must our officers' training in order to have the best skills and current intelligence to understand today's inmates.

Steps have been taken to improve correctional programming. Seven years have now passed since the last program review was completed, and we need to stay current with offender needs and profiles. A survey of staff and inmates along with research on correctional programming has been completed. Analysis on the information learned will allow the NWT corrections service to create strong programming that meets the rehabilitative needs of inmates. We plan to complete this work by March 2017. Until then, we will continue to provide a range of programs including those that incorporate traditional healing and enlist Aboriginal elders to share aspects of their culture and traditions. This focus on traditional healing will continue to be a key element of programming at the facilities.

These are just a few of the actions that have been taken by the Department of Justice in the last several months. I want to assure Members that the staff at our correctional facilities are professional and are committed to excellence. We are grateful to the Auditor General's office and the standing committee for their advice that has helped us refine and focus our efforts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Abernethy.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 230-17(5):
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide an update on our plans to improve care and services for our residents by improving the Health and Social Services System.

On June 4, 2015, Bill 44, An Act to Amend the Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act, received assent in the Legislative Assembly. With the assent of Bill 44, we now have the legislative mechanism to bring the NWT Health and Social Services System together.

This milestone is the result of years of work and collaboration between many different stakeholders, including the chairs and public administrators of the health and social services authorities, Aboriginal and community governments and Health and Social Services staff from across the system. We also heard from the public about how to improve patient care and client service delivery.

Mr. Speaker, our goal in the process of system transformation is to improve the Health and Social Services System's ability to provide the best possible care to patients and clients. We want the system to focus on the needs of clients and ensure it is as efficient, sustainable and accountable as possible.

The current governance structure makes it difficult to improve our system. With eight different health and social services authorities, there has been a lack of coordination, communication, and an inefficient use of resources. We are working to improve the governance structure so that we can take advantage of new technologies, improve capacity and continue to provide high-quality services and programs in the future, while ensuring that we provide a consistent level of care for all residents.

Mr. Speaker, on April 1, 2016, six health and social services authorities will be amalgamated into a territorial health and social services authority. The legislation also provides for the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority to become part of the Territorial Authority at a later date, pending the negotiations required to bring its employees into the public service. The Tlicho Community Services Agency will remain a distinct entity, as provided for in the Tlicho Agreement, but will continue to be an important partner in our system and participate in system-wide planning and decision-making.

Advisory regional wellness councils will be established to replace the current regional boards of management, with the exception of the Tlicho Community Services Agency. The regional wellness councils will provide for a more effective regional voice at the territorial level. The chairs from each region, including the Tlicho Community Services Agency, will be members of the territorial health and social services board of management, which will be known as the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Leadership Council.

Mr. Speaker, the NWT is a large territory, with different regions and cultures each with its own priorities and challenges. Residents will now have a greater voice and influence on the services they receive, both at the regional and territorial level.

Despite our regional differences, we share many of the same problems, and it is much better to work collectively to address these issues and meet the needs of our residents. That means recognizing our diverse cultures, respecting Aboriginal customs and traditions, and working in partnership with Aboriginal governments.

Mr. Speaker, we are working hard to achieve our vision of "Best Health, Best Care for a Better Future." As a step forward in the move in the new system structure, today I am pleased to announce that Mr. Jim Antoine has been named as the chairperson-designate of the Territorial Health and Social Services Leadership Council. Mr. Antoine brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the design and development of the Health and Social Services System and has been instrumental to this work over the last few years.

Leading up to April 1, 2016, a dedicated team is working with Health and Social Services staff from across the system to develop detailed organizational

structures for the Territorial Health and Social Services Authority and the Department of Health and Social Services and accompanying transition and implementation plans to move the current system to the proposed new structure.

Improving our Health and Social Services System is a process, not an event, and will not end with the establishment of the new governance structure. We will continue to improve our system to better support its clients and make it easier for service providers to deliver effective, efficient, patient-centred care and programs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 231-17(5):
STATE OF COMMUNITIES

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, community governments are critical partners in building a strong and independent North. As we near the end of our term, it is a good time to look back at the work we have done to support community governments and the challenges that still remain.

In 2013 the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs launched the Accountability Framework for community governments. This tool is used to measure the performance of community governments based on 14 defined indicators. MACA is currently collecting and analyzing the 2014-2015 data that will be used to create a unique work plan with each government based on that community's specific needs.

Mr. Speaker, the importance of MACA working collaboratively with community governments cannot be overstated. In May of this year, the department was honoured to receive the NWT Association of Communities President's Award in recognition of the collaborative approach taken in the formula funding review. The formula funding review was undertaken by a working group of senior administrative officers and elected officials from communities across the North, as well as senior staff from MACA.

As a result of the research and discussions carried out by the working group, a new needs-based approach was developed that better addresses community requirements. This work would not have been possible without the support and engagement of the community government representatives and NWTAC.

MACA is committed to supporting the communities by offering training and development opportunities for community government representatives. Working with its partners, the department is administering the Public Service Capacity Initiative, which includes a series of programs designed to enhance community government public service capacity.

The focus of the initiative is to recruit, retain and train senior level community government staff, and a community government training specialist position has

been created in the South Slave region to provide coaching, mentoring and on-site support. Since the initiative began in 2009, MACA and its partners have supported a total of 22 trainees from 18 communities.

With the improved training and development opportunities being offered to community government representatives, many community governments are thriving.

However, Mr. Speaker, despite the very best efforts of many people, we are reminded that some communities still struggle to deliver full services to all residents. We know that there are some communities that are struggling to meet demands with inadequate resources, some struggle with capacity and having skilled workers, while others face larger challenges with governance and having effective bylaws and policies in place.

We currently have one community under municipal administration and another under municipal supervision. These are significant steps and were only necessary due to extreme conditions. However, while these administrative and supervision orders were necessary, I am pleased to report that both communities appear to be progressing and we expect them to return to normal in the future.

Some NWT communities are run by Aboriginal governments under the authority of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, or AANDC. In these communities, the GNWT has a contractual relationship for the administration of municipal-like services. Despite providing funding for these services, and training and development through the School of Community Government, some of these designated authorities continue to run deficits and are challenged by governance issues. MACA is continuing to work with AANDC to support band councils and band managers to provide more capacity building and improved governance support.

MACA is also responding to new forms of governance, with progress being made toward the implementation of the Deline Self-Government Agreement in September 2016. The community has hired an implementation team that is working alongside DAAIR and MACA to ensure that all necessary components are in place and ready by next September. The three parties have agreed upon an implementation plan and meet regularly to discuss objectives, track progress and outline responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, as you can see, there has been some very good work to support and develop community governments, while at the same time we also have new and ongoing challenges to address.

The department has done good work, and I invite all Members to join me in thanking all its staff and management for all of their efforts to improve the quality of living for our residents in their communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EMPLOYMENT OF POST-SECONDARY GRADUATES IN THE NWT

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As this government has committed to growing the population of the Northwest Territories over the next few years, one of the areas that I talked about in the past is our link between the students who are going out to schools and the Department of HR. We have a disconnect there. I think that we should be able to communicate with those students and link them to jobs before they've even completed their education.

Hay River has a great couple of students right now. Mr. Lance Crook is finishing up his education, a doctorate, and he's in Hay River doing some training. We also have R.J. Simpson, who has finished his degree in law and is looking for the GNWT to do articling. He's having difficulties finding a position.

The problem we have is that exact thing. Why is Mr. Simpson coming back to the Northwest Territories now to get an articling position? Shouldn't we have already known that from student financial assistance that that was what he was doing? Shouldn't we have talked to HR and the Department of Justice and linked this together so Mr. Simpson and other students have an opportunity to come back? The problem now is he's considering, do I stay in the Northwest Territories or do I go south where I can actually get a position? We should have linked that in his first and second year of school, to HR, to the department he will potentially be working for. Why is there a disconnect?

I know the Department of ECE is looking to create this checkbox so HR can communicate with Justice and everybody else. There is definitely a disconnect with our GNWT. We need to find that link and we need to make sure all our students come back. We are paying for that student financial assistance. We should maximize that opportunity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NWT REVENUE GROWTH CONCERNS

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In continuing my daily ritual of evaluating the performance of the McLeod government, today I want to reference my tabled document of Tuesday, September 29, 2015, and spend some time on our revenue concerns, both federal and own source.

By all accounts, our GNWT revenue grew by 149.79 percent from 2000 to today, and was substantially more than operation spending growth of 115 percent

during the same period. However, with federal transfers currently accounting for more than 70 percent of GNWT revenue, and with only modest NWT population growth over these 15 years, we should be concerned of what current negative trend in population growth truly means. In fact, it is in the 2015-16 year where we see the single largest negative revenue growth of minus 1.01 percent, and if you put this side by side with our operational spending at 2.15 percent, you can clearly see this is not a balanced budget process, as it's been portrayed, but a true deficit process.

While we are told and soothed when we have an operational surplus, it is important to note that this is not entirely true, as this book adjustment surplus is already spent in our capital budget process.

The second source of our revenue is through own-source revenue, and this revenue grew by 143.2 percent from 2000 to 2016 or '15, far more than the inflation but less than total revenue. Our own-source revenue is more variable than federal transfers due to the volatility and the forecasting of our corporate taxes collected. We would all agree that increasing own-source revenue through taxes would likely increase the cost of living, and is worthy to note that corporate and personal income taxes in the NWT are among the lowest in Canada.

To pass praise where praise is due, the January 2015 Fraser Institute graded Canada's Premiers based on corporate and personal income taxes or changes in tax rates. Now, although not specifically mentioned in this Fraser Report, Premier McLeod would place and as I'm saying, the best in the country, first place on corporate taxes and second place on personal income taxes, and by these measures Premier McLeod would have been second overall of all the Premiers in Canada, behind Alberta.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. DOLYNNY: This is very painful for me.

---Laughter

Now, I know the Premier is gleaming right now, and to be fair, I wanted to be balanced in my reporting. He does get an A for maintaining a stable, low corporate and personal tax environment, but – hang on – his government only gets a C grade for how it has handled our population growth issues, our own-source revenue options and increased volatility in our overall revenue management. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
FUNDING FOR NWT
ADDICTIONS TREATMENT CENTRE

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I'm very distressed over this week's report that the Minister of Health and Social Services has rejected a proposal put forth by the K'atlodeeche First Nations to reopen the only addictions treatment centre located in the NWT. There was a lot of disappointment and disbelief when the department pulled the funding for the Hay River Reserve's Nats'ejee K'eh Treatment Centre.

I agree with my colleagues in this House; I question whether it was a wise decision to close the only addictions treatment centre in the NWT. I was willing to accept the department's position that they were shifting their focus to the on-the-land programs, but I was also encouraged that they seemed to be willing to work with the KFN to find ways to reopen the treatment centre.

Now, it appears that Health and Social Services is no longer willing to support this. Like many others, I want to know the reasons why. This government talks a lot about working in partnership with Aboriginal governments. If we truly believe in this, then I don't know how we can take such a non-productive approach with KFN.

The KFN wants to see the treatment centre reopened. There are a lot of good common sense reasons why this should happen. We could support the KFN to continue to use that perfectly serviceable facility. We could support putting jobs in the community, and most importantly, we could provide a treatment option for our own residents who want to stay in the NWT while in recovery.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud Chief Roy Fabian and I support the KFN in the push to reopen the only treatment centre in the NWT. Chief Fabian says the response of the Minister of Health and Social Services was like a slap in the face. The chief was trying to provide leadership on an issue that matters to the community and instead he's disrespected and insulted in the process. This does not sound to me like the actions of a Minister who truly believes in partnerships with Aboriginal governments.

Will the Minister reconsider his response to the KFN and commit to reopening the treatment centre? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT ANALYSIS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the summer months I had a disappointing e-mail exchange with the Minister of Transportation. For several years now I've been waiting for the government, the Department of Transportation, to produce and make publicly available a

comprehensive, in-depth review and analysis of the Deh Cho Bridge Project. I have repeatedly asked about work done on such an analysis, and for years now I've been given excuses as to why it hasn't yet happened.

Last month I finally got a straight answer, but it's one which gives true meaning to the phrase "the government can't be trusted because they lie."

On December 13, 2011, there was, in this House, a public commitment by the Transportation Minister of the day to do a full retrospective analysis of the Deh Cho Bridge Project. But the answer I received last month from Minister Beaulieu stated, "I have had discussions with my Cabinet colleagues on the pros and cons of committing additional time and resources to undertaking additional analysis of the Deh Cho Bridge Project. It has been determined that further retrospective analysis of the bridge project is not warranted at this time." The Minister continued, "Any additional analysis at this time is not expected to result in new lessons learned and could become a distraction to other significant initiatives of the government." A distraction, Mr. Speaker.

The Deh Cho Bridge Project was undoubtedly the most poorly handled project in this and the two previous Assemblies. The public deserves to know why and where the project went wrong, deserves to know why it ended up costing residents, through their tax dollars, some four times the original estimate.

The e-mail answer to me went on to say that a number of analyses have taken place and that "other reviews have also been undertaken, including the presentations delivered at several venues." "Are all of these items publicly available," I asked. Are they even available to MLAs? What are these other reviews? Presentations were made to whom? Did MLAs have access to the info in those presentations? Can the public have access to those presentations? They certainly should.

The last straw for me was this part of the answer: "The Deh Cho Bridge is functioning and operating as planned and there are no outstanding concerns regarding the processes as to procure this important piece of infrastructure."

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. BISARO: Everything done by the Department of Transportation does not address the fundamental underlying issue: the project did not proceed as planned. Where is the report which identifies and outlines the problems with the project, where it went off the rails and why?

Minister Ramsay committed to a full retrospective analysis of the bridge project, and that's what I and the public expected. Now it's just a distraction and not worth doing.

Examining past mistakes is invaluable to preventing the same thing from happening in the future. At the very least, Cabinet should be able to provide me and the public with a report that encompasses all the work done to date in an easily readable and informative format.

I will have questions for the Minister of Transportation at the appropriate time. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NWT SENIORS' ISSUES

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On June 24th to the 26th this past summer, I had the honour of sitting in a meeting with seniors from around the region that I attended and worked on a seniors meeting, entitled Working Together to Address Seniors Issues. It was a follow-up to a meeting that some of the stakeholders, some of the coordinators did when they came to Yellowknife and had a meeting with the NWT Seniors' Society.

A lot of really good discussions happened during those three days, and we had seniors from Aklavik, Tsiigehtchic, Fort McPherson and Inuvik. They were bringing up issues that meant a lot to them, and anybody who was in attendance that day could see the passion and the hardship that our elders go through on a daily basis and that continue to occur.

Today I want to bring up some of those issues that the elders addressed as they broke into their focus groups by community to see what kinds of solutions they could come up with. Things such as language interpreters, whether it's through the justice system, through the health and social services system, even the education system, and that's been brought up in this House over the term of the 17th Assembly.

Other things: lack of RCMP in the communities, lack of health care in some cases in some of the communities, as well as on-the-land programs. They wanted to promote on-the-land programs not for treatment but to create awareness, increase our culture, go back to the traditional values they feel are being lost, and working with youth.

Of course, they wanted to bring up something that has continued to occur, and Members on this side of the House have spoken to it on many occasions, and that's the elder abuse. Other things that we've talked about which was kind of addressed and we're trying to deal with within the Child and Family Services Act is child welfare cases and concerns, and our grandparents are continuing to foster care.

Things such as housing is another issue, and working with youth. In fact, just recently our Children First Centre in Inuvik went and visited our elders at Ingamo Hall and had a great day with them, I think just a couple days ago. As well, home care is needed to be addressed.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. MOSES: As I mentioned, these elders had a lot of passion and a lot of concern, and almost every elder spoke up. It was their venue to speak and be listened to. Each community brought priorities forward, some with similar themes. As I mentioned, home care, suicide, what kinds of services are provided in the community, and also elder abuse was a big one. It provided great guidelines for other regions to follow, and I think that's something that we need to promote in other regions throughout the Northwest Territories.

Our elders are our caregivers, providers, and keepers of knowledge. It's time that we support them, show them the respect that they deserve, treat them with dignity and listen to what they had said in this report.

I will have questions today for the Minister responsible to see how we can address this, how we can get the next government to take this as one of our priorities. As you know, our seniors population is increasing.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON LOCALIZED SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was following and supporting the Finance Minister's report on the fiscal situation we are leaving for the 18th Assembly, noting the volatility of the global economy, the mining industry and our economy; low revenues; and the need to diversify. That is, until he suddenly and illogically looped back to saying that, therefore, we have to pursue the highly volatile and uncertain extractive industry even harder.

People are drained of any remnant of enthusiasm for this old way of thinking and they pine for recognition of the real opportunities we do have for vibrant, localized and cooperative economies that benefit our families, communities and businesses.

Last May, people from across the Northwest Territories, convinced that a new vision is needed, came together with economists to explore localization of our community economies and what it could mean. They saw a viable alternative to a resource extractive economy, but one that must deal with two issues: climate change and poverty. This means changes to our economic model from a global one to a local one.

People were enthused. Localized economies enhance rather than degrade resources, target community people rather than transient populations, take a grassroots approach and support diversity. They are achieved by removing fossil fuel subsidies, following the polluter pays principle, refocusing towards diverse local enterprises rather than a single extractive

industry, and replacing the glamorized industrial model based on external investors to an economic gardening model with local people in mind. The gathering recognized that poverty and inequity are bad for our economy but that the NWT could alter tax policy – and I disagree with the A grade – so it is investing in sustainable economic infrastructure and social and cultural development. Attendees recognize that globalized businesses don't attend to local needs, highlighting why ownership is key. Public and cooperative ownership are ways to include local people and focus investment locally. This approach supports quality of life and the strengthening of social structures. In focus sessions, participants concluded that food systems are at the heart of localized economies and food security for everyone; that climate change, energy costs and health are three primary drivers of renewable energy adoption...

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BROMLEY: In focus sessions, participants concluded that food systems are at the heart of localized economies and food security; that climate change, energy costs and health are three primary drivers of renewable energy adoption; and that compared to oil and gas, renewables are investments in local jobs and businesses. Much work needs to be done to evolve government policy that recognizes and supports local economies.

In conclusion, the goal should be community empowerment that builds a strong local economic foundation and restores the commons. We need to take control of our destiny, invest in our collective strengths, and work together locally towards a brighter economic future. Now there is an economic approach that will address the Minister's fiscal challenges and all Members' goals of healthy families and communities supported by this government.

Let's get 'er done. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HOUSING ISSUES IN SAHTU COMMUNITIES

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to know why there are so many houses just sitting empty in the Sahtu communities. This is a common conversation I have when I meet with my constituents in the Sahtu, especially in Fort Good Hope. In Fort Good Hope there are rows and rows of empty houses and a long list of young people who are waiting for a house. Unbelievable. Here we have a case where we're not getting our act together fast enough to put these young people in these houses and fill these empty houses.

The latest NWT needs assessment paints a clear picture of the housing needs in Fort Good Hope and

the Sahtu communities. A study that shows you the dire straits of overcrowding, the health issues are a result of this fact and this spills over into other areas in our society.

The community leaders of Fort Good Hope have always wanted to do something with these empty houses. "Tear them down," they say, "or build new ones." We need houses for our people. There's provisions within the land claim that gives them the opportunity to build these houses and make it work for them, yet there seems to be some delay in movement within the NWT Housing Corporation to release these units. What is the problem? Can we really put people in homes? Is that a good measurable goal we can do, or do we continue to allow these empty houses to sit empty and do nothing?

I'll have questions for the NWT Minister of Housing on how we can clean house.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TRANSFORMATION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN NAHENDEH

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to hear the Minister of Health's statement on the transformation of our health system, but today I want to let the Minister know that we simply must ensure that our residents in Fort Liard and Nahanni Butte's health needs are taken care of. They want to be served by the BC Ministry of Northern Health in Fort Nelson, BC.

The Minister travelled with me in May and heard clearly from the residents that they are treated fairly and with care when they go to Fort Nelson. In fact, our residents have been treated in Fort Nelson for decades. They're only asking to formalize the process, recognize the Fort Nelson Hospital as a point of service. This will then allow our region to refer and pay for the travel costs of our residents.

Having health services provided as close to home as possible will lower the costs of health care in my region. It's a two and half hour drive from Fort Liard into Fort Nelson, as opposed to when they travel to Yellowknife it's a two day travel.

I have been standing in this House for three terms asking our government and our Minister of Health to authorize Fort Liard and Nahanni Butte residents to receive their health care in Fort Nelson. We have an agreement with Alberta Health, and we use all their facilities. What will it take to have an agreement with the BC Ministry of Health to serve our residents in Fort Liard and Nahanni Butte?

I will have questions at the appropriate time. Mahsi cho.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
EXPANSION OF NWT SENIORS FACILITIES

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, we all heard the other day that the population in Canada is aging. No surprise, of course, and the NWT is certainly not immune to those pressures. That's right. Stats Canada says one out of every six persons in Canada are over the age of 64. Heck, take the statistics in this room. Twenty percent of the MLAs are over the age 60. Stats Canada can see this, why can't the GNWT see this?

So, while the problem keeps getting ignored, Avens continues to be bursting at the seams when it comes to capacity, and as time goes on, it marches on, more seniors are on the waiting list at Avens, knocking on the door when there's nowhere else to turn. But what happens? They get turned away. Why does this keep being ignored?

Avens is maxed out, Mr. Speaker. I cannot keep telling you this because everyone knows it, and if something doesn't change, who knows what will happen?

We need more extended care beds because Stanton isn't going to cover them. Avens is offering a solution.

If this was a school, for goodness sake, we have policies to start looking at renovation plans or extension plans once they reach 75 percent, so why do they just pay lip service to our seniors? So, where are they to go? To the street, I wonder: I don't know. I could tell you about the 50 or more seniors on the waiting list, but no, the government already knows this, so there's nothing that seems to want to motivate them into action.

Typically finding a single partner is the biggest problem to these things, but no, they've got a partner, a partner that's competent, that can do the job and wants to do the job. So, what's the problem? Procrastination. I think that's all it is.

So, while the delays continue, and of course our elders population keeps growing and growing, and the need for 173 residential long-term beds is still at zero capacity because they're all full and we need more, well, this government, what do they do? They hire an expert, Dr. Hollander, who says in his report – the government's expert, by the way – "Yellowknife is expected to grow by 287 percent in the next 16 years." Oh, but that's too far away to talk about, let's go to 11 years away, 248 percent. Oh, 11 years is too far away to think about? Well, let's just get it down to five years from now, 184 percent growth in seniors.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Bromley couldn't be more right; it was a shame the way Ms. Lemay had been treated in her nineties. She's given her life, heart and soul to this community and she's shown the street, with no options. They're giving her temporary care but there is no solution.

To sum up, it can't go on any longer. This government needs to wake up to the seniors' problem. We must do something to the demand that's on our doorstep now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
MEDICAL TRAVEL POLICY

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to talk again about our Medical Travel Policy and I'd like to provide an example of where I think there may be a gap.

A patient has been assessed by a doctor and it's deemed they have to travel from one community to come to Yellowknife to have a procedure done – it could be any kind of procedure, it could be surgery – and it's deemed that they need a non-medical escort. So, a friend or a family member is called upon to accompany that patient. But when they get to Yellowknife, they find out that the procedure or the treatment that's planned is not available at that time. So, the escort is then left in the situation where the patient must stay but the escort needs to get back to their home and to their family.

I want to get to the bottom of a policy which, to me, seems very unfair. Someone, out of the goodness of their heart, agrees to accompany a patient to Yellowknife, finds out that the stay is going to be too long and they can't stay for the duration. But when they want to go home, they get told by medical travel, I'm sorry, if you're not travelling home with the patient, you're not eligible to have your cost covered. I don't think that's right. I think it would discourage people from helping a friend who needed a medical escort.

I will, later today, be asking the Minister of Health and Social Services if he could clarify for us what the policy is in a situation like this. I mean, it's very possible that the treatment or procedure that that patient was scheduled for could get changed for some reason. It could be any number of reasons. If the patient is not sent back to their home community, what happens to the person who escorted them here when they need to return?

I think it may be potentially a gap in the system that needs to be addressed, and I'd like to question the Minister about it in question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Colleagues, before we go on today, I'd like to welcome Mr. Roy Erasmus, Member of the 13th Legislative Assembly. Welcome back to the House.

---Applause

Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. McLeod.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to recognize my wife of 36 years and, Lord willing, another 36. I'm glad you're able to join us in the Assembly. My wife, Judy. Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome all visitors to the gallery today. We have some special guests visiting us from the Yukon. We have the Deputy Premier of the Yukon, the Honourable Elaine Taylor; her deputy minister, Murray Arsenault; and from the Premier's office, Jonas Smith; and I'd also like to welcome a former Member of the House, Mr. Roy Erasmus; and, again, everybody else who's with us. Thank you.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] I would also like to welcome the Deputy Premier from Yukon. I know that she has the ministry of francophone under her. I know that she has a lot of work, the same as we do, and I want to express my welcome to our House, our Assembly. Mahsi.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize three of my hearts in the gallery today: my loving partner, Ms. Lucyanne Kendo; a wonderful stepdaughter, Brittany Jewel; and my very smart grandson, Kayleb Black-Villeneuve. Welcome to the gallery.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize constituent Roy Erasmus. At least for the next couple of months he's a constituent of Weledeh. So, welcome to the House.

I'd also like to welcome the visitors from the Yukon. You know, we don't get nearly enough east-west interaction, so I really appreciate the visitors joining us in the House and visiting Yellowknife. Mahsi.

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

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome a constituent to the House today, Ms. Judy McLeod, and also thank her for all the work that she's done with our Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services throughout the region. It's very much appreciated.

I'm not sure if Hilda is still up there or not, but I want to recognize her and just say that I appreciated curling with her in all the government bonspiels over the years, and I just want to say thanks for her welcoming smile every time we walk down the halls to

our meetings, especially for the out-of-town MLAs when they come here.

Also, Mr. Murray Arsenault, a one-time Inuvik resident, welcome to the House. To all the other residents and people joining us today, I hope you enjoy the proceedings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, although I think Hilda is gone, but I did want to mention Hilda. She has been a stalwart person in Yellowknife for many years, beyond her work in the Assembly, so I wanted to recognize her work here and her commitment to the community.

I'd also like to recognize Ms. Elaine Taylor. We have had some meetings over the years. Also all the other representatives here from the Yukon. As Mr. Moses said, it's great to have communication between Yukon and NWT, Whitehorse and Yellowknife. Welcome to everyone.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. They've been recognized a few times, but I certainly wouldn't mind underscoring it just one more time at least a little further. I'd like to recognize Deputy Minister Arsenault. I've gotten to know him over the last few years. I really admire his hard work. He's had a great relationship with the Northwest Territories and I'm very thankful that we have someone in the Yukon who understands our problems as we learn about theirs. I couldn't think of a better team to take on the challenges in Ottawa than our good folks in the gallery here today, so thank you for your presence and, also, thank you for being a partner on our side, because we're certainly on your side too when we challenge Ottawa.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to recognize and thank all the visitors to the Assembly here. I want to name, of course, Hilda. She's not here, but I also want to thank her. Hilda is family. She's my first cousin. One of the things that I want to say is when I walk down the hallway into the office, Hilda always says, "No, no, this is how you do it. You've got to do this, this and that." So she keeps me on the straight and narrow. I also wanted to congratulate her on her retirement.

Also, to Mr. Erasmus in the gallery, too, and all the other people from the Yukon for visiting us over in the Northwest Territories. Hopefully, one day we'll get a chance to visit them over there.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you. I'd also just like to make a comment on Hilda Camirand and what a cheerful good morning we get as we go down the

Ministers' corridor to our meetings in the morning and just for being the encouraging and supportive person that she is. When I look around the staff and when I look around the Members, there are not a lot of people who predate Minister Miltenberger's and my arrival here. Mr. Schauerte is one of them. Hilda is one of them. There are not very many, and Hilda's been there for a long time. She's an institution and much appreciated by everyone.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. I'd like to welcome everybody here in the public gallery. Thank you for taking an interest in our proceedings.

Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Yakeleya.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 909-17(5): HOUSING IN FORT GOOD HOPE

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the question to the Minister of the Housing Corporation. Why are there so many empty houses in Fort Good Hope and how many empty houses are there in Fort Good Hope?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The Minister of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is we have an eight-plex in Fort Good Hope. I believe this is what he's referring to. That is empty. I think we're in the process of selling that particular unit. I think we have another eight units that we might be in talks with the local government about taking on these units.

MR. YAKELEYA: The Minister is correct on the eight-plex that is sitting empty and in the process of selling it in the community. I'm not too sure where it will be going to or which organization or person. It's been there for a while.

Why is it taking so long to dispose of this empty unit while there are a lot of people on the waiting list? Why are the empty units still sitting there while there are a lot of people on the waiting list to get into these units? What can we do to expedite this situation so that we can put people into houses rather than have them in other houses where overcrowding is a major health issue?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Every community has an allotment of public housing, and as we take the units out of stock, we have a disposal plan. We try to sell off the unit if we can. Those that we dispose of, with the new WSCC regulations we have to do a hazardous material assessment and abatement before we're able to dispose of those units. So it's added on a tremendous cost to our ability to dispose of many of these units. The Member and I were having a conversation where, back in the day, they'd

just come in with a backhoe, take the unit down and haul it off to the garbage dump. We don't have that ability anymore. So we're trying to come up with the funding to... It's almost double or even triple the cost in some cases, so we're challenged that way and our aggressive disposal plan is not as aggressive as it used to be. So we're taking steps to try and address that. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Certainly, the Minister and I were speaking this morning on why it's taking so long to dispose of these empty units, knowing that Fort Good Hope has a long list of potential tenants who want to go into these units and there's overcrowding. It's causing health issues; it's causing social issues and people want to get into these units.

Is the Minister actively looking at an expedient process where these empty units can either be retrofitted by the local community organizations or be torn down? Like the Minister said, in the old days it was good because you could go in there, knock the houses down and build a new one. Now we seem to have more bureaucratic red tape costing us more, so it's more difficult to replace these units or sell them off to the local government. People want these empty units filled either by building new ones or tearing them down.

Is the Minister looking at an expedient process for this to happen in Fort Good Hope?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The eight-plex that's in Fort Good Hope, I'll get the update on that and share it with the Member. I'm not sure where we're at with that.

As far as the other units go, I'd have to get an update on those. If there are some there that we deem are write-offs, we will sell them if people want to take them on and try to do some renovations themselves. We've had that done in the past. I'll get an update on all of the units that are in Fort Good Hope and the status and where we're at with those.

Again, we're challenged by the fact that we have to do an assessment and remediate a lot of these units before we dispose of them. Thank you.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a TV program called Clean House where they come in and they take all the junk out of the house and people sometimes have a hard time letting go of some of their junk in the house. It's almost like this Housing Corporation is letting go of some of their junk in the House here. So, I know this can be done because in my hometown of Tulita the Housing actually did a very good job of turning over these empty units to the community corporation real estate. They actually bought these units, fixed them up and rented them out.

Can this happen in Fort Good Hope where the Housing Corporation can go and say these units can be turned over to the community? The community is waiting to purchase these, build them and get these young couples into these houses. That's what they're waiting for. So, can the Minister clean house on this issue?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you. We'd love to clean house, but again, we're faced with some of the challenges of the proper assessment and remediation. We would be more than pleased to sell these units to a community group as we did in Tulita and they took on responsibility of those units. I think they were in the process of renovating them and they would rent them out and they would collect the revenues. We're more than willing to partner with communities where we have a lot of these vacant units, and if there's an opportunity for them to take those off our hands and fix them themselves then we have other opportunities to possibly look at putting new replacement public housing in the communities. We're faced with many challenges and we've continued to try and address those. We understand that it is an issue across the NWT, so we're looking at taking on that challenge head on. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 910-17(5):
ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACT

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Public Works and Services. I'd like to follow up on his statement yesterday.

Yesterday the Minister gave a statement outlining some of the things we have done to reduce energy consumption, and I was pleased to hear the progress that's been made. However, until a long overdue energy efficiency act is in place, our performance as a territory will be hit and miss.

We know that an act is not about to happen during the life of this Assembly, but the Minister at least promised a discussion paper towards such an act, but where is the promised document for our review? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister of Public Works, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the information here in the House with me on how far along the department is in producing a discussion paper for the Assembly. I will talk to Public Works today to find out if I can get an update for the Members in the House and provide that early next week. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I'm not quite sure what to say here. The Minister seems to be unaware of this, and yet this is fundamental to reducing our energy costs and so on.

Will the promised discussion paper be ready... I can't even ask the rest of my question so I'll have to stop here, Mr. Speaker. The Minister doesn't have any information. I'll have to say I'm very disappointed. We need our government to be on top of these important issues. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. That was more of a comment. Mr. Moses.

QUESTION 911-17(5):
REGIONAL SENIORS' MEETINGS

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just following up to my Member's statement earlier, and there are some really good Ministers' statements here as well. One was from Justice in terms of using an elder in some of our work that we're going to be doing in the traditional healing and enlisting Aboriginal elders in the aspects of their cultures and traditions, focusing on traditional healing in the corrections facility. Also, when I mentioned that meeting that we had in Inuvik, we had discussions of the regional wellness councils, and elders who were there spoke up and said that they would really love to be on those regional councils, as well, but they had a lot of concerns, and I guess, just the whole aspect of having that regional meeting.

I'd like to ask the Minister responsible for Seniors, what is his department doing to create more regional meetings like this throughout the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have a fairly positive working relationship with the NWT Seniors' Society and we have provided funding for some meetings and some of the functions that they're undertaking.

With respect to facilitating the exact type of meeting that the Member is talking about, I will talk to the department to find out where we are with those kinds of supports and I will get back to the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MOSES: In terms of an action plan, I know there is a Seniors' Handbook that's out in the communities. Can I ask the Minister, is there an action plan for seniors? As he heard here today, there are housing issues and even issues in terms of long-term care facilities and beds. Is there an action plan for our senior population over the next five, the next 10 years? One of my colleagues mentioned the increased population, you know, five years from now, 11 years from now, even further down the road. Is there an action plan to address some of these issues moving forward? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We don't have an action plan per se. What we do have is Our Elders: Our Communities framework which focuses on seven different priority areas: healthy and active aging;

home and community care services; integrated and coordinated services across the continuum; getting people to work together, as the Member has described; caregiver supports; elder-responsive communities is another initiative that we're working on with communities and partners; and ensuring that there's sustainable best practices available for all of the care providers and residents of the Northwest Territories.

We are also working on the development of an NWT Continuing Care Service Delivery Action Plan, which will focus on facilities and where we need to be building facilities, recognizing the large increase of seniors we are going to be seeing over the next number of years. This project is going to help us figure out when, where and how to build facilities to meet those needs. So, there are a number of different things happening, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MOSES: My experience that I had at the meeting over the summer, just being in attendance – I wasn't there for all the three days, but I sat in and listened to some of the discussions – and the passion and concern of these elders speaking up and not really having the confidence. Within government and other areas of leadership, something needs to be done so that with the Continuing Care Action Plan that the Minister is discussing, would he welcome some of the senior populations from the regions to sit in on the discussion of an action plan to help to address the real issues in the small communities and at the regional level? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: As I've indicated previously, we have a really positive working relationship with the NWT Seniors' Society, who represents seniors from across the Northwest Territories and the board actually has representatives from people from across the Territories. We work closely with them and are always seeking their input and guidance. I am happy to meet with seniors' societies across the Northwest Territories to get their input. The services and programs we are talking about are ultimately for them and it's important to make sure they are engaged. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we come to an end in the 17th Legislative Assembly, would the Minister responsible ensure that this is a priority of the 18th Assembly? Would he commit that our seniors' issues, such as elder abuse, housing and services in some of the small communities are a priority in the 18th Assembly so when the new government comes in, they can hit the road running and address some of the issues our elders are dealing with? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: This is obviously an incredibly important issue in the Northwest Territories, especially recognizing the rate in which our seniors

populations are increasing. It's something I have asked to be included on the Cabinet's transition document so it is brought forward to the future government. If I'm fortunate enough to be back, whether I'm on that side of the House or on this side of the House, it's still a priority for me and would continue to be a priority for me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 912-17(5):
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT REVIEW

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Transportation. I would like to follow up on my Member's statement and ask some questions about the Deh Cho Bridge review, which is apparently not now coming. I would like to ask the Minister, first of all, if he could please explain to me the answer that I got from him that he and Cabinet had decided that the public did not deserve a report which had been promised by the previous Transportation Minister in 2011.

I have to ask him, what is the value of the promise of government and why did you decide the public did not deserve the analysis that was promised? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I don't believe I said that the community or the public did not deserve a retrospective analysis. I indicated that we had done some work with the Auditor General in looking at the bridge at the point when we took the bridge over from another project authority and changed the contractor. We also had a report done by independent people, the Levelton Report that was done from the time the bridge started until we took over the bridge, and DOT had done a couple of reports on lessons learned. I felt that that was sufficient for us to move forward using that bridge as lessons learned on other major projects that would be undertaken. It isn't a matter of whether or not people deserved something; it was something we felt we could work with the information we had to move forward. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. I didn't suggest that... I think it was my statement that the public didn't get what they deserved. It was a public commitment in the House to do a retrospective analysis and then there was a decision by the executive, by a Minister and I guess the rest of Cabinet, not to go through with this.

So my question is again, which I think the Minister chose to ignore, what is the value of promise by government?

The Minister mentioned a whole bunch of documents. I have a list here that is probably about six or so documents, but why should the public have to go

searching all over the website, all over the GNWT public site looking for documents to find out why this project didn't proceed as planned? I would like to ask the Minister, in that particular instance, where is it – I know there is no spot – that the public can go to get a fully inclusive retrospective analysis of the Deh Cho Bridge Project. I don't believe it's there. There is no one report which covers everything and I want to ask the Minister why that is not there. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: We do have that information on our DOT website. We felt that individuals who wish to determine what the issues were could find that information in a lot of different places. We looked at a retrospective analysis as a tool for ourselves when we move forward. It appeared that the main issues that people in the House felt that there was something wrong with the Deh Cho Bridge. What we were saying is the issue was that the contractor changed midstream, that the project authority changed in midstream. That is what seemed to be the issue.

As far as the department goes, we felt we did a very good job. We put a project in that is very valuable to this city, valuable to the people of the Northwest Territories. It makes travel a lot easier and we felt it was a very good piece of infrastructure. It appears as though individuals are indicating that that may not be such a good piece of infrastructure. We put information together from lessons learned so we could do a better job on other projects, but it wasn't something that would be there for the individuals to see and say exactly what happened.

Everything that happened with the Deh Cho Bridge was very public. There is more information, and if individuals want specific to what they are saying what they see as an issue, they can make that request. Members can make that request and we'll comply. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I don't believe I was suggesting that the bridge was not a good project. By the time the government took over the project, I believe it was extremely well managed and it has become an excellent piece of infrastructure. That's not the issue. The issue is that the project started under a veil of suspicion and it continued under that veil of suspicion for quite some time.

There is no analysis, to my mind, that's been done, looking at all the documents I got from the Minister. There's nothing that looks at the project from its inception from the 15th Assembly when it was first discussed, from the transition from the 15th to the 16th when the contract was signed and then on into the 16th until the government took it over. There is nothing which I can go to or direct the public to go where they can see what sorts of things happened and what went wrong.

I would like to ask the Minister, there were lessons to be learned, absolutely. The lessons that were learned by the department were from a review team and specific to the building of the bridge. I don't have a

problem with that. My problem is what lessons were learned from the very inception of the bridge project. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I don't know specifically which lessons were learned from the very inception of the Deh Cho Bridge, but we do have lessons learned. They are on the website. We have made several presentations. The department of highways and marine division of Department of Transportation made a presentation on the Deh Cho Bridge Lessons Learned. That is on the website. Retrospective Lessons Learned on the Deh Cho Bridge, again prepared by the Department of Transportation, is on our website. The Auditor General's report is also on the website. We charted out the recommendations of the Auditor General's report. Thank you.

MS. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have to say to the Minister that the only lessons that were learned were from the review team project. I quote from their report: "The analysis was based on the experience of the delivery team, and many more parts that included political, financial and legal issues were not looked at."

I have to ask the Minister, will he, once again, commit and fulfill the promise that was made by the previous Minister of Transportation and provide one report, a fully thorough and analyzed and retrospective analysis of the Deh Cho Bridge Project from inception to completion?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I can have that discussion with the department again. We felt like there was no real value in continuing to do a retrospective analysis. We are busy. There are a lot of projects on the go, and the department felt that with the retrospective lessons learned and the Deh Cho Bridge lessons learned, the Levelton Report before we took over and the Auditor General's report at the point we took over were sufficient for us to move forward, was sufficient to provide information.

The Member is correct that doesn't cover the financial and the political perspective of what occurred with the bridge, and I'm prepared to put that information together to provide it to the Member or put it on the website.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Colleagues, before we go on today, I'd like to welcome back to the Assembly Mr. Derek Tremblay, our former head of security here. Welcome back to the Assembly, Derek.

Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 913-17(5):
EXPANSION OF AVENS SENIORS' FACILITY

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said in my Member's statement today – and I gave the facts

and the numbers, and even the GNWT's numbers through their partnership with the researcher on Avens – the study Where to Go and What to Do, one thing is clear: a tsunami of seniors is coming and there's nowhere for them to turn.

As I said in my statement, if the capacity was similar to a school where once a school hit 75 percent full, it triggers a renewal of the school whether through renovation or a building of a new school, but yet we have no policy or solution for the seniors. Avens is 100 percent full right now, at least 50 on their waiting list with nowhere to go.

I want to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services, what are the delays that are stopping this government from making a formal commitment to address the seniors population problem and provide Avens with the necessary tools so they can provide the solutions for those seniors who need places to go?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The Minister of Health, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the numbers that the Member has put forward. I mean, they are department numbers. There is no question that the degree of increase of seniors in the Northwest Territories is going to be significant over the next number of years, but it isn't just a Yellowknife problem; it's a territorial problem and we have to look at this with a territorial lens.

We have been putting new beds for long-term care facilities in the Northwest Territories. We will have 18 beds in Norman Wells. We are going to have nine more beds in Behchoko, and we have put new beds in the Territories over the last number of years, including the Dementia Facility. At the same time, we are also partnering with the NWT Housing Corporation that is putting in independent living units throughout the Northwest Territories, five in the life of this government. That will make space available.

We are focusing on Our Elders: Our Communities, which is an aging in place strategy to help encourage and help support people who want to live in their homes.

All that said, we know we need additional beds, and over the last two years we have been working very closely with Avens, exploring a number of different alternative financing options to support the pavilion project which will increase the number of units or beds in the Northwest Territories significantly. We are committed to finding a solution. We will find a solution and we will find a way to support Avens as we move forward on that project. It's an important project that needs to happen.

MR. HAWKINS: It couldn't be said better than by the Canadian Medical Association president, Cindy Forbes. She talks about the growing rate of seniors. She also references the cost, where it costs \$1,000 a day, on average, in Canada to hospitalize and hold

seniors. Whereas if you find partners like Avens, it comes at a fraction of that price. She estimates average cost in Canada at fifty. Now, I know these are southern costs, but the ratio is the point, not the actual dollar number. Why is the government not realizing that?

My next question is: When will this government be willing to finally step up and address the Avens problem, which is an NWT problem because there are a lot of seniors there from the Northwest Territories, not just Yellowknife. In other words, when will this government be willing to step forward to make that final commitment to address the overpopulation of seniors and the inability to meet those needs?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: As I've indicated, we've been working very closely with Avens over the last few years. We've even presented options and they've presented options back. At one point in time, we were talking about working with them to utilize the extended care needs and an extended care facility here in Yellowknife as an option to help them leverage some money to build their long-term care facility. At that time, that was declined by the board. I'm happy to say that the board has actually re-engaged and they are now interested in having dialogue and discussion about the possibility of merging those two opportunities, and it is certainly something that we're open to.

As I've said, we work very closely with Avens. We're in the process right now of actually taking all the work that's been pulled together to figure out how we can move forward and exploring all the different financing options that have been presented to us by Avens and other groups to make this a reality. As I've said, this is incredibly important. We need to make this happen. We're working with our partners. We're going to continue to work with our partners and we will find a way to make this pavilion project a reality.

MR. HAWKINS: Avens presently has 29 beds. They want to extend it to 60, and of course, they have bigger plans than that. But you know what? They see what's in the near future. They've got over 50 on their waiting list. I won't go on at length, but our population is growing to 184 percent in five more years. We're not meeting the demands. We couldn't start the planning, reviewing and building and meet that challenge that's presented to us in five years if we did something today.

Again, I'm going to ask the Minister, when is the government going to make a formal commitment so Avens can march forward on this particular project? We cannot wait anymore. Catastrophe is on the doorstep of seniors. Who is going to take responsibility for this tragic end?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: At the current time on the Territorial Admissions Committee list for Avens we have 13 people on the wait-list to get into the Avens facility, so there is clearly a need. We know that when the facility in Norman Wells and the facility in

Behchoko opens, we may have some opportunity to move some people back to their initial or home communities, which we are hoping will take off some of the immediate need on Avens.

But at the same time, as I've indicated, and I'm going to indicate again, we're working very closely with Avens. We have a number of options and opportunities in front of us. We need to explore them and we will come to an agreement with Avens, and at that time we will be prepared to make announcements on when and how we're going to move forward.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Territorial-wide, territorial-wide, the growth in five years in seniors is going to be at 150 percent. All the beds that have been created today and all the beds they think that they're going to create tomorrow still won't meet that demand. The Minister can say we're going to shuffle seniors around the room, around the territory to solve the problem. It is not meeting the challenge.

Will the Minister just be honest in this House to say are they going to make an agreement with Avens and when, because they cannot wait any longer. I can't wait any longer. The seniors can't wait any longer. As I started, and I'm going to finish, this tsunami of seniors is on our doorstep and they're crashing away because they've got nowhere else to go. They demand their government to act.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: As the Member indicated in his opening comments and following up with his questions, Avens is a territorial facility and it has a number of people from across the Northwest Territories. As we make beds available in Norman Wells, as we make additional beds available in Behchoko, we do believe, and we have a fairly solid understanding, that some of these individuals will move. That will take off some of the temporary demand on Avens, but it doesn't eliminate the demand. I've acknowledged that today.

We are working very closely with Avens. We will continue to work very closely with Avens, exploring all the possibilities and financing options. We're committed to getting this done and we will get this done. There will be an expansion to Aven Pavilion, and we believe it will be done in the appropriate time given resources, timing and agreements with Avens.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Abernethy. The Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

QUESTION 914-17(5):
NWT ADDICTIONS TREATMENT FACILITY

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Minister of Health and Social Services. Addictions and its effects in the NWT are a big problem. It's sad to see many of our people struggle, and like many, we are compelled to try to do something. Chief Roy Fabian and his council on the

K'atloodeeche First Nation were trying to do that. We have an unused and empty facility on that reserve.

Will the Minister commit to working with Chief Fabian and his council to consider reopening the treatment centre? Mahsi.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 2011 the Nats'ejee K'eh Board funded an organizational review, which made many observations about the issues at the facility that impacted negatively on programs, clients and staff. We worked closely with the board to try to find some solutions. Unfortunately, they were unable to implement any of the solutions to improve the situation there.

In 2013 the executive director advised that no further intakes should take place due to the risk of client safety in that particular facility. When that happened, we were in no other position than to withdraw funding from that facility and prioritize it into other area that it was going to meet immediate demands.

We recognize, as I said the other day, that the people of the Northwest Territories want a continuum and a range of services, including on-the-land programming, community treatment, community counselling-type treatment in communities. We've offered the Matrix program and we have contracts with four southern facilities that are providing those services that we've never been able to get through facility-based treatment here in the Northwest Territories.

Having said all that, I have been working with the chief of the KFN to try to find a solution for that building. We've funded them \$44,000 to hold a workshop in 2014 where they brought residents from across the Northwest Territories together to discuss possible options, not including a treatment facility but a wellness centre, a training centre for mental health and addictions, a spiritual centre for Aboriginal people, as well as possibly the home location of what will be the future of a mobile treatment option. All of these seem reasonable. We discussed those with the chief at the time. Even the chief, at the time, indicated that they did not want to open a facility; the facility they had had too many challenges and even their board were the ones who directed that it be shut.

I'm absolutely interested in having a relationship with KFN to find a way to use that building outside of a dedicated treatment facility and we will continue to work with KFN to do that. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: I'd like to thank the Minister for his reply. Can the Minister expand the fundamental issues in terms of having customized made-in-the-NWT treatment programs? Can the Minister explain to this House the cost deficiencies in terms of having customized addictions programs here in the NWT versus sending people down south? Mahsi.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you. At any given time here in the Northwest Territories, even when Nats'ejee K'eh was in fact opened as a territorial treatment facility, we have approximately 12 people in treatment at any given time. As I explained earlier this week, we have 12 people going out and they're going to a wide range of programs that we haven't had in the past. Nats'ejee K'eh offered one sole program. We have a women's facility; we have a men's facility; we have a facility focused on narcotics and other drugs.

What we do know is at this time those facilities in the South are costing us around \$150 a day for a wide range of programs we've never been able to offer, whereas Nats'ejee K'eh was costing us \$420 per person per day, which is significantly higher for a very limited program where people and clients were not safe. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: In the NWT we pride ourselves on made-in-the-North solutions and we always try to be independent in terms of trying to aspire to make things work here for us.

Why can't we have our own people treat our own people in addictions to help them recover and at least reach a productive life in communities and in the NWT? Mahsi.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We do do that. As I indicated, when the Minister's Forum on Mental Health and Addictions went out, we heard a number of things: made-in-the-North solutions, on-the-land programming, community counselling, all sorts of different options. People wanted a variety and a range of programs. Facility-based treatment is only one of those options.

We provide money to different Aboriginal governments and organizations around the Northwest Territories to have custom made, regionally specific, culturally appropriate made-in-the-North programs for our residents and those programs are seeing some positive results. We also have community counselling positions and many NGOs who are doing incredible work across the Northwest Territories with a real focus on the North. We also have programs like the Matrix, which are community-based treatment programs with no facility that are being delivered around the Northwest Territories by Northerners for Northerners.

We have responded to the Minister's Forum on Mental Health and Addictions, which was very clear, a wide range of programs, options that are available and we have moved down that road.

I still think the facility, the Nats'ejee K'eh facility, has a great opportunity to provide some service, whether it's a wellness centre, whether it's a training centre, whether it's a spiritual centre of some capacity, something that is going to benefit all people of the Northwest Territories, and we're open to having those discussions with KFN. We just don't feel that, at this point, re-establishing it as a treatment facility that has

failed over and over again is going to provide any benefit to the people of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's very clear and there's no denying that we have a huge addictions problem in the North.

Will the Minister admit that we do have a problem and that the treatment centre is one solution and that the treatment centre should be reopened? Mahsi.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: There's no question that we have challenges here in the Northwest Territories with mental health and addictions. Addictions is rampant throughout the Northwest Territories, and in direct response to the Minister's Forum on Mental Health and Addictions, we're taking the actions that were directed by the people of the Northwest Territories, who said support on-the-land programming, get community counsellors in the communities and regions, make sure that we have a wide range of programs and options. Treatment facilities are but one, and in the Northwest Territories, treatment facilities have failed every time that we have tried to open one. They've failed because of staffing reasons, high cost, \$420 per day compared to southern facilities at \$155, safety issues that were clearly articulated, and underutilization.

These facilities in the South are run and successful because they can maintain a very, very large number of clients at any given time. Poundmaker's can take between 80 and 100 people, which helps them bring in psychologists, psychiatrists and permanent staff who can really work with the clients. We don't have that capacity.

So I'm not going to commit to reopening Nats'ejee K'eh as a treatment facility. I will commit to working with the community to finding a use for that facility that will benefit all people, something like a wellness centre, a training centre for mental health and addictions, or a home location for what will be our mobile treatment option at some point in the future, but not reopen it as a treatment facility again because we've failed and we'll continue to fail. We don't have the capacity. Let's do something that's actually for the benefit of our people rather than just result in another failure. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 915-17(5):
MEDICAL ESCORT TRAVEL POLICY

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services as well. In my Member's statement today, I talked about a scenario that could occur where a non-medical escort accompanies a patient to Stanton, or I suppose it could be to Edmonton, and they get there

and the programed treatment for the patient changes for some reasons and the person who is the non-medical escort, out of the goodness of their heart, has probably taken time off work and is there doing this as an unpaid service.

When the program changes and the person who is the escort needs to go home, what are their options for that cost being covered? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Minister of Health, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When an individual travels as a medical escort with a patient, there's an expectation that they will stay with that particular person. We do know that we have people going out for really long periods of time and we actually have a policy that says after 21 days escorts can swap out and we cover those costs. However, if an escort wants to leave before the designated swap-out person, they are technically on the hook for recovering the costs.

Now, we do recognize that the situation the Member is describing has happened and can happen. So, we do have an extenuating circumstances policy in place that says if you go and something happens, like the patient's stay is extended and it adversely affects the escort, we can work with them to make sure that they wouldn't necessarily have to pay back. But if they choose, and there's no extenuating circumstances, they're on the hook. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: That is good news to hear that under extenuating circumstances the escort could find a way home at the government expense. If an escort is only accompanying a patient for a procedure or a surgery or something that's only anticipated to be a day or two, they may have agreed to it on those grounds, but if it turns out to be a longer period of time, how would that escort then, without having to pay out of their own pocket, access that return ticket? How would they do it? What's the process? Who is going to determine what the extenuating circumstances are? How long is that going to take to get approved? Those sorts of things. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: As in all cases, we would obviously need some confirmation from the medical practitioner that the patient's reality has changed. So the individual would have to work with the patient to get some recognition from the practitioner which could then be shared with the medical travel staff who can actually facilitate the return ticket or rebooking. How long it takes really depends on their ability to get the information to the medical staff, but we can make those things happen pretty fast. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: How much latitude does the person who works in medical travel who issues travel tickets have and are they aware of the discretion they have? In a real life case that I know of, the escort was told, I'm sorry, if you're travelling home

without the patient, you are on your own hook, and at the last minute they needed to get home and had to pay full fare for their ticket and so on. So, are the people who issue the tickets in medical travel aware of the fact that they can approve return flights under those circumstances? Do they have the authority to grant that? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We are trying to ensure that all of our staff are up to date, they understand the policies, they understand the policies that exist. We are actually doing a medical travel review and modernization to improve the medical travel experience. One of the things that we're doing is focusing on client service and making sure that all of our medical travel staff have gone through and are certified as customer service agents, which means they will be able to work better with our clients.

In the case the Member is describing, I would certainly be happy to look at it to make sure everything worked out, or if it didn't, we can fix it to make sure it doesn't happen again. We are trying to ensure our staff are trained. We are trying to ensure they understand the policies. We are trying to ensure they know what latitude they have. But at the end of the day, everything around medical travel is going to require some sort of medical practitioner's recommendation for changes, so we still need to make sure that the medical system is involved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like so many other government policies, this one needs common sense and it needs flexibility because there are probably lots of times when somebody is going to be an escort for a patient, if they are going for 21 days or more, in all likelihood it may not be practical or it may not be necessary for that escort to stay with that patient for that entire time. It may just be required that they travel with them, make sure they are delivered into the hands of a health care practitioner down there and they may not need someone to stay. You're not travelling with the patient, so your expenses aren't covered isn't a very good answer from medical travel. I don't know what my question is, except let's make it real, let's make it common sense and let's make it simple. Thanks.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I agree completely. That's what we are trying to accomplish through medical travel modernization. We want to have clear rules. We want to make sure people understand their obligations under the rule and understand the Medical Travel Policy, that they understand their roles, both as a professional and as a recipient and that it has the human component built in. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 916-17(5):
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR
POST-SECONDARY GRADUATES

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a follow-up to my Member's statement, I will have questions to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. As I indicated, and the Minister has indicated in the past that they are working to link with HR, has the Minister had any success in linking and contacting students with jobs that we potentially have in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Minister of Education, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. We have made some changes to our SFA application guidelines, and having a student's consent was a barrier over the past several years now to linking the students with the employers and working with HR. So now we have the opportunity. We have the students' consent to move forward, working very closely with employers and also the Human Resources department. There are also a Facebook page that allows employers to advertise jobs and work with our department to create opportunities for our students.

Again, in partnership with Human Resources, there is information sharing and some employment throughout the Northwest Territories about employment opportunities. These are the changes we've made. We have heard from Members in the past and now we are moving forward on that. It is making progress within our application guidelines. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BOUCHARD: Can I clarify a question with the Minister? So, now we have that checkmark in the application, currently we have the ability to contact those students when we have job positions from HR? We can contact the students that these are the positions we currently have in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: That's correct. We didn't have the checkmark prior to making those changes. Now we do have the students' consent to allow them to explore opportunities in the Northwest Territories and creating opportunities for them through the employers. So, yes, we are making progress in that respect. We want to attract those students who return to the Northwest Territories, whether it's an apprenticeship or other professional areas, and provide opportunities for them. That's our overall priority. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BOUCHARD: Sounds great, Mr. Speaker. Has the department made those contacts with HR? Have we started to make the links of linking those students with potential positions in the future, linking up what the students are currently taking with what we have in our inventory of positions in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: That's exactly what is happening between our two departments. Also keep

in mind that there is the employer aspect that we need to work with. We are dealing with upwards of 1,600 students and we need to identify who is graduating when, what kind of positions should be available to them in the Northwest Territories. Not just the GNWT, but other prospects and partnership opportunities within the Northwest Territories. There is also Skills for Success, improving employment success in the Northwest Territories. That's another initiative on the go that involves integrated departments to work together to improve those successes. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just wondering if the Minister can give me more information or indicate to me whether we are linked to all other departments in the NWT, Justice, HR, Housing, some of those positions where we know we need a certain skill set that we want, not just for highly educated people but also for tradespeople. Are we linked to all the sectors and all the private sectors? Can the private sector come to us and say we would like to put this job out to the students of the Northwest Territories? Are we able to take that information and pass it on to our students? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Since we got the consent from the students, now we have the dialogue with the interdepartmental discussion we are having, whether it's the Housing Corporation, the housing maintainers or any other positions within departments and also outside the Government of the Northwest Territories, private agencies and public agencies as well. So those are discussions we are currently having since we got consent from the students. Yes, we are having the dialogue with the respective parties within the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 917-17(5):
PROTECTED AREAS STRATEGY

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Without question, the recent announcement of the draft Protected Areas Strategy caught the resource industry by surprise with clear word from the resource industry that the Northwest Territories was no longer safe to do business with. My questions today are for the Premier.

Can the Premier indicate how does this recent unchecked announcement from the Premier's Cabinet as a goal to conserve 40 percent of NWT's land mass support his vision of a strong and prosperous territory? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a Member, he's been around a long time and should

know we have had a Protected Areas Strategy that was developed in the 1990s. When devolution occurred, we devolved and evolved and we've taken that Protected Areas Strategy and reviewed it and served our northern priorities. It is a draft document and those have been put out for discussion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOLYNNY: The Premier is quoted, "We need a solid framework on which to build this potential. The Mineral Development Strategy is that framework."

So, to the Premier: How is limiting up to 40 percent of land going to support an increase in mineral exploration? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The appropriate term is "balanced development." We've always said that we would have development while protecting the land and environment at the same time. With the draft Conservation Strategy, it allows for up to 80 percent for development. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOLYNNY: The Premier is also quoted in the Mineral Development Strategy: "The new strategy represents a commitment. The NWT is serious about addressing our investment challenges and unlocking the mineral potential of the territory."

Can the Premier share with the House, how does this draft Protected Areas Strategy not conflict with our ability to unlock dismal mineral exploration numbers? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We have quite a number of strategies. We finished the Economic Opportunities Strategy, Mineral Development Strategy that the Member is referring to. We also have a Land Use Strategy Framework, and the Member knows that the lack of investment or the downward turn in mineral exploration is something that's happened across the world. It's an international problem.

I have said many times that we will have balanced development. A priority is to settle land claims, and there will be up to 80 percent of land available to development when it is all said and done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The recent draft Protected Areas Strategy has been deemed by some as a clear indication of this government: we are closed for business. If indeed some truth, Mr. Speaker, what is the Premier prepared to do within our limited time in the 17th Assembly to correct this characterization of his government? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We have been working with a very large group in developing this draft plan, so it shouldn't have been a surprise to anybody. We've reached out and had a number of meetings with the Chamber of Mines, Chamber of Commerce and other organizations. Also, we have to keep in mind that settling the land claims is very important. We want to

do it as quickly as possible. There's 144,000 square kilometres of land as part of the interim land withdrawal, and once those land claims are settled there'll be additional land available. As I said, it's a draft document and it'll be a transition document and it will be dealt with the 18th Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 918-17(5):
TRANSFORMATION OF HEALTH SERVICES
IN NAHENDEH

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to follow up on my Member's statement wherein I spoke about Fort Liard and Nahanni Butte residents accessing health services in Fort Nelson, BC. I just wanted to speak with the Minister of Health and Social Services with regards to that.

He was travelling in my constituency in May. He heard from the residents about the type of care that they do get from Fort Nelson. Part of the barrier there is that they're not being referred there. They're going there and they have been using it for decades, but their travel costs aren't being covered to go there to access that health care. So, I'd like to ask, the Minister had agreed at that time to review it, to work with his officials, to see what can be done about accessing the health services in northern BC.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The Minister of Health, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Canadian residents, the residents of Fort Liard can receive services anywhere in this country with no cost as long as it's medically necessary. So if they travel down there for a doctor's appointment or if they travel down there for an emergency situation, those costs are actually covered through reciprocal billing.

What I believe the Member is talking about is when members of the community choose to go to Fort Nelson as opposed to going to the health centre, they want their travel covered. Our recommendation is that we use the health facilities here in the Northwest Territories first and that they go to the health centre. If they get a referral out, we do cover those costs, but we don't have an agreement with the Government of British Columbia to provide additional services to residents of the Northwest Territories.

I have asked my department to have some discussions with BC at the admin level to figure out what steps would be necessary to do that. We haven't made it very far, unfortunately, and I don't really have too much of an update for the Member at this time other than the fact that we are looking at it to see what needs to be done in order to allow us to do some referrals, if possible.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: When the Minister talks about using our health services in Fort Liard, that's an entirely different question, because the Minister is well aware of the other concerns with regard to people not trusting or else being dismissed by our Fort Liard Health Centre, but that's an entirely different issue altogether.

What I'm talking about is when Alberta had the Capital Health Services we had a written agreement to use their services, their facilities, with our medevac services, et cetera, and now they're called Alberta Health. I'd just like to ask the Minister exactly what type of arrangement or agreement do we currently have with the Government of Alberta with regard to health.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The Government of Alberta, the Alberta Health Services is our primary partner in the delivery of services. They do most of our diagnostics around things like MRIs, they are the specialists that we send our residents to, and they have a direct link and cooperation with our practitioners here in the Northwest Territories and agreements that allow them to share information, where appropriate, as long as it falls under the Health Information Act and the Access to Information.

We have agreements in place that allow us to work together and refer to them. We don't have those same agreements with BC. It would take negotiation to set up those types of agreements, and we've got to do, obviously, cost-benefit analysis on that and make sure that those agreements are actually going to provide some value.

In the meantime, I do remind the Member as well as the residents of the Northwest Territories, and particularly Liard, as you travel outside of the Northwest Territories and you do go to hospitals or health centres outside of the Northwest Territories, those costs are recovered under our reciprocal billing and you shouldn't have a cost. Where we've run into a difficulty with Fort Nelson is they don't have the ability to refer back to the Northwest Territories for things like home care, physio, occupational therapy or any of the additional programs that we provide above and beyond what is consistent across this country.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I'm very pleased that at least the department is beginning the process of trying to understand the situation about having Fort Liard and Nahanni Butte residents having a travel cost. I think that's the biggest issue, because the Minister is right; we do have reciprocal billing and we do have an agreement throughout the provinces that our health care cards are recognized in BC as well as Alberta, but it's just a matter of getting there, seeing the services. Like I said, they've been doing it for decades. They're familiar with the doctors and the dentists in those communities in northern BC.

I'd just like to ask the Minister once again, can he commit to have his department seriously look at this issue and see how much further we can go about

delivering health care close to home to the residents of Fort Liard and Nahanni Butte?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I'm happy to have the department continue and re-engage in some dialogue with BC to see what it would take, but I do put some provisos around that. When a resident of the Northwest Territories chooses to go outside of this province for medical treatment that's available in this province, we don't cover that. What we're talking about now is whether or not we can cover people for referrals, somebody who's actually accessed and engaged in the system, so not people who are just making choices to travel outside but where there's been a referral or something, we're certainly willing to have those discussions.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, I can say unequivocally on behalf of the residents of Fort Liard and Nahanni Butte that they're not choosing to go there. It's just that over time they've developed trust issues about service of health delivery within our own system. But aside from that, if we can develop this base, the residents have a working relationship already. I'm just asking our government, let's formalize this, let's work a way around it, let's continue supporting our residents getting the proper health and close to home delivery of health care that they can.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We're committed to providing health and social services in the Northwest Territories as close to home as possible, and I hear the Member that we have some issues with Liard and the trust issues. I'd say that it's going to be important for the future Ministers and the existing Minister as well as Members to work with our communities to find out how we can overcome some of those trust issues and re-encourage some trust and faith in the system that is available here in the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The 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. Miltenberger.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 324-17(5):
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),
NO. 2, 2015-2016

TABLED DOCUMENT 325-17(5):
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES),
NO. 3, 2015-2016

TABLED DOCUMENT 326-17(5):
LETTER DATED MARCH 13, 2014, TO CHAIR,
STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
OPERATIONS REGARDING COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS – BILL 24: AN ACT TO
AMEND THE LIQUOR ACT

TABLED DOCUMENT 327-17(5):
LETTER DATED SEPTEMBER 5, 2014, TO CHAIR,
STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
OPERATIONS REGARDING COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS – BILL 24: AN ACT TO
AMEND THE LIQUOR ACT

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following four documents, entitled "Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2015-2016;" "Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2015-2016;" a letter dated March 13, 2014, to the chair of the Standing Committee on Government Operations regarding committee recommendations on Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act; and a letter dated September 5, 2014, to the chair, Standing Committee on Government Operations, regarding committee recommendations on Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 328-17(5):
GNWT RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE REPORT 19-
17(5): REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE 2015
REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA
ON CORRECTIONS IN THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled "Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 19-17(5): Report on the Review of the 2015 Report of the Auditor General of Canada on Corrections in the Northwest Territories."

TABLED DOCUMENT 329-17(5):
INFORMATION AND PRIVACY
COMMISSIONER OF THE NWT
ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Pursuant to Section 68 of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, I wish to table the 2014-15 Annual Report, Information and Privacy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories.

I would also like to recognize, colleagues, Ms. Elaine Keenan Bengts, the Information and Privacy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, who is present in the gallery here today. Thank you for visiting our Legislative Assembly, Ms. Keenan Bengts. Item 15, notices of motion. Mr. Yakeleya.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 49-17(5):
DISSOLUTION OF THE
17TH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Tuesday, October 6, 2015, I will move the following motion: now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that this Legislative Assembly request the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories to dissolve the 17th Assembly of the Northwest Territories on October 25, 2015, to permit polling day for a general election to be held on November 23, 2015;

and further, that the Speaker transmit this resolution to the Commissioner.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Mr. Bouchard.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 69:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ACT, NO. 2

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Kam Lake, that Bill 69, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2, to be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 69, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2, has had first reading.

Item 19, second reading of bills. Mr. Abernethy.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 68:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT, NO. 2

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that Bill 68, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act, No. 2, be read for the second time.

This bill amends the Child and Family Services Act to remove all references to the Child and Family Services Committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 68, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act, No. 2, had had second reading. Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 68 moved into Committee of the Whole.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 68 is moved into Committee of the Whole. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 45, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act; Bill 49, An Act to Amend the Deh Cho Bridge Act; Bill 56, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2015; Bill 59, Estate Administration Law Amendment Act; Bill 60, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act, No. 2; Bill 61, An Act to Amend the Public Airports Act; Bill 62, An Act to Amend the Coroners Act; Bill 63, An Act to Amend the Victims of Crime Act; Bill 64, An Act to Amend the Co-operative Associations Act; Bill 65, An Act to Amend the Safety Act; Bill 68, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act, No. 2; Minister's Statement 221-17(5), Sessional Statement; Tabled Document 281-17(5), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates, 2016-2017; Tabled Document 324-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2015-2016; and Tabled Document 325-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures) No. 3, 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 a Whole to order. What is the wish of the committee, Ms. Bisaro?

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We wish to deal with Tabled Document 324-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2015-2016; and Tabled Document 325-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures) No. 3, 2015-2016, and, Mr. Chair, we'd like to start with the capital estimates, which we did not conclude yesterday. Thank you.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Alright, committee. We'll commence after a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Order, committee. I'd like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. With that, we'll continue on capital estimates as agreed upon earlier. With that, I'll turn it over to the Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services to see if he has any witnesses that he'd like to bring into the House.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

Thank you. Minister Abernethy, for the record, if you could please introduce your guests.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you. Here with me today are Debbie DeLancey, the deputy minister on my right; and Derek Elkin, the assistant deputy minister on my left.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Ms. DeLancey, Mr. Elkin, welcome back to the House. Committee, as I indicated, we're on page 37 with the Department of Health and Social Services. With that, we'll start with general comments. Is committee prepared to go to detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Committee, we'll defer page 37, capital estimates. I turn your attention to pages 38 and 39, capital estimates, administrative and support services, infrastructure investments, \$44.134 million. Does committee agree? Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A couple of questions here. First of all, I wonder if I can get an update on the Child and Family Information System. I'm sure a mass of information was provided, but for clarity this is something we've been trying to get done since midway through the 16th Assembly. I know we've tried a couple of times and failed during this Assembly, even though the money was budgeted. I would be concerned if this was a modification of the

current system, which we know is not worth the paper it's printed on. So I'm just looking for an update on what exactly is involved here with this. I think it's our third attempt during this Assembly. Thank you.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We're not looking at rebuilding the existing system in any way, shape or form. We're actually moving forward with an all new system. I know that we have begun the internal work, have started on this particular project, the project planning. Working groups have been assembled, including professionals that will be utilizing the system. Communications and change management work has begun. I can also say that we have actually chosen a preferred vendor and we're currently in the process of negotiating the contract. I believe the contract negotiations will be concluded in December, at which point we will be moving forward with the work on the new system.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you for that update to the Minister. I appreciate that and I think it sounds like we're getting after it here. So, this is spread over two fiscal years. This will be finishing up the system, if that's what we're approving here today. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: There's money in the current fiscal year that we're in today and this is money for '16-17 that will take us through, hopefully, to conclusion of that project.

MR. BROMLEY: Just moving on, and I know, as a P3 project, the Stanton Territorial Hospital, I'm not sure if it's a renewal project, but a new project, is a P3 and, therefore, probably involves Finance as well as Public Works and Services. So far we don't have a good record for finishing our large infrastructure projects on budget. Most recently, of course, is the Inuvik-Tuk Highway, which is half built and already 15 percent above the promised cost. I guess one of the things that we hear about a lot and that we've seen with the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Optic Line, for example, is what's termed in the analysis literature on P3 projects as "cost creep," where the government keeps shifting what the cost is and says they're meeting those costs.

So, what checks and balances are in place to ensure that the cost of this facility does not go over, like has been our experience to date with large infrastructure projects? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I hear the Member's concerns around P3 projects and we have, before moving forward with this particular project, reviewed other P3s that were done for the construction of hospital facilities across the country and there have been some that have worked out not particularly well, but we also know that there have been some that have worked out. We've also reviewed the Auditor General's reports and other reports that were conducted on some of those P3 projects and we've moved forward, recognizing the number of the

recommendations that were put forward in those particular projects. One of the recommendations, I believe it was in one of the facilities in Ontario, is that you need to have a hard cap on the construction component of the P3 project and we have a hard cap of around \$300 million, maybe slightly over \$300 million of the P3 project to replace Stanton facilities. We also have checks and balances and teams put together to monitor the progress to make sure that we're getting what we want when we expect to get it, and some external reviews that will help us obviously ensure that we are meeting our commitment and the contractor's commitment moving forward to make sure that we get this facility that's going to provide high quality services to all the residents of the Northwest Territories over the next 30 years.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister. Perhaps just a quick follow-up on the monitoring teams. I think it's clear that we have a record of non-inclusiveness from the government for Regular MLAs with timely information.

What will be the responsibility to get the reports of the monitoring teams in a timely manner to all Members of the Legislative Assembly? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I know the Minister of Finance has indicated they will be providing updates to committees moving forward. That will be in the life of the 18th Assembly. I'm sure that the standing committees responsible and whoever happens to be on Cabinet will be able to set up a protocol to make sure information is being shared in a timely and appropriate way.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate the 18th Assembly will have that role as do we. We are, right now, talking about the 17th Assembly as we set this up and discuss this budget. I would like to know there will be a commitment to get timely information from these monitoring teams to all Members of the Legislative Assembly.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I believe the Minister of Finance has already made that commitment and we will live up to it accordingly.

MR. BROMLEY: Maybe I could just ask the Minister to commit to finding me where that has been documented.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. We'll turn our attention to Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will make it on the record here that we will provide that information. We will be monitoring closely the system designed with checks and balances to ensure compliance and a high level of implementation. We will commit to share that with committee now and on an ongoing basis.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger, for that clarification. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you to the Minister for that. I would like to know how many GNWT personnel are we letting go as a result of this project and do we have any indication of how many of them will be picked up by the new provider. Is it possible to get a breakdown of those according to the various areas? I know there is building maintenance and so on by a very committed bunch of staff there, part of our GNWT staff that we're losing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's projected to be nine positions that may be affected by this. I will not give the names and the specifics at this point because we want to give the CEO at Stanton the opportunity to talk to the staff and make sure they are fully informed before we release their position which will, in fact, identify the individuals. It is nine facilities maintenance staff. BHP will be taking over the facility's maintenance of the project effective 2018 when the facility officially opens.

MR. BROMLEY: So there is no other staff, just the maintenance staff. It will be all GNWT staff that will be taken over, just for confirmation. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: That is correct. There are positions in the facility today that are contract staff, whether it's laundry services or food services, dietary. Those are going to be part of BHP's facilities management and building management in the future, but they are not GNWT staff. Only nine GNWT positions will be impacted.

I would like to add, Mr. Chair, that this is a significantly larger facility than the one we have available to us today and we actually anticipate, in order to provide the full scope of services that are going to be in that building, requiring additional positions just like we needed additional positions in Hay River and other facilities when we've constructed them, there will be a number of new positions created as a result of this build.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Mr. Bromley, if you want to be put back on the list, just let me know. Getting back to questions on pages 38 and 39 on administrative and support services, I have Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do have some questions about the Stanton Project as well. Obviously, there is a bit of a balancing here. We, obviously, as Regular Members, had an opportunity to walk through Stanton, and there is definitely a need for improvement to the facility, and talking to some of the contractors that were bidding on it and were talking about bidding on it, a stand-alone building is probably more efficient and a more effective way to do this project.

I guess the difficulty comes in the fact that in the communities in the regions we kind of often see that

and say, okay, well, Yellowknife's getting a bigger health centre. I know it's a territorial facility, and I appreciate that, but I guess some of the difficulty that I'm hearing is what's going to be done with the old hospital. My understanding was that when we build our new facilities, we build them for the health care only, and then our own facilities, I'll use Hay River as an example, we're going to use our old medical clinic for office space. I was thinking, in Stanton's case, we'd be building a hospital just for the essentials, using the old hospital probably for the administration, just like we're planning to do in Hay River with the medical clinic, but it seems like we're doing a bigger project than that, which is difficult for us who are continuing to look for things in the regions.

I understand we're building a new hospital, but it's going to be a "have your cake and eat it too" scenario where there's a double whammy. You're getting a new hospital and you're getting a new upgraded facility in the community. There are probably some needs for that somewhere, but from a regional perspective, people are always looking at that and obviously criticizing it.

I know Mr. Bromley was asking those questions, and the Minister was talking about staffing, and obviously we have an issue in Hay River about our staffing. We originally started asking for 33 new positions, went down to 21 and then come back and we are about to be given a lesser amount. Before we get too far down the road, we should actually have some of those numbers of the staffing that a brand new \$350 million building is going to add for staffing. I'm assuming that Stanton is probably similar to the new Hay River Health Centre where things are separated and you already need separate staff, so the numbers will maybe be different. In Hay River we're seeing a scenario where the ER and patient care are separate right now, where they were together before, so we're seeing that type of increase for that at that facility. But we should know that going into Stanton right now. We should be doing some of those operational assessments right now so that Regular Members can understand the pressures that we're going to see in that health care.

The other question that I have, and I see the portable ultrasounds are in two areas in this budget and I'm not so much concerned about ultrasounds, but I'm just talking about equipment. I know in the South Slave we have a situation where we have a lot of people travelling from Fort Smith to Hay River and a lot of them are taking cabs and a lot of them are travelling there, and even some of those people in Fort Smith are talking about moving to Hay River because they're on a dialysis system. I know Fort Smith used to have dialysis. I don't know if it's an operational thing or we got it and they didn't, we took it from them or...

Why can't we run two dialysis systems in the South Slave? We're spending a whole bunch of money

transporting people, forcing people who are on dialysis who are ill to travel three times a week. It's probably costing us an arm and a leg. It's definitely affecting the care and concern of public because those people are actually talking about moving to a community where they're getting that service.

I think we need to look at that as far as getting dialysis back in Smith for the residents of those communities. Obviously, we appreciate the economic driver with those people coming into the community, but it's getting to a point where it's beyond that and beyond just a small economic driver. It's actually affecting people's lives. If we could look into that process, I think that's definitely a difficulty we have.

I'll just wait for the Minister's answers on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A lot of questions there. Just to be clear, the RFP for Stanton was prepared to ensure the broadest potential options for bidders to develop the most affordable and efficient proposal. The procurement process that we went through does not limit the redevelopment solutions. A full range of proposals were considered for Stanton, including renovation of the existing building and provision of a completely new hospital. A new build proposal was considered, provided that the proposed solution did not include demolition of the existing hospital, and addressed the GNWT's requirements with respect to the future development and long-term maintenance.

The BHP proposal included an opportunity to repurpose the existing Stanton Hospital at no cost and no risk to the GNWT. The developer in the BHP proposal assumes a 30-year commercial redevelopment marketing and tenancy for the redevelopment of this old hospital under a separate lease agreement with the GNWT. The GNWT will retain ownership of the facility, land and parking at the end of the 30 years. The agreement to lease includes revenue sharing with the GNWT over the 30-year life and also provides limits to ensure that any redevelopment is not incompatible with the delivery of health care services from the overall Stanton site. All security for the redevelopment is being provided by the developer's project company.

At the end of the day, when we were initially looking at the redevelopment of Stanton, we recognized that the bones of that building, the existing Stanton building, are still good and there's still an opportunity for the building. But, as I indicated, the RFP process was such that it allowed for options. The option that is before us came and it was the best proposal as far as efficiency, value for money, and it is the proposal that we'd be moving forward with.

I hear you on the staffing. The building is larger and it will require some additional staff. But as we are seeing with all expansions in all program delivery

areas, there's the "I wish I had," there's the "I would like to have," "it would be nice to have," "I need," and this is what actually is required in order to ensure that we don't go backwards. We look at those numbers. We try to assess those numbers, program areas. This isn't about program expansion, so we've got to make sure that we're not putting in positions in light of this incredibly tight fiscal environment that are expansion services but required to meet needs.

We are doing the thorough analysis of Stanton and future Stanton, recognizing that the building has room for growth over the years dependent on changes in populations, changes in demographics, all those types of things. So some positions might come later, but we anticipate there will be some positions that are going to be needed right out of the gate. We're doing that work to make sure that we can present a case that will be accepted by the future Assembly to support additional required physicians in that facility.

With respect to portable equipment, the ones on this particular page are related to the evergreening of equipment that has basically reached the end of its useful lifecycle. But I do hear the Member on his desire for two dialysis units in the South Slave. I will say that the Fort Smith facility, when it was built and designed, there is a room where a dialysis unit could be placed, and we are always monitoring and always evaluating to see when and if it's going to be appropriate to move a dialysis unit back to Fort Smith. There will need to be a certain level of demand in order to justify positions and the intense training that dialysis nurses have to undergo. A nurse from a regular unit untrained cannot provide dialysis, so we need to make sure that there's nursing coverage to meet the expectations of our clients, which requires a certain number of clients to make it happen. It's probably going to have to be a couple nurses. A dialysis unit is not one nurse and it can't run with one nurse.

Keeping all those complications and difficulties in mind, we look at our numbers. I hope we never get to a position where we meet those numbers in Fort Smith, but it could happen, and we are prepared to go that direction if and when we reach those numbers. In the meantime, we have to work with the residents who are affected, whether they're going to Yellowknife or whether they're going to Hay River, to find solutions that work for them for their health and well-being, recognizing that being a distance from dialysis can prove difficult.

I think I answered all the questions.

MR. BOUCHARD: I understand the proposal and the concept of building a new building. I guess no cost and no risk sounds a little scary to me in the fact that obviously the P3, there's got to be something in it for the private part of the equation, and at no cost. Somewhere along the line we're paying extra somewhere to retrofit that building or we're paying in a long period of time for extras. Somehow that retrofit

to the current facility, once we build the new one, is being paid for somewhere down the line. The GNWT has got to be on the hook somewhere. At no cost, I can't believe that would be true.

Another area I appreciate is in this project we are also talking about extended care. I am glad they planned for a place to put their extended care in a new building. I know in Hay River that process wasn't thought through by the Department of Health when they designed the new Hay River facility. We had to get that into the budget to extend that. I will be asking questions about that in the next section. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I think the extended care unit is a good example. We do learn from past mistakes and there is, on the next page, a request for money to build the extended care unit here in Yellowknife that would ensure we don't run into the same problem we ran into in Hay River.

Coming back to the management of the new building, the management of the old building will be taken over by BHP. They are responsible for leasehold improvements and tenant management. We don't have a cost related to any construction in that building. We do have an opportunity, depending on the tenants who are brought in, to have some revenue sharing on that. However, if we choose to utilize some of that room for our programs and services, there will be a discounted rate or discounted rent that we might have to be pay. So, there might be some future cost to leasing those buildings.

As far as the upgrades, that is on the facility maintainers and managers which will be BHP. Was there another question?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Carrying on with questions on pages 38 and 39, administrative and support services, Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to make a couple of comments. In the past I've made comments about some medical equipment. I think I've asked questions and made some statements in the House about when this department purchases new equipment, they send a lot of patients down south for specialized care, specialized appointments or checkups. I am trying to remember back, but I think the Minister mentioned that they were already in the process of looking at how many appointments where we send people down south and the cost-effectiveness of it and whether or not there's a trend for dialysis or cancer treatment or some other area. Since you are creating a new stand-alone hospital, maybe we should get an update, and if he recognizes any of these trends, maybe we could start doing those kinds of appointments here in Yellowknife, at the very least, rather than sending our patients down south. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are always looking at the numbers and the costs of sending people south versus finding ways to keep them here in the North. We are doing ongoing analysis. We haven't been able to identify anything appropriate as an immediate move to the Northwest Territories at this point in time. But in the construction and design of Stanton, we didn't want to limit ourselves to the future. So there is room within the proposed build that would fit something like an MRI, as an example. In the plan of the new building, there is a section that is designated for where we put the addition on to house an MRI should we reach that point. We may well reach that point. The numbers are changing all the time and some day we might reach it, but we're not there yet.

We have an immediate need to expand things like dialysis here in Yellowknife where there is a significant number of residents who require dialysis. We are working with the Stanton Foundation. I would like to applaud the Stanton Foundation, who is currently out fundraising for four new dialysis machines that could be put in this new hospital. When that happens, we will have to seek some operating dollars. We are on top of trying to monitor trends to ensure we have the ability to provide acute care services for all residents of the Northwest Territories.

MR. MOSES: In terms of the medical equipment, it kind of goes to what my colleague Mr. Bouchard mentioned as well. We do get a lot of medical travel which has also been a topic of hot discussion in the House. Whether or not we can put some equipment into the regions, for instance, seeing what we might be able to get up in Inuvik. With the cost of travel and adding an escort on to that, the costs doubled bringing people down, whether it's a first appointment of follow-up or checkup appointments. Maybe it's a possibility to see what inventory we have in the communities and if we can start putting that type of equipment in the communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The line the Member is referring to is the medical equipment biomedical evergreening. Much of this can be quite small, Mr. Chair. Some of it is small machines, some larger machines. Some of it is diagnostic machines and some are more complex. We are always looking for ways to bring the services as close to our residents as possible. We have to acknowledge that it's not just machines but specialty expertise, specialty employees who come to us who have particular training who sometimes have to come to these machines. It's a little difficult to talk about this category with respect to machines because the nature of these machines is so varied, so significant, but we are always looking for ways to bring these services closer.

You will note that there is a portable ultrasound on this page and that is intended to go to Inuvik and help improve some of the X-ray services they are providing up there.

MR. MOSES: That is leading into my next question with the portable ultrasound machines in Inuvik, Simpson and Smith. It seems like it's a very important piece of equipment in terms of detecting any kind of disease or disorders that can be life threatening.

Can the Minister tell me how many communities have these portable ultrasound machines and why we're not getting them into more of the communities, especially the regional centres? On top of that, do we have people staffed and trained to operate these machines? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The portable ultrasounds is in response to a policy that was put forward in 2006 by the Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians. There are new national standards for emergency rooms and these portable ultrasounds will be going into emergency rooms. We've already got the one we need here in Yellowknife and we're looking at Inuvik, Fort Smith, Simpson – Was it Simpson? – Hay River, my apologies, to be in – you're right, Simpson – the emergency units. They do require some specialty training that we're not in a position to ensure that our community health nurses throughout the Northwest Territories have, so they won't be going into the community health centres at this point.

MR. MOSES: Just looking at some of our regional centres, does Hay River also have one and does Norman Wells have one? Do these regional centres have the staff trained to utilize these portable ultrasound machines? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: There will be one in Hay River. It's incorporated into the new build as part of the plan there. There will be one in that community. At this time there isn't one scheduled or planned to be in Norman Wells, given the nature and degree or scope of that particular facility.

MR. MOSES: Just to follow up, do we have the people who are qualified because of the new standards, who are trained, and do we have the adequate staff to use these in the communities? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: You forget to answer a question and you get everybody coming at you from all sides. Yes, the training is incorporated. I apologize for missing that. Sorry.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Continuing on with questions, pages 38 and 39, administrative and support services for the Department of Health, I have Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm going to maybe touch base on some of the earlier questions,

only more so for clarity and so I can get the fullness of the detail provided.

First off let me say that I want to applaud the decision-makers on going forward with the new building. Part of the issue I had was I was speaking with two of the bidders when it came to three preferred folks to make a final proposal. Two of them told me it would be a lot cheaper and a lot faster to build a new building. I know a lot of emotion is probably attached to Stanton, and rightly so, but I think it's important to ask ourselves was it the right choice, and I think it is at this particular time. I also find it really interesting, the clause of the old building will not become a burden on the territorial government or the taxpayer and I think that that was quite an interesting initiative that certainly years down the road that it's going to play out in a way that I certainly hope it will, but the idea of having the proponent manage, take all the risk and the GNWT shares in some revenues, it's really an interesting concept. So I hope in 34 years or whenever that contract is done that they look back and say that that decision wasn't just a good one, it was an incredible one. Like anything, only time will tell.

My first area of questioning is going to be in the area somewhat as Mr. Moses had just pointed out. I'm curious about what new services are being identified. I did hear the Minister say about they're thinking ahead with things like space for an MRI if that becomes the issue of the day that we need to now offer that service. I also heard him say the possibility of allowing more room for dialysis machines.

Can he maybe speak to the types of programs the hospital will be in a position to expand towards on day one? New changes that is. I'm not talking about floor space and an ER that's bigger than it was before. What I'm talking about is what will be new and what is it preparing for. I'd like to know what programs we'll offer new, as well as the staffing component that must have been examined when they considered this, because no designer worth their salt would have just drawn a hospital and said okay, we'll figure it out from here. They would have had to have known exactly what program areas we needed and where we were going and they also need to know the complement of the staff required in this. So, that said, I look forward to that first set of questions. Thank you.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We've been clear that this isn't about adding any new services to the Stanton footprint at this point in time. It is a replacement of all the in-patient beds through newly constructed single patient rooms. There is a new larger emergency department allowing for more appropriate flow, patient engagement, things to help us address decontamination, isolation, those types of things. There is also a new larger medical laboratory with space for diagnostic imaging. We aren't planning

an MRI in there, but we have asked that the ability to add a footprint for an MRI be incorporated into the site design and the plans so there's room for the MRI.

We're incorporating into the building enhanced medical technology to modernize some of the hospital operations. We're looking at, in this facility, sort of trying to build upon where we started in the existing Stanton where space became a giant issue, things like a chemo suite that will be in the new hospital. So it's not a new service, but it will be done in a far better way and the area will actually be truly designed for the purpose and the intent. The same is true of the dialysis. There will be an area designed for dialysis that was designed as a dialysis unit as opposed to a room that a wall was knocked down and a dialysis unit was tossed in there.

So it's planning about flow, it's planning about the services, and the units will have room for some level of expansion over the 30 years of the life of the building, or the life of our contract with BHP.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you. Anything new almost sounded exactly as what's been said before. So, I guess there's really nothing new per se.

What is the change to our complement of the staffing levels that we will experience in the new facility? Could the Minister, maybe not this present second per se, give me the exact number, but what's the ballpark number we're working with at Stanton and what is the ballpark staffing complement number we'll need for the updated facility? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We don't want to get into the same situation we had in Hay River where there was a lot of early projections without the thorough analysis. Once again, we're not adding new functions, but recognizing that the building is larger and that we're designing units that are actually going to be focused on patient care and have a better layout, better flow, we anticipate that there will be increases in positions over the 30-year life of that particular facility. Over 30 years it could be anywhere from 50 to 100, but on day one I couldn't tell you what those numbers are going to be. We need to do more analysis and we are in the process of doing that work today.

MR. HAWKINS: It was reported on CBC North, and I thought it was an interesting comment, and not just a plug for CBC North on at six o'clock with Randy Henderson – Randy can thank me later; I'm waiting for his Tweet – that said, in all seriousness, the Ontario Auditor General had pointed out performance problems with the contractor as basically the lead of this initiative. I mean, in essence it really talked about probably cost creep, although I haven't had a chance to read the report, I certainly will be looking towards it later on. In essence, the performance of these two hospitals that were built in Ontario went well and above the original cost scope and predicted budget and of course it looked like, from the story that I read, that the size of the hospital was compromised

probably in a manner to keep the costs from growing well beyond reach.

That said, has the department had a chance to go through these Auditor General reports? I mean, these contractors would have, of course, put their best case forward by saying oh, we're the greatest contractor, we can build hospitals day in and day out any day of the week and deliver a great product, but if they have a history of running into cost overruns and there's lack of oversight on the performance of these particular contracts, how does the department plan to mitigate this? It's easy to say, well, that's Public Works' problem, but ultimately it's somebody's problem and it runs through the Department of Health who is asking for money. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you. The Department of Finance has taken the lead on the financing of this particular project as well as some of the monitoring and overseeing.

I do know, without question, that the staff of the Department of Finance did review those audits that were done in other jurisdictions because we wanted to make sure that we did not relive or redo the same mistakes that were done in other jurisdictions, which goes to the comment the Minister of Finance made later about some of the overseeing that's being done on this particular project, some of the checks and balances that have been put in place.

We also do know, and if you read that report on CBC further, that one of the recommendations that came out of that particular report was a hard and fast cap on the construction costs, which is something that we've built into our contract. So we actually have a hard and fast construction cost cap on the facility construction itself so that the build won't cost more money than we anticipated, but it's going to take, as the Member was saying, a thorough analysis, constant checks and balances. The Minister has already committed to keeping committee informed about progress, steps, checks and balances. It is important for us to read those reports, those Auditor General reports from other jurisdictions so that we can be as informed as possible to make sure that we don't relive those mistakes made in other jurisdictions.

Just as a final note, we also know that there have been hospital projects similar to ours where there has been a great deal of success without those cost creeps or other problems. I would say those jurisdictions have also learned from the mistakes of others to make sure that we get what we ask for, what we're paying for over the short and long term.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you very much. Sorry to compare the two projects, but of course the Inuvik-Tuk Highway had a hard number, as well, and we're having a hard time swallowing that one too. So I fully agree and think it's fair that if we change the scope midway through where circumstances beyond control gives us the chance, but again, those are things we'll

have to deal with, or somebody will have to deal with as time goes on.

The only thing I want to say is I want to reiterate the two comments I made at the very beginning of the statement, which were the new building, I'm very glad with that process. It's the one I wanted. I was worried we would get a renovation while patients were trying to be served. I thought from the start it was impractical.

The last part I want to point out is that the old building will have a service life. It's an iconic figure in this community and certainly the territory and it would be a shame to see it bulldozed over, so I'm glad to hear that it will have a life beyond the opening of the new hospital, a life that doesn't carry any risk on the GNWT.

My understanding is Minister Miltenberger may have had a role in playing that no risk part in, so if he did, I hope he's still here as an MLA serving in 30 years to evaluate the contract to see if it worked out. I have no doubt he'll be here in another 30 years if given the chance, assuming his wife lets him. Of course, that probably means Mrs. Groenewegen will be wanting to keep running too.

In all seriousness, the new building is excellent news. The old building risk taken off is fantastic.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Committee, we're on pages 38 and 39 of your capital estimates. Administrative and support services, infrastructure investments, \$44.134 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Pages 40 and 41, community health programs, infrastructure investments. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm not going to belabour this section very long. I just need to clarify a particular thing under the extended care 18-bed facility being anticipated to be here in Yellowknife. One of the particular issues that has arisen is the competitiveness of these opportunities.

Can I get the Minister's commitment to this House that it will be a competitive tender process whether it developed through a partnership with Avens or it's developed as a government project or some other way? The point is, I want to ensure that this extended care facility is an open and competitive contract, our contractors can be involved in it and at least take a shot. I hear, time and time again, that although they don't like it when they lose – make no mistake, they don't like it – the fact is, they like it even less if they don't get to be involved in the bid.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The extended care facility is going to be an important facility here in Yellowknife. We need to get this

approved so that we can have the 18 level 5 beds that are currently in the Stanton building but will no longer be in the Stanton building. As far as construction, Public Works and Services will be the lead on the procurement of that particular facility, so I'm not really in a position to say anything at this point on how they'll proceed.

I will say that there has been some interest expressed in this building already. By way of example, Avens has indicated they would maybe like to enter into a partnership where that extended facility can help them move forward with the construction of a long-term care facility. We've indicated that that's something we're open to, but obviously before any decisions can be made on that, a solid business case would be required. First things first though. We need to get the project approved so that we can ensure that there are the 18 level 5 extended care beds available in Yellowknife for the day that the current Stanton closes and the new Stanton opens.

MR. HAWKINS: I guess I go to the Minister and, hopefully, maybe if he doesn't want to answer, maybe the other Minister will answer it, or somebody will take responsibility for it, which is: Who can confirm or commit to the House that there will be a competitive process in this particular initiative?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Like I said, there has been some interest expressed by Avens to utilize that facility or utilize that opportunity to help them move forward with the expansion of their long-term care facility in Yellowknife. We've indicated we're open to that discussion. If that is something that comes to fruition, obviously it might change our ability to do an open competition as Avens would be the builders and not necessarily us, so I can't commit on behalf of Avens on how they intend to move forward with the procurement.

If that does not work, we will certainly want to have an open and transparent process to ensure that we get the best building we can for the dollars that we have available.

MR. HAWKINS: I hear the Minister but I worry he's not hearing me. The issue is it's not about Avens and if the government decides to contract directly with Avens for services for the extended care level 5 beds. Albeit it's not as if it's a competitive market in the city where we've got 50 seniors' agencies scrambling at the door saying we want a chance. We really have one. Sorry; two. I should say it this way. You have Avens and you have the Government of the Northwest Territories. You have one or the other who wants to take on the challenge.

That isn't the issue, and I want to be very clear, but the problem really boils simply down to the fact that if the government is now offsetting its, sort of, problem with this one by finding a partner who's willing to carry the weight or the crux of the issue and follow through on the success of it, that's great. But the fact is we're giving them the money, government money, public

money, taxpayer money, and they're going about it in a way that probably creates great frustration in the community. I can't say they will. I want to stress that. I can't say they won't. I don't know. But I can tell you, when you are in business, be it in Yellowknife or anywhere in the Northwest Territories, and the government gives, I stress by way of example, \$10 million for another group to build a facility that will then come up with a long-term contract, they see that still as government money. If the government enters into a \$10 million, \$20 million, \$30 million project by way of contracting spaces, beds, leasing, whatever, they still see that as government money used to pay for that whole facility.

If any agency enters into sole-source agreement, they just see it as, de facto, the government has chosen to steer or redirect government taxpayer money without a competitive process, and that's what I'm trying to avoid. I'm trying to see that we have a competitive process. Yellowknife is the one market community where we have a competitive community. It's not as if it's in Fort McPherson where you may only have one or two people who can do these types of things, or you're in maybe Fort Simpson where, again, you're very limited on your options and choices. The everyday citizen sees it as government money going through. It's not the issue of Avens being the partner or the deliverer of the solution. It's about how we get the construction portion and component of it, and that is a great concern. We have construction companies in the city that have more than enough skills and competence to do that, and that's the type of assurance we need. I'm sorry to go on at length, but I need to ensure that it's explained very well where the issue lay. It doesn't lie with Avens.

The final thing I'll say on this area is that if any agency wants to enter into a contract with the Northwest Territories government, I mean, essentially they do it at their own choice. We could put in our agreement with them that they have to have a competitive process on that. That's a choice we can make how they do that. To say that, well, it's up to them, actually I disagree. If they want to provide the service, which I certainly hope they do, because I believe they do a darn good job at it, we can say at the beginning that you have to be competitive and that is the minimum expectation we have in that area.

I know we have a lot of contractors. We even have some formally of Hay River who would like to be involved in this initiative and opportunity just to bid. I'm looking for some type of assurance I can go back to the folks in this community who own construction businesses who want to play a role in this, because these opportunities don't come along very often.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Obviously, the procurement will be led by Public Works and Services, but moving forward from a Health and Social Services perspective, whether we're partnering with somebody like Avens or looking for other

opportunities, we must ensure a cost-effective business case and we must go with the most appropriate development delivery based on value for money.

I agree with the Member; transparency is necessary and having the ability to have an open and fair process is important. I take the Member's point around having a proviso in there that even if we do work with somebody else that it has to be open and fair is important. I will certainly share that information with the Minister of Public Works and Services. I'm pretty sure he heard it.

MR. HAWKINS: I thank the Minister for that answer. Is there any commitment that we can get that that will be the process followed?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: It's a little difficult for me to make a commitment to bind future governments in this particular case since the procurement won't actually happen until the life of the 18th Assembly. But as I said, I will certainly share that information. The department has the information. I'm sure the Department of Public Works and Services has heard what the Member is looking for. I will commit to ensure that that information is shared.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Hawkins. Okay, next I have Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I welcome the Minister and staff here. I would just like to get some definition or characterization, so I'm using the right terms, of things like extended care versus long-term care, maybe a level of care. Could I get just a crash course on a few of those terms? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am happy to do so. Extended care facilities are what we refer to as level 5 and provides services to residents with complex medical needs who require 24-hour nursing care and a range of supports from other health care professionals. An example of this would be a resident who is on a ventilator who requires care from a registered nurse and a respiratory therapist. These residents' medical needs may become quickly unstable.

Long-term care facilities, which we refer to as level 3 and 4, provides services to residents with more stable medical needs that require access to 24-hour nursing and health care professionals to assist with personal care and daily activities. An example would be residents with dementia who require a safe and secure environment 24/7.

Within completion of the operational plan and functional program, it was determined that 18 beds is the optimum level for staffing level of level 5. So that would be 16 extended care beds, one palliative bed

and one respite bed in the extended care facility that we're talking about today. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MR. BROMLEY: Could I get an inventory by those categories for, say, existing ones for Yellowknife, Hay River and Fort Smith?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We have the 10 extended care beds at Stanton currently and other than the Dementia Facility... Sorry, that's it for extended care. So, 10 extended care in the Northwest Territories at this point in time.

For long-term care beds, we have eight in the Tlichó, 22 in the Beaufort-Delta in the Inuvik Hospital, none in Norman Wells at this point in time, 26 in Fort Smith, 25 in Hay River, 17 in Fort Simpson, 28 in Aven Manor and 28 in the Dementia Facility. Then at the hospital we have 10 extended care. So there are 151 long-term care beds and then 10 extended care beds. With the construction of the facility in Behchoko, there will be 18 long-term care beds and we will have 18 long-term care beds in Norman Wells, so we are moving those numbers up as we speak.

MR. BROMLEY: I think the Minister can see that there is a huge gap in the capital where we've known for years that the rate of increase is much higher than anywhere else in the Northwest Territories. I appreciate the commitments I am hearing him make to the extent that he can for trying to get after those, but even this 18-bed facility on anywhere near a comparative basis leaves Yellowknife in the dust. I would recommend that the department sit down and start bringing some fairness to this equation and start thinking on the scale that the data clearly shows is required. That's a comment.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I agree with the Member; we need to make sure we are getting in front of this and we are working very closely with Avens to find some solutions. We are exploring a number of different financing options that are available. They have expressed an interest in a partnership opportunity in the extended care which would help leverage moving forward with the 60 beds they want to provide here in Yellowknife. I know they're working with the Housing Corp to talk about the renovations of the existing facility once they have a facility to move people in.

This isn't just a Yellowknife problem, I'm sure the Member will acknowledge. The Beaufort-Delta, by way of an example, is incredibly tight as well. We are actually out for RFP right now. I think it's going to close next week, looking for someone to help us do the facilities planned for the Northwest Territories to help us figure out where we need facilities and how to move forward.

Having said that, I acknowledge that there is an immediate need in Yellowknife and I am working with Avens right now to get them into the capital planning process. We need a business plan; we need some cost estimates; we need to understand the O and M

costs; and we are hoping, assuming that none of these other options like the extended care work out, to still work closely with them to get them into the capital planning process as quickly as possible.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister for those comments. The other gap that is out there is that there are many seniors, because of their income levels, who would never be able to get into these facilities that we are imagining.

What role does the Minister see government playing in the small Northwest Territories economy at working to provide private facilities or encouraging private facilities? Those who have the financial resources, families who have financial resources can have an option to support their elders with the care that they need, but they are unlikely to get the same support from a government institution. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: A couple of things. Your income doesn't really affect your ability to access government funded long-term care facilities in the Northwest Territories or extended care. So it doesn't matter if you make a ton of money or have no money, it's based on need. So I'm not sure I understand that particular question. Hopefully the Member will be able to help me understand where he's going with that.

On the other side, there is nothing stopping a private business from opening up a long-term care facility and charging whatever they feel an appropriate market rent or market fee would be to do that. There's nothing stopping anybody from doing that. Having said that, I absolutely acknowledge that there aren't any, which means there may be some barrier out there to dissuade some individuals who are interested in opening a privately run long-term care facility with no government money.

As part of the review that I've asked to be done, I've asked them to do some analysis around that component, as well, to see whether or not some policy changes are required to help create some incentive or remove potential restrictions or barriers that private enterprise might see for opening up and running their own private long-term care facilities and charging whatever they feel is a reasonable market price. So, that is to be included in the review so that if there are barriers, we can find a way to work with private enterprise to create some economic opportunities and see some additional non-government funded beds here in the Northwest Territories.

MR. BROMLEY: That sounds good, Madam Chair. I would be happy to provide the Minister with some examples. I'm sure he's aware of them, but I'll refresh his memory for people who are not able to get into facilities because of an income barrier. I will leave it at that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Anything to respond, Mr. Abernethy?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Pardon?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Do you have a response to that? Okay, thank you. Health and Social Services, community health programs, infrastructure investments, \$16.343 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Now we'll turn to page 37, total infrastructure investments, Health and Social Services, \$60.477 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Thank you, Mr. Elkin and Ms. DeLancey. I'll ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

Does committee agree that we've concluded the Department of Health and Social Services?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. If we could turn to page 9, we'll deal with the Legislative Assembly budget next. Is everyone agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. I'll ask the Sergeant-at-Arms if he could please escort the witnesses and the Speaker to the table.

Welcome, Mr. Speaker. For the record, could you please acknowledge your witnesses today.

HON. JACKIE JACOBSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. To my right I have Mr. Darren Ouellette, director of corporate services. To my other left I have Mr. Tim Mercer, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Speaker Jacobson. If I could direct Members' attention, then, to... We'll defer page 9 and we will go to page 10, Office of the Clerk, infrastructure investments, \$200,000. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you. I see this item on here and I'm just wondering if we have some other capital expenditures. I know we've talked, the Board of Management, about doing some upgrades to the building. Have we completed all those upgrades for access? I know we've had people with disabilities come through, CNIB come through and stuff like that. Are there any other building upgrades that we're looking at doing in this upcoming year? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Mr. Ouellette.

MR. OUELLETTE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, the building accessibility betterments are underway. We're in phase two right now. We've completed phase one last year and that was primarily all of the work that was being done on the main floor area and now we're just looking at a second floor area where some of the doorways have been widened and the committee rooms and access into the Members' and executive areas and looking at the installation of

automatic door openers and whatnot. We're scheduled to complete that work by the end of this fiscal year.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ouellette. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Another program I know they've been working on is the signage in the whole area of the Legislative Assembly, the tourist booth, the museum and stuff like that.

Can we just get an update? Do we have anything coming up in the upcoming budget on that or is it just all this year's expenditure? I'm looking forward to seeing some of that completion.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Speaker Jacobson.

HON. JACKIE JACOBSON: Yes, all the signage will be completed this year.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Speaker Jacobson. Mr. Bouchard is finished. Anything further? Office of the Clerk, infrastructure investments, \$200,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Turning back, then, to page 9, total for the Legislative Assembly, infrastructure investments, \$200,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Does the committee agree that this concludes consideration of the budget for the Legislative Assembly?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Thank you, Speaker Jacobson, Mr. Mercer, Mr. Ouellette. I'll ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort these gentlemen from the Chamber. Thank you.

Okay, does the committee agree that we have concluded consideration of Tabled Document 281-17(5), Capital Estimates, 2016-2017?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Ms. Bisaro.

COMMITTEE MOTION 140-17(5):
CONCURRENCE OF Tabled DOCUMENT
281-17(5): NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
CAPITAL ESTIMATES 2016-2017,
CARRIED

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that consideration of Tabled Document 281-17(5), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates, 2016-2017, be now concluded and that Tabled Document 281-17(5) be reported and recommended as ready for further consideration in formal session through the

form of an appropriation bill. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The motion is in order and is being distributed now. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Question has been called. Motion is carried.

---Carried

Tabled Document 281-17(5) is now ready for consideration in formal session through the form of an appropriation bill.

Does committee agree, then, that we'll now proceed to Tabled Document 325-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2015-2016?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Opening remarks, Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm here to present Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2015-2016. This document provides for an increase of \$2.1 million to the capital budget.

The most significant items are:

1. \$1.5 million to provide the Department of Public Works and Services a capital appropriation to renovate office space in the YK Centre. This amount is fully offset by a lease inducement provided by the landlord; and
2. \$400,000 for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to provide funding for the increased costs for the new air tractor fleet due to the current exchange rate between the Canadian and American dollar.

I am prepared to review the details of the supplementary estimates document. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I would like to ask the Minister if he would like to bring witnesses into the Chamber.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. I'll ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses to the table.

Minister Miltenberger, for the record, could you please introduce your witnesses.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have with me Deputy Minister Mike

Aumond and deputy secretary to the FMB Sandy Kalgutkar.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. General comments. I have Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have some general questions to the Minister about the ENR expenditure on the US purchase of these aircraft.

My first question is: Why wouldn't we have hedged the major purchase of these assets and are we making that correction going forward? We know we have multiple payments to make in US currency and are we making that in the future so that we don't have to spend \$400,000 every time we try to make a payment?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. The whole practice of hedging is a separate, highly volatile profession of its own, and if we could, with any certainty, know which way things were going to go as hedgers, as has been pointed out, I'd probably be sitting in lavish luxury somewhere in maybe another locale. Be that as it may, we don't normally buy a lot of things in US funds and, no, we did not hedge, buy any dollars to hedge on this. Yes, we are looking at how we could possibly ameliorate that impact. But I would also point out that earlier in this process we came before the Legislature and we moved some money up to take advantage of an opportunity that saved us, about a year or so ago, about \$350,000, so things are close to balancing out. But the issue of hedging and having to pay money because of the exchange rate is something that we are, as I indicated, trying to ameliorate. I'll ask the deputy minister if he wants to add anything further, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. To follow up on the Minister's comments, the Department of Finance will set up a facility at an institution and we will explore opportunities to get more certainty into the costing going forward, but as the Minister said, it does come with its own risks. Depending on where you hedge the dollar, it could go up or go further down, so it's not without risk. But again, we will take prudent measures to mitigate our exposure going forward.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Madam Chair. Obviously, my next question is for Public Works and Services spending another \$1.5 million on more office space in Yellowknife. Obviously, this is a concern. I know we just built a whole building. I know we have millions and millions of dollars out there in rental

space in Yellowknife, and obviously, it's been key to me to do some decentralization and promote decentralization and now we're spending another \$1.5 million to do some more office upgrades.

Can the Minister just give me an explanation of this \$1.5 million being spent, and how often do we spend another \$1.5 million on office space in Yellowknife?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. This money in question is money that was provided to us as an inducement to help encourage and make lease renewal more of a possibility, so the money is sitting there in an account as an inducement given to us and we are just now seeking approval to put that money to use to do different improvements. Once again, Madam Chair, I'd ask if the deputy minister wanted to add anything further.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. As the Minister said, this is an inducement for a lease renewal for a leased property, not a property that the GNWT owns, so it's at no cost to the Government of the Northwest Territories so we were looking to... The only condition was that we had to do it in the building that the lease landlord owns and so we still need the appropriation authority to spend that money, given that the funds were already provided to the Government of the Northwest Territories. The request here is to see the legislative approval to spend the money for its intended purpose.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Any other general comments? Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd like to welcome the department here today, bringing forward another supplementary estimate before the House.

Kind of dovetailing on what we've heard earlier from Mr. Bouchard regarding the additional costs here for the 802 bombers that we're purchasing, I tried to pay particular attention to some of the description used earlier as to how come we kind of know this was coming. We know this was a multi-year purchase and that these airplanes are bought in US dollars. That's a given. That's how the industry works. But I want to zone in on one of the things that was said today that the deputy minister indicated, "We're looking for a facility or institution for more certainty." Can I get an explanation of what that really meant?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. By "institution," I mean one of the banks that we deal with, and the facility would either be the hedge vehicle or another vehicle for which we could try to protect ourselves from currency fluctuation.

MR. DOLYNNY: If Members remember, last year we were accelerating the program to take advantage of, I believe, the dollar, I think, if memory serves me right, and now we're, this year, looking at a cost varied to the currency value.

I guess my question is: What did we learn from this project and what changes are going to be made to mitigate purchases of this magnitude, especially in US dollars in the future? Has the department managed to come up with a different set of policies or directives on how to deal with purchases in US dollars?

MR. AUMOND: I think the learning opportunity from this experience is, as I said earlier, we will look to set up an agreement with one of our financial institutions that we deal with to try to see what may be possible in terms of mitigating our exposure to currency fluctuations. At the time when we did this, we did the acceleration, we had savings of about \$335,000 US offset now against this requirement for \$400,000 Canadian.

We'll look to do that under the limitations that we have, given that for '16-17 the money will not become available for the government to spend until April 1st. So we'll have something set up prior to that and then be able to make a decision on what would be appropriate at that point in time. Again, I think this is, in terms of buying goods or services in US dollars, the exception to the rule. Nevertheless, we want to mitigate our exposure going forward.

MR. DOLYNNY: I give some credit where credit is due. This is a bit of an exception to the rule, but notwithstanding, I'm sure this is not the first time our government has had to purchase expensive items in US funds and I'm assuming we will continue to do so for years to come.

My role here as a legislator is to protect the public purse, and in doing so it's incumbent upon me to make sure the department is working towards the betterment of processes, the betterment of procedures so that we have a high degree of certainty when we do a desktop analysis as to what these projects will cost in the future. As I said, every year it seems to be something different with respect to these 802 Fire Bosses. This year now it's about the evaluation of the Canadian currency vis-à-vis the American currency, so I'm a bit disenfranchised that through it all we're still looking into it. We may see we still don't have a project or a directive or a policy that clearly says these are the things to do when we're buying items. These are the issues of hedging or whatever the case. Whatever you've heard from the previous Member here that clearly give Members on this side of the House when we're buying something for millions of dollars in this case.

My next question is that, if memory serves, this project was a little over \$30 million, I believe, a three-year period. We know that there's another installment coming forward in infrastructure possibly for next year. So, what does that mean for next year now? If the

dollar stays the same, are we going to be facing the same type of question next year for those who are going to be here and for the future 18th Assembly?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. The issue of buying in US dollars anything of significance, both gentlemen at the table here have a combined experience of over 50 years, and this is the first situation of this nature that either one, with that extensive experience, has experienced or been involved in. I have much less experience in the finance field but could add a few years to that as well.

As the deputy minister indicated, we are taking the steps with one of the institutions and a facility to be ready, should that need arise, and we're going to, of course, be prepared, and this has now been documented that if that issue comes up and as we move forward before we get to the stage of having to actually pull the trigger on some type of investment, the US dollars, between ourselves, the very qualified staff we have, all the experts we use and of course the due diligence and vigilance of the communities and the Legislature, that I'm sure that we will make sure that we are well prepared. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Anything further, Mr. Dolynny?

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the astute knowledge of the Finance Minister in reply, but the one question that was not answered is we know there's another installment of this project in the next capital budget. We know we're faced here with a discretionary amount due to a fluctuating dollar. We know that the original project was somewhere in that \$30 million range. My question was, and still stands, what do we anticipate for next year's appropriation and how does this affect the overall evaluation of the total project in terms of the cost? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Mr. Kalgutkar.

MR. KALGUTKAR: Thank you, Madam Chair. In '15-16 the total payment that was due to the contractor, based on the revised cash flow that we were able to negotiate, was based on a cost of \$8.9 million Canadian. But when that payment was required, that obviously had devaluation in the Canadian dollar compared to the American dollar, which is what's driving the need for this supplementary appropriation because of that item to actually come here. The amount of exchange rate required us to make the payment to increase the amount that was due to the supplier. Going forward, as Mr. Aumond said, we will have a facility in place with our bank to try to hedge the '16-17 and '17-18 payments due to the supplier. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Kalgutkar. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Again the question is still not answered. What does this impact have on the total cost evaluation or whole asset cost of the purchase of the 802 bomber program? Again, originally told and brought to the House as a project that was going to be a \$30 million project. Has that price, or will that price increase over the life of this contract? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. We are not that prescient that we can foretell what the exchange rate will be by next year, which is why we're going to set up this facility to help us try to hedge and hopefully pick appropriately as we're hedging what exactly it is we're going hedge and how much. So I appreciate the Member's concern. We can tell you what we've spent to date with the actual cost of what we came forward with, the money we saved by advancing the project last year to the money that it cost us with the exchange rate drop. All combined, that money has been paid. We can tell you to the penny now what that has cost us. The next installment we are going to be taking all the steps we've talked about here to make sure that we hedge against another type of loss related to exchange rates. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you. Again, I'm getting a very blurred response, Madam Chair. The money saved last year is definitely being spent this year. So at the end of the day, the net impact is zero. The question still remains with the two installments that we've had already on this project, there's a third installment left on these 802 firebombers. It's going to be a small residual left, according to the math if you're looking at the appropriations. Again, are we still on target of a slightly over \$30 million project for the purchase of the 802s? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. Yes.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. At this time I'm going to recognize the clock. We had not planned to sit beyond two o'clock. I let Mr. Dolynny conclude his general comments. We'll resume with general comments on this document when we come back on Monday. I'd like to thank Minister Miltenberger and his staff for their attendance here today and wish them a happy weekend. Colleagues, I'm going to now rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 21, report of Committee of the Whole. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 281-17(5), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates, 2016-2017; and Tabled Document 325-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures) No. 3, 2015-2016; and would like to report progress, and that consideration of Tabled Document 281-17(5) is concluded and that the House concur in those estimates and that an appropriation bill to be based thereon be introduced without delay. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Do I have a seconder? Mr. Bromley.

---Carried

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

Orders of the Day

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte): Orders of the day for Monday, October 5, 2015, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
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 48-17(5), Northwest Territories Disabilities Services
18. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 48, An Act to Amend the Mental Health Act
19. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 69, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2

20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Bill 45, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act
- Bill 49, An Act to Amend the Deh Cho Bridge Act
- Bill 54, An Act to Amend the Forest Management Act
- Bill 56, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2015
- Bill 59, Estate Administration Law Amendment Act
- Bill 60, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act, No. 2
- Bill 61, An Act to Amend the Public Airports Act
- Bill 62, An Act to Amend the Coroners Act
- Bill 63, An Act to Amend the Victims of Crime Act
- Bill 64, An Act to Amend the Co-operative Associations Act
- Bill 65, An Act to Amend the Safety Act
- Bill 68, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act, No. 2
- Minister's Statement 221-17(5), Sessional Statement
- Tabled Document 324-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2015-2016
- Tabled Document 325-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 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 Monday, October 5th, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 2:09 p.m.

