



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Session**

**Day 76**

**18<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Wednesday, May 29, 2019**

Pages 5649 – 5680

**The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Monfwi)

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

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Wednesday, May 29, 2019****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Blake, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Ms. Green, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. McNeely, Hon. Alfred Moses, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. O'Reilly, Hon. Wally Schumann, Hon. Louis Sebert, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Testart, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Vanthuyne

The House met at 1:32 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty):** Good afternoon, Members. Ministers' statements. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**Ministers' Statements****MINISTER'S STATEMENT 189-18(3):  
SENIOR CITIZENS' MONTH**

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. June is Senior Citizens' Month. As the Minister responsible for Seniors, I want to encourage all Northerners to join me in recognizing and celebrating the valuable contributions that seniors and elders make within our families and our communities.

With a focus on aging in place, the Government of the Northwest Territories has made it a priority to help seniors and elders live in their own homes for as long as possible by ensuring that the right kinds of supports are available to them.

For its part, the Department of Health and Social Services continues to make progress to advance the Continuing Care Services Action Plan, with a strong commitment to supporting healthy aging and enhancing home and community care services for our territory's aging population. The department is currently working on the Home and Community Care Review, which will help build a roadmap for where and how to make investments in homecare to help support aging in place. This work includes reviewing gaps in services for each region and community in the Northwest Territories, analyzing demand, and jurisdictional reviews of models and protocols.

I have said it before in this House, Mr. Speaker: seniors and elders are the fastest-growing segment of our population, and one of the challenges that we face is limited access to suitable or affordable housing across the territory.

On this front, our government is making steady progress in the right direction. The NWT Housing Corporation recently completed and released a Seniors Planning Study that provides an overview of the current seniors' population and housing context in the Northwest Territories. Key findings of the study indicate that many seniors in the NWT face core housing issues. Armed with this information, the NWT Housing Corporation is looking at ways to improve the delivery of the Contributing Assistance for Repairs and Enhancements, also known as CARE Program, such as using local housing authorities to deliver repair and maintenance services in communities.

Improving how we deliver programs and supports to elders and seniors is important, but equally important is continuing to work closely with our Indigenous governments and community partners to improve supports for senior housing in our territory.

Mr. Speaker, there are two additional days of recognition within Senior Citizen's Month that I would like to highlight, as well. June 1<sup>st</sup> is Intergenerational Day, which is a day for all of us to reflect on the importance of embracing intergenerational relationships in our communities and our homes. We know that fostering healthy and respectful connections between people of all ages improves our ability to share traditional knowledge and culture, build resiliency, create safer communities, and address social isolation.

To support these efforts, the Departments of Health and Social Services and Municipal and Community Affairs are funding a three-year pilot project, Generations on the Move, led by the NWT Seniors' Society in partnership with the NWT Recreation and Parks Association. The project is designed to encourage healthy aging through intergenerational connections and to increase active living opportunities for older adults in our smaller NWT communities. Currently, the communities of Ulukhaktok, Fort Simpson, Whati, Hay River, and Fort Providence are delivering intergenerational projects with this funding.

June 15<sup>th</sup> is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Raising public awareness about the abuse and neglect of seniors and elders is the first of many

steps in preventing elder abuse. Elder abuse comes in various forms, not just physical abuse. For elders struggling with some of these forms of abuse, the Department of Health and Social Services continues to offer a confidential, free, 24-hour NWT helpline offering counselling support for residents of all ages in need. We are also working to increase awareness through the department's What Will It Take campaign. This past winter we developed a video featuring a local Fort Good Hope elder that depicts the but damaging effects of financial elder abuse. This was played in the Yellowknife Theatre, is available online, and there are upcoming plans for promoting this campaign again throughout Senior Citizens' Month.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize the commitment to elder abuse prevention by the NWT Seniors' Society. Leading various elder abuse prevention initiatives, such as providing the It's Not Right workshop on identifying abuse and how to help older adults at risk, the NWT Seniors' Society has advocated passionately to raise the profile of this important social issue that is present in our homes and our communities. They also have a toll-free Seniors' Information Line for questions specific to issues and topics of interest to seniors and to elders. We are pleased to be working with them on various initiatives and are truly grateful for their dedication towards eradicating the abuse of NWT's aging population.

Through strong relationships with our partners, our government aims to provide high-quality programs and services that best support our seniors and elders. Together with our commitment to aging in place, we are creating a future where seniors and elders can remain safe, independent, and actively engaged in their home communities for as long as possible.

I would like to take a moment to thank all of those involved in enhancing the lives of our territory's aging population. From dedicated individuals to entire organizations, your efforts do not go unseen or unappreciated. During Senior Citizens' Month, and on Intergenerational Day and World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, I encourage all residents to celebrate the important role that our seniors and elders have in our communities and our lives. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister's statements. Minister for Industry, Tourism and Investment.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 190-18(3):  
SUMMER HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION SEASON

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Mr. Speaker, our government is following through on its mandate commitment to strengthen connections with our public and private sector partners to secure funding

for strategic infrastructure projects across the Northwest Territories. Investments in our public highway systems help to connect communities, improve public safety, ensure the efficient delivery of essential goods and services, support tourism, increase our resiliency to climate change, reduce the cost of living, and create training and employment opportunities. Investments also help attract interest from industry in the exploration and development of natural resources and pave the way for further economic opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, residents and visitors can expect another busy highway construction season this summer. In fact, a total of \$75 million in improvements will be made to eight highways, two bridges, and five access roads.

In the South Slave region, a number of improvements are planned for Highway No.1. A section of the highway will be reconstructed, which includes crushing and stockpiling material, hauling gravel, widening the highway embankment, replacing culverts, and clearing bushes and trees from the right of way. This will be a multi-year project, with work expected to be completed by July 2020.

Between Hay River and Fort Smith, two sections of Highway No. 5 will be chipsealed, which will mean a much smoother drive for the motorists. On Highway No. 6, also known as the Fort Resolution Highway, chipsealing will be carried out in two sections.

Mr. Speaker, in the North Slave region, improvements will also be carried out on 12 kilometres of Highway No. 3. This project will include levelling and compacting the existing road surface, crushing and stockpiling material, hauling gravel, and replacing culverts. A section of the highway will also be chipsealed. Work is expected to be carried over the next year and be completed by August 2020.

Further north on Highway No. 4, also known as the Ingraham Trail, roughly 4 kilometres will be reconstructed. We will also be crushing and stockpiling material, hauling gravel, widening the highway embankment, and replacing culverts.

In the Dehcho region, reconstruction work will take place this summer and fall on Highway No. 7, also known as the Liard Highway. This project is currently in the permitting phase, but we expect a section of the highway will be reconstructed. Work is expected to include crushing and stockpiling material, gravel hauling, embankment widening, and culvert replacements.

In the Beaufort Delta region, some construction work will be taking place on Highway No. 8, better

known as the Dempster Highway. Reconstruction will take place along 2 kilometres of the highway. Two culverts will also be replaced. On Highway No. 10, the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway, one culvert will be replaced.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to highway improvements, we will also be undertaking improvements to five access roads, which ensure we can connect communities to our main highway system. Overall, we will be improving approximately 26 kilometres of access roads.

In the Beaufort Delta, a section of the Inuvik Airport Access Road and Hospital Hill Drive will be reconstructed. In the South Slave, the Hay River Reserve Access Road will be repaired and chipsealed. In the North Slave, the Rae Access Road will be upgraded. In the Dehcho region, a section of the Jean Marie River access road will be resurfaced.

Mr. Speaker, we have two major bridge projects scheduled this year. The Hay River to Pine Point Bridge is currently undergoing rehabilitation. This project is expected to be concluded in October 2019 and will bring a number of benefits for commercial drivers, such as no overhead restrictions. On the Mackenzie Valley winter road, the approaches to Blackwater Bridge will be improved, improving the effectiveness of the winter road.

As the construction season begins, I would like to thank the dedicated workers who put in long hours to maintain and improve our highway system. Your work is essential to the North. I would like also to remind drivers to watch for highway crews and slow down in construction zones, and obey the signs and flag persons along the highway.

Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to work closely with all of our public and private sector partners so we can continue to build a transportation network that meets the current needs of our citizens and the needs of generations to come. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister of Justice.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 191-18(3):  
PROGRAMS AVAILABLE TO INMATES IN NWT  
CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Mr. Speaker, our government committed in its mandate to pursue innovative ways to prevent and reduce crime. Today, I want to share with you progress on this work, as well as offer clarity about the way programming is provided to both sentenced and

remanded inmates here in the Northwest Territories.

Following the release of the 2015 Auditor General's report on the Corrections Service, the Department of Justice underwent a full review of the programs and services provided to individuals in the care and custody of the Corrections Service. In this review, the department considered feedback from Members of the Legislative Assembly, past and present inmates, and the recommendations from the 2015 Auditor's report.

This review highlighted programs being delivered in our facilities needed more attention to address the reasons individuals found themselves in contact with the criminal justice system. We also found that substance abuse is the most prevalent issue requiring intervention. As well, violence, sexual offences, and relationship violence were issues also identified. Most importantly, we found that the lengthy programming being provided based on federal correctional designs did not meet the needs of our inmates and offenders due to the short time most of them are in our facilities. As a result of these findings, the Corrections Service made fundamental changes to create a new program model in 2016, including ensuring that both remanded and sentenced offenders were able to access programming. Programs were designed to target areas of substance abuse, violence, and relationship violence.

The new model addressing the likely causes to criminal behaviour was developed to be delivered not only in corrections facilities, but also throughout the territories in the community probation offices. Programs at our corrections facilities recognize the importance of Indigenous cultures and traditions. The Substance Abuse Management, Violence Prevention, Living without Violence, and the Respectful Relationships programs are all evidence-based programs aimed at supporting inmates to become aware of the triggers that lead them to engage in unhealthy and unsafe behaviours. All NWT corrections programs integrated Indigenous culture and traditions in the way they are delivered. This is accomplished through the input of elders, traditional liaison officers, and Indigenous staff.

Since 2016, over 500 participants have successfully completed programs using this new model. Community probation offices have delivered 47 programs in 12 different communities in the NWT, which has resulted in 133 community clients successfully completing programs to target their identified needs.

Since its launch in 2016, the Substance Abuse Management program has been delivered 64 times, including 30 times in probation offices in

Yellowknife, Behchoko, Whati, Hay River, Fort Providence, Fort Liard, Fort Simpson, Fort Resolution, Fort Smith, Inuvik, Fort Good Hope, and Fort McPherson. The Corrections Service also delivers these programs specifically for women at the Fort Smith Correctional Complex Women's Unit and the Yellowknife probation office.

Since its launch in 2017, the Violence Prevention and Living Without Violence program has been delivered 38 times, including 12 times in probation offices in Yellowknife, Hay River, Fort Smith, Inuvik, Fort Good Hope, and Fort McPherson.

Since its launch in 2017, the Respectful Relationships program has been delivered 21 times, including 10 times in probation offices in Yellowknife, Behchoko, Hay River, Fort Liard, and Inuvik.

As of March 2019, the department has implemented the Northern Addictions Sessions at the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre. Reports and feedback have been positive for this delivery model. Work is currently under way in the development of the Northern Violence Prevention and Northern Healthy Relationships sessions, which will be delivered with the Living Without Violence and Respectful Relationships program.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize the importance of providing a method of continuous learning, development, and practice of cognitive, behavioural, and social skills programming, which is why our dedicated staff have developed a maintenance program targeting those offenders who have completed one or more of the programs that address the causes of criminal behaviour.

Changes have been made to the release planning process that make it possible for case managers to look for community programming options for inmates upon release. Where possible, clients are matched with similar programming so that they can continue to build the skills that are needed to prevent and reduce crime and harm in their lives.

We recognize the importance of offering programs and opportunities that support inmates in meeting their educational goals. Inmates have access to programming that includes adult literacy, basic education and upgrading, high school and exam preparation, trades exam preparation, life and employment ready skills, and assistance with pursuing or registration into post-secondary studies.

I am pleased to report that, over the past year, approximately 130 inmates have accessed the educational programming available within our adult correctional facilities.

Mr. Speaker, our goal is to prepare inmates for their rehabilitation and reintegration back into their

communities. The Department of Justice continues to ensure that the programming and supports that we offer help to address the individual needs of offenders. Through the efforts of our dedicated Corrections Service staff and the continued partnerships that we have with other departments and stakeholders, we are making a difference in lives of Northerners and are helping to create safer, healthier communities in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 192-18(3):  
NORTHERN PATHWAYS TO HOUSING IN  
BEHCHOKO

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation has worked hard to meet the commitments made by this government to advance affordable housing and address homelessness during the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

In addressing this priority, we resolved to use northern solutions for northern housing. One example is the Northern Pathways to Housing Program, an innovative approach to addressing homelessness in small communities.

We all know that there is homelessness in our communities. We know there are overcrowded houses where people couch-surf because they do not have a home of their own. Research tells us that the chances of addressing the issues that lead to homelessness, mental health, addictions, and other social issues, are better when you have stable housing.

The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is working with community groups to develop, design, and implement supportive housing for our residents through the Northern Pathways to Housing Program. The program involves providing four apartment-style single room units to community partners, along with funding support to pay for the additional costs associated with the operation of a supportive housing program.

The community partner works with the program participants to maintain their housing stability and respond to their particular needs. This support includes connecting them with available services and resources from community agencies. The community partner chooses the program participants through a committee. The program allows the community to prioritize the needs that they see as the most urgent.



Our experience with the Liidlii Kue First Nation and the Aklavik Indian Band is proving that this model makes a difference in peoples' lives. I want to thank those two groups for their dedication and vision.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that a third Northern Pathways to Housing Program is starting in Behchoko. Through engagement with the Tlicho Government and the Community Government of Behchoko, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation has selected the Behchoko Friendship Centre as the community partner that will deliver the program in Behchoko. I anticipate being in Behchoko in June to celebrate the project with community residents and government leaders.

The Northern Pathways to Housing Program is one of a kind. It takes the philosophy of Housing First, an approach utilized across North America, but tailors it for the Northwest Territories. This truly is a northern solution for northern housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Ministers' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to move item 5 as the next order of business today. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues, for agreeing to that change. Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure today to welcome to the House a number of women who participated in a series of workshops called Women on the Ballot through the winter, which were presented here in Yellowknife. They are Caitlin Cleveland, Megan Holsapple, Kate Reid, Jan Vallilee, Katrina Nockleby, and Michelle Ramsay. I hope that they will, in fact, be women on the ballot this fall, and I thank them for coming and seeing what happens in this Chamber today. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Great Slave.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome the following people from the NWT Seniors Society who are with us in the Chamber today: John Soderberg, who is the treasurer of the NWT Seniors' Society, and Suzette Montreuil, who is the executive director of the NWT Seniors' Society. I would also like to recognize Katrina Nockleby, who is a resident of the Great Slave riding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I would like to recognize my wife, Suzette Montreuil, for being here today. I know that she was in the Great Hall earlier for a photo op with the Minister responsible for Seniors, but I want to thank her for looking after at least one senior in this House after I'm finished here every day. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, and I do appreciate her coming to the Assembly today. Thanks.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Range Lake.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that I am breaking convention a little bit because I don't really have a constituent, but I do want to recognize the women who are in the House today who are watching the proceedings. I think it is pretty evident that there are not enough women in the House, and so I am really proud to see them and, like my colleague, I am hoping that I will see their names on ballots. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Sahtu.

**MR. MCNEELY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize our youth here, the two Pages from Norman Wells, Summer Rose and Aidan Watson, and their chaperone, Jillian Brown. Welcome to the experience. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Kam Lake.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize two residents of my riding of Kam Lake, Caitlin Cleveland and Jan Vallilee. It's great to see you take an interest in our proceedings today. I, too, am excited to hear about your interest in our democracy and look forward to seeing your names on the ballot, as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to recognize a Page from the Yellowknife North riding, young Zefer Jordison from Ecole Allain St-Cyr, and thank all the Pages for all of the fantastic work they do on our behalf. I also want to recognize some constituents from the riding of Yellowknife North. Today we have here Megan Holsapple, Michelle Ramsay, and Kate Reid. Welcome and thank you for being here. Lastly, I would also like to acknowledge the executive director of the NWT Seniors' Society, which is located in the riding of Yellowknife North, Suzette Montreuil. Welcome and thank you for being here.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Member for Nunakput.

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Ms. Jillian Brown, as well. In her past career, I have seen Jillian teach across the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. It's good to see educators making long-term goals in our territory, educating our children, so welcome, Jill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

### Members' Statements

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FORT MCPHERSON ELDERS FACILITY

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No one is more important in any culture than our elders. This government has shown over time that the money we put into the care and well-being of our elders is nothing short of positive. Our elders are more active, healthier, and, if I may state, are looking younger.

I want to touch on the elders' home that was started in Fort McPherson some time ago. I believe it's almost near completion, and the community is looking forward to the grand opening.

Mr. Speaker, it's been a long time coming. There are eight units in this building, plus one for a caretaker. This will give the community eight empty units to place other families in, ones who are on the waiting list for housing.

I have heard many times that keeping our elders in our home communities makes them stronger, and keeping them near families, where they can be cared for, especially keeping them in a home in their community where they feel safe makes them more comfortable.

Mr. Speaker, it's pretty exciting for Fort McPherson. We have had the local contractor finish the work, with on-the-job training opportunities for local labourers. Finishing touches are in the works, and we are anxiously awaiting the day our elders can move in. I will have questions for the Minister later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MARINE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES RESUPPLY OF COASTAL COMMUNITIES

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As our days get warmer and the ice melts from the lakes and the rivers, residents of our remote coastal communities look forward to being resupplied by

marine transportation services. The Nunakput communities rely on the barges each summer for essential goods, fuels, and services which can only be delivered in the summer months in a short operating window.

As this House knows, unfortunate weather last August caused the last barges of the season to be cancelled. This resulted in the already high cost of living to rise. I have spoken before about my constituents not being able to afford fuel to go on the land harvesting and hunting, which causes a vicious cycle of them being forced to buy expensive food at the store instead of providing for their families from the land.

It was for this reason that I was pleased to hear the Minister say that they are planning an earlier start to the shipping season. I encourage the Marine Transportation Services to use this season to do some long-term planning for future ice conditions, working with Transport Canada and other agencies that are experts in the Arctic sea ice and weather conditions on the western gate of the Northwest Passage so that they can maximize their chances of completing all the reply routes each year.

Mr. Speaker, one way to improve shipping times could be the use of the now-complete Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway to bring goods to the coast and then stage shipping from Tuktoyaktuk. This would have the advantage of cutting the sailing time. Goods could start to be collected before the sea ice has broken up, and sailing schedules may be easier to adjust to account for conditions in the Beaufort Sea.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, investing not just the physical infrastructure, the docks and wharfs of the coastal communities, but also by mapping the ports of entry into the communities and monitoring any changes to the seabed may also help ensure that the shipping season runs smoothly. I look forward to hearing from the Minister on any investments being made to improve marine shipping in the Beaufort Sea and the Arctic this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeheh.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RECOGNIZING VOLUNTEERS IN NAHENDEHEH

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I spoke about a pay it forward program in Fort Simpson. Today I would like to speak about a second program established in the region. It is largely in part to Mr. Troy Bellefontaine. In the summer of 2016, Troy began researching Dolly Parton's Imagination Library and, in November

2017, he began accepting registration for this literacy program.

The Dolly Parton Imagination Library is a program that sends one book a month to children between the ages of zero months to five years. The program is partly dependent on donations, as the cost is \$3.55 per child per month. All other expenses are covered by the foundation. Initially, Troy himself began the program by donating enough money to have the program run for five months. As well, he personally funded all the promotion associated with this program, along with accepting the responsibility for registering the children. Since November, he has received approximately 45 registration, and predicts it will continue to grow.

The Liidlii Kue First Nation, the Village of Fort Simpson, and other local businesses have donated to allow this program to become operational in the community.

After conducting research, Troy established there are 113 kids in the region who qualify for this program. His goal is to have each of them registered and receive books each month. He would like to expand his literacy service to the other communities in the region, such as Jean Marie, Wrigley, Somba K'e, and Nahanni Butte. To his credit, he has.

Troy's personal commitment to literacy is one of his key passions, so much so that he took time off work to attend a literacy workshop in Yellowknife. He returned with the initiative to hold local literacy workshops, giving parents tips and tools on how to assist and engage their children in the joy of reading. The books not only assist with literacy, but they contain valuable life lessons. Many of the books teach kindness, caring, and helping others.

Troy also operates a successful private business. In October 2016, he and his employee, Heather Greencorn, discussed giving back to the community and options for paying it forward. The discussion resulted in Heather offering free hairstyling to the residents of the elders' care home in Fort Simpson. Heather has been providing this essential service since that conversation to the elders monthly and remains dutifully committed to this program. I would like to thank both of them for their commitment and others who continue to do this work behind the scenes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
NORTHERN FRONTIER VISITORS CENTRE

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I will come back today to the too-long and too-twisted

tale of the former Northern Frontiers Visitors' Centre and the lack of progress re-establishing a tourist information centre for Yellowknife. It's been more than two years since the facility closed.

Back in February 2017, the Minister of Infrastructure told me that his staff were working to stabilize the building and had "recently gone out for expressions of interest on possible design opportunities." Northern Frontiers Visitors' Association board produced a report detailing the estimated \$5 million in additional tourism business generated by the centre and offered three costed options for redesign and relocation of the facility. Despite these efforts, the building closed in May 2017, and the visitors' operation hopped to the museum, then to the basement of Yellowknife City Hall, where it has been located ever since. When I asked the Minister a year later, in February 2018, what progress towards a new centre had come from the design studies, he said, "I think it's a bit early to make a decision on that yet. We are working with the City of Yellowknife to determine the long-term model of delivery of the visitors' information centre." So much for 2017 and 2018.

In the February 2019 budget session, I asked the Minister for a status report yet again and was told the building is still being stabilized and that the infrastructure department has "recently gone out for expressions of interest on possible design opportunities." Media reports have since informed us that \$125,000 has been spent to stabilize the building that officials describe as "just barely surviving" and that \$75,000 was split between three design companies for their ideas on building redevelopment.

Presumably, with all of these suggestions, in addition to the recommendations paid for in 2017, we have a lot to look at. Others use have proceeded in parallel, including the passage of a law enabling the City of Yellowknife to finance a destination marketing program, but that doesn't result in a storefront visitors centre helping our 70,000 annual visitors spend more money in Yellowknife and beyond.

Later today I hope to have questions for the Minister to find out what is going on with the building and how we can improve visitor services for Yellowknife moving forward. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

**MR. NADLI:** Mr. Speaker, the GNWT has the goal of employing a public service that is representative

of the general population that it serves. The NWT's population is almost exactly 50 percent non-Aboriginal and 50 percent Aboriginal. This means that 50 percent of the GNWT's public service should ideally be composed of Aboriginal employees. Unfortunately, that is not the case.

According to the GNWT's 2018 Public Service Annual Report, only 30.5 percent of the territorial government's workforce is made up of Indigenous Aboriginal people, who are defined in the policy as people of Dene, Metis, or Inuit descent who were born or have lived more than half of their lives in the Northwest Territories. I agree with my colleague from Tu Nedhe-Willideh that the Affirmative Action Policy has failed many Indigenous Aboriginal P1 candidates. The government has to make a commitment to turn this around now, not to leave it to the next Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, there has been no change to the policy in the 30 years since it was established. It still contains a commitment to do a policy review in 1994. The language is outdated, as well. In the policy, "Indigenous" means everyone who has lived half of their life in the NWT, whether they are Aboriginal or not. Everywhere else, the GNWT uses the word "Indigenous" to mean Aboriginal only.

The GNWT needs to get more jobs into small communities to bring the jobs to the people, instead of requiring people to abandon their families and their traditional lands to take jobs elsewhere. Most summer employment opportunities for post-secondary students are in the headquarters and regional centres. DMs, or deputy ministers, in every department should be challenged to ensure that students from small communities can get GNWT summer jobs. Their tenure and bonuses should depend on it.

Some departments are doing better than others. ENR has the highest rate of Aboriginal employees, at 45 percent, followed closely by Executive and Indigenous Affairs, at 44 percent. Departments at the bottom of the list, like Lands and Health and Social Services, at 22 percent each, need to prioritize this. I would like to see the Minister of Finance establish a firm commitment that Aboriginal residents of the NWT from small communities make up at least 75 percent of the GNWT workforce.

Human resources staff in the Department of Finance should be working hard to remove systemic barriers, not create them. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my Member's statement. Mahsi.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. NADLI:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I understand that hiring

practices now include the requirement to do a written test to qualify for a job interview. If this is a standard approach across the GNWT, then it needs to change, because it discourages potentially dedicated Aboriginal employees who were deprived of good educational opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, the Affirmative Action Policy needs to be revised and updated, and the government's political leaders and top senior managers need to recommit today to making the policy's goal a reality. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NORTHWORDS WRITERS FESTIVAL

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I am rising today to celebrate a great community and cultural event, the NorthWords Writers Festival, which begins tomorrow.

The festival was created in 2006 as a three-day event to provide a stage for northern and Indigenous writers to welcome established writers from southern Canada. The NorthWords Writers Festival Society was established a year later, and workshops and other literary events were added to the program.

Today the four-day event attracts around 1,000 people. Emerging and established writers converge to develop their craft through public readings, mentorships, panel discussions, workshops, and a writing contest, as well as informal meetings with each other and guest authors. NorthWords promotes the development of young northern and Indigenous writers by sponsoring events for schools.

In 2010, NorthWords NWT began to reach out to writers in other NWT communities with a three-author tour of Fort Smith, Hay River, and Yellowknife. The festival now offers events in all three communities.

The festival took another step forward in 2012 with the publication of the anthology "Coming Home: Stories From the Northwest Territories." This anthology featured the work of 17 NWT writers, half of whom were being published for the first time. This anthology has enjoyed an extraordinary reception from the reading public and has been an important step in the development of NWT writers. It has resulted in increased participation and interest in northern literary events.

Mr. Speaker, the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual NorthWords Writers Festival runs from tomorrow through Sunday. Events include the open mic event "Flash: Your

Five Minutes of Fame," the NorthWords Cafe, a gala and silent action, and "Blush: An Evening of Erotic and Sensual Readings." A line-up of more than 20 writers and authors, filmmakers, songwriters, storytellers, and performing groups will entertain from venues across the three communities. It is an event about and beyond words.

Congratulations to NorthWords, and keep on growing. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON POLYTECHNIC POTENTIAL

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the most exciting opportunities currently before us is the development of advanced post-secondary education through a polytechnic university. I am proud that, in the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly, we have taken significant steps towards making this a reality, but it is important that it be done right, so it demands our continuing attention and vigilance, even in the remaining months of this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I see a polytechnic university providing many benefits to the NWT, such as:

- significant education dollars will stay here at home;
- students can engage in a northern priority curriculum that will equip them to find career opportunities here at home;
- promote affordable post-secondary education for all NWT students;
- continuing success of existing Aurora College programs and campuses;
- address labour shortage issues here at home; and
- encourage and retain northern residency.

A made-in-the-North curriculum can be designed to meet the unique needs of both the northern economy and the student body. Programs can be designed with a staged curriculum to meet both the demand for vocational and trades-based skills and academic research, possibly leading to post-graduate work.

A polytechnic university campus based in Yellowknife is a logical choice because of human and civil infrastructure, as well as the demands for housing. As for Inuvik and Fort Smith campuses, I see their communities being enhanced by the

increase in post-secondary activities generated by the polytechnic.

Mr. Speaker, the circumpolar regions of the world are gaining increasing international focus. There is huge potential for foreign students attending northern educational institutions. Foreign students pay tuition averaging three to five times what Canadian students pay. This is another area of huge potential growth.

Finally, partnerships with other northern, national, and international educational institutions can provide further opportunities, academic and otherwise. Important research is currently conducted by institutions across the northern hemisphere. Connections and collaborative partnerships among such agencies can be mutually beneficial.

Mr. Speaker, an NWT polytechnic institution should take its place among them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REGULAR MEMBER IMBALANCE IN CONSENSUS

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. According to the Legislative Assembly's own website, the role of Regular Members is to sit as the unofficial opposition. They are "responsible, through questioning in the House and the work of standing committees, for holding the government accountable and responsive to the people of the Northwest Territories."

For Regular Members to do their job effectively in holding government accountable and responsive to the people of the NWT, Regular Members require expedient and complete access to information of government activities. In our current system, all information requests by Regular Members must go through Cabinet and their staff, then to the department, and back again to Cabinet, eventually answering Regular Members. Cabinet members have extra staff to handle their workload, discretionary funds to appropriate as they see fit, and maintain a tight grip on access to departments, agencies, and information.

Simple requests for data sets will often be answered by an executive summary written by departmental officials, and in the past, Regular Members have had to pay for out of their own pockets and file ATIPP requests to get answers from the GNWT on legislative reviews of bills before committees.

Mr. Speaker, the House has the paramount responsibility to oversee the public purse, among other duties, and paramount is ensuring the laws of the land proposed by the government reflect the will, attitudes, and aspirations of the people.

Regular Members need a system that functionally permits this, and our current system places barriers and challenges in the way. Regular Members should not have to have their access to government information filtered through a Minister's office. As far as the membership of this House is concerned, in the much-derided partisan institutions of the South, there are backbench MPs who can speak directly to deputy ministers in those governments to get information. That is something simply not permitted under our current standing procedures.

The restrictions on Regular Members which currently exist in the operation of our consensus system ensure that they are left in the dark at the best of times, and typically, only one perspective in public policy as written by government is provided to them. This is inherently contrary not only to the values of consensus, but also wholly contrary to the values of good government.

Mr. Speaker, we desperately need to fix this system and make the job of Regular Members more consequential to the operations of government and more effective to their constituents, because they are first and foremost the reasons we are here, to represent their attitudes and not the will of government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Sahtu.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON UNLOCKING OUR RESOURCE POTENTIAL

**MR. MCNEELY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.] Recognizing the Minister of ITI's statement a few days ago on the advancement of the NWT's resource potential initiatives and the number of strategies developed by this Assembly, the petroleum resource strategy, alongside the proposed amendments to the NWT Petroleum Resources Act and the Oil and Gas Operations Act, have been efforts by this Assembly to increase our competitiveness comparative to other jurisdictions and promote increased investment in the NWT oil and gas exploration and production, while enhancing transparency and public accountability. This Assembly has been working to create an environment where investors can be confident in, and proceed with, energy and infrastructure projects throughout the territory, and it's this confidence that will benefit the economic growth and prosperity in regions such as the Sahtu.

Mr. Speaker, we also must continue to support and identify opportunities for our energy resources to be developed locally to reduce the cost of living, displace diesel for a cleaner environment, and create good, long-term jobs. In this regard, we all have a role to play as we adapt to the realities of climate change and transition to a stronger, healthy economy, less reliant on fossil fuels, while benefitting all residents and the small communities, and large urban centres, as well.

I also appreciate that key infrastructure investments in the Mackenzie Valley Highway will help increase the viability of resource development in the Sahtu and support advancements in our territory. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to complete my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. MCNEELY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, the idle time we have can be used constructively through strategic planning and engagement that include all NWT stakeholders. It's through these collaborative processes that the NWT will create an environment for responsible resource development. Our post-devolution engagement on legislation modernization is in process and, as our term draws near, it allows all Members an opportunity to reflect on the progress and successes achieved.

Soon, we will be reviewing over 200 mandate commitments that were developed collaboratively at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Although I look forward to the final report, along with the transition report for the next Assembly, I would be remiss not to highlight the successes this Assembly has made in key energy and infrastructure projects.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, we should all ensure that with our remaining time, we will continue to look for opportunities to collaborate and create positive change for the people of the Northwest Territories. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 6, acknowledgments. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

#### Oral Questions

##### QUESTION 742-18(3): MARINE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AND FUEL PRICES

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I spoke about Marine Transportation Services, and my questions are for the Minister of Infrastructure. Mr. Speaker, my first question is: what is MTS doing to plan for this and future seasons to ensure

that they don't run into the same issues as we did last year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned in the House here the other day about some of the conditions that we are working on to make sure that we don't get into the same situation as we did last year with the shipping season. We've moved our schedule forward, as I mentioned in this House, and I encourage all Members who have communities that participate or use MTS to inform their residents along with what we're trying to do, along our communications line, to inform them that we've moved our sailing schedule up.

Of course, that is conditional, as I said again on a number of conditions. It's going to be on ice conditions on Great Slave Lake. It's going to be on the conditions of the ice going down on the Mackenzie River. We are a little concerned about the low water levels. The Coast Guard has to put their buoys in again, and a lot of it is conditional, too, as well. We're working with the fuel supplier that supplies the Government of the Northwest Territories for our annual summer resupply. Maybe many Members of the House don't know we have hired an extra person with our communications process through our customer service representatives. These are some of the initiatives that we've taken to hope alleviate the situation that happened last year.

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** I appreciate the response from the Minister. It looks like there have a lot of lessons to learn as we move ahead, seeing as this is all very new to the government. My second question to the Minister is: are the bulk fuel prices being done, and will they reduce the price of gas for petroleum products for Arctic residents?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** All our bulk fuel is purchased in the summer, as I've said. That's our normal practice for the marine summer resupply. The final price of gasoline and other fuels is based on the cost of fuel and the cost of shipment to each community. The changes in sale prices are based on these costs, and we won't know what those prices are going to be typically until the end of fall, until we gather all this information.

Also, on the Member's first note, too, another effort that we are doing to help address the situation is MTS plans to mobilize and stage all fuel and dry cargo in the Nunakput region and Tuktoyaktuk early in the season, too, so that's one of the things that we're looking at adjusting our schedule.

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** I appreciate that. It's good to hear. It gives MTS a little bit of a reaction time to

some of the issues and some of the conditions up in the Arctic along the Beaufort Sea.

Mr. Speaker, my third question is: have there been any planning studies done using Tuktoyaktuk as a staging point for future shipping, not just to Nunakput communities, but to other communities, say, in Alaska and in Nunavut?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Infrastructure has applied for funding through CanNor, and the application is for a study to examine economic employment and community development opportunities, induced by potential investment and improvements in the marine assets and supporting infrastructure to six communities of the Beaudel and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region.

The study will examine and recommend a future role for Tuktoyaktuk as a straightforward staging location for cargo and fuel to support marine resupply of and through the western Arctic. We are contemplating that these improvements will mitigate the risk of any future marine resupply in the area.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is good to hear that. I think that we have gone a long way since this time last year, as far as MTS goes and the planning for shipping in the Arctic communities. It is great to see that the Minister is working federal Ministers on this, as well, Mr. Speaker. That is good news. I commend the Minister for that. My final question is: are there any infrastructure investments planned to improve shipping in Arctic coastal communities in Nunakput? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** As I said, the money that we applied for CanNor will actually give us some pinpoint ideas of what we need to do around that, but one of the big things, I think, that we are doing this year is that, as this House knows, we have gone out and secured the money to purchase four double-hulled barges that will help do the resupply in these communities. The procurement process for building these is under way right now, and we are anticipating, if all goes well, that we will have delivery of these by August of 2020. This is going to help with the existing fleet of the two double-hulled barges that we already have; so we will have six double-hulled barges.

As I have said in this House before, when I have talked about this, this is going to help us. Instead of making two trips to some of these communities, or all of these communities, we will be able to do the resupply based on one trip to each community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

QUESTION 743-18(3):  
CLOSURE OF HIGHWAY NO. 1

**MR. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday afternoon the highway between High Level and Enterprise was closed because of a fire that is straddling the highway by Steen River. Not only has this stranded some residents, but the majority of foods and goods that come into the territory travel along that highway. That is because it is the most economical route. If all of the truck traffic needs to be routed through BC and up the Liard Highway, you can be assured that the price of everything is going to go up, not just for the residents, but for businesses and for the GNWT, and depending on how long this is closed, it could cause disruptions to the construction season as well. My first question for the Minister of Infrastructure is: does the GNWT know how long this stretch of highway will be closed? If not, what is the department doing to keep the public informed about the closure in a timely manner, and where can people find that information? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, not at this time; we don't know how long the highway is going to be closed. We are in constant contact and communication with our Alberta counterparts on this issue. We know that this is going to significantly impact the residents of the Northwest Territories if it is ongoing for a considerably long time. I even mentioned to some of the people last night at the event that the Premier and I were at that they don't think about it, but if this road is closed for any significant amount of time, the residents in the South Slave who are on the road system who are impacted by food delivery and fuel delivery and stuff could be significant.

We are in constant contact with the Alberta counterparts, as I have said. For residents of the NWT who are listening today and want to read Hansard, we have our GNWT Infrastructure website that is going to be posting constant updates on that. We have the Infrastructure Twitter page, which we will be using, and we will also have variable digital messaging signs that are going to be on the highway system. They are already out there, I believe. We are working with different media outlets across the Northwest Territories to get this information out there in a timely manner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SIMPSON:** I remember a few years ago when I was heading back up north, and there was a fire by Zama, and we were escorted in the nighttime

like a convoy. Is the GNWT working with the Government of Alberta to have vehicles escorted through the fire zone to avoid disruption to the supply of food, fuel, materials, and so on?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** The short answer is no. The reason for that is, based on the information that we are getting out of the Alberta department of ENR, whatever their title is in Alberta, this fire is out of control at the present time. It is not safe to be able to escort people through there. They have to get a better understanding of the fire's behaviour. We will be working, as I have said, very closely with these people to get a better understanding of when this will be able to be done. All I know is today we have north winds down there again, the fire is right along the side of the highway, and it is plus 30 in the region. It is going to remain closed for the short term.

**MR. SIMPSON:** Now, this happened less than 24 hours ago, I believe, the closure was. There were some people who were on their way up north, some people headed south, and I am not sure what the fuel situation is where these people were stopped, if they have all turned around and gone home, but are there motorists who are stranded at either end, and if so, are there services being provided to them, just basic things like access to washrooms and water and fuel?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Yes, we have put washroom facilities at the barricade already. The Department of Infrastructure is also in talks with the Hamlet of Enterprise to see if we can use some of their existing infrastructure, like the Seniors Centre, as a rallying point for these people. The motorists are also being directed into the community of Hay River to use their facilities, as well. As I said, we are in constant communication with the Alberta government and trying to do what we can if there are any questions that need to be answered for people stuck on the other side.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

**MR. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that every day so far during this sitting, we have heard either statements or questions about marine resupply, and that is because of what happened last season. People are a little worried about whether or not they are going to get their goods, their fuel, their food on the barges. How long before this disruption causes problems with the resupply? I assume that the rail line has also been shut down; I am not quite sure, but that is how most of the fuel comes into the territory. Can the Minister give us some insight on that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Yes, the rail traffic has been affected, particularly around the High Level



fire, not even the new fire that's around the Steen River area. There has been no rail traffic for over a week already. Infrastructure has been in conversation with CN Rail. They have been out there and checked out their asset. They are inspecting it, then doing a weight test on the rail tracks and bridges to make sure that everything is copacetic once they are able to open back up. As of today, none of their infrastructure has actually been affected by the railroad, but we are continuing to work with CN to stay abreast of the situation and keep residents and this House informed when the railroad will be opening back up so that they can get the fuel supply back north. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

QUESTION 744-18(3):  
FOSTER FAMILY RECOGNITION

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I had an opportunity to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services some questions regarding foster parents, and I have some follow-up questions for him today. Mr. Speaker, I believe that people who open their homes for our youth are amazing and kind-hearted people. How does the Department and the NWT Health and Social Services Authority show appreciation to the foster parents annually? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Foster parents make a significant difference in the lives of children and youth, and their efforts and commitment really needs to be recognized and supported and celebrated. Mr. Speaker, we do do that as a government, and we do support the Foster Family Coalition, who takes significant efforts to do this, as well.

Mr. Speaker, each year we take time to celebrate the important contributions that foster families make in the lives of children and youth within the Northwest Territories. For example, over the years, there have been a variety of events to help honour and celebrate the foster families in individual communities, led by regional offices in those communities. Each community and region often has its own way of celebrating. In some regions, they host breakfast. They have dinners or lunches. They provide small gifts of gratitude. The Foster Family Coalition has been really fantastic in supporting the foster families, and they help us by actually getting letters out to the foster families thanking them for their service across the Northwest Territories.

They also host a number of different functions throughout the year. I have had the honour of attending a couple of different dinners and events that the foster family coalition has put on for foster families, where I have had the opportunity to thank foster families directly for all that they do. We also take every opportunity like this to really thank the foster families throughout the Northwest Territories for their incredible work. There are a lot of different things we do. There is not one set program of gratitude or acknowledgement, but we take every opportunity and we work with the foster family coalition, who is really the lead on this, and we support them in their efforts to congratulate and thank our foster families, as well.

**MR. THOMPSON:** That is great to hear. Again, I am looking at the territories and trying to see how we help recognize our foster parents, and it's great that a coalition does that, but sometimes the coalition does not exist in some of these smaller communities, that I am aware of. Has the department looked at recognizing these foster parents, especially on Mother's Day, Father's Day, like even a small gift like a box of chocolates or a card?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** The Foster Family Coalition of the Northwest Territories is a territorial NGO, and they reach out to all communities throughout the Northwest Territories. We have not targeted something like Mother's Day or Father's Day. We have actually targeted our formal appreciation of foster parents to communicate in other activities actually centred around Foster Family Week. There is actually a national week set up for this, so we do that rather than looking at Mother's Day or Father's Day.

The celebration of foster caregivers occurs both at a national and a territorial level every year. We know that we need to look at further opportunities, Mr. Speaker, and we recognize and appreciate everything that foster parents do. We will certainly work with the foster family coalition to find ways to better support them. There are lots of opportunities for us to do this. We have a good relationship with the foster family coalition, and we will certainly continue to have dialogue around this issue to make sure that our foster families are really getting the support and appreciation that they deserve.

**MR. THOMPSON:** I appreciate the response from the Minister. Again, Mother's Day, Father's Day, just a small appreciation for the great work that these folks do, and, again, I think they are the most amazing people. They open their own homes to look after our youth in difficult times. Does the department budget for such activities in their yearly budget? When you talk about the coalition, do we give them money to help them provide this kind of service?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** There is not a budget line referred to as "foster family appreciation" or "foster family gratitude," but there is specific budget within each of the regional offices of the territorial authority specific for supporting foster families, Foster Family Coalition. Within those budgets, the three authorities and the regional operations are able to support foster care appreciation activities and initiatives. So, although there is not a specific line, the dollars that they have available can be and are used to provide appreciation and gratitude to those who are doing this incredibly important work throughout the Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I would like to thank the Minister for his answers here today. I guess I am trying to understand the budgeting process and getting it out there, so can the Minister provide us information on how much money is allocated for foster caring, maybe not here today but provide it to us later on so that we can have a better understanding of the money that is put into this? Because, if we see a shortfall in it, then maybe it's something that we need to look at to help improve our foster cares out there.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** As the Member knows, any time that any of the departments wish to put additional money into any of our programs and services, we have to build a business case that has evidence to suggest that it's necessary. We are always looking at our programs to see if more money is needed. To that end, we actually did significantly increase the allocation for families through the Foster Family Care Program. The per diems increased significantly about a year and a half ago. That information was brought forward in this Assembly. It was discussed. I cannot remember off the top of my head what the budget is for foster families is here in the Northwest Territories, but I will commit to getting the Member that information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 745-18(3):  
YELLOWKNIFE ADULT DAY PROGRAM

**MS. GREEN:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Minister of Health and Social Services talking about seniors' month starting in just a couple of days. Although the department provides many valuable services to seniors, there is a gap here in Yellowknife because there is no adult day program. It closed about two and a half years ago, and I ask each session what's happening with it. So, with that, I wonder if the Minister could give us an update on the status of the adult day program for Yellowknife? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Member's continued commitment and dedication to this particular program and the important work that it has done in the past and the important work that we need to continue to do. I did have an opportunity to meet with the Member earlier in May, where we had an opportunity to discuss the current status. Last session, I indicated that I would direct the department to move quickly to put in a day program. They did proceed with that work, but then they came back to me after they had an opportunity to talk to the other stakeholders, and the stakeholders raised a good point, that, before we design a program, we should really talk to the clients who are utilizing the program to make sure that the program we make actually suits their needs. It's been great that Members in this House, myself included, have been talking about how important it is, but we actually hadn't had that conversation, so I withdrew from aggressively pushing it to changing the direction slightly and asking the authority and the department to work with a steering committee that has been established to reach out to the residents in Yellowknife to find out exactly what they want so that what we design meets their needs. That work is currently under way. They are reaching out to seniors throughout the community to figure out what exactly they would like an adult day program to look like. We are hoping to have all that work done and the program designed by the fall of this year.

**MS. GREEN:** If I understand this correctly, it was the stakeholders who told the Minister to put the brakes on this while he did an assessment of needs. Do I have that correctly?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** No, that is not what I said. I said the stakeholders indicated that it would be valuable to do that work, that it would be important to actually hear what the residents say as opposed to us in this Chamber assuming we actually know without talking to the clients or to the residents. At that time, I realized that it's important that we get their voice, we get their input, we design programs to meet the needs of people as opposed to meeting the needs of the individuals in this House, and I directed them to take that new direction at that time.

**MS. GREEN:** The thing that I find most difficult to understand is, two and a half years after the day program closed, the Minister is now looking at an assessment of what the needs are. This, to me, does not indicate real priority to address this area. Why has it taken so long to get to the point of assessing needs?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** The Member might want to go back and review Hansard for the last two and a half years. She has certainly brought this up a number of times, and it is a priority. The Member should not be blind to the fact that, based on her recommendations, her encouragement in this House, we did go for an RFP; we had no applicants. We went out for another RFP; we had no applicants. We reached out to some stakeholders; there was some indication of a desire to work together. We were going through that process when, in October or January, February of this year, the Member said we really need to make progress. I made a commitment to actually move it forward with a program at that time. At that time, when we started to move out with the program, the stakeholders said, "Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. We really need to do this assessment." I respect what our stakeholders are telling us, and I made the direction to the department at that time to reach out to users, not just stakeholders, and get that work done, which is what we are doing. We will have it done in the fall.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. This is a botch. This assessment should have been done before the RFP went out. On what basis was the RFP issued in the first place, if not to describe the needs that the bidder was supposed to work on? I fail to understand how doing an assessment at this point is the next logical step. It should have been done years ago. Now, the Minister is saying to us not only will it be done now, the whole program will be implemented and designed within the next four months. Mr. Speaker, I have been here long enough to think that that is unlikely. What confidence can the Minister give us that that will happen? Thank you.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** The Member has been involved in this for a while. There was a report done after the original program shut down. I have heard the Member in this House say that we need to duplicate that program with a few amendments that were identified in that report. That is what we moved for in the RFP. That is what the Member and others encouraged me to do. I did as the Member suggested. It didn't prove to have any value because nobody applied on the RFP. We went to some stakeholders and got a few amendments on how we thought people wanted this to go, once again potential proponents. It also bore no fruit. Then we went to other stakeholders who hadn't expressed interest, and we started to get their input. This is based on the wishes of the Member, who has continually raised this issue. We have done what the Member has asked us to do, and we will continue to make sure that this program is effective.

On the last round, I said, "We are going to move. We are going to design something." At that point, the stakeholders, our partners, the people who want to be part of the solution said, "Before we do that, we should really talk to our clients to figure out exactly what it is they want as opposed to what has been delivered in the past, which did not work," which was in the RFP which was built on a report that was prepared based on what had previously been done, which did involve some input from stakeholders. The Member obviously appears to be upset that we are not making progress. We have been responsive to the Member. I am as frustrated as she is that it is not done, but the reality is, if we are going to do it, we need to do it right, and we are getting it done, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 746-18(3):  
ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS ACT ANNUAL  
REPORTING

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. Now for something completely different. Two days ago, the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources tabled an annual report under the Environmental Rights Act that covered 15 years. Can the Minister explain why this annual report covers 15 years when there is a statutory requirement to report every year to this Assembly? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister Environment and Natural Resources.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is correct. We have not tabled one since 2002-2003. This is primarily due to inactivity under the ERA. In the future, however, reports will be tabled on an annual basis regardless of whether or not there were any activities conducted under the ERA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for that. From my calculations, in the 28 years since the Environmental Rights Act has been passed, there have been three requests for investigations into the release or potential release of contaminants into the natural environment. Only one of the three requests for investigation was accepted, and that happened back in 1991. Can the Minister confirm those numbers on investigations under the Environmental Rights Act: three requests and only one actual investigation in 28 years?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** My understanding is that there were four requests for investigations. For three of the requests, it was determined that the appropriate permits and licences were in place. Therefore, the investigations were declined. The

fourth request, a full investigation was undertaken, and recommendations were made.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I would like to thank the Minister for correcting the numbers there. I was one of the two people who filed the one that was actually accepted in 1991, so I know a little bit about that. There are some other reporting requirements under the Environmental Rights Act set out in Section 8 that were not covered in the tabled report. The annual report is also supposed to cover all prosecutions commenced by individual NWT residents for environmental offences, all court actions commenced by individual NWT residents to protect the environment, and the use of any money received as a result of the court actions and all convictions for offences as a result of protecting whistle-blowers. I am not aware of any of these provisions of the Environmental Rights Act ever being used in the last 28 years. Will the Minister table a report on these matters in this House?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** As required under Section 8 of the ERA, the annual report tabled May 27, 2019, stated that no applications, investigations, prosecutions, or actions had been undertaken between the reporting period 2003-2004 and 2018-2019 other than one application for an investigation in 2013-2014. As there were no prosecutions, there was no disposition of money or any convictions.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I see that in the report. Maybe future reports are going to be a little bit clearer about the reporting under each of the subsections in section 8 of the Environmental Rights Act. I think the Minister, though, has made my point here. Given the issues of late reporting by the Minister under the Environmental Rights Act and the lack of use of the rights established under this legislation, what is the Minister doing to promote environmental rights in the Northwest Territories? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** As the Member is currently aware, amendments to the Environmental Rights Act have been proposed to make it easier to make an application for an investigation. Bill 39 is currently undergoing review by the Standing Committee on Economic Development and the Environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

QUESTION 747-18(3):  
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Minister of Finance. The GNWT's

Affirmative Action Policy dates back at least as far back as 1989, when it succeeded the Native Employment Policy. It was meant to even the playing field for Aboriginal people by giving us priority hiring opportunities when seeking employment with the GNWT. This was done out of a recognition that many Aboriginal people have faced systemic and other barriers to getting a good education and also when applying for a job. My question is: why has the Affirmative Action Policy not been updated in the last 30 years? What is preventing the GNWT from getting this done? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Finance.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, for one, have seen some of the benefits in my riding of the results of Affirmative Action, and I do support it. If it hasn't been reviewed for a while, I think there is an opportunity to do a review, but it has reached some of the goals that it was intended to. Across government-wide, I think the Member pointed out before, we have only 1,533 Affirmative Action employees. Outside the capital, we have about 1,100. It is about 46 percent of our workforce outside the capital are P1 candidates, getting closer to the 50 percent. As our people start to be more and more educated and get into some of these positions, I think we are going to see those numbers rise. I am sure if you go community by community, you will probably see a higher percentage of Indigenous/Aboriginal employees within the communities themselves. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. NADLI:** I think the Minister has stated that some aspects of the policy is working, but I didn't hear a commitment. Will the Minister commit to having his department bring forward innovative ideas from improving Aboriginal employment rights? As an example, what about an Aboriginal employee advocate who is tasked to work with management to assist interested Aboriginal employees seeking employment with the GNWT?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I am not sure if we have an actual advocate within the department. I am sure a number of our staff people are working, trying to improve the percentages across the Northwest Territories, but I do know that we have a number of innovative new initiatives that we have been bringing forward. We have one I spoke to yesterday where we would like to work with some of the Indigenous Governments, take on some of their employees, provide them an opportunity to build some capacity, then they go back and serve the people who they represent. There are opportunities. I do believe that we have a lot of opportunities within the government system to help those who want to move through the system.

Again, I have always been a firm believer in trying to improve the numbers. I think that we have seen the numbers improve; I am confident that we have seen the numbers improve. My biggest thing is that I want to see the move through the system based on merit, and we have a lot of really good people out there who are going through the system based on what they bring to the table. I wouldn't want to put somebody in a position because they are a P1 candidate just to fill a quota and have them fail at it. It doesn't do us any good.

**MR. NADLI:** My other question is: when the performance of deputy ministers is reviewed, are they graded on how successful they have been in reaching the Aboriginal employment targets that the policy is designed to reach?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** The Premier is responsible for the discussions with the deputies, but I will assume that there are a number of goals that deputies have to achieve as part of their performance. Within the departments that I have had, I know that there are some opportunities in there for the deputies to try to improve the workforce and come up with new initiatives to improve the workforce. Again, I think we are getting there. I really think that we are getting there, and I believe that, in the future, there are going to be more and more Indigenous P1 representatives within the GNWT, but they will get there based on merit.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is pretty clear that, yes, indeed, there should be a system to help Indigenous people, and I think that the Minister has clearly stated that it should be based on merit. I agree with that. Is it a standard employment practice that anyone applying for a GNWT job, anyone, must first write a written test? Are exceptions being made for Aboriginal people applying for jobs, especially in areas such as labour, where writing is not a required skill or, for example, where their Aboriginal language could be used? Mahsi.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I understand that there are some tests that applicants have to take. Like everyone else, they do the test to see if they qualify for the position, and if they qualify for the position, on top of being a P1 candidate, that would help them get to the next stage. I have seen cases where a number of Aboriginal people who were working within the system were doing some quality work, but didn't quite meet some of the qualifications that were required. I think that we have taken some steps to correct that. I have heard of cases where people were being brought in to do a job that the applicant in the same office, who had been doing it

for a while, was not qualified to do; so who is tasked with training the new person coming in? The applicant who wasn't qualified to do the job. Thankfully things worked out at the end; the two people in the office did move into managerial positions because they had been doing that work for a long time, but based on the paper qualifications, they didn't really have them.

I think that that was a good case of applicants and our people moving through the system based on their ability to do the job. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

QUESTION 748-18(3):  
FORT MCPHERSON ELDERS FACILITY

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In follow-up to my Member's statement, I have a couple of questions for the Minister responsible for Housing. I would like to ask the Minister: are we on schedule for the completion date of the elders home in Fort McPherson? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the Member for his Member's statement and recognizing that our elders are important. Allowing our elders to live in an area where they can continue practising and teaching our youth their cultures and traditions is very important. We are expecting to have the completion this summer, sometime in June. I don't have an exact date, but I will keep the Member, as well as the residents and the elders, updated so that we know when we can do the move-in. I just want to thank the community for their patience. I know that this was a project that was a little bit complicated, and we had to deal with it.

I want to thank the Member for bringing this up, and we will keep the Member updated so that he can keep his residents and elders updated as well. I don't have an exact date right now, but we are looking at sometime in June. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BLAKE:** It is good that we are on track here. When does the department plan to have their grand opening?

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Once we have a firm date, we will let the Member, as well as community leaders, know that we will be opening it.

One thing that I do want to mention is the design that we did fix and change up. There has been a design for improved accessibility, high energy efficiency, as well as having a space for health and

wellness programming. Once we do have a firm date for the opening, as I mentioned, we will have the elders, the community, and the leadership know when that day is. As usual, as the Member knows and Members around the table know, McPherson really does do a good job when we celebrate things as such.

**MR. BLAKE:** We know that we are going to finish the building in June. When will the department hire a caretaker? That way, that position is in place before the elders move in.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** As I mentioned, we are looking to open it next month. We are hoping that we will have elders into the eight units and have a caretaker in place. We will have to go through the regular process. As is tradition, we do have our people taking care of our people. As the Member noted in his Member's statement, our elders are very important, and we will have somebody capable to take that position on. As we progress through the opening and working with the seniors complex, we will keep the Member apprised, as well as the leadership in the community of Fort McPherson.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 749-18(3):  
POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. As I mentioned in my Member's statement, there is great potential for a polytechnic university to enhance our educational system, our economy, and our society in general.

Mr. Speaker, Arctic research and knowledge has an increasing profile in Canada and around the world, and in fact, last year, the federal government and Government of Quebec announced more than \$53 million in funding for a new campus of the Institut nordique du Québec that will have a focus on Arctic research. I would like to ask the Minister: has the Minister begun any, call it, lobbying to the federal government for support for the development of the polytechnic university? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As for the term "lobbying," direct lobbying to build our polytechnic university, at this point, we have not. I know that the federal government is working with us. They just gave us \$4 million, I believe, for the Centre for Mining and Industry in Fort Smith that was recently opened, which I attended just a couple of months ago. Word on the street is that they are actually looking at post-

secondary universities in the north all over, so we are trying to get in on that team to find out what they are doing and what their interests are. Once we have an implementation plan developed and we have decided what types of canvas, student supports, et cetera, that we need, at that point, when we have a concrete ask, we will be approaching the federal government with an ask.

I'm very hopeful. I know that they are looking at us, and I also know that they have supported not only Quebec, but also the Yukon, with their post-secondary. We're in line. We're watching them closely, and we're hoping they're listening today.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you to the Minister for that update. I appreciate that it is an election year, and so I would ask that the Minister and the government keep the pressure on.

In February, the Minister updated the Assembly on post-secondary development, referring particularly to a public consultation process to gather input of the needs of our post-secondary system and the establishment of the Public Advisory Board. I'd like to ask the Minister: can the Minister update the Assembly on progress in these areas?

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Yes. Actually, we're going to be presenting to standing committee as well on June 5<sup>th</sup>, so I'm going to give a little bit of heads up to what we're presenting on June 5<sup>th</sup>, I suppose. We've completed the survey. We've gone across the Northwest Territories. We've reached actually almost 750 surveys. I don't have the number on hand. We'll present it to standing committee. We did a real focus on youth, 29 and under, which I'm very happy to report that we've actually been very successful in getting those voices. With that, we're still breaking down what the vision will be. That process is still ongoing. Not only the vision, but the goals which have become our framework. We're doing that process.

The advisory council is really important. That will actually support the associate deputy minister of post-secondary renewal to define where he's going with the courses, and also to do the evaluation. I know that the associate deputy minister has already approached some universities and colleges throughout Canada. We're really looking for people with a strength in polytechnic to actually help us mentor us through, and we're developing. We're just doing a draft terms of reference for the advisory committee that will be shared once we're finalized with standing committee, and then put out, but we're in the process of doing that currently.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you to the Minister for that update. That's much appreciated, and we certainly look forward to the presentation on June 5<sup>th</sup>. In my statement, I spoke about the benefits of a

made-in-the-North curriculum. Building on the curriculum that's been taught at Aurora College for many years, what does the Minister envision for the new, call it "directions," which the curriculum of a polytechnic university might take on?

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** We've often heard it all along saying, "we need to get this right." With that polytechnic, we need to get this right. This isn't going to be something that's done too fast. The first thing was developing our vision, trying to find out what are our strengths; what programs should be done. One of the critiques that was in our college foundational report is we tried to do too much for everyone. Sometimes, when you try to do too much, like over 200 mandate question areas, you don't get enough done to address them all. You get spread too thin. We are trying to figure out what our specialization should be, and my direction has been all along from the beginning, I said that when I first came into the Assembly. I have not changed my stance. I am huge on accreditation. Accreditation means best practices. Whatever specialization will be defined, I want accredited programming, programming that our students can take their qualifications and go throughout Canada, internationally, to be able to provide their skills throughout. That is my direction, is that the curriculum be based on best practices, and that we work towards accrediting all of our programming at our polytechnic university.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you again to the Minister for that reply. I like her enthusiasm and definitely the excitement that she has about accreditation and, in particular, she mentioned about accreditation that could be awarded to those not just in the North, but outside the North, possibly outside Canada. Our post-secondary strategy must be central to provide better services and opportunities for our own young people, but a further advantage of a polytechnic university will be its ability to attract people from outside the North. I'd like to ask the Minister: what does the Minister envision in a strategy for attracting interest and participation from around Canada and other parts of the world? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** When I was travelling to the three communities three or four times, I had heard from staff and from students, et cetera, that they want to have great programming and that we need to have programming for northern students. People were a little bit concerned about national and international students, but it's a good thing. The reality is that our numbers in the Northwest Territories will make it challenging if we didn't look outside of the Northwest Territories.

I want to emphasize, the post-secondary that we provided in the Northwest Territories has to be for northern people based on Northern needs, and specializing the Northern strengths. That will define who we become, the courses that we offer. No sense doing everything. Like I said before, define what our strengths are. Once that is done and those programs are actually developed so that they're based on best practices, that they're quality programming, then, at that point, we need to do a serious student enrolment management plan that we actually look at, not only getting students from the Northwest Territories, gauging them, keep them in courses, but also looking nationally and internationally, because not only do we need to promote what we have the strengths of the Northwest Territories, but we also need the numbers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

QUESTION 750-18(3):  
MARINE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FUEL  
RESUPPLY

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently, I have been hearing rumours and concerns about the MTS fuel resupply from last year. It is my understanding that some of last year's fuel supply that was delivered to the shipyard in Hay River is apparently bad fuel. I'd like to ask the Minister of Infrastructure if he can tell us what happened in this situation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, this is true. Some of the fuel that was supplied last year did not meet the specification required by Infrastructure. This, I do know, because we had to reject it and it had to be returned to the refinery at the supplier's expense.

**MR. THOMPSON:** I'd like to ask the Minister: whose responsibility was it for the bad fuel that was supplied to the communities?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** It is the supplier's responsibility to meet the terms and conditions of the contract, and within that contract, supplying fuel at the appropriate specifications.

**MR. THOMPSON:** In light of the fuel supplier's responsibility in providing fuel that did not meet the specifications required by the department, I'd like to ask the Minister: what sort of recourse is available? Will the GNWT be able to be reimbursed for the cost of the fuel and for sending it back?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** The Department of Infrastructure did not pay for any off-specification fuel that we received, and the supplier arranged for the recovery of the off-specification fuel at their own expense and took it back.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Minister for providing this information and clearing up some of the concerns and issues that I've been hearing. Finally, given the importance of fuel supplies to communities, what lessons has the Minister learned from this experience to help avoid a similar case in the future? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** The Department of Infrastructure, due to what happened last year, has actually asked the supplier to avoid these issues going forward by asking them to increase their inspection of their fuel-testing regime before the fuel is delivered to us. We've been working with them on that, and asked them to do that. We will continue to independently test the fuel received from our supplier to ensure it meets our required specifications. The department has also initiated a delivery risk management initiative that will involve staging one year's consumption volume of fuel in surplus capacities at NTPC's tank farms in Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. A plan is in place to establish the strategic reserve of fuel during this year's shipping resupply. Those are some of the things that we have worked on from last year's lessons. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 751-18(3):  
NORTHERN FRONTIER VISITORS CENTRE

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Infrastructure. In my statement earlier today, I itemized some reports about reimagining the design of a new or redeveloped visitors centre here in Yellowknife, the former Northern Frontier Visitors Centre. I pointed out the Minister's statements that redesigns were being commissioned in 2017 and that there was a recent RFP or something, again, to do more design. Before we go out with this new call for designs, can the Minister explain what he intends to do with the first two sets of designs? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Normally I credit the Member for doing his homework, but there were three designs, actually,

that we have received on this. I'm just teasing him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We received three concept designs as part of this planning process, and through that, we want to go to the next step to develop a schematic design over the summer in 2019, but this is going to largely depend on some of the technical work that has been recently wrapped up on this building. We are waiting to hear back on these geotechnical and structural reports. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for correcting my notes here. They have three sets; that is a lot of designs to work with, then, but it looks like we are going to be going out for some more. When is the decision actually going to finally be made about either resurrecting the current building or knocking it down?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** I am glad that the Member asked the question that way. As I have said, this geotechnical report and structural engineering review was conducted, again, this year. We had the original one, and we went out and did the work to stabilize the building. We have done a couple of things since then to make sure that the building doesn't get too out of whack.

We already know that we have never met the inspection to be able to have people in there. We went out to the design concept. We got them back, but before we push that any further, we have to see what these reports come back and say about what can be done with this building. My concern is: is it going to be to a point of non-repair? Do we have to knock this thing down? I think that the reports that we are going to get are going to give us a little better of an idea of what is going on.

From some of the discussions that I have had with my department, I would say that things are not looking very well on saving this building, just to get that out there. I think that it is going to look like it is in a condition that could be very expensive to fix this thing up, but I have to wait until that report hits my desk here in the next coming weeks, and then we are going to have to update this House on what we are going to do with this building moving forward. I don't want to get too deep into long-term plans until we know if this thing is even viable to fix.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for sharing that information. I hope that he is going to share, maybe, a summary of the geotechnical report with myself, as this building is my riding, when it is completed. The other key unknown here, of course, is the role of the City of Yellowknife in promoting visitors services. The Minister once told me that "we are working with the City of Yellowknife to determine the long-term model delivery of the visitors information centre." Can the Minister update



us as to what sort of discussion there has been with the City of Yellowknife in providing proper visitors services here in this city?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Our department and our officials are in constant contact with the City of Yellowknife with what is happening at the visitor information centre. One of the things that has happened since we shut down the Northern Frontier Visitors Centre and moved it over to city hall. I took a lot of questions in the House about how that is going to work out. Things with the city have moved along quite well.

One of the things that has happened since we have closed down the visitors centre is the number of tourists who actually went to the city's tourists information centre has almost doubled. The department was kind enough to actually give me those numbers. In 2018, when we shut that thing down, there were roughly 7,000 people who went to the City of Yellowknife tourists information centre. I see the number is written down; it is actually 7,105.

In March of 2019 -- and this is a surprising number; and you heard me talk about this in my statement the other day, how much tourists have impacted them, particularly around the aurora viewing -- in Yellowknife, the number of visitors who actually visited the new centre in City Hall is 12,991 people. There hasn't been a whole lot of noise in the Legislative Assembly about the number of people and how the services are going. I think that things are going quite well with the city and how they are handling these things. We are working with them closely. They are trying to put together an advisory committee on how they are going to see the future of this thing working out. I know that our officials have talking extensively with them, because we have a number of ideas that we want to work with.

As you all know, we passed a levy in this Chamber so that the city could actually do that stuff, and we want to see an opportunity for them, moving forward with their bylaws, for how they are going to levy these funds. Maybe it is going to be to support visitors services and, also, the DMO. Those discussions are ongoing with the City of Yellowknife. The City of Yellowknife is the biggest impacted region in the Northwest Territories based on the successes that we have had around NWT tourism. We are going to continue to work with them.

As I have said, the building is another situation, and that is going to feed into how we work with the City of Yellowknife going forward. If we end up ripping this building down, the 19<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly is going to have to make a decision about how we are going to move forward, working with the City of Yellowknife, based around infrastructure and what those needs are going to be. Our capital plan on

that is going to be our fiscal reality in the 19<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. There are a lot of different questions that are going to have to be answered.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that long explanation of what is going on. The reality, of course, is that our government continues to spend more on a visitors centre in Dawson, Yukon, than we do here in Yellowknife, which is the capital.

The Minister trotted out some great numbers of the increases in visitation at the visitors centre in the basement of city hall. As the Minister well knows, I helped drag him through the visitors centre when we were coming back from lunch one day. I think that the city is doing a good job with what they have, but they clearly don't have enough. What is the Minister doing to set this up for the next Assembly so that we actually can make a proper investment in promoting tourism here in Yellowknife, given the huge growth in this sector that the Minister himself just talked about? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** I am not even going to go to my notes first here. I am going to address some of the comments that the Member has made. I am the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. I represent all residents in the Northwest Territories, not just the City of Yellowknife and not just the tourists coming to the City of Yellowknife.

What I don't like about the comments that the Member made is that it is kind of "us versus them," the Beau-Del region versus Yellowknife, because of the money that we have spent in Whitehorse. We are trying to address and diversify our economy across all regions of the Northwest Territories.

The City of Yellowknife has clearly been the biggest benefactor of tourism in the Northwest Territories, and I dare any Member to stand up in this House and contradict me on that. That is not the case. As I have said before in this House, we are doing almost too good of a job because we are a victim of our own success, but this is what we are going to do forward, and that was what the Member's question was.

Under Tourism's 2020 strategy, we will invest more than \$1.5 million this year in the development and delivery of funding and programming to strengthen our tourism products and capacity of our tourism operators. The growth of tourism, particularly through the life of this government, confirms that our approach of supporting and growing this sector

of our economy is working. That was clear from the numbers that I said in the House yesterday.

As Members may be aware, we are about to begin the process of evaluation of our current 2020 strategy in the interest of developing a follow-up strategy and building on the success that we have seen. Our process will include engagement with tourism stakeholders and operators and will help us to identify the projects and priorities, not just for Yellowknife, but for the full territory. I look forward to having the Member's contributions to this process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. With that, time for oral questions has expired. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to the Commissioner's opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Member for Kam Lake.

### Reports of Standing and Special Committees

COMMITTEE REPORT 16-18(3):  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BILL 29: AN ACT TO AMEND THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 100(4) and to have Committee Report 16-18(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of Bill 29: An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The Member is requesting unanimous consent to waive Rule 100(4) to have Committee Report 16-18(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of Bill 29: An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act moved to Committee of the Whole.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. SPEAKER:** Committee Report 16-18(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of Bill 29: An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act has been moved to Committee of the Whole. Reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 438-18(3):  
2017/2018 ANNUAL REPORT - NORTHWEST TERRITORIES AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS MARKETING COUNCIL

TABLED DOCUMENT 439-18(3):  
NWT OIL AND GAS ANNUAL REPORT 2018

TABLED DOCUMENT 440-18(3):  
ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019 NWT OFFICE OF THE REGULATOR OF OIL AND GAS OPERATIONS

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following three documents entitled "2017/2018 Annual Report - Northwest Territories Agricultural Products Marketing Council"; "NWT Oil and Gas Annual Report 2018"; and "Annual Report 2018-2019 NWT Office of the Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Health and Social Services.

TABLED DOCUMENT 441-18(3):  
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HELP DIRECTORY 2019

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled "Health and Social Services Northwest Territories Help Directory 2019."

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Tabling of documents. Member for Kam Lake.

TABLED DOCUMENT 442-18(3):  
2030 NWT CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2019-2023 ACTION PLAN

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, "2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework 2019-2023 Action Plan." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Member for Kam Lake.

### Notices of Motion

MOTION 39-18(3):  
REFERRAL OF 2030 NWT CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2019-2023 ACTION PLAN

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that, on Tuesday, June 4, 2019, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for

Yellowknife North, that Tabled Document 442-18(3), 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework 2019-2023 Action Plan, be referred to Committee of the Whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

### Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

BILL 57:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE EMPLOYMENT  
STANDARDS ACT

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Mr. Speaker, I give notice that, on Tuesday, June 4, 2019, I will move that Bill 57: An Act to Amend the Employment Standards Act be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 29, An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act; Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act; Bill 35, Supply Chain Management Professional Designation Act; Committee Report 15-18(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of Bill 30: An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act; Minister's Statement 151-18(3), New Federal Infrastructure Agreement; Minister's Statement 158-18(3), Developments in Early Childhood Programs and Services, with Member for Hay River North in the Chair.

### Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** I will now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The committee would like to consider Committee Report 16-18(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of Bill 29: An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act; Bill 29, An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act; and Bill 35, Supply Chain Management Professional Designation Act. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, committee. We will consider the three documents after a brief recess. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you for your patience, committee. I will call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have agreed to first consider Committee Report 16-18(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of Bill 29, an Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. I will go to the chair of the committee for opening remarks. Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the opportunity to speak to the committee's report. I am not going to speak at length, as we read the full contents of the report into the record yesterday, and I believe that that took approximately an hour and a half, because it is, to my understanding, the third-longest report that has been produced by a committee, in the history of this sitting, at least.

It shows the tremendous amount of work that the committee did, putting together their review of Bill 29. I would be remiss if I didn't mention the very hard work that staff, both committee staff and the staff of the Department of Justice, did, collaborating on a bill that addressed the public concerns that the committee heard, addressed the concerns that Members brought forward over the course of the review, and worked collaboratively to ensure that we have world-class access and privacy legislation.

I think that I can safely say that this is one of the most progressive access and privacy regimes currently in the country, and I think that we should all look towards this as fulfilling a very important part of this government's commitment to transparency and openness as a government in Canada. It is a new generation and a new age of technology, and we have seen a number of very high-profile privacy issues over the life of this government. This legislation is going to ensure that privacy rights and protections are in place for our citizens and that the government can continue to function where its own privacy is needed, but that is tempered by the public's right to know and the high standards of transparency that we have set as a society and as a government. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. The way that we usually proceed with these reports is that the chair will move as motions the recommendations within the report. There are two in this report. Before we get into that, I will open up the floor to general comments on the report itself. Do we have any general comments from committee relating to the report? First, Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to take a minute to express my appreciation to the committee and the Legislative Assembly staff for the work that they have done on this bill. I know that they have spent many hours, and they have produced a very solid result. I think that all of us in the NWT should be appreciative of that fact. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I am an alternate on the Government Operations Committee, and I want to sincerely thank all of the committee members for their very hard work in putting this together. I sat in on all of the discussions here in Yellowknife. This is a great report. This is why we are here as legislators, to do this kind of work. Very significant improvements have been made to the bill, but I do want to particularly recognize a few individuals for the work that they did on this whole process.

I want to congratulate the chair of the committee, Mr. Testart, for stick-handling this through the committee. It is a very complicated piece of legislation, a lot of issues were at play, but I want to congratulate him on his chairing skills in getting this piece of work done.

A lot of the staff behind the scenes deserve some recognition. I will have to leave that for now, but there was a lot of very hard work by our staff.

I also want to recognize the work of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, who provided a lot of very valuable feedback that was incorporated into this bill, and I think that her work in particular has made it a much better piece of legislation.

This is the first time that this legislation has ever gone through a comprehensive review, and we made this a mandate priority. We all did in this House. It is a very important piece of legislation, and I want to thank the Minister of Justice, as well, and his staff for leading that effort.

I have a strong personal interest in this matter, as well, because I have used access to information for many years at the federal level. I was involved with MLA-at-the-time Sam Gargan and John Vertes in drafting the original bill back in about 1994. This has really come a long, long way, and I have become more familiar with the GNWT process since I became an MLA because I've had occasion to use this GNWT process now, trying to get documents that I had hoped to get out of Ministers. This is a strong piece of legislation now, and I'm happy to support it. I want to recognize everyone's work on getting this to where I think it needs to be. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Testart.

COMMITTEE MOTION 131-18(3)  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT  
OPERATIONS REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF  
BILL 29: AN ACT TO AMEND THE ACCESS TO  
INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY  
ACT – IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACCESS TO  
INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY  
ACT FOR MUNICIPALITIES  
CARRIED

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this Assembly recommends that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, working with the Department of Justice, develop a detailed and costed plan to guide the implementation of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act for Municipalities.

And further, that the plan identify: I) time lines for the inclusion of different categories of municipalities in the access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act regulations; II) the resources needed by each municipal government to comply with the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, to III) ensure adequate funding for initial implementation and ongoing operational requirements; along with IV) any other significant considerations as determined through consultation on development of the plan.

And furthermore, that, before being finalized, the plan be provided in draft so that input may be obtained from: the appropriate standing committee; the NWT Association of Communities; and the local government administrators of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. There's a motion on the floor. The motion is being distributed. There are some hiccups with distribution, but we're working on it. It's a two-page motion. I will wait until everyone has both pages before we begin speaking to the motion. To the motion. Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In virtually every community organization that came forward, including the first responders who worked in emergency services in the communities which the committee consulted, the number one concern was ensuring that -- sorry, I'm getting confused with other consultations, because we've been doing so many of them. Sorry, Mr. Chair.

In all the community governments we spoke to, including representatives from the Northwest Territories Association of Communities, the concern has been that a new access regime that applies to municipalities will bring with it additional technology

requirements, personnel requirements, operational requirements, et cetera, and that funding is already stretched thin to support municipal operations so that additional cost pressures created by this legislation can be appropriately assessed by the Government of the Northwest Territories before municipalities are properly brought into the act.

I should note that the act creates the possibility that municipalities will be brought under ATIPP, but it is to be determined on the schedule set by regulations, so not all municipalities will be subject to the act after the act comes into force. They'll be dealt with on a schedule moving forward, and this motion calls for a very precise transparent and reliable process for rolling communities into the access regime, and to ensure that a costed plan is brought forward for any additional operational requirements those municipalities need. I think it's important that we do so to ensure that the access regime is properly functioning across all governments that it touches.

The Government of Alberta brought in municipalities to their ATIPP regime only recently, and we know there are hiccups with that system. There will be growing pain. This motion intends to address that in a way that seeks to meet the concerns raised by municipalities and the stakeholders we heard from, and that the common complaint that higher levels of government continue to download responsibilities onto lower levels of government is addressed with real action that puts people at ease.

Although the committee can't speak to any direct funding requests or compel the government to appropriate funds for this regime, we think it's appropriate that they at least assess the costs and have a realistic timeline for implementation that respects the integrity of community government operations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. To the motion. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I served on Yellowknife City Council in 1997 to 2006, and certainly, when I was on city council, the position of the Northwest Territories Association of Communities was that access to information legislation should be applied to them.

I think what I heard during the public consultations was that municipalities are okay with that. They just want to make sure that they have the right kinds of support in place to allow that to happen. The idea here of having a working group, some sort of a collaborative process of developing a plan for rolling this out, is a great idea, and it will involve Municipal and Community Affairs, Department of Justice, municipalities themselves, probably

through the NWTAC, to make sure that they have the right resources to do this, the right kind of support in terms of training, and perhaps even through the School of Community Government.

We want to make sure that our communities have the right support to do this, and they get it right from the beginning. That may mean a phased approach through, with a tax-based community starting, or records of a certain date would be brought in, and older records through time, or whatever. I think there are a bunch of different options. The idea is to get this group working at this and develop a plan for rolling this out. I'm very happy to support this motion. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. To the motion. Minister Sebert.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are well aware of the issues that give rise to the motion, and I thank committee for the recommendation. As it is a recommendation, we will be abstaining. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Thank you, committee. Mr. Testart.

COMMITTEE MOTION 132-18(3)  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT  
OPERATIONS REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF  
BILL 29: AN ACT TO AMEND THE ACCESS TO  
INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY  
ACT – INCLUSION OF HOUSING ASSOCIATION  
AND HOUSING AUTHORITIES AS PUBLIC  
BODIES UNDER ATIPP ACT,  
CARRIED

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this Assembly recommends that the Minister of Justice propose, for approval by the Commissioner in Executive Council, amending the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act Regulations to include housing associations incorporated under the Societies Act and housing authorities incorporated under section 45 of the NWT Housing Corporation Act, as public bodies under the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. There's a motion on the floor. The motion is

being distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As noted in our report on page 10, the inclusion of local housing associations is something that the committee identified as a concern. However, as with any clause-by-clause review of legislation, the committee's role is to determine how best to address that concern. In this case, committee felt that amendment to the law would be inconsistent with how the legislation operates to be inclusive of government agencies or public bodies. That is through regulations. The committee felt that the best way to address this concern of ensuring that local housing associations are properly included under the Access to Information regime is through the regulations. However, committee cannot change those regulations. That remains the sole prerogative of the Minister and the Commissioner in Executive Council.

The purpose of this motion is to send clear advice and direction to government that this is a concern. It needs to be addressed through changes to the regulations, and we hope that the government will carefully consider what's being proposed. Review the very substantial commentary on this that is contained in the report and the committee's findings and make those changes so that we can ensure that our access regime affects all public bodies in the Northwest Territories that are holding personal information of our citizens. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. To the motion. Minister Sebert.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, I thank the committee, but again, we will be abstaining. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

Thank you, committee. Mr. Testart.

COMMITTEE MOTION 133-18(3):  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT  
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE  
REVIEW OF BILL 29: AN ACT TO AMEND THE  
ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECTION  
OF PRIVACY ACT – RESPONSE WITHIN 120  
DAYS, CARRIED

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this Assembly recommends that the Department of

Justice provide a response to the recommendations contained in this report within 120 days. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. There is a motion on the floor. It is being distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

Committee, do you agree that this concludes consideration of Committee Report 16-18(3), Report on the Review of Bill 29, an Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, committee. This concludes consideration of Committee Report 16-18(3). We have agreed to next consider Bill 29, An Act to Amend The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. There are copies of the bill in the grey binders next to everyone's seats. I will give committee a moment to get them ready. Committee, I will turn to the Minister responsible for Bill 29 to introduce it. Minister Sebert.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am here today to discuss Bill 29, An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Government Operations for their review of this bill and for the productive feedback that they have provided. A number of motions were made in committee, and I believe the bill has improved as a result of the work with standing committee.

Bill 29 amends the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act to improve public accountability, the protection of personal privacy, access to government information, and to ensure greater transparency and openness. The amendments include lowering fees and shortening timeframes for processing requests and arise from recommendations received during the comprehensive review of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act that was completed in 2017.

The amendments are a result of extensive consultation with public bodies, the Information and Privacy Commissioner, and the public. All feedback received during the course of these consultations, including the Information and Privacy Commissioner's submissions and recommendations previously identified by the

Standing Committee on Government Operations, were carefully considered.

Specifically, the proposed amendments to the act include changes to:

- update and clarify provisions relating to purpose of the legislation;
- improve public access to information by responding to advances in technology and shortening timeframes for processing requests;
- provide greater clarity on existing exceptions and narrowing the focus of specific exceptions;
- acknowledge the operation of common or integrated services or programs across public bodies, and to provide greater clarity on disclosures supported by the act; and
- provide for greater oversight of activities carried out under the act, including new powers for the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

The bill will also make a number of non-substantive miscellaneous amendments to improve the clarity and readability of specific provisions of the act. I would be pleased to answer any questions that the Members may have regarding Bill 29. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister Sebert. I will now turn to the chair of the Standing Committee on Government Operations, which is the committee that considered the bill, for any opening comments. Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think that I have spoken at length about the importance of this bill, and I will refer interested viewers back to those previous comments. It is great legislation, and the one thing that I will say is that the collaboration with the Minister's office was greatly appreciated. We have achieved consensus on every issue brought forward by committee, and it has greatly improved the bill and shown just how effective this legislature can be when it puts its mind to collaborating on legislation. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister, do you have witnesses who wish to bring into the Chamber?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness into the Chamber. Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses for the record.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my left is Denise Anderson, manager of GNWT Access, the Privacy Office, Department of Justice,

and to my right is Kelly McLaughlin, legislative counsel, Legislation Division, Department of Justice. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. That was Ms. Anderson and Ms. McLaughlin? Thank you very much. I will now open the floor to general comments on Bill 29. Is there anything that is unsaid? Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee of the Whole take a short recess. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Take a recess? All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

We will take a brief recess.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** I will call committee back to order. Does committee agree that there are no further comments on Bill 29?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Agreed. Can we proceed to the clause-by-clause review of the bill?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Okay. We will proceed in groups of five. Committee, we will defer Bill 29 and title until after consideration of the clauses. As said, we will do groups of five. Please turn to page 1 of the bill. Clauses 1 to 5?

---Clauses 1 through 16 inclusive approved

Clause 17?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Mr. Testart.

COMMITTEE MOTION 134-18(3):

BILL 29: AN ACT TO AMEND THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT – AMENDMENT TO CLAUSE 17 - DELETING PROPOSED CLAUSE 24.1 AND SUBSTITUTION, CARRIED

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that Clause 17 of Bill 29 be amended by deleting "proposed clause to 24.1" and substituting the following:

"24.1(1) subject to subsection (2), the head of a public body shall refuse to disclose to an applicant labour relations information

- a) the disclosure of which could reasonably

be expected to reveal information supplied to, or the report of, an arbitrator, mediator, labour relations officer, or other person or body appointed to resolve or inquire into a labour relations matter, including information or records prepared by or for the public body in contemplation of litigation or arbitration or in contemplation of a settlement offer;

- b) that is prepared or supplied, implicitly or explicitly, in confidence, and is treated consistently as confidential information by the public body as the employer; and
- c) that could reasonably be expected to
  - (i) harm the competitive position of the public body as an employer,
  - (ii) interfere with the negotiating position of the public body as an employer, or
  - (iii) result in significant financial loss or gain to the public body as an employer.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the head of a public body shall disclose to an applicant who is a party to a labour relations matter any relevant information that the party would otherwise be entitled to receive in respect of the matter." Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. A motion has been made. The motion is being distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have some written comments here, because this motion is quite complicated. Mr. Chair, clause 17 of Bill 29 proposes to add a provision requiring that, where someone makes an access-to-information request, the head of a public body must refuse to disclose labour relations information that could reveal information supplied to or the report of an arbitrator, mediator, labour relations officer, or other person dealing with a labour relations matter. The committee was concerned that the provision, as written in the bill, did not provide clear enough direction on what constitutes "labour relations information." The committee was also concerned that the provision in the bill was too broad and could potentially exempt from disclosure a significant amount of information that would otherwise be available to an applicant. As such, the committee sought to narrow this provision so as to limit the exemption to a much narrower category of information.

Both the Department of Justice's legislative drafters and the committee's law clerk proposed motions to address this concern. The motion before us today is the result of a compromise reached on these earlier drafts. It specifies, as did the original clause in the bill, that the head of a public body shall refuse to disclose labour relations information that could reveal information supplied to or the report of an arbitrator, mediator, labour relations officer, or other person dealing with a labour relations matter, but it further specifies that this includes information or records prepared by the public body in contemplation of litigation, arbitration, or a settlement offer. It also specifies that this further includes labour relations information that was developed in confidence by the public body, as an employer, and has been treated consistently as confidential information.

Another notable feature of this motion is that, to be protected from disclosure, labour relations information must also meet the following test: that it could harm the competitive position of the public body as an employer; that it could interfere with the negotiating position of a public body as an employer; or that it could result in significant financial loss or gain to the public body as an employer.

Finally, Mr. Chair, the motion adds a subsection to the provision which provides that, notwithstanding the protections set out above, an applicant who is party to a labour relations matter must have access to any relevant information that the party would otherwise be entitled to receive with respect to the matter at hand.

The committee believes that this revised motion provides enough direction to strike an appropriate balance between privacy and access to labour relations information, such that highly confidential and personal labour relations-related information is only disclosed to parties with a direct interest in a labour relations matter, while ensuring that broader types of labour relations information must only be withheld by public bodies where there is a risk of harm.

The committee, again, thanks the Minister and his Cabinet colleagues for their support in amending Bill 29. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister Sebert.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As has been mentioned, this is a compromise. A lot of work did go into this, and we will be supporting this motion. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Minister Sebert. To the motion.



**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstentions?

---Carried

Clause 17, as amended.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Clauses 18 through 40 inclusive, approved

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** We will now return to Bill 29, an Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that Bill 29, an Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, be deemed ready for third reading as amended. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Bill 29 is now ready for third reading as amended and reprinted. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 29?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you. Thank you, Minister, and thank you to the witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. Thank you. Committee, we have agreed to consider Bill 35, Supply Chain Management Professional Designation Act. It is in your binders. I will ask the Minister responsible to introduce the bill. Minister Schumann.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** I am here today to introduce Bill 35, Supply Chain Management Professional Designation Act.

In the Northwest Territories, Supply Chain Management Professionals are licensed by the Supply Chain Management Association Northern Territories. This association sets the standards for excellence and ethics and is the source of professional development and accreditation for supply chain management in the Northwest Territories.

Supply Chain Management Professionals ensure that goods, people, and information are transported as safely and efficiently as possible.

Prior to 2013, the Supply Chain Management Association Northern Territories was called the Northwest Territories Institute of the Purchasing Management Association of Canada. Likewise, in 2013 the Certified Professional Purchaser designation was replaced with Supply Chain Management Professional.

The new Supply Chain Management Professional Designation Act, which replaces the Purchasing Management Association Act, reflects these name changes.

In addition, it will continue to ensure that only Supply Chain Management Professionals licensed by the Supply Chain Management Association Northern Territories are entitled to hold themselves out as professionals in the field of supply chain management.

The Government of the Northwest Territories values the hard work of Supply Chain Management Professionals, who are imperative to the region's ongoing economic development, the provision of health services, and the transportation of food and supplies, among many other things. The proposed new Supply Chain Management Professional Designation Act recognizes this hard work and will modernize the outdated Purchasing Management Association Act. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Minister. I will now turn to the chair of the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment, the committee that considered the bill, for opening comments. Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment concluded its review of Bill 35, Supply Chain Management Professional Designation Act, on May 27, 2019, with a public hearing held at the Legislative Assembly building.

The committee received a submission from Bonita Nowell, president of the Supply Chain Management Association Northern Territories Institute. Ms. Nowell, on behalf of the board of directors of the institute, expressed support for the bill, noting that it protects the designation used by Supply Chain Management Professionals in the Northwest Territories. The committee agrees and also supports the bill as outlined by the Minister. Individual Members may have additional comments or questions as we proceed with consideration of this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister, would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Yes, I would, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Thank you. Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. On my left is Paul Guy, deputy minister of

Infrastructure, and on my right is Laura Jeffrey, legislative counsel, Department of Justice. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Minister. I will now open the floor to general comments on Bill 35. Comments? Seeing none, does committee agree that there are no further comments?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, committee. Can we proceed to a clause-by-clause review of the bill?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you. Committee, we will defer Bill 35, Supply Chain Management Professional Designation Act, until consideration of the clauses. There are six clauses in the bill, starting on page 1. We will go one by one to six.

---Clauses 1 through 6 inclusive, approved

We will now return to Bill 35, Supply Chain Management Professional Designation Act. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Does committee agree that Bill 35 is now ready for third reading?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that Bill 35, Supply Chain Management Professional Designation Act, be ordered to be read for a third time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Question has been called. All in favour? Opposed?

---Carried

Bill 35 is now ready for its third reading. Thank you, Minister. Thank you to your witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. Does committee agree that concludes Committee of the Whole? Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that the chair rise and report progress. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. We will rise and report progress.

**MR. SPEAKER:** May I have the report, Member for Sahtu?

### Report of Committee of the Whole

**MR. MCNEELY:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Committee Report 16-18(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on Bill 29, an Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act; Bill 29, an Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act; and Bill 35, Supply Chain Management Professional Designation Act; and would like to report progress, and that Committee Report 16-18(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on Bill 29, an Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, concluded with three motions adopted; and that Bill 29, an Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, is ready for third reading as amended; and that Bill 35, Supply Chain Management Professional Designation Act, is ready for third reading, and Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Do I have a seconder? Member for Nahendeh. The motion is in order. All those in favour. All those opposed. Motion carried.

---Carried

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

### Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE:** Day 77, Thursday, May 30, 2019, at 1:30 p.m., orders of the day:

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 the Commissioner's 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 38-18(3), Extended Adjournment of the House to June 4, 2019
18. First Reading of Bills
  - Bill 54, Standard Interest Rates Statutes Amendment Act
  - Bill 55, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 1
  - Bill 65, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act
  - Committee Report 15-18(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of Bill 30: An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act
  - Minister's Statement 151-18(3), New Federal Infrastructure Agreement
  - Minister's Statement 158-18(3), Developments in Early Childhood Programs and Services
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
  - Bill 29, An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
  - Bill 35, Supply Chain Management Professional Designation Act
23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi, Mr. Clerk. [Translation] This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, May 29, 2019, at 1:30 p.m. [Translation ends]

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

