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The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Friday, September 29, 2023****Members Present**

Hon. Diane Archie, Hon. Frederick Blake Jr., Mr. Bonnetrouge, Hon. Paulie Chinna, Ms. Cleveland, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Mr. Edjericon, Hon. Julie Green, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Martselos, Ms. Nokleby, Mr. O'Reilly, Ms. Semmler, Hon. R.J. Simpson, Mr. Rocky Simpson, Hon. Shane Thompson, Hon. Caroline Wawzonek, Ms. Weyallon Armstrong

The House met at 10:02 a.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Colleagues, before we start, I'd like to draw your attention to the gallery and welcome Mr. Daryl Dolynny. Welcome back. Daryl was a Member for Range Lake in the 17th Assembly, part of the Fab Five at the time. Good to see you again.

Personal explanation, Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Speaker, I rise pursuant to Rule 1.8(1) one of the rules of the Legislative Assembly to make a personal explanation. Yesterday, during Members' statements 599-19(2), the MLA for Kam Lake states as follows, as quoted in unedited Hansard: During the press conference, the Premier asked residents who could get on a commercial flight and leave town to do so, and they did. The press conference that the MLA is referring to was August 16th, 2023. I personally reviewed the video of this press conference and want to provide this House with the complete quote that I understand the MLA is referring to and context for it.

The quote is as follows: People that do not have enough money to leave town in their vehicles and need supports to get out of town, we're recommending that you actually meet at the multiplex, take a bus, or take a plane. We don't want to see you broke down on the highway. Although we will have supports, we want to make sure that everyone is safe. I made these remarks after the Minister for Municipal and Community Affairs had outlined in the same news conference the various methods for evacuation to residents, including that the GNWT would be offering free evacuation flights to residents beginning the next day, Thursday, August 17th.

Mr. Speaker, the full context of my remarks is important to understand that although the MLA

implied this, I did not encourage residents to get on commercial flights. I was concerned that those who did not have enough money to travel on their own means know that the Government of the Northwest Territories evacuation flights would be available to them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Premier. Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Housing NWT.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 382-19(2):
INDIGENEOUS GOVERNMENT
PARTNERSHIPS AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Mr. Speaker, Housing NWT has been very successful in building strong partnerships with Indigenous governments over the life of this government, because we have cultivated collaborative relationships with them. This is particularly important with the large amounts of distinctions-based funding that flows directly from the Government of Canada to Indigenous governments for their housing priorities.

The Council of Leaders Housing Working Group, which played a significant role in the review of housing programs and policies as part of Housing NWT's Strategic Renewal has transformed into the NWT Housing Forum. The forum will be instrumental in moving the needs of Northwest Territories forward collaboratively. With Housing NWT, the Indigenous co-led forum has already met twice and is positioned to play an important role in promoting information exchange and cooperation between all types of Northwest Territories governments on housing priorities.

Mr. Speaker, another success that should be highlighted are the formal agreements that have been signed between our government and the Tlicho government, Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated, and the Deline Gotine government to address their housing needs.

These agreements are tailored to each Indigenous government and will build on existing intergovernmental agreements in place between the GNWT and those Indigenous governments. The agreements acknowledge the relationships and work already done and provided a framework for intergovernmental cooperation on the collaboration to develop and implement housing-related matters. Even if no formal agreement is signed, Housing NWT will make it a priority to engage and work with Indigenous governments across the Northwest Territories in collaboration is an approach to key priorities to providing better services to our communities.

Mr. Speaker, as a new way of doing business, Housing NWT recently collaborated with the Indigenous governments on the design of units for seniors and single-occupancy units, both of which have been in high demand. In November 2022, Housing NWT established a senior advisory committee through discussions with community leadership. The committee is comprised of seniors, elders, and those who have direct experience taking care of seniors. Meeting with the committee have provided excellent input on the design and improvement that can be made by Housing NWT to allow seniors to age in place in their communities. In units that better meet their needs, the highly collaborative process has allowed for input every step of the way. I want to thank everyone who shared their insight and experiences through this process.

Mr. Speaker, through the negotiated contract policy, Housing NWT has worked directly with Indigenous governments and businesses to construct energy-efficient housing units in communities across the Northwest Territories. Through this work, we are seeing more locals getting involved in construction, more businesses developing capacity in the residential sector, and more houses being built for residents.

Housing NWT, along with other GNWT departments, has approached all Northwest Territories Indigenous governments to discuss market housing opportunities. Our government conducted research to determine specifically the needs for each community, including the need for frontline workers such as teachers and nurses that presented their information to Indigenous governments as an opportunity to build units to support staffing in these communities.

With funding from the federal Urban Native Funding Program targeted at Indigenous clients, Housing NWT was able to provide the North Slave Housing Corporation with \$600,000 for their repair program, supporting

75 units in Yellowknife that house Indigenous clients. The funding enables us to improve the quality of these units while also making them more energy-efficient.

Mr. Speaker, Housing NWT does not always have to be the lead in providing housing solutions. Over the life of the 19th Legislative Assembly, we have seen welcoming federal investment in direct funding to Indigenous governments for their housing and infrastructure priorities of more than \$400 million. This funding, along with over \$200 million that has been provided to the GNWT, will help address the overall housing infrastructure deficit in the Northwest Territories, and we are seeing Indigenous governments putting their funds to use across the housing spectrum, from home repair programs to market housing. Housing NWT will continue to support and coordinate with Indigenous governments as they put this money to use for their people.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said this before, no single government can address the housing needs of the Northwest Territories and communities. But by partnering and supporting other, Housing NWT can remain focused on improving the lives of residents most in need by using new approaches and finding new solutions.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank the staff of the Housing NWT for their collaboration and for their work on getting a lot of this work done in this Assembly. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 383-19(2):
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES SENIORS' STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK

HON. JULIE GREEN: Mr. Speaker, throughout this term, departments across the Government of the Northwest Territories have been working towards our mandate commitment to enable seniors to age in place with dignity, and we just heard some of that detail from the Minister responsible for NWT Housing. To focus this work, Regular Members passed a motion calling on the Department of Health and Social Services to create a framework for seniors. That work is now finished, and later today I will table the GNWT Seniors' Strategic Framework. This framework is an inventory of measures required for improving programs, services, and initiatives to better meet the needs of seniors and help them to stay at home for as long as possible.

Many people and organizations contributed to this framework. Their engagement reflects their commitment and respect for seniors and their valued place in our communities and territory. Their participation strengthened our understanding of the needs of seniors, existing gaps in programs and services, and provided insights as to how to enable seniors to age in place.

Mr. Speaker, the resulting framework outlines 20 key focus areas organized into four pillars: * Built Environment; Healthy Aging; Safety; and, Information and Communication.

Advancing work in these focus areas, whether through mandate commitments or departmental business plans, will be instrumental in ensuring that we can meet seniors' needs. I am going to speak to each one separately.

The built environment pillar emphasizes the importance of accessibility, suitability, and affordability of housing, along with the rest of the physical environment, to enhance the safety of seniors to participate in daily, recreational, cultural, and social activities. This pillar is about transportation and outdoor lighting, for example, that would help prevent slips, falls and injuries and contribute to personal and property safety too.

Mr. Speaker, the healthy aging pillar focuses on supporting the physical, mental, and social well-being through financial support, health care services, practical assistance, and age-friendly opportunities for activity such as intergenerational programs where seniors can connect with children and youth to share culture, traditions, and knowledge. Over the past two years, the Department of Health and Social Services offered a specific funding stream for communities to deliver services and provide support to seniors in their health and well-being.

The safety pillar addresses the right of seniors to safety in relationships, homes, and communities. Health providers will be promoting a person-centered, integrated service delivery approach, as well as providing access to advice from legal and professional experts and safety information and support. Work is ongoing to strengthen staff training to spot the signs of elder abuse and protect seniors from it.

The information and communication pillar prioritizes delivering information that is relevant, timely, accessible, and culturally appropriate. I hope the next government will invest in system navigation services to support seniors accessing necessary programs,

making informed decisions, and participating in recreational, cultural, and social activities.

Mr. Speaker, a comfortable life for seniors means having access to the necessary services and support to live independently and safely at home. This goal requires collaboration and coordination of efforts with all government entities and our valuable community partners. That work has already started during this Assembly, including the increased home heating subsidy, a new income assistance stream for seniors, and access to home improvement funding. I am confident these program changes have improved the ability of seniors to age in place.

I am very proud of this framework which is the result of a motion I made as a Regular Member in 2020. It provides clear direction to future governments on areas for improving seniors' programs and services so that we all have the opportunity to age, with the appropriate support, where we choose to live. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 384-19(2):
2023 TERRITORIAL WILDFIRE
EMERGENCY RESPONSE

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about this summer's devastating wildfire season that affected a majority of Northwest Territories residents. Territorial emergencies began in May and ended in September and saw a total of 12 communities impacted and roughly 70 percent of all NWT residents evacuated from their communities.

I understand how stressful these emergency events must have been for residents. I was an evacuee myself in the spring of 2021 and understand the challenges and the anxiety that these situations bring. There are also challenging days ahead as many of you have to repair the damage and help rebuild your homes and communities.

This has been the worst wildfire season in our recorded history and, for many of us, one that we will never forget. To preserve the record, I will table MACA's detailed chronology of the events of this summer later today. It is important for us to remember the events that occurred in a short period of time and the environment that was in place that led to the declaration of a state of emergency.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to being our worst wildfire season, it was also the first time any of us ever experienced an out-of-territory evacuation. To guide this historic undertaking, the GNWT used its Territorial Emergency Plan and that plan worked. The Emergency Plan provided for the activation of the Territorial Emergency Management Organization, or TEMO, to act as the lead authority for the government's emergency management response.

TEMO included a representative from all GNWT departments and agencies, applicable community governments, and emergency response-related agencies. The emergency plan outlines that community governments are the lead on community emergency events but when they need assistance, they ask the GNWT. When the GNWT needs assistance, we ask for help from Canada and other partners, which is exactly what we did. Through the TEMO, we supported community governments by calling for assistance from partners like the United Way and the governments of Alberta, Manitoba, and Yukon when our capacity was exceeded. I am the first person to say that we had to make several adjustments over the past few weeks as situations changed and as new information emerged.

It is a standard process after a disaster to conduct an after-action review using external contractors. The after-action review for this event is expected to be extensive and will involve the public and all partners. However, we are not waiting for recommendations from this review to make improvements. There are things we can start right away. This includes updating the NWT Emergency Plan, enhancing GNWT coordination and community government training, and increasing capacity for emergency response and evacuations across communities. We have also started the most important matter of all, which is helping community governments recover from this wildfire season as we work to rebuild Enterprise and all other affected communities.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I am so impressed by the tremendous amount of work undertaken by so many since May to protect residents and communities. The collective work done by hundreds of people over such an extended period of time deserves our gratitude and our thanks.

To the brave firefighters, as well as the frontline staff and contractors who worked so hard on wildfire prevention and emergency response, thank you. To the residents who displayed such resilience in the face of so many challenges and showed such kindness to their fellow evacuees, thank you.

To the GNWT departments and agencies that supported all our efforts, thank you. And to the federal government, provincial, and territorial partners who came to our help when we needed it most, thank you. We are in your debt for the kindness and compassion you have shown our residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Members' statements. Member for Thebacha.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1605-19(2): RECONCILIATION

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is September 30th, which is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. This day recognizes the dark history and legacy of residential schools, the missing children, and the survivors from these institutions. This date is a date of remembrance and of reflection for all Canadians across the country. It's also a day to acknowledge our country's colonial history and all the trauma, pain, and suffering that has been done to Indigenous peoples. It is also a day that we commemorate the families, communities, and survivors of those impacted by residential schools.

Mr. Speaker, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is a very significant date, so it is extremely important that we observe this day and that we never forget or try to erase this history from our collective consciousness. It is important that people understand and respect the significance of this day and people take time to educate themselves and each other about why this date is on our calendar.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if on this date I did not take this opportunity to once again state that Fort Smith is home to one of the last remaining residential school buildings that is still in active use in Canada. I am referring to the Breynat Hall at Aurora College Thebacha Campus. It is unfortunate, upsetting, and uncomfortable for many people in my community to see that building still standing and remains in active use in Fort Smith. This building is the first thing that needs to come down and be replaced when the new headquarters of the future polytechnic is established in Fort Smith.

Regardless, Mr. Speaker, I hope that all people will take a moment tomorrow to consider what reconciliation means to them and to this country. I know that for some, this may be an awkward or difficult subject to talk about; however, I would encourage everyone to move

out of their comfort zone and have a conversation with somebody about this important topic. It is vital for our country to be able to engage in this type of dialogue as that will help in the healing process and in moving our country forward in a good and positive way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1606-19(2):
RECONCILIATION

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. National Day of Truth and Reconciliation is tomorrow, and I'd like to just thank all the communities in my riding and across the territory that's taking part in showing, having remembrance of it. The opportunity and encourage all residents of the Northwest Territories to spend time with their family and friends, to take the time to appreciate each other, get out on the land and talk to elders; most importantly listen to those who want to speak. I'm very proud of my Inuvialuit heritage, my culture. And I'm a residential school survivor and so many of my brothers and my grandfather and my mother that went through this, and we all were traumatized in one way or another, the effects that it had on our family. But we're still standing.

You know, being a part of a community and watching our young people now hunt, fish, explore that don't have to go through this, that what we've been through, I think it's a really -- we're really blessed to be where we're at and where we're from. You know, our leaders, as members of our community, we need to encourage this particularly within our youth, to keep forcing them that school's the most important thing and helping them, encouraging, encouraging everybody.

Mr. Speaker, I know the impacts of the residential school system. I know the challenges faced by Indigenous peoples throughout Canada, especially in the North. I always like to say, you know, Mr. Speaker, honour the past, live the present, and create the future. I know the challenges we faced, and reconciliation means that we could work together now, everybody's on the same page, and now we could just work together and move up and not look back. But it's pretty tough to do. That's why this day and this weekend is so important. It's a reminder of what we should always be thinking and doing, a reminder of the importance of culture, family. It is a reminder of difficult path of Indigenous peoples that we faced and also a reminder that here today we work for the better and brighter future.

Mr. Speaker, I want to wish everyone in Nunakput and across the country a meaningful weekend, to take the time for each other and reflect. You know, I always reflect because you, Mr. Speaker, are a residential school survivor. We have other Members in the House that are other residential school survivors. But when we see our brothers and sisters that we lived with for three or four years at a time, it's like you never skipped a beat. And today, you know, I reflect on a couple of my friend's I've lost. Clifford Takazo from Deline, one of my good friends. He was crazy, and I loved him. He was an awesome guy. And one of my good friends that I lost in the 1990s when we first arrived residential schools, my good friend Raymond Bernard, he passed away at Christmastime. But it's things like that you think about on these kinds of days and reflect. And, you know, we're blessed we're still standing, and we just want to make a brighter future for our youth and our communities that we represent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1607-19(2):
RECONCILIATION

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, Saturday, is a federally-recognized statutory holiday in recognition of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. This holiday falls on September 30th each year. This day honours residential school survivors across Canada and the thousands of children who never made it home.

The federal government contracted the Catholic and Anglican churches to operate the residential facilities in order to assimilate Indigenous peoples into the white man's culture. One of the ways was to separate Indigenous peoples from their families and homes. Our people were not allowed to speak their native language or practise their traditions and culture. They were trying to take the Indian out of Indigenous peoples. This was recognized in the White Paper of 1969 published by the Liberal government.

The physical and psychological impacts from the residential school system continues to this day. It has impacted many generations.

The annual day is set aside to reflect and remember all of our ancestors who have passed and to reflect on the many children who have lost their lives in the care of the residential school system. This day is an important step in the reconciliation process and recognized as one of the 94 Calls to Action by the Truth and

Reconciliation Commission. Please join in on the festivities to mark this all-important day to commemorate all residential school survivors. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Members' statements. Member for Hay River South.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1608-19(2):
AMALGAMATION OF HAY RIVER HEALTH
AND SOCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY AND
NWTSSA

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we wrap up four years in office, many of us, including our constituents, find we are fighting the same battles which include that of health care recruitment and retention, lack of housing, homelessness, addictions, cost of living, access to labour and trades people, decrease in economic activity, affirmative action, and several other important issues. For now, I want to zero in on health care and ask why it is that we continue to have trouble recruiting and retaining doctors and health care professionals in our communities?

Mr. Speaker, I will use Hay River as an example. The Hay River Health Centre provides services not only to the residents of Hay River but also those surrounding communities which include K'atlodeeche First Nation, Enterprise, Fort Resolution, Kakisa, and Fort Providence. In essence we may be a health care centre in name, but we are seen as a hospital to many of the residents accessing services. People rely on services that are quickly disappearing or not available due to lack of doctors and qualified health care professionals. This is placing residents' health at risk, and we should be concerned.

Mr. Speaker, residents are tired to hearing of doctors shortages or that a whole department is closed due to lack of staff. That reality must change. The NWT was once competitive with southern Canada when it came to wages and benefits for health workers. We now find ourselves in a position where we are no longer competitive; instead, we are only comparable or in a wage deficit which does not work when it comes to recruitment in communities with high living costs and limited accommodations.

Mr. Speaker, the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority considers itself a separate and a distinct organization from the NTHSSA yet during union negotiations, countless employees say that they cannot provide benefits above and beyond what the NTHSSA and GNWT provide.

Mr. Speaker, if it looks like a duck, swims like a duck, and quacks like a duck, then it probably is a duck.

Using that analogy, the HRSSA facilities are owned by the GNWT, the cost of managing, operating and managing the facility is covered by this government, contract negotiations require support from this government, so why would we not look at the amalgamating the HRSSA with the NTHSSA so all workers are treated equally throughout the health care system in the NWT and, most importantly, residents are provided with timely and quality health care. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1609-19(2):
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES COMPLIANCE WITH
ARCHIVES ACT

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. The Minister of Education, Culture and Employment knows that I am a big fan of the NWT archives and the territorial museum here in Yellowknife, that also needs a name change. I visit the archives once or twice a year and I have always received great service from the staff there. However, I am becoming increasingly worried about the state of whole building constructed in 1977 and our management, or lack thereof, of the archival and documentary heritage of the NWT. I have seen so many studies about the need to replace, expand, and upgrade the building in my almost eight years here that I have lost track of where we are with this important work.

Many important records covering the early years of the Government of the Northwest Territories are not even stored at the museum building due to lack of space. These records are stored in the government warehouse on Bryne Road. That building is totally unsuitable for any long-term storage. Lack of temperature or humidity controls place our archival records at considerable risk. Just think of the heat inside that building this summer. It would be unbearable and definitely not good for paper records.

These documents cover the transfer of authority from Ottawa to the Northwest Territories and other political development of our territories. They document the rise of Indigenous governments, negotiations over land rights, devolution, and many other significant events for the Northwest Territories. It's not just the government records that the NWT archives is responsible for but at least 21

other boards and agencies and numerous private records that have been donated and/or acquired.

When I review the antiquated Archives Act, which seems to date from 1981, there are virtually no standards or requirements for the archival heritage of the Northwest Territories. Section 5(2) says, quote, "the archivist is responsible for the safekeeping of every public record that is transferred to the archives under this section." End of quote. That's it. That's a lot of responsibility with what seems to be not enough resources to actually do it. I also note that the Archives Act has been on the list of legislation to be updated in both Assembly's that I have been part of it but it continually gets bumped. I will have questions later today for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment about GNWT's archival practices and whether they comply with the law. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Members' statements. Member for Great Slave.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1610-19(2):
TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The beautiful autumn season is upon us. This is a time for harvesting, storing away our summer items as we prepare for colder months ahead. It is a time of wrapping up projects, to make room for new work and new stories. We end one season with a sense of gratitude for the memories we have created and look forward to making more over the coming months. However, for many, the fall season is a stark reminder of the time when children's voices full of play and laughter ceased to be heard in their community. Fall was the time when children, as young as three years old, were forcibly removed from their loving homes - homes where they were nurtured by parents, grandparents, and extended family members; homes where they spoke their language, harvested their food, honoured their culture in ceremony, and had laws and teachings of their own. Children were taken away by boat, plane, or vehicle and placed in residential schools far away. Parents were arrested if they did not hand over their children.

The Indian Residential School system was designed to assimilate, to "kill the Indian in the child" by removing them from all connection to family and culture. Established by the federal government and run by the churches, the very people charged with the care and handling of all students, subjected them to every abuse possible. And many did not return home.

Marking September 30th as a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is one small gesture that has been made in the attempt to begin righting the wrong inflicted on the Indigenous people of Canada, who were here long before the first colonizer ever set foot on Turtle Island. It is important that we take it upon ourselves as settlers and newcomers to learn about the legacy of these institutions. We must create spaces for dialogue with our families and friends, educating that this isn't something historical. Something of the past. In fact, Mr. Speaker, residential schools were in existence as recently as 1996.

The trauma from these institutions is rippling through our communities, and we owe it to everyone to learn what this day represents so that we can all be part of the process of healing and reconciliation. I stand here today with love and respect to honour all former students of residential schools, their families, and communities. And in memory and honour of all the children who did not return home. May this never ever happen again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1611-19(2):
LUTSELK'E DENE FIRST NATION CARIBOU
ENFORCEMENT

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today marks more than a year since a deeply troubling and unconstitutional event has cast a shadow over my riding of Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. I speak not to dwell on the past but to demand justice and healing for our friends and the neighbours, who are Indigenous people, that have suffered greatly at the hands of this government's reckless action of the raid in Lutselk'e Dene First Nation Timber Bay culture camp on September 15th, 2022.

One year ago, the unthinkable happened when Lutselk'e Dene First Nation culture camp was raided violating the very essence of our constitution section 35 rights, the sacred Dene laws, and the very principle of reconciliation. Our chief and council, along with the entire community of Lutselk'e, bore witness to this unrighteous and injustice as an effort to our shared commitment to truth and reconciliation. Today, the people of the Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh stand united to demand accountability and justice. We cannot let the anniversary pass without raising our voices for silence in the face of injustice. It's a betrayal of our values and our commitment to more equitable future for First Nation people.

The lack of progress in the investigation to this tragic event is deeply concerning. One year has passed, and we're still in the dark about what truly transpired on now that infamous day. We are still waiting for answers for transparency and accountability and for the genuine commitment to healing the wounds that have inflicted upon your community. Equally distressing is the continued absence of an apology from the Minister of Environment and Climate Change who bears responsibility for this disturbing incident.

An apology isn't merely a matter of courtesy. It is a vital step towards acknowledging the pain and suffering that has been caused. It is an admission of wrongdoing and a commitment to do better. To the chief and council of Lutselk'e and entire community, I want to say this: Your pain is my pain. Your fight is my fight. I stand shoulder to shoulder in solidarity to demand justice, accountability, and sincere apology from this government.

To the Minister, I saw and will not rest until the truth is brought to light. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my Member's statements. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. To the Minister, I saw, and we will now rest until the truth is brought to light, until the justice is served. And until the Minister of Environment and Climate Change acknowledges the wrongdoing that has occurred, we will not waiver in our commitment to reconciliation and healing. We will not allow this dark chapter to define our future.

Mr. Speaker, let us remember that it is duly -- that it is the duty of government to protect and uphold the rights of all citizens, and it is our duty to -- as our duty as a community to hold our government accountable. When those rights are violated, together we can ensure justice is served, that healing can begin, and we find the strength to stand together and demand the justice be served. I would have questions for the Minister of climate change. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. Members' statements. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1612-19(2):
HOUSING

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of this 19th Legislative Assembly's priority was to increase the number of affordable homes and reduce our core

housing need. The mandate said it would increase the stock of quality energy efficient and affordable housing, especially for vulnerable persons, by 100 units over four years, and it would transition 100 individuals and/or families to homeownership. I think we can all agree in this House that housing is a crisis in our country and especially in our territory.

Lack of affordable housing for people throughout the territory hasn't gotten any better even with this as a priority. I cannot speak to the details in all the communities, but I will bring up again what I do know in Inuvik. There are many vacant units, and they have been vacant almost the entire four years that I have been an MLA. Mr. Speaker, why do we still have these units sitting empty?

We approved money for renovations, major and minor retrofits, and we have never seen them worked on. There are units the Minister said that they were going to sell to make room for new units on those lots. This has not happened. We have a waitlist of people that could benefit from these homes but yet they sit empty. Even sit empty, heated, with no tenants. I know this, Mr. Speaker, because I pass them every day when I'm at home.

I am pleased to see that we have one unit being constructed by Housing NT other than RCMP units that have been completed pretty much in our community. And I am sure the two families that will move into this duplex will be very happy as well. However, Mr. Speaker, one duplex in four years is not going to fix the current waitlist of the single and the family units that are waiting for homes in my community. I will have questions for the Minister of Housing NWT. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1613-19(2):
BUSINESS INCENTIVE POLICY

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We hired an independent panel, and they did some really good work on procurement, and they delivered their report in June 2021. And Mr. Speaker, I somewhat naively thought that, you know, within a few months after that we'd see changes to procurement.

I reviewed their report. I thought they did good work. I didn't really disagree with any of the recommendations. They made a few recommendations to change the thresholds in BIP, increasing the top \$1 million to \$2 million,

recommended creating a local labour adjustment, and a few other tweaks.

They recommended a new definition of northern business, ones that a company would either have to have 51 percent ownership or a majority of its employees in the Northwest Territories. Importantly, they recommended using that definition which would then get rid of schedule 3 and finally remove Walmart from BIP. Yet, here are, Mr. Speaker, at the very end of this Assembly, and we still have not amended our policy.

Additionally, they recommended the creation of an Indigenous procurement policy. As far as I can tell, that conversation went completely off the rails, and there is no Indigenous procurement policy any hope in this Assembly. I personally would have just created a target similar to the Yukon and called it a day. I think getting everyone in the room who probably was never going to agree in the first place did more harm than good. But, Mr. Speaker, here we are.

And in August 2023, the government released finally its response to the review on procurement. And there are some hope in there. Apparently we have a new definition of northern business. We seem to be making no changes to the BIP threshold, and it doesn't look like Indigenous procurement is going anywhere. But maybe, just maybe, Walmart will finally be removed from BIP if we get that policy passed in the life of this Assembly. I'll have questions for the Minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Members' statements. Member for Monfwi.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1614-19(2):
TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is tomorrow. It signifies a time of the year when Indigenous children were taken from their homes and placed in residential school. The mission was to take the Indian out of the child. We must honour all these children, the residential school survivors, the children who never returned home, as well as their parents, grandparents, families and communities.

Wearing orange is to remember these children and to acknowledge the impacts on Indigenous families and communities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all people to reflect on the painful history here in the NWT. We cannot forget the little children and the little boys who

cried at night alone for their parents and grandparents. We cannot forget the parents' and the grandparents' pain who cried for their children.

Mr. Speaker, I also ask that we all take meaningful action to reconcile this painful past and work together to build a stronger territory for our children and grandchildren. We have begun to acknowledge the discriminations faced by Indigenous children but more needs to be done, especially for our Indigenous youth in the child and family services system. Today, 98 percent of children in the NWT child and family services are Indigenous children.

Mr. Speaker, we need to start to focus on real change and give Indigenous families more support, more educational opportunities, and more resources so that they can be successful. Many residential school survivors did not receive the life skills they needed and were more comfortable in institution rather than home. That is so sad. Our jails are full of too many residential school survivors who have said being in jail is easier than living in a residential school. We need to think about having appropriate support for these residents as well.

Mr. Speaker, we all want a territory where each person has fair opportunities to build a good life and contribute to their communities. I hope that your reflection on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation lead you to positive actions for every child and person in the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, the truth and reconciliation is about how we face the past and move forward. We need to do this together as a territory with the Government of the Northwest Territories, Indigenous government, non-government organizations and, most importantly, all the people. NWT has a population of 44,000 people. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1615-19(2):
CLIMATE ACTION

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, climate action is reconciliation. We're on the heels of a dry summer season of record heat and wildfire in many parts of the world spurred by a rapidly warming planet and marked by a significant absence of global climate action ambition. Yesterday we heard an excellent synopsis of this government's persistence to overpromise and under deliver on climate action and the grim reality of the progress of energy alternatives. Globally,

Indigenous people protect 80 percent of the world's biodiversity but account for less than 5 percent of the global population. The true costs of climate inequity are disproportionately paid for by Indigenous Canadians where the impacts of climate injustice threaten human rights over life, water, sanitation, food supply, health, housing, self-determination, culture, and development.

Climate change is disproportionately impacting the North. But globally people are mobilizing, especially our children, who are increasingly turning to the courts to hold governments accountable in the fight against climate change.

This summer 16 Montana youth brought forward a suit against the state of Montana and won. The youth said the state violated their right to, quote, "a clean and healthful environment, as well as their rights to dignity, health, and safety, and equal protection in law." In April, Ontario youth took their province to court in *Mathur v. Ontario*. The case was dismissed but not before the judge agreed that Indigenous people and youth are disproportionately impacted by climate change and that the government is risking the lives of its residents by not going further. These are just two examples of hundreds of climate litigation cases being adjudicated around the world. Globally, courts are helping people hold governments accountable to their climate action responsibilities.

By 2050, there will be over 1.2 billion climate refugees worldwide displaced by extreme weather, rising temperatures, and damaged ecosystem. What people pass off as just a few degrees difference equate to massive shifts in weather systems, food supply, and way of life closer to the poles or here in the Northwest Territories. NWT residents have quickly become statistics as climate refugees temporarily displaced by the unmitigated impacts of climate change.

Lack of true climate action jeopardizes true reconciliation as it risks further threats against treaty and land settlement agreement rights, Charter rights, and threatens culture, traditions, and customs. The climate crisis is gaining speed, Mr. Speaker, and the work to mitigate it needs to be transparent, aspirational, funded, and fulfilled. Mr. Speaker, what would an NWT judge say about this government's climate action and its infringement on human rights and treaty rights? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Members' statements. Member for Sahtu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1616-19(2):
RECONCILIATION

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Tomorrow's a historic day in Canada acknowledging truth and reconciliation on Indigenous people across Canada and across our territory. Today I would like to recognize the Members in this House today who are the last residential school survivors. Yourself, Speaker Blake, MLA Jacobsen, MLA Semmler, my colleague Minister Archie, and myself Minister Chinna, and to our interpreters as well too that I could recognize, and I could just remember at the top of my head, is Sara Cleary, Therese Etchinelle, Lillian Elias, and Jonas Lafferty.

It's been a historic movement from our country, but I also want to acknowledge us as people, as Northerners, who are here today working to help and work towards the resilience of Indigenous people. I'm here today because my grandmother Jeannie Chinna survived, and my mother Martha Chinna survived, and also my foster mothers Peggy Day and Sherry Gordon both of Inuvik. As an Indigenous woman and a survivor, as to what the country calls us, we are here today.

We are healing. We are resilient. And I take most pride in this life and being a part of the opportunity to be a part of repairing us as a nation and as a territory. We are resilient. And to our grandmothers, we will make you proud. We are healing. We are still here. And when I show up, Mr. Speaker, I don't show up alone. I show up with the 10,000 Indigenous women that weren't here today. I speak for the ones that weren't able to speak for themselves. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Sahtu. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1617-19(2):
EULOGY FOR ALICE JANE PELLISSEY

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alice Jane Pellissey was born on June 30th, 1947, in Fort Wrigley to Wilson and Caroline Pellissey. Alice is the one of thirteen siblings, and she was considered a matriarch of the family. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that Alice was instrumental in helping raise her siblings. She was always trying to help her parents.

Alice was a residential school survivor and attended Grollier Hall in Inuvik. As she got older and wanted to go out on her own, she moved from Wrigley to Yellowknife to help her auntie. Her family and friends would always describe her as a hardworking, happy, and friendly person. She was always about helping people regardless if they were family or friends. This attitude and work ethic was passed on to her son, Wesley James Pellissey. Wesley was their pride and joy. Later, in life Wesley meet the love

of his life Tamarah, and they gave them four beautiful grandchildren. She loved them very much and she would say they helped her stay young. She was always speaking highly of her grandchildren, son and daughter-in-law.

Mr. Speaker, her son shared the moment his mom passed away with me. Wesley and his wife were by her bedside throughout the time at Stanton Hospital. At about 2 a.m., he woke up and knew that she was going to pass soon. After a bit of time, he went up to his mom and told her it was alright for her to go be with her husband. He explained to her that he and his family were going to be okay. After saying this, she left this world to be with her husband. He describes feeling the energy leave her body and most peaceful feeling he had felt. The time was 2:17 in the morning.

Mr. Speaker, her sister Lena described being woken up and being told that Alice had passed on. All the sisters cried, got dressed to go to the hospital to say their last good-byes. It was very hard for them to lose her.

Mr. Speaker, she was predeceased by her loving husband Eddy Sonnenberg, her parents and brother George.

Mr. Speaker, the family would like to thank the Stanton Hospital for all they did for Alice when she was there. They will be forever grateful. After she passed, the family took her back to Wrigley so she would be buried in her home community. Her son and his company prepared her grave site using his own equipment, one last thing he could do to honour her.

On behalf of the family, they would like to thank the community of Wrigley, family, and friends for their support during this difficult time. Mr. Speaker, she will be sadly missed but never forgotten.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. JULIE GREEN: Welcome, and Ms. Terry Hawkins, the chair of the advocacy committee and a board Member for the Yellowknife Seniors' Society. And my constituent, a very avid advocate for seniors, Margaret Marshall. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife South.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Fernanda Martins. I'm not sure she's actually a constituent, this might be in the wrong spot, but she is a resident of Yellowknife, Mr. Speaker. She's here as the senior advocacy advisor from the Northwest

Territories Cancer Society. She's here today because there is a motion, of course, on the floor today around taxation of vaping motions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife South. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not to be repetitive, I would also like to welcome Mr. Daryl Dolynny to the gallery. He is my constituent of Great Slave. Unfortunately, where I sit, I can't see whoever else is in the gallery so if there are other constituents of Great Slave, I welcome them, and thank all of the senior advocates for their work and bringing this strategy forward. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. If we have missed anyone, welcome to the gallery, and I hope you're enjoying our proceedings. It's always good to have an audience with us. Thank you.

Acknowledgements. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 1591-19(2):
AMALGAMATING HAY RIVER HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY INTO NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of health and social services what are the barriers to incorporating the HRHSSA into the NTHSSA? And I ask that question as residents of Hay River are concerned that this separation is, in part, one of the reasons the community cannot attract doctors or fill vacant health positions which in the end impacts timely and quality health care for our residents. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is flexibility within the Health and social services Administration Act to bring Hay River health and social services into NTHSSA, but in the meantime they are part of an integrated health and social services system in the NWT where people from Hay River receive treatment anywhere else in the Northwest Territories, and vice versa if someone's in Hay River, they get treatment there. There are a couple of significant barriers. One is that Hay River health and social services

has its own collective agreement. And so their staff are not GNWT staff. So that issue was last looked at in 2015 when a working group examined the implications and costs of bringing HRHSSA into the Territorial Health and social services Authority. At the time, the cost of bringing the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority in was \$20 million, and the government of the day decided it was beyond its capacity to accommodate that. So I think the time has come to strike again a working group to look at what the cost would be so that the next government can make an informed decision about this. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell me if incorporating the HRHSSA into the NTHSSA was to proceed, what would the process be and the timeline to complete such amalgamation? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you. Just to reiterate what I said earlier. Functionally, there is already amalgamation in service delivery. But, specifically, the work that needs to be done involves the public service. So there would need to be some work done with regulators, pension providers, and the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority to complete a detailed cost analysis of the cost of bringing that health authority in. There would need to be negotiations with the Union of Northern Workers because they hold the collective agreement with the health authority staff. And then there would probably need to be some work done on job evaluations and job descriptions and so on. So it is quite a comprehensive list of things to be done. But I think the kickoff point is having the leadership of the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority ask us formally to join NTHSSA so that preparatory work can be done. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, incorporating the HRHSSA into the NTHSSA, I see an opportunity to formally expand health services to those communities outside Hay River, which I expect would result -- and I would hope it would result in an increase in staff in Hay River. Can the Minister confirm if this is something the department would consider in such an amalgamation process? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you. Yes, I certainly

(AUDIO DISRUPTION)

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: When we're talking about incorporation. Will the Minister commit to identifying the financial amount we are talking about and whether it would have to be allocated

in one fiscal year, or could it be accomplished over several years? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can't make that commitment for the time that I have left in my term. But I will say that there have been some favourable changes since this issue was last discussed. So the projected cost of bringing Hay River Health and social services into the public service when it was last calculated in 2015 was \$20 million and that was based on the functional costs of amalgamation but also on the pension liability. My understanding is that the pension is now in a much more positive position. So it's likely that that number has gone down. But as I said, I think the next government in making this decision will need not just a rough idea but an exact idea of how much it would cost to bring the health authority in. In the meantime, there's no loss of service, including recruitment of doctors to Hay River Health and Social Services Authority. Functionally, we are one health care system but formally we are separate. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 1592-19(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ARCHIVES
AND PRINCE OF WALES NORTHERN
HERITAGE CENTRE

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. I mentioned in my statement that I've lost track of how many studies, reports, and proposals I've seen regarding the inadequate and sad state of the 46-year-old territorial museum building. Can the Minister tell us what the current plans are for replacing, expanding, and/or renovating the space occupied by the NWT archives and museum? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, of course, we are currently deliberating the capital budget in Committee of the Whole, so I don't want to go too much into that because that document is properly before committee of the House. But I can say that ECE has taken -- undertaken work to explore the renovation or replacement of the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre and, in particular, as the Member mentions, the need for archival space. So there has been a comprehensive planning study, the development of estimates to explore various options ranging from replacing the entire

museum to pursuing more targeted upgrades, including -- and focused specifically on the archival space. There's been a schematic design for a standalone archives building with a class D estimate. Given what I've seen on class D estimates, I don't put too much stock into what that says because prices have been changing, you know, daily. They seem to be going up. But with all that said, we understand better than anyone that there is an issue and that we do need to pursue upgrades in order to meet our legal obligations, and there have been upgrades proposed. There were upgrades that we were hoping can start in the upcoming year. And ECE will be pursuing a standalone archive building in the future capital planning process, likely in the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Thank you.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. I'm excited about a new archives building, and I can hardly wait for the opening. The Archives Act, though, appears to have not gone through any kind of substantive review in over 40 years. To say it is outdated and does not establish a proper framework for archival heritage would be an understatement. Can the Minister explain why the Archives Act has not been updated and whether there are any plans to do so? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I don't want the Member to get ahead of himself. Proposing that a new building be built and having a grand opening are two very different things. So we'll see what happens in the future.

Every year the government proposes a slate of legislation that they would like to see proceed. About half of that legislation actually makes its way through an Assembly and is passed. So I can't speak for previous years, but there's been a number of pieces of legislation and the priorities of the Assembly have dictated what has made its way through and what hasn't. And, unfortunately, despite recognizing the need to update the Archives Act, it has not been updated. But, once again, in the next government, ECE will bring this forward as a piece of legislation that needs to be dealt with. Thank you.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that and, of course, when he comes back, I'm going to be happy to help him with the ribbon cutting and getting the Archives Act drafted up and ready to go. So in my statement, though, I mentioned that very significant archival records on the history of the political development of the Northwest Territories are stored in a totally inadequate government warehouse. We're kind of lucky it didn't burn down this summer. So can

the Minister tell us how long these records have been stored there and whether there are any plans for proper archival storage and preservation of this important historical legacy of the Northwest Territories? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that it was back in the -- sometime in the 90s, I'm not sure exactly when, when the archives, they started storing archives off site. And as I mentioned, there are some minor upgrades planned for next year. Hopefully, the Member will support funding for those upgrades. And those would include, at the offsite space, minor space improvements, fencing, so secure access to the documents. New racking so there -- you know, more stable storage. As well as some temperature and humidity control improvements where possible. So given the situation and the needs, ECE is moving forward with attempts to better preserve these documents. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister. The current Archives Act places the burden on the territorial archivist for the safekeeping of our documentary heritage. There's a lot of -- that's a lot of responsibility on one person who clearly doesn't have the resources to carry out this important work. That would be a stretch for anyone to conclude that GNWT is taking proper care of our archival records.

Can the Minister tell us whether there has been any advice received on whether the GNWT is in compliance with the Archives Act, and can he share that with us? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, of course, legal opinions aren't shared on the floor of the House. But I will say that the territorial archivist, boy, I would feel for them if they were alone. But in addition, there's two senior archivists, two digital record archivists, an archive and library technician, and an audiovisual archivist. Given all that, though, I know they're still quite busy. And that team knows better than anyone that we do need to upgrade our facilities and work on the act because, you know, the things that need to be stored under the act are part of the issue, actually. So this has been an issue since I took this role. There have been advancements made. You know, government doesn't move as quick as any of us would like, and this is one of those situations. But this is -- we are marching forward, and there is progress. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

QUESTION 1593-19(2):
HOUSING

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, my questions are for the Minister of Housing NT. Can the Minister tell me how many homes of the 100 that's in the mandate that they said they would build in the Northwest Territories were built, not including any RCMP units? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Minister responsible for Housing NWT

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the question. We did -- we do have a hundred-unit rollout that is currently underway right now.

Mr. Speaker, 47 of those homes in the communities are close to final inspection and would be available for occupancy. Another 14 of those units are being constructed and being delivered to various communities as well. And 17 are occupied today. 32 of those units are at various stages. And I would also like to include, Mr. Speaker, like, during the 100-unit rollout, we did have the supply chain issue, the delivery issue, our barge issue that has happened, COVID, and restrictions of people coming into the communities. Despite all of that, Mr. Speaker, we are still on time. Mahsi.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Minister for that. And I'm glad that we do have some of those houses done and people are living in them.

Can the Minister tell us how many -- I know another part of the mandate was transferring homes to -- so people could become homeowners, and that way some of the, I guess, units to offset some of those units so we could build more and have more. So how many units have been transferred from Housing NT to individual families in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the question because this was a priority of mine as well too that I take right into my own riding.

We didn't have a very strong interest in people taking over their public housing unit and is not being able to afford those units as well too. I don't have the number specifically in front of me that, the amount of units that have been transferred over. But I know we did have some difficulty, and hopefully housing is listening to me right now so they can send that number

over to me quickly so I could provide that to the Member. And also that, you know, I don't want to set people up for failure as well too, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to take too much of the Member's time but to be honest, a lot of our units are not in very -- in fair condition. We need to renovate them. We did get additional \$60 million from the federal government, and in the next government we are committed to being repairing those units in the next Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, you know, I know this question is not something that I sent over to the Minister, but just looking at my community alone, the Inuvialuit used some of the money that they received from the federal government to homeowners -- like, Inuvialuit beneficiaries in the ISR, to retrofit, put new windows, new siding, new insulation, windows, doors, roofs, you know, and they used -- they did it by starting with seniors. And so -- and looking at our units -- and the Minister just said that our units are old, they need to be fixed up. How did this department work with some of our Indigenous governments? Did they work with our Indigenous governments to maybe transition those homes to homeowners with working together? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the question because she is speaking about the distinction-based funding. And once again, I hope my department is hearing me because I want to get an update on the working table between IRC and the Housing NWT.

What housing has done differently is they've repaired the relationship with Indigenous governments and with community governments as well. And the funding that the Member is speaking about, there was approximately \$400 million that was distributed amongst the Northwest Territories to -- directly to Indigenous governments. My conversation with the federal government was if you're not going to fund the territorial government directly, please recognize our partnerships with Indigenous governments and, in respect, Canada had responded, and this is the response as to getting houses on the ground. We are working in collaboration with them as well too. There is an established working group. My apologies to the Member, I didn't get the update, but I will provide that to her separately. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. She just makes me want to ask way more questions, so I hope I have time to afterwards. Does the

Minister have the current waitlist for housing and the empty units available, and when are those units going to be filled with our waitlist? Thank you.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And respectfully, I am enjoying the questions that are coming from the Member as well. There's been a significant progress within the portfolio, and this gives the opportunity of really highlighting the struggle that we do have with the funding that we do receive territorially but it also highlights the strength we do have with Canada as well too.

And just for the Members, we do have 57 applicants for a one-bedroom. We have 12 applicants for a two-bedroom. Seven applicants for a three-bedroom. And four applicants for a four-bedroom. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

QUESTION 1594-19(2):
LUTSELK'E DENE FIRST NATION CARIBOU
ENFORCEMENT

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Tomorrow's the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Day. It's Friday. Everybody's tired and want to go home and that kind of thing, and so I'm just hoping the Minister is feeling good today.

Mr. Speaker, after a year with no further progress on the supposed investigation into the caribou harvesting in Lutselk'e, will the Minister now recognize the wrong that was done under his watch and apologize to the community of Lutselk'e and start the reconciliation process as mandated by this government? Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. Minister responsible for Environment and Climate Change.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these incidents are still being investigated for suspected illegal harvesting in a mobile zone and wastage of edible caribou. I can tell you that I met with the chief last fall and have written to him to offer to work on reconciliation efforts once an investigation is completed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister provide an update to the House on the status of this investigation? We were told it's going to take six months. Here we are a year later. We still don't see anything. And we're concerned that the court already made a decision this is unlawful. And we want to know

here today that -- if you can give us an update on where things are at. Thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, like I said previously, these incidents are still being investigated for suspicion of illegal harvesting in a mobile zone and wastage of edible caribou. At this point, as it is still an open investigation I cannot speak further to this matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, the Minister offered to come across this House, Minister Simpson will go across -- I was hoping that will happen and we would have this thing resolved.

Mr. Speaker, has an internal review taken place internally into the unconstitutional violation of the Lutselk'e Timber Bay culture camp raid? Thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it seems as some people on the other side thinks being on this side's easy. I'd love to be on that other side to ask those questions and get them -- you know, and say, when are you going to get it resolved and how are you going to do it. And I know Members over there say well, we got to fix it. We have a process. We have investigations going on. So, Mr. Speaker, a terms of reference has been developed, and we have identified an independent party to review the -- or to conduct a review. And the review will be conducted once the investigation has been completed. Again, this investigation is ongoing, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So in other words, we're not going to get no report in this -- at the end of this session and it's going to carry over to the next government.

Will the Minister drop this pointless investigation and own up to his mistakes that were made by offering the community of Lutselk'e a sincere apology to this House? And for the record, I just want a simple yes or no today. Thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, usually I'll do yes or no. But I do need to follow up with more information here. I've acknowledged that the search at Timber Bay was very difficult for some of the people at the camp who were not harvesting wildlife or who were harvesting wildlife in a respectful and lawful way. Investigations are done independently by officers, not by myself. We allow officers to do their work. The investigation into suspected illegal harvesting in the mobile zone and waste of edible caribou is

ongoing. So, Mr. Speaker, once this is all said and done, I would like to be able to say here, this is what we're doing. Until that is done, Mr. Speaker, I need to follow the process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 1595-19(2):
CLIMATE ACTION

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Environment and Climate Change. Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering to start off if the Minister can confirm what GNWT department is ultimately responsible for climate action mitigation here in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister responsible for Environment and Climate Change.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Environment and Climate Change is the GNWT lead for climate change using a coordinated interdepartmental approach that is outlined in the 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework. Under the framework, the Department of Infrastructure implements an energy strategy which is how the GNWT addresses reducing greenhouse gas emissions related to energy supply and consumption. The Department of Finance implements the NWT carbon tax approach. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we heard yesterday a very honest portrayal of where the Northwest Territories is in its production of alternative energies and how also the low water levels this year are having an impact even on what's happening right now with our current energy usage. Right now we have a huge dependency still on fossil fuels in the Northwest Territories, and that's only going up with our low water levels. And so I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to how this additional usage of fossil fuels, even in this year, is going to have an impact on our climate target goals? Thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent below the 2025 level by 2030. As of 2021, which is the latest data that has been analyzed, NWT has reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent since 2005 with COVID, the pandemic and a slowdown of resource development activities being the main factor driving emissions down in recent years. Based on

recent modeling, the GNWT is on track to achieve its target of reducing emissions by 30 percent below the 2005 level by 2030. Unfortunately, still emissions in the territories are largely driven by industry and transportation sectors. An anticipated reduction in mining activity in the late 2020s is one factor that will contribute to the realization of this target. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So if one of the things that we're relying on in order to meet our targets is for mines to actually shut down but, on the other hand, we're going out, and we're proactively trying to get mines to open up and do more in the Northwest Territories, how are we ultimately going to reach this goal if all of a sudden one of our hands gets what it wants and it has a direct impact on the other hand? So I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to how we're actually going to support both development in the Northwest Territories and our energy and climate change goals and our targets? Thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with those type of questions, I would encourage the Member to reach out to the Minister of Finance and Minister of Infrastructure to answer the energy and finance. I know Members on the other side think that I have all the answers, but other departments have the work that -- do the work on this area. So I would encourage the Member to reach out to them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I was trying to do is ask the lead department on climate change what's going on and to help me paint this bigger picture as to how we're actually going to get to our goal. When I have to jump around from department to department, I don't actually get the full picture in one answer. And so it's nice when we can ask one department to help us paint that picture for residents. And so my final question is in regards to a dashboard that was actually mentioned yesterday and has been mentioned in this House multiple times before. Is there an intent, and is there a deadline, on when this government will potentially put together a public dashboard that outlines the progress on climate action and the GNWT reaching its climate target so that we can see a more fulsome picture of what our targets and our goals and our results are looking like? Thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when the Member asks, yeah, no, it would be great to -- well, one

Minister can answer the question. That would be great if we got all those questions so that we can get that information. If you ask me a question about infrastructure, I'm not going to be able to give you that information unless I get the question ahead of time. And I understand, and it's prerogative the other side to give the questions and not give the questions, to do that. So I appreciate that, but if you ask the question it's going to be multiple departments, and if I don't get it ahead of time, I won't be able to give you the information. And I apologize for that. In regards to a dashboard there, I will have to get back to the Member on the timeline on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Monfwi.

QUESTION 1596-19(2):
HOUSING

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Mr. Speaker, thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a question for the housing, for housing. Mr. Speaker, I understand about the process, and they are the Ministers. They can direct. We know that nothing gets done without their input or their direction. So I want to ask the Minister, can the Minister of Housing NWT explain why her department doesn't have a policy supporting the sale of market rental units. I still have -- currently there are some constituents who are living in a market rental housing in my region, and they would like to become a homeowner, and they have been living in those units for over 20 years, and they really want the market rental unit that they have been living in for over 20 years. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Minister responsible for Housing NWT.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the question. I just wanted to just explain market housing was created to address the high income earners. Not only that, but the recruitment of GNWT employees to provide programs and services in our smaller communities. The units that are for sale now are the public housing units, but I am getting some push back from the clients as well that, you know, are they able to afford the units, are units in conditions that they're ready for sale. And also, Mr. Speaker, there is a consultation that is being done right now for the market housing units as well, too, that letters have gone out to the Indigenous governments acknowledging, would they like to work with us, are we going to address this market housing unit need in the smaller communities together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Mr. Speaker, in small communities for many years, you know, there's people do not want to build because there's no market. So that's why housing was the only landlord in many of the small communities. So now many of these people -- we know what happened when a person who is not on the lease, when the elderly parents pass on, we had a lot of those because of those policy that was in place, many of these people became homeless and some are on the street here, and some have passed on being homeless because of the policy that's in place. So, yes, I understand about that now that she mentioned why the market rental is there, but it's just that why not make -- if that -- change the status of the market rental, they are the Minister, to public unit. Can the Minister commit to changing a lot of those public market rental unit to public housing unit? Thank you.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the question. I just want to be very honest and say, no, I wouldn't be able to do that. Because we do need the programs and services in the smaller communities, we need to be able to house teachers, social workers, nurses in our smaller communities. So there needs to be housing set aside for them as well. But just looking at what the Member had said as well for the generational homes -- and I do know what she's talking at where we have families that have been raised in these units. These units were built in the 1970s. Going into the next government, this is one of the priorities of housing is how do we transition and how are we going to be dealing with these units that were built in the 70s. I myself personally -- but I've get to work with the department is I would like to see them all transferred. I would like to see them all transferred. And I would like the federal government to recognize that we need a replenishment of 23, maybe 5,000 units in the Northwest Territories. And hopefully this is going to be a working document for the next government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, many of these houses, just like she said, yes, they are over 50 years old. No social worker or nurses or teachers coming from the south would want to live in many of these condemned houses. And many of our people are living in those units, and nothing is being done. And there's a lot of boarded up houses in my community in my region as well. So that is why I'm pushing for all those units, if they can change the status from market rental to public housing unit because Tlicho government and other organizations are providing housing for many of their staff

because we want to keep many of those people to educate and to help and work with our people. But many of them are not going to go into the housing that's available. So that is why I am saying that. So would the Minister commit to selling the units to people based on their commercial value and take into consideration the amount of rent already paid and future maintenance costs when determining the purchase price? Thank you.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the question because that's a mechanism that we are actually working with right now. We need to determine whether the client can actually afford these units and being able to take care of the operation and maintenance of these units themselves without government subsidy. And we're finding it very difficult throughout the Northwest Territories but trying to work with them fairly.

And also, I just wanted to speak about the Tlicho government as well and the working table that we do have established with them. They did get a distinction-based funding announcement, I want to say in the spring, of \$47 million, to address their housing need. And like I had said earlier, is that there is \$400 million across the Northwest Territories that has been allocated to Indigenous governments. And this is where we as a territory and we as Indigenous governments, we work together in partnership. And for the agreement that's been signed with the Tlicho government, these are the type of conversations that are actually happening to address the housing crisis in the Member's riding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we lived here forever and we survived, you know. And it is not right the government determining or making -- you know, going directly and saying people are -- making a decision of who can and cannot afford the housing. So I just want to ask the Minister would the Minister consider giving existing public units to the people who live in them and use the money -- and use the money that's saved to build more houses in small communities. We do need more houses in small communities. We have people that are on the waitlist. I have families. There's five families that are waiting in Behchoko alone. There's nine -- one family has nine. There's nine of them waiting for a house and living in a one-bedroom unit with other family members. Thank you.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the

question. You know, like I had said that this is -- this is a strategy that we're using within housing and trying to have our clients become successful and having them to own their own units. And we're finding difficulty, to be honest, very much. You know, we're not having people that are able to repair their own stairs, pay for their heating. And it's a difficult time right now. And all of these units are -- they're drastically subsidized. You can be living in a unit that's going to cost us \$20,000, maybe even more, for us to operate and maintain, and the client would only be paying \$75. So we need to find a balance where we're able to have the clients become successful in operating and maintaining their own home, and acknowledging that we do have a hundred unit rollout. In Behchoko alone, the community has received six additional units. Nine throughout the region as well. It's probably -- you know, to just give her an idea of what we are facing within the Northwest Territories, we are in a housing crisis, and housing has done what they possibly can do working with the Indigenous governments, working with the federal government to address this housing need. And like I had said, all together for the portfolio, there's \$400 million that's been allocated. \$200 million from this government. There's \$600 million throughout the Northwest Territories. And that's still not enough. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 1597-19(2):
BUSINESS INCENTIVE POLICY

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I really do not like leaving things to the next Assembly. I think if you look at the last Assembly's mandate, a lot of the things that were very close, and it's clear hundreds of hours of staff time went into them and, you know, there was perhaps some last minute disagreement. Never got done. We didn't take them on. They didn't make it into our mandate. And all of that work disappeared. There's quite a few things in our mandate that I'm sure the next Assembly will let die as well. I'm hoping that the Business Incentive Policy is not one of them. So my question is for the Minister of ITI, are we going to make any changes to the Business Incentive Policy in the life of this Assembly? I know there's only a week left, but perhaps I could dream, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister responsible for Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member has

asked -- or made quite a number of statements about the procurement review, and there has been quite a lot done. In July of this year, a report was put out publicly. It's online through the GNWT's government -- the Department of Finance website detailing all the many changes and improvements to procurement in the Northwest Territories that have been made in the life of this government.

Within that with respect to the Business Incentive Policy -- and I know the Member goes on at length about how much he liked the review, the review itself says that the question of how to define a Northwest Territories business is one of the most complex components of the procurement review. The good news is, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the Member really likes the recommendation. I like the recommendation too. But that has to go to modern treaty partners. Any changes made must go to modern treaty partners first. It is part of our obligations under those treaties. So the recommendations that we've put forward to make some changes are with them. It's been for review. It's had its time. A little extra time given where what happened this summer was probably not inappropriate. But I believe SCEDE will be getting its own letters in very due course, and we'll know exactly what's happening before the end of the Assembly. Thank you.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It sounded like we're not going to quite get there in the remaining week. I'm skeptical that the next government will take that on. I know the definition of northern business is complex, and I think you really just have to make a decision and commit to it. I don't suspect there's agreement. But in reviewing that, it says, the Minister's report tabled in July -- or released in July, it says a new definition of northern business which will result in the removal of Schedule 3 from BIP has been created. I understand it's been shared with Indigenous governments. Can the Minister tell us what that new definition is of northern business? Is it the same one that the procurement review panel recommended two years ago, or have we come up with a new one? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are protocols within a consensus government. One of them is that when we are releasing new information like this provided by government that it goes to one of the standing committees first. So until I can release it to standing committee, it's very difficult and would not be appropriate for me to stand in the House and make the announcement here. Otherwise, I would love to do it, Mr. Speaker, but I'm afraid the Members

are going to simply have to look at their inbox and wait for the letter to come pursuant to the rules and the procedures that we all operate under. Thank you.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Speaker. In addition, in that July report, you know, it kind of just says the work to create an Indigenous Procurement Policy is ongoing, there's no kind of timeline on there. I'm wondering if we have any sense of -- I know that's not going to be done in in the next week, but is there any hope of us getting that done in some sort of timeline, or will we have an Indigenous Procurement Policy as a government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Indigenous Procurement Policy is one that is being co-developed or -- and co-drafted and proceeded together along with Indigenous governments of the Northwest Territories. It is not something that's going to be singularly led or dictated by the Government of the Northwest Territories for the benefit of others. It's the people who are going to benefit from it who are the ones that should be at the table driving what it looks like.

And, Mr. Speaker, while it might seem nice and easy to just create a target and call it a day, Mr. Speaker, right now the Yukon is having quite a lot of trouble with its procurement policy. It's, in fact, been to court already. So the process for using goes through established processes within this government, within the consensus model, and within the Intergovernmental council model. Their first step was to get together, to meet, to determine what an Indigenous business should be and how to define that. It is not for the Government of the Northwest Territories to singularly do that. As I just said, defining a northern business is one of the most complicated and complex parts of procurement review. No less so when we're looking at who is an Indigenous business or what is an Indigenous business, but that work is underway. It's being led by EIA. Other departments are involved. My understanding at this point is while it won't be done in the life of this government, significant progress is made, and all of the partners are very much committed to seeing it through. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 1598-19(2):
INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE 2023 FIRE
SEASON

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Environment and Climate Change who also

conveniently serves as the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

Later today, I'll table a request for proposal for a Northwest Territories 2023 Wildfire Response Review. It appears to be a standard after-incident review, but I just want to get it on the public record that this is not the comprehensive, independent review of fire and emergency management that we've talked about in this House. So can the Minister confirm that there will be -- that there will be a comprehensive and independent review of fire and emergency management beyond this request for proposal? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister responsible for Environment and Climate Change.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. That's kind of both portfolios. So we will be both -- both departments will be doing an after-action review of what the situation is. With ECC, we deal with individual situations that are impacting communities. So there will be -- I call it a number of chapters that we're having impacted communities that were with the wildfire. So we'll be doing that. And then we will do an overall review of the impact of the fire season itself.

Now, in regards to Municipal and Community Affairs, it's going to be an independent report. We will be going out to the public. We will be going out, and we will be getting an independent contractor to be doing this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I'm a bit alarmed at what I'm hearing. It sounds like there's going to be contracted so-called independent reviews. That's not what we've been talking about here. So there are a number of options, though, for an independent review of fire and emergency management. These include -- could include a public inquiry with a very formal legal process, a joint special committee with Regular MLAs, Cabinet, and perhaps others involved, or an independent group or task force with an agreed upon terms of reference that could include input from Regular MLAs and maybe even the Council of Leaders. Probably should include the Council of Leaders. So can the Minister tell us what options Cabinet is considering for this independent review? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've had conversation with the Member about this very topic. So Department of ECC is going to be doing what we consider our part of the after-action review. Each situation and then an overall. Then Municipal and Community Affairs was going to

be doing an independent, getting a person to go out there, and it's going to include general public, Council of Leaders, Regular MLAs, Cabinet Members, whoever wishes to talk about that. However, I have had conversations with this House here and talked about the opportunity -- and I think the Member talked about the special committee, which would be Cabinet and Regular Members or AOC. So it would be a team, a special committee. So it would be like three and two that would meet together, come up with the terms of reference, to look at this. So that was what I'm looking for and recommending in the next Assembly to my -- whoever gets this portfolio, or the MACA portfolio, to do that, work with the committee to come up -- and when I say committee, AOC, or what it will be called next Assembly, to work with them to come up with the terms of reference of how we're going to do it within the timeframe of six months. We don't want to interfere with the other work that ECC's doing and Municipal and Community Affairs is going to do. I think it can be worked together, and it could be part of a good solution. But, again, I think we want -- we don't want to, I guess, handcuff that special committee to do the work that they need to do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. I think it's very important that careful consideration be given to who and how this independent review of fire and emergency management should be conducted. I also realize that this is all very fresh and some of it's still ongoing, but this Assembly and government are coming to the end of its life. I don't want decisions made by this Cabinet alone or even during an election. So can the Minister tell us how and when decisions are going to be made about who and how this independent review of fire and emergency management will be carried out? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: I guess I didn't make myself clear, and I apologize to the House and the public out there. It's going to be my recommendation to the next Assembly -- I repeat the next Assembly, not this Assembly here. We only got two weeks left. So there is no way we could do justice to the work that needs to be done. So what we're saying is that we're making the recommendation to the next government, whether Cabinet and AOC, to look at this, develop a terms of reference, develop a special committee to do the work. It can't be done, and we don't want to shortchange the work that needs to be done. We need to be respectful of it. It's a long season. And to get the information correct and to get everybody's viewpoints on how we can improve the things we were able to do. I agree with the Member.

Work has to be done. But it's not going to be done by this Cabinet. It's not going to be done by AOC or SCEDE, this Assembly. It's got to be done for the next Assembly. And I agree with the Member. But as I said, I will put it in my transition binder this work needs to be done. And whoever gets reelected, one of the priorities that they need to stress is that work needs to be done first and foremost so we can get moving forward because we're going to have another bad season next year, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for clarifying that. He's just got it on the record that this Cabinet is not going to be making a decision about this independent review and that it's not going to happen during the election. That's good. It's going to be a decision made by the next Assembly. But I'm certainly grappling with who and how this review should be carried out. Personally, I don't think that MLAs, whether Regular MLAs or Cabinet, should probably be leading this review. It needs to be independent third party, so. And they have to have access to the resources and experts to do it properly. So I don't think it should be MLAs. That's what my thinking is. But I'd like to hear from the Minister whether Cabinet has any preferences as to who and how this review should be carried out? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't speak for Cabinet. That's the Premier's role and responsibility. But what I'm saying, my personal, opinion is that the next Assembly, the next Cabinet, the next AOC sits down and has that conversation. If they feel it needs to be led by X, then great. I agree. The next Assembly needs to do that. And it's not going to be a Cabinet or AOC directive. I believe it should be the collective when they meet at the very beginning when they talk about some of the mandates that they need to do, some of the things that they need to task the next Assembly to get done, they need to follow that. I'm not saying what should be or shouldn't be done. I don't think it's my role. I'm just saying it needs to be discussed. The way we do it in the next Assembly, it needs to be done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

QUESTION 1599-19(2):
DREDGING IN HAY RIVER

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And these questions will be for the Minister of Infrastructure. And they're fairly easy questions so she'll be able to answer them off the cuff. I can see here getting ready. I'd just

like to get an update on the status of dredging in Hay River since we did have, you know, approximately three weeks where people were away from the community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister responsible for Infrastructure.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker -- and the Member is correct. I mean, we've been going back and forth since the beginning, perhaps this Assembly, where the Member's been wanting to do dredging in the community. I went and met with the community members with both the MLAs, had good feedback. It was a room full of people with, you know, really strong interests in dredging. So as a result of that, we put some proposal together. We met with the federal Ministers, and you know, really stressed how important this project is. So the Member's asking where we are with this. We have permits in place. We can dredge until October 7th. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'd thank the Minister for that response. And I guess since we lost three or four weeks here, will we be able to accomplish the scope of work that was set out in the RFP, or are we going to have to come back to this next season? Thank you.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, so far we're doing good. We're on track. Yes, we did have some delays at the beginning during the fire season. So, you know, I -- we have until October 7th. The contractor's on -- you know, on site. So I am hoping that we can be able to get most of the work done this year. You know, I did apply for a five-year proposal for this work. So hopefully, you know, we're able to continue year after year for the next five years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd ask the Minister, considering that we've had much lower water levels in the Hay River I guess and in the lake as well to the point that where we had people actually, you know, from the K'atlodeeche, ride bicycles across. That's how bad it was. So with these lower water levels, are we going to be looking at an extended area that's going to be requiring dredging beyond what we're doing? Thank you.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we will return next season to be able to accomplish some of the work. We have kind of a mapped out of the river. So we are looking into it, and just to be

able to assess what we've done now, where our next steps are. And I'd be happy to share an update with the Member in terms of what our plans are because we do have plans in place, I just don't have it right in front of me right now, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yeah, I just wanted to do these off the cuff here to make sure that I was satisfied that the Minister was up to speed on this file, and she seems to be. So I guess I would -- and a good thing is that I hear that we are looking at -- looking for funding or support from the federal government, I think, for ongoing harbour maintenance, and I just want to make sure that, you know, that we don't let off on that and that the Minister keeps after the feds for that because we've got -- we've got a fairly big harbour there, and there's a lot more work to do. Thank you.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, of course. I mean, you know, we look -- continuously look at the feds help. I mean, really, we ask for their participation and, you know, some of the work that's done, and I think we will continue -- we will continue. I don't think about it. We're going to continue to look for federal funding for harbour restoration. I take the dredging work back, it's harbour restoration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

QUESTION 1600-19(2):
HOUSING

MS. SEMMLER: I just got in under the gun. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to finish off my questions that I had for the Minister of housing. Can you tell me how many housing units -- Housing NT units in Inuvik that are sitting empty currently? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Minister responsible for Housing NWT.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member for the question. I did not receive that number yet. I will follow up with the Member separately. Thank you.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I know this House, the Member -- or the Minister has stated that there are units in Inuvik that they were planning on selling off because they needed to get them -- move them

off the land that they currently are on. They have been disconnected from the utilidor system. The Minister's very aware of this. When would the -- when would you be selling off these units to make room for new units? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Right now, we do have units that are sitting empty. According to what I've received from housing, is that we have three units that are vacant, two of which were allocated to the housing authority yesterday, and the remaining seniors' units should be allocated in the next coming days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Colleagues, our time for oral questions has expired. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Replies to the Commissioner's address. Petitions. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Reports of standing and special committees. Member for Kam Lake.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees

BILL 75: COUNCIL FOR WOMEN AND GENDER DIVERSITY ACT

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your Standing Committee on Social Development is pleased to provide its report on Bill 75, Council for Women and Gender Diversity Act.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Great Slave, that Committee report 72-19(2), Standing Committee on Social Development report on Bill 75: Council for Women and Gender Diversity Act, be deemed read and printed in Hansard in its entirety. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Kam Lake, we'll need a different seconder.

MS. CLEVELAND: read it all over again? Okay, thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, your Standing Committee on Social Development is pleased to provide its report on Bill 75, Council for Women and Gender Diversity Act.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Committee report 72-19(2), Standing Committee on Social Development Report on Bill 75: Council for Women and Gender Diversity Act, be deemed read and printed in Hansard in its entirety. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried. The committee report is deemed read.

---Carried

MS. CLEVELAND:

Introduction

Bill 75: Council for Women and Gender Diversity Act (Bill 75) received second reading on March 9, 2023 and was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Development (Committee) for review. Bill 75 repeals and replaces the Status of Women Act (Act). In 2018, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) initiated a review of the Act to modernize language, provide clarity, meaning and strengthen the Act overall.

Based on the results of the review, the GNWT proposes legislative amendments to the Act that allows the Status of Women Council to continue as the Council for Women and Gender Diversity; clarify roles and responsibilities of the Minister, Council for Women and Gender Diversity, and the Gender Equity Division; modernize language; promote inclusivity; clarify the composition and member term limits; re-define legislative objects and powers; and include a purpose statement of the Act.

Committee Members were keen to review Bill 75, and upon review, are concerned that the legislative amendments to advance gender equity and achieve gender equality amongst women and girls, and 2SLGBTQIPA+ in the Northwest Territories (NWT) are not achieved. Committee Members, the Status of Women Council, and Northern Mosaic Network shared that barriers to gender equality go beyond gender, and include other parts of a person's identity, like the expression of gender; sexuality; ethnicity; age; disability; political status; employment status; and/or geographic location (living in a small community versus a regional centre or Yellowknife).

Committee Considered Public Input

Committee sought public feedback on Bill 75 with a public notice and targeted engagement letters. Committee received a written submission from Northern Mosaic Network. The written submission is included in an Appendix to this report.

Public Review

Committee held a public review of Bill 75 on June 28, 2023. At that meeting, Committee heard remarks from the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women Council (Minister), and asked questions to the Minister regarding the lack of definitions for key terms like, "gender equity" and "gender equality,,"; the lack of a preamble; the lack of reference to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls; the lack of reference to other entities in the NWT that are working to advance gender equality; lack of core funding mechanisms for those entities; appointment of council members; and diversity of Board Member of representation.

Committee also heard from the Status of Women Council including Board Members Rita Arey, Board President, Beaufort-Delta Region; Shelley Browne, Board Member, North Slave Region; Dora Minoza, Board Member, South Slave Region; Delphine Pierrot, Vice President, Sahtu Region; Anna Pontikis McLeod, Board Member, Deh Cho Region; and Sophie Lubet, Executive Director. Status of Women Council Board Members and Executive Director highlighted the need for collaboration with other entities working to advance gender equality; concerns about the lack of definitions of key terms; the need for a preamble; concerns that the stated purpose falls short on addressing critical issues; and desire to retain the name of the original Act.

Committee Cannot Endorse The GnwT Approach At This Time

Committee is of the view that Bill 75's legislative amendments do not go far enough to meet the needs of stakeholders to support gender equity and achieve gender equality for women, girls and 2SLGBTQIPA+ in the NWT.

Committee is unequivocally committed to gender equity and gender equality for women, girls and 2SLGBTQIPA+ among all persons regardless of their expression of gender; sexuality; ethnicity; age; disability; political status; employment status; and/or geographic location. Committee believes that taking an intersectional approach and acknowledging the ways that different aspects of a person's identity can overlap and create compounding experiences of discrimination is imperative to breaking down barriers to gender equity and gender equality. In addition, these unique experiences must be understood in an NWT context.

Robust engagement with Indigenous governments, non-governmental organizations and NWT residents are required to inform the development of inclusive and meaningful legislative amendments for future. Trauma-informed and culturally safe engagement

facilitation is key as many women, girls and 2SLGBTQIPA+ have faced discrimination. Accordingly, future legislative amendments should be written in plain language through trauma-informed and cultural safe lenses. Committee heard clearly that legislation must be accessible and easily understood. Committee believes that this approach will foster sincere collaboration and relationship development Indigenous governments, nongovernmental organizations and NWT residents.

Finally, the NWT is unique in its population, geography and social landscapes. Future legislative amendments must be made with in-depth knowledge of the mandate, goals, and capacity of territorial non-governmental organization partners. The GNWT must work in collaboration with important partners, such as the Status of Women Council and Northern Mosaic Network, to honour differences and at the same time advance gender equity.

Conclusion

On September 21, 2023, Committee held a clause-by-clause review². Based on stakeholder concerns, Committee passed a motion to report Bill 75 to the Legislative Assembly as not ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. This concludes Standing Committee's review of Bill 75: Council for Women and Gender Diversity Act

MR. SPEAKER: Reports of standing and special committees. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Committee Report 72-19(2), Standing Committee on Social Development Report on Bill 75: Council for Women and Gender Diversity Act, be received and adopted by the Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried. The committee report has been received and adopted by the Assembly.

---Carried

Reports of standing and special committees tabling of documents. Minister responsible for MACA.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 1006-19(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES 911 2022-2023
ANNUAL REPORT

TABLED DOCUMENT 1007-19(2):
MUNICIPAL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
WILDFIRE 2023 – HIGH LEVEL
CHRONOLOGY

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents: Northwest Territories 911 2022-2023 Annual Report; and, Municipal and Community Affairs Wildfire 2023 - High Level Chronology. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for ITI.

TABLED DOCUMENT 1008-19(2):
MINERAL RESOURCES ACT –
REGULATION DEVELOPMENT STATUS
REPORT

TABLED DOCUMENT 1009-19(2):
2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT NWT
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND
INVESTMENT CORPORATION

TABLED DOCUMENT 1010-19(2):
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS OF THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED
MARCH 31, 2023 - SECTION II - INTERIM
NON-CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following three documents: Mineral Resources Act - Regulation Development Status Report; 2022-2023 Annual Report Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation; and, 2022-2023 Interim Financial Statements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

TABLED DOCUMENT 1011-19(2):
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES SENIORS' STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK

TABLED DOCUMENT 1012-19(2):
2023-24 HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
AUTHORITY BUDGETS

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two

documents: Government of the Northwest Territories NWT Seniors Strategic Framework; and, 2023-24 Health and Social Services Authority Budgets. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Member for Frame Lake.

TABLED DOCUMENT 1013-19(2):
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR
ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE -
NWT 2023 WILDFIRE RESPONSE REVIEW

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I wish to table the following document: It's a Northwest Territories 2023 Wildfire Response Review Request for Proposal. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Motions. Minister responsible for Finance.

Motions

MOTION 84-19(2):
TAXATION OF VAPING PRODUCTS UNDER
COORDINATED VAPING TAXATION
PRODUCTS AGREEMENT,
CARRIED

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

WHEREAS the federal government implemented a tax on vaping products effective October 1st, 2022, under the Tobacco and Vaping Products Act and has extended an offer to enact an additional duty on vaping products with the revenues to be received by the Government of the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS the federal government has presented the Coordinated Vaping Products Taxation Agreement with Canada, which the Government of the Northwest Territories desires to sign;

AND WHEREAS as a condition of a coordinated vaping products taxation agreement, the Government of the Northwest Territories must confirm its support for the Government of Canada to levy an excised tax on vaping products on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories to receive 50 percent of the federal Vaping Products Excise Tax duties levied on vaping product sales in the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS the authority to tax residents of the Northwest Territories resides with the Legislative Assembly.

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that the Government of the Northwest Territories should agree to receive revenues from an excise duty in respect of the Northwest Territories as imposed as part of the federally-legislated vaping products excise tax.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions about this, if I could. I think we -- I'm trying to remember if I actually saw this motion before. But can the Minister tell us a little bit more about what this is actually about, what kind of revenues we expect?

MR. SPEAKER: Sorry to cut you off, Member for Frame Lake; there is no questions, but you could have debate on your concerns and anything you have. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do have a few things I'd like to know a little bit more about, and perhaps the Minister may get up and actually provide some more information about this. But I'd like to know a little bit more about what this agreement is all about, what level of revenues our government expects to receive, and where those revenues would end up. I suspect they'll probably just go into the consolidated revenue fund which, quite frankly, I always have a little bit of trouble with and, of course, people at finance really hate targeted revenues. But I do think that we owe it to the public to give a little bit better explanation about what this is all about. And I look forward to some further information, and I hope that the Minister would provide some explanation here.

But I do support this. We dealt with vaping in the last Assembly, and I think it might have even flowed over into this Assembly if I remember correctly. This is a real problem for our youth. It's causing severe health problems with our youth. It's very addictive stuff, and we need to deal with this more seriously. I know that there's people in the Department of Health and Social Services that are working on this. But this is really bad stuff, and we got to help our youth understand that and get off this kind of stuff. And if this money can help do that, I'm all for it. But we need to do more and better. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. The motion is in order. To the motion. I'll allow the Minister to close debate.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This motion is of importance to the people of the Northwest Territories. I did intend to make some brief remarks this morning. I'm

not entering, obviously, into any sort of a question period. But there has been a process by which the House would follow to keep committees apprised of their work and respond to correspondence from committee relating to any uncertainties about what was proposed.

But for the sake of the public, Mr. Speaker, on April 7th of 2022, Canada announced the implementation of a federal vaping products excised tax that would be effective in October of that year, of last year. And provincial and territorial governments were invited to join a coordinating vaping products tax regime. That would then apply an additional duty on vaping products for those participating jurisdictions. It's that which we are now looking to participate in. And under this approach, Canada is responsible for administering the collection of the tax, which comes at no additional cost to the Northwest Territories. But it does also then share some of those revenues with the Government of the Northwest Territories. More specifically, we're expecting right now based on a current projections and current sales that it's somewhere in and around \$500,000, but obviously -- ideally, Mr. Speaker, it would be less because ideally there's less products being sold.

And on that, just a couple final notes, Mr. Speaker. We are hopeful that the additional tax and the fact that it's -- it's enhanced by participating in this regime will, in fact, discourage the use of vaping products and, particularly for youth, they would hopefully be even more sensitive to an increase in the prices of these products. It's certainly is something that is of concern. It's concerning to the Government of the Northwest Territories, and that is one particular reason we would want to participate in Canada's regime. Again, I would note this was supported by Canadian Cancer Society and certainly we do look forward to ongoing efforts by the federal government, by our own department of health, and by nonprofit organizations to discourage the use of vaping. And hopefully this is one more tool in that toolbox. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Motions. Member for Thebacha.

**MOTION 85-19(2):
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE
HOUSE TO OCTOBER 3, 2023,
CARRIED**

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I MOVE, second by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that when this House adjourns on Friday, September 29th, 2023, it shall be adjourned until Tuesday, October 3rd, 2023;

AND FURTHERMORE that at any time prior October 3rd, 2023, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, or at a time later than the scheduled resumption of the House, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as if it had been duly adjourned to that time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Thebacha. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Motions. Notices of motion for the first reading of bills. First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters, Bill 23, 65, 74, 75, 78, 80, 81, 84, 85, 93, and 94, Committee Report 52-19(2), Committee report 53-19(2), Committee report 55-19(2), Committee report 61-19(2), Committee report 62-19(2), Minister's Statement 264-19(2), Tabled Document 681, 973, and 974-19(2).

By the authority given to me as Speaker under Rule 2.2(4), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider the business before the House, with Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes in the chair.

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

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madam la Presidente. Committee wishes to consider Tabled Document 973-19(2) Capital Estimates

2024-2025, Tabled Document 974-19(2) Supplementary Estimates, Committee report 61-19(2), Bills 81, 93, and 94. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. We will take a short recess and resume with the first item.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Tabled Document 973-19(2), 2024-2025 Capital estimates. Minister, do you have witnesses you wish to bring into the Chamber?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Yes, I do, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses for the record.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. On my left, Madam Chair, is the deputy Minister of Finance, Bill MacKay. And on my right is Perry Heath, the director of infrastructure planning at the Department of Health and Social Services.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Welcome. Committee, yesterday, we ended just before -- we're going to start -- turn to page 45, long-term care and continuing care services with information items on page 46. Are there any -- Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to talk about the long-term care facility for Hay River. It's something that's needed, and I'm glad to see it's in -- still in the capital budget. I guess my first question is has there been a need to update the cost and scope of work for that project? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Sorry, is there problems with the earpiece? Okay, I'll just have somebody fix that, and then I'll stop your time and you can just re-ask the question. Can you hear? Can you hear me? Okay. I'm just going to get the Member to re-ask the question, and then I'll start the clock again. Go ahead, Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I just want to know if there's been

a requirement to update the cost and scope of work for the project? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. There was a requirement to do that, and the budget that's in the capital plan before you does reflect that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can we -- I guess I'd like to know there what work, I guess, has been completed to date on the project and is the -- as well as the estimated completion date, is that still a good date that -- is it still relevant? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: I'll turn that to Mr. Heath, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Heath.

MR. PERRY HEATH: Thank you, Madam Chair. As people are likely aware, we ended up changing locations of that due to the implications of the flood. I'm happy to report that we have an MOU with the town of Hay River, and the new site has been secured. We are currently in evaluations for the design services related to the facility and the new locations. We we expect to have the design contract awarded shortly with design to begin immediately. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess that was my next question. Has the site been secured for it, and you have answered that. Is that site -- will it be adjacent to the current health centre, or will it be accessible, I guess, as -- will there be some type of connection between the health centre and this facility? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: It'll be across the street, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I guess I'm just -- I'm just pleased to see that, you know, that we're moving along with it and that, you know, we're hoping the completion date is still going to be good. We

need those beds as, you know, as Hay River has an aging population. And I just want to make sure I got a bed when it's built. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions to -- Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I also want to just touch base on the long-term care facility for Fort Smith, the 24-bed, the planning process will start after the next election. I'm just wondering, there will be public consultation with the seniors' society and the caregivers with regards to this facility; is that part of the process, Minister?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, Madam Chair, there is an engagement process that will be undertaken. I don't have the details of it here, but certainly, I -- you know, I would expect that the relevant organizations of the community would be engaged. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Also, I just want to ensure, for the record, that there's some assisted living accommodation within this facility. You know, there's a lot of people that are kind of in between long-term care and having to have that extra care sometimes, and I'd like to see this facility going in that route because that's what the seniors' society would appreciate. So I just want for the record to put that in. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Chair, right now, the project scope does not have an assisted living. It has -- contemplates the higher level of medical requirements that would be needed for individuals, so -- as well as other facilities, kitchen, laundry, and, you know, communication systems. Some of these are included right now in what is being scoped out. But as I said, at the present time it's being scoped for being an assisted living facility at a higher end need. So, you know, again, I would say the first step is to just get the site, do the technical evaluations and do this engagement. So to the extent that there does require something alternative, this would be an opportune time for the community to be involved and to discuss what the needs of the community, in fact, are. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Did you have any further questions?

MS. MARTSELOS: (audio) because things change. People change. After the next election, things change. Thank you, Madam Chair. That's all I have, too

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: So anyways, Madam Chair, in regards to the long-term care facility design that they have in Inuvik, again, like I brought up in this House numerous times about my elders in the communities of Ulukhaktok and Paulatuk having to be brought in from the communities when care is too hard to give for families. And, you know, they always say elders aging in place of their home community. I think that there's nothing in the books this go around in regards to a go forward for those two facilities. I mean, I went to the extent of my office, you know, getting designs and that built. But what I'm thinking is there any, like, potential, again, I mean, for the next Assembly or even us to put something in for long-term facilities in the communities for aging in place because the only time that people get to see their parents, their nanik and dadik, is when they come in for medical because of price of tickets are so high. You could go from Yellowknife to Disneyland and back for a one-way ticket from Inuvik to Ulukhaktok. So it's really -- to me, as an Inuvialuk, we take care of our elders and we don't want to send them out into a place where they're not -- we think they're not cared for but they give the best care that they can. They're not eating their native foods. They're not eating -- and they're not with family. And like I said before, it's harsh for me to say this but when the elders go out, they say they go out and they come back in a box. And that's really tough with the -- over the last 12 years, you know, being here, I seen a lot of it. And I hear the families, especially in Ulukhaktok and especially in Paulatuk, Tuk, we have a road, Sachs Harbour same thing. You know, they're caring for families that are -- they should be nursing -- like, should be cared for 24/7. They are cared for 24/7, but, you know, it's just the way they're -- they're not in a proper facility. It's hard for one person when they're -- usually it's one or two people. They got to wash them. They got to do everything for them. Feed them. And they -- they have no problem doing that. But when you send them out for respite care, if the people in the communities, they get tired, 90 percent of them will stay there because they don't want the -- the parent doesn't want to be a burden on the children no more. So it's give and take. But for myself, I think we're in a day and age where we should be able to -- like, I worked with Ministers in regards to looking and

teaming up with the communities to get facilities in place but we never -- I never got it pushed over the goal line. But it's something that we should be looking at in the long-term instead of sending them to Inuvik. Because I see 20 beds going into Inuvik. I'm happy for Inuvik because there's a waiting list to get in there. But half that waiting list is people from my riding. We need to be able to have our elders age in place and give them the respect that they deserve. And I really -- I really think that there's -- it's a good news story in regards to it. I know -- and I think there's no way to add. But, you know, I'll support today in the budget today. I'm supporting it. But I want the Cabinet and the Members to know, the ones that come back, they should be -- it's so easy to have elders -- saying elders aging in place but they don't back it up. They have to back up our elders because they were the ones that made the path that we're on today. And I really think that we should be working with the community corporations and IRC to make this happen because we're more than capable of making it happen. It's just a matter of working together because I -- I have family, say, in Ulu. I have an uncle that has dementia. And my auntie and cousins, they watch them. And it's really tough for me when I hear that. And they say they're waiting for a bed in Inuvik. And it all kicks in, you know, for myself that what's going to happen. Proper care. They're gonna feed him, yeah. Proper care for him. But he should be able to do that in his home community of Ulu or in Paulatuk. So the elders that we have and the people that we represent, the people that put us here, the voters, the constituent, we should be looking out for their best interests. And the best interest is getting elders' facilities in the communities so we're able to care for ourself. So working with IRC and our government in the next go around, I think that should be a priority of looking right across the whole territory and seeing if fly-in communities have able to do that and the community corporation, or however they have their business arm set up for the Aboriginal groups, they should be looking at that. I really think something like this would go a long way and have people more happy and happy in regards to when mom and dad are home or your grandparents, you're able to go visit them and you're not visiting them in Inuvik. Sorry, to put it like that. Visiting them in Inuvik in long-term care. And I -- thank long-term care in Inuvik. The staff, thank you so much for what they do because they do care, and they do the best job they could do with what they got. But like I said, this is so easy for long-term care facilities in the bigger communities, in the city here. They're doing an awesome job here in the city because they have funds and it's easier to access. Going into communities, it's, you know, triple the cost. We've seen that over and over.

But I have no issue. And now, like I say, I'm supporting this 100 percent I'll support it today. But we need to start thinking outside the box in regards to how to get -- stretch our money and make it go longer, and that's partnering up with the Aboriginal groups across the territory if they want to go that way. And it's their choice. But having for myself, like I said, I've been here since 2007. I have 12 years here in this building. I've been trying to do this to a point where I went out and I sought private business. And now we're close but now it's the end of this Assembly. And now going forward, I have to start all over again. But Members here, I want them to hear it loud and clear. Elders should be -- should be able to age in place with dignity and not away from family and in the room and God forbid they're alone. And, you know, for the people that are going through this right now, my thoughts and prayers are with you. We're working as hard as we can to get it done. But I think that the Minister and the Members here that come back should put emphasis -- real a lot of emphasis in working with -- to make our money go further because we got now very little money going forward anyway. We're in a pretty tight situation for next go around. Going to be a lot of work. So thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. I didn't hear any questions but more of a statement and thank you for that. Are there any further questions or comments on the page 45, 46? Seeing none.

Department of Health and Social Services, health and social programs, infrastructure investments. 15 million -- sorry, this is -- Department of Health and Social Services, long-term care and continuing care services, infrastructure investments, \$15,976,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Does committee agree? Thank you, Members. Please return now to the department summary found on page 39. Health and social services, 2024-2025 Capital estimates, \$56,997,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Does committee agree that consideration of the Department of Health and Social Services is now complete?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Committee, we will now consider the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investments. Minister, would you like to switch your witnesses?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Yes, please, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witness from the Chamber.

Minister, would you please reintroduce your witness for the record.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's Kristal Melanson back again, the director of the Management Board Secretariat.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Welcome back. Committee, we will now consider the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, which begins on page 47. We will defer the departmental totals and review the estimates by activity summary beginning with page 48. Economic diversification and business support with information items on page 49. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I note that this money, the \$750,000, is for the Robertson Drive dock rehab, which is in my riding. It's my understanding it is through the ICIP fund, which means at this point it's been 100 percent funded by the federal government, which I think is great. I do note, though, that it doesn't show up anywhere in the parks area. So my guessing, then, or my question for the Minister is the dock money or this money earmarked just to repair the dock that's there, or will this be an expansion to sort of the day use and other area around that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, Madam Chair, this isn't being turned into a territorial park. But there is a recognition that right now the dock that is there is quite unsafe, is being used, and so as a matter of a -- primarily a safety concern and safety issue, that's the thrust behind this. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can the Minister tell me, then, is this a replacement of the existing dock that is there or just repairs to the dock that is there? And if it is a replacement, will the dock be larger than it is now? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I actually don't have confirmation as to whether it will be a full replacement or not. I'm just trying to see if I can see the detail here. But I think at this point, there was an assessment done so I just don't have the details of the project here. I'm not sure if Members of the Department of Finance have it. I'm not sure that we do, Madam Chair, sorry about that.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you. I'm willing to take that at a later date if the Minister could provide me with a bit of the details around the planned work. I would assume that some of that is still being figured out, but as much as I could get ahead of time, that would be great. I definitely know this will be a concern to people in the upcoming election, and they are going to want to know what use is. And I guess I just want to take the time to make a plug on behalf of my constituents and advocate for the -- whatever happens there, replacement or repair, that there is a portion of the dock that remains accessible to the public for fishing by the shore. I don't know if that has a specific name, but casting from the dock itself. I know that a lot of my constituents walk there with their children. They'll catch dinner for themselves off the dock and currently with the houseboat, or whatever it is that has been taking up half the dock for the last I don't know however many years, it has become harder and harder for people to use the area that live there. So I don't really have a question in that but just want the Minister to hear that and ensure that it's still be able to be used by residents and not just the fishers. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance, did you want to comment?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, it is just to be able to confirm that at this point it's really a repair project, and it's done -- it is in following to the recommendations that were received as part of the larger environmental -- not larger, but the environmental assessment that was done. So we've taken those recommendations and that is what we are planning to act upon, and the first round of funding is to do the planning to undertake that and just to get that going. There's still other work happening at the dock with DFO. That is DFO's that they are working on as to whether or not this could be a site for a small craft harbour but that -- again, that responsibility lies with DFO. For now, recognizing the use as already described, it is

quite clear that this is unsafe, and so those repairs do need to get done. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you for that. And I do appreciate that it's a weird one with the double jurisdictions and such, but it would be a great area, I'll put the plug in again, for some sort of recreational use.

Can the Minister at least confirm that the houseboat will be removed and that it will no longer be allowed to be anchored at the dock, which really is inhibiting industry and recreational use. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Not strictly in my capital books but I can say that my understanding last I heard was that the boat in question, or whatever it is in question, had, in fact, been ticketed and that, you know, obviously, enforcement measures do need to then be taken and those enforcement measures can be, I believe, up to and including removing forcibly. That is some cross-jurisdictional but I can follow up again with the Member directly. That certainly is not lost on me the challenges that vessel was creating. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you. The Minister has my empathy with that as I worked at Giant Mine and dealt with the houseboat that was sitting in the mouth of Baker Creek for over a decade as well as we are all aware of the ones that were off of the point there at Rotary Park. So I'm hoping the city's going to get that harbour plan going that's been talked about for the last decade but that's not this Minister's problem. So thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. You don't have any further questions? Okay. Thank you. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. The Robertson Drive dock, I'd like to know whether that's within the surface lease area that Miramar Con has. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't believe it is, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, I guess belief is one thing, but I guess I'd want a definitive answer. My concern is that the property is still under active remediation as far as I understand. And I'm just wondering what responsibility, if any, does Miramar Con have for remediation of the dock. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Chair, I have confirmed this is GNWT land, not -- it's not something belonging to another entity. So the Department of Lands at one time transferred this to ITI. It is, one way or the other, GNWT owned and not -- therefore, this dock would then be our responsibility which is why it's coming through this process. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks. So did that transfer happen within the last five or ten years, or do we know? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I mean, there's transfer from lands to ITI I can say, I believe, was within the last five years. Where and when it became a GNWT asset before that point, I don't know.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks. I guess I'm just a bit concerned that there might be potential contamination in the fill that was used for the dock, around the dock, and that we may have incurred some liability in accepting that property, which wouldn't be the first time, or at least the property back from the mining company. And I don't know, is there -- what, if any, responsibility does Miramar Con -- residual responsibility does it have with regard to remediation the dock if there's contamination there and so on. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So Madam Chair, point of clarity, Miramar does have its own dock so the two aren't to be confused, that there are different facilities in that area. This particular dock, when the Stantec Engineering assessment was done

in 2022, they did take into account what remediation may be required, and so as I say, the amount that's being proposed here is taking into account what remediation work was recommended by the engineers in that assessment. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks. I'm interested in seeing the Stantec report. Can the Minister provide that to me even if it needs to be confidential, that's fine. But I'd like to see it myself. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't think there's any limitations to doing so under cover of confidentiality subject to being corrected. But assuming that that's fine.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Okay. No, that's fine. Look, I understand the value of the area. It is important. It's used recreationally now. I want to see it developed. I just want to make sure that it can be done safely and that we're -- in doing this project, we're not going to expose people or workers to stuff that they shouldn't be exposed to. So that's why I'm asking these questions, and I'm just wondering whether the company has any residual responsibility because I think it's adjacent or a part of their original operations over a number of years. So that's why I'm asking these questions, and these are the kinds of questions our government needs to -- somebody's singing Happy Birthday, I love it.

But these are the kinds of questions our government needs to ask and be sure of before they accept sites or even transfer sites back within and between departments and getting leased lands back from companies or individuals. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I can say we have departments of ITI, infrastructure, lands have all been involved, and the Stantec professional engineers out of Vancouver who do marine assessments are the ones that were involved. So I am hopeful that the information we get to the Member will allay his concerns. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Any further questions? Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: No, thanks, Madam Chair. I thank the Minister for that. And, of course, since we've got only about a week left if I could get it before then, that would be helpful. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions under the economic diversification and business support? Member for -- sorry, Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Chair. Yeah, this dock rehabilitation really caught my eye here. I wasn't aware that GNWT did this type of work or had funding to rehabilitate docks because I imagine there's many docks up and down the Mackenzie River, and specifically the dock at Fort Providence is in need of major repairs, and also the boat launch too is just a single little launch, you know, considering the amount of usage that area has, especially with lots of tourism in our community. They're launching out of every little nook and cranny that they could get at which are not recognized boat launch but the one in the community. What's the process to have -- to get dock repairs and have boat ramps built? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I would also be very keen to see more small craft harbours and accessibility to the waters all around the Northwest Territories, not the least of which would be around the Mackenzie and in Fort Providence and throughout the area. A lot of this does require the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, which is the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans. I can see over the last couple of years we had hoped to have them more engaged and more involved in determining additional sites and locations for small craft harbours, but first there were some delays because they couldn't travel here during COVID and then the last couple of summer seasons were not necessarily the smoothest, if I may. So I mean, that process of getting access and changing accessibility to the waters really does involve a conversation with them. I can say that the DFO does have an office now in the Northwest Territories, which hopefully will make the process of engaging with them a little bit smoother. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Chair, and mahsi to the Minister for that. I'm just wondering why -- you know, if our

community -- I was asking for a process of how we could get that in. Now you only mentioned one part of it there, getting DFO involved. What's DFO's involvement in anything like this? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. DFO, or the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans has the jurisdiction over waterways, so they control the access and control the -- that parcel of -- not land, but that area is under their authority and administration. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: what triggers DFO involvement; how do we get that process going? That was my initial question was what's -- what is the whole process to get from point A to point B in this application process or whatever to get infrastructure in place? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So -- I mean, there are two parts to it I suppose. Firstly, if there's an interest in having DFO involved, I mean, the Department of ITI can be a liaison point where whether under tourism, whether under fisheries, potentially Department of Municipal and Community Affairs I imagine could certainly go and advocate to our counterparts to say, look, we would like your officials and staff to come and -- come to our region and look at what prospects there might be, do their own internal assessments and government processes that exist within the federal government. We would not be in a position to build things in a waterway without the Department of Fisheries and Oceans approving that. You've probably heard the Minister of Infrastructure talking about the harbour restoration happening outside of Hay River. It required approval from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans for them to be able to go and do that even though it's the coast guard are the ones that needs it. So it's really getting them to be taking an interest. Again, I can say they -- it has been a bit of a challenge to get them to take an interest in putting some additional collection points for fisheries. Notwithstanding that we have all this potential in the North for a strong fishery, it's been very challenging to get their attention on this issue and to get them to come up and identify potential sites. And then we go through our capital planning process so that we could build the docks or build a marina or build a site. But

we're not -- to get through our planning process, we would certainly not want to not go too far down that path if the Department of Fisheries and Oceans is only going to say, no, you cannot have access to that waterway. So, you know, they give us the okay, then we can build whatever it is on the land piece to access it but we really need them involved to identify an appropriate site in the water, and then we can build on the land. I don't know if that makes a bit more sense. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi. So to trigger that whole process, the community would have to request through ITI for the boat and the ramp -- or the dock and the ramps?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I'm just going to remind Members to end your question with Madam Chair just so that we can make sure that the sound and the mics go on in the right order. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Chair, that is definitely one path. I think I'm starting to realize here where this is going. Yes, look, I think it would be wonderful news to have, again as I said, more access to the waterways, whether for tourism, for the sake of the communities, or for fisheries. So one way is for the community to reach out to ITI to be partners in that and to then take the interest to the DFO to say, look, get your officials out to the community of Fort Providence. There's an interest locally. I know there's an interest in the fishery locally there. What can be done to have better access. And if they can identify a site, ITI could then start to go through the capital planning process that brings a project to this House to try to request funding through this -- the current process we're in to build the associated facility on land. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Chair. Also, does it take any engineering firm? Because you mentioned Stantec was involved in the Yellowknife one. Would that include an engineering firm to look at it also? Mahsi, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, it doesn't -- I mean, not necessarily, but maybe. I guess it depends. In this case of the Robertson dock, because they were rehabilitating an existing structure, the Stantec folks were involved to

determine whether that structure could be rehabilitated or had to be replaced and what the parameters of that would be. But if it's -- you know, again, if we're building anew, then that is a new building process. If you're rehabilitating, that's a different process. Yes, not necessarily is probably the best I can give, unfortunately. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Back to that Robertson dock rehabilitation, did somebody have to apply for it? Like, the City of Yellowknife? Or was it just an engineering firm that said, hey, here's a dock, rehabilitate? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. No. Madam Chair, this piece of infrastructure that is owned by the Government of the Northwest Territories is dilapidated. It is dangerous. People are going there and using it despite signage that we put up last year. And this has a risk to life. So that's one of the first risk categories when we do an analysis for the capital plan and when we're building the capital plan is to determine if there is a risk to human activity. This one fell in that category. And that's where it then advances through the peer review and ADM review process of a capital planning, and then ultimately comes here. So that's how the Robertson dock advanced. Other initiatives, such as something in Fort Providence could potentially proceed through a very different process if it's a new build for different purposes. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Chair. So can you send an official to Fort Providence to have a look at that dock? And you'll find that it's in dire need of repair. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am certain that the South Slave Region would be happy to send somebody, and I know ITI's listening now. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi cho.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Are there any further questions to the ITI economic diversification business support? Seeing none.

Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, economic diversification and business support, infrastructure investments, \$750,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Members, please now turn to page 50. Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, minerals and petroleum resources. Questions?

Industry, Tourism and Investment, mineral and petroleum resources, infrastructure investments, \$700,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Industry, Tourism and Investment, tourism and parks, infrastructure investments, \$2,978,000. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I can't let the last sitting go by and not ask about outhouses. So I know that this could also follow under the infrastructure area too around highways. But I note that there are a lot of parks work that are along the highway south, and it was really highlighted during the evacuation the facilities are woefully lacking down the highway and such. And so I note that there is one outhouse construction being planned here for Fred Henne Territorial Park. But I'm wondering has anything happened with the evacuation that has made the Minister feel that perhaps we do need to have more park outhouses and washrooms along our highway, or only road out. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. If the issue is around an evacuation route, that probably does not fall within ITI. Certainly during the evacuation, infrastructure did take the lead in terms of providing some additional porta potties along the route and ensuring that there was some additional cleaning, as did ITI, to ensure that for the parks that are there -- in the parks along the way, that the outhouses that are there that they were receiving additional cleaning. I am -- I have received both side of this council in that I certainly did receive some complaints, but I also had other people that I was checking in with along the way to see, and some were saying that facilities were fine, and then of course I know that others perhaps get there at a different period of time. So the long answer, Madam Chair, if it's an evacuation situation,

infrastructure was the lead on that, yes. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I guess it's just one of these areas where I don't see it like as being kind of one department or the other. Given that most of the parks do come off of the main transportation routes or evacuation routes, it makes sense that we would be looking to double up and put that kind of infrastructure in those locations.

I'm not sure if this is where it would fall under, but I know that over time in the chair, your own region, there's been questions around the pull-outs and such along the Inuvik-Tuk Highway and whether or not there was going to be any sort of facilities or areas put in there. I know we went out to RFP a few years ago for that. Could the Minister give us an update on whether -- I don't think I see anything here that falls into that. So will that be in the next year's plan, or where is that at? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, there was money at one point notionally allocated for pull-outs along the Inuvik-Tuk Highway. Madam Chair, the challenge that we've run into is identifying the appropriate location and getting the hunters and trappers associations from the regions to, in fact, agree on a location, along with elders. Last I know there was some work and some progress made towards bringing those parties together. I would like nothing more than to see what really is a tourism flagship, or could and should be a tourism flagship, have those kinds of facilities.

Without them, it's not quite the flagship that it could be sending folks down an hour plus long road, hour and a half long road, without any kinds of facilities. So, you know, I think there is now a staff person that's been seconded into Tuktoyaktuk to help support their community with some of their tourism planning, and that may well be an opportunity to bring those interested in tourism in that region together to get that moving and to find agreement between those who are the owners of the land. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I totally appreciate the complexity of that as well because I know those pull-outs and those recreational use areas will become

quite -- quite popular with the public. So you definitely have to make sure that they're in the right spots. Just looking at some of these things here, I did have an opportunity to see the new -- some of the new work that had been done around the North Arm Park in the last couple of years and thought it was pretty good, and everything was looking quite good in a lot of our parks over the time. But I just wanted to point out too that not only not having the sort of pull-outs and areas along the Inuvik-Tuk Highway is not just a sort of discomfort thing, but it also becomes like an environmental and health issue if people are starting to use places for the washroom that they should not be. And I do believe that was another complaint I did hear through the evacuation that some of the sort of sandpit pull-out areas along the highway became basically large outhouses for people. So I do think it is something when we do emergency response and such that if we are going to evacuate people 15 hours south, we need to ensure they can go to the bathroom somewhere.

I think my other question has to do with has there been any talk around installing things like WiFi or cellular service into the territorial parks along -- along the highways south or the egress routes? I get, again, that this is ITI, but, again, duplicating effort, it would make sense that people could go in and use WiFi at campgrounds. And I'm not sure if that -- that might already be existing, and I'm just not aware. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, it is my understanding at this point that -- well, I don't have any information that we're putting that forward as a plan, as an idea in terms of having WiFi as a set available thing at a park. I mean, I think some parks do have access to it, and the extent that park users then can go and use it is, you know, I guess up to them. I think it's based on the Starlink program in most parks to the extent that -- again, I believe most of them have it. They are often operated by contractors. So if I'm hedging a bit, it's because it does somewhat depend on each contractor. But they do have access to Starlink. They were being used during the evacuation process. And, again, while we are in the ITI capital, Starlink was also made available for others along the route during the evacuation, and I think there's an understanding that that is, if anything, being improved upon having gone through the recent experiences that we did. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I think -- I just wanted to ask a little bit about the Canol Trail and the emergency shelters. I am not super familiar with where this is at, but I did know at one point there was a lot of remediation that was still left around the Canol Trail. Without, you know, asking for too much detail, is that coming to completion to the point where the Canol Trail is going to be more of a tourism destination or, you know, have more areas opened up as a result of remediation? I know there was a lot of challenges remediating it because it's very inaccessible to heavy equipment so a lot of it would have had to have been done by hand. So if maybe the Minister could just give us a bit of an update on that, that would be great.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, Canol Trail is another one that could frankly be a bit of a flagship -- or it should be a flagship, not a bit of, but should be a flagship in the Northwest Territories. It does have a lot of sections that were still under ownership by the federal government, and there's some concern around overtaking that without doing the kind of proper due diligence to ensure that there's not an excessive amount of remediation that is required. So these -- ENR is the department that would be the lead in terms of that discussion with the federal government. This capital project is for shelters at Miles 175 and 200. I also at one point had a big large map in front of me on this. I don't have it memorized, but. These -- we are doing work just with some of these emergency shelters. So they're not really camping shelters per se. They're really meant to support those who are using the trail in the event that they needed an emergency shelter, exactly as described. But there's still quite a bit more to go on this to make the trail, I think, really what -- what I think probably the Member and myself would like to see. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Yes, I very much agree with the Minister on this one. It is such a rich part of our history and really could be, yes, like you said a -- she said, a flagship for that. I guess just wanting to confirm that these two North Arm projects for -- that are done in the region for Behchoko, those are both done under the Tlicho Infrastructure Agreement? Can the Minister confirm that.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: That's correct, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Is this the end of the work for the North Arm Park, or is it expected to continue into 2025-2026? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I believe -- Madam Chair, there's -- I this is the end for these two projects. Now, I don't have in front of me whether or not there's any future project lists for -- or future projects outstanding. But I know there had been some delays. So I just want to confirm, if I could. No, I think -- from what I am seeing or reading, Madam Chair, I think this is the end. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): thank you, Minister. Are there any further questions under tourism and parks? Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Chair. I see that the -- there's some group camping areas being constructed. I recall for the Fort Providence campground around 2018, there was plans developed to expand the campground for another eight sites, I believe it was. That was 2018. And so far, I know they didn't go with it at that time. I don't know what ITI's excuse was at that time. I'm just wondering where it is in the capital plan because we were getting quite a bit of, you know, influx of tourism in our community and they're going into the overflow camp area, which is not developed with all the power stalls and everything. But even that, that can get full too itself. So there was room to expand, because I know they have the plans. I was a project officer on that one there. So I'm wondering where it is in the capital plan, and why it hasn't been constructed yet. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't have a Fort Providence campground in the capital plan. So there isn't anything anticipated for Fort Providence in the 2024-2025 plan. I'm not sure if there was maybe a surrounding area campground, if that's what the question was about. But nothing for the community of Fort Providence. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Chair. Yeah, I was hoping to get it bumped up somewhere but wishful thinking, I guess.

The other one too, I recall ITI renovated a building in the community to have a micro fish plant. I'm wondering what was -- what is the status of that, and are there any future plans? What was happening there? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I know there was quite a bit of work done at one point with the community in terms of looking at a micro fishery. I don't think there's anything, again, in this plan. There was some training offered, and the training that was offered to community members from Fort Providence around particularly a winter fishery, as well as with respect to the summer fishery, but that would be running out of Hay River. And the last I understand is that there were -- there was an asset within the community for a small scale fish processing plant for local usage but I believe that is a Fort Providence band asset, not GNWT. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Chair. Yeah, I just thought maybe ITI was on top of everything that they do, especially having to do with fisheries as they're promoting fisheries around the plant -- around the lake I should say, so. Because I'm wondering, you know, people start initiatives and then it just dies, you know, just like on the order papers or something. So I thought ITI would be more, you know -- because I'll be asking those questions. I guess I'll be sending an email so that we keep everybody accountable. We're spending public dollars and, you know, we should know what's happening with it, and the community should know what's happening with it.

Also, at the same time, the MLA, even myself, I should know what's going on with any ITI projects or any ITI funding that's going into my community, whether it's First Nations or anybody else, instead of me finding out through the grapevine. You know, it would be a common courtesy to us as MLAs. And you know how we felt about that before. That was brought up. So I'm just wondering if we could be -- I could be included moving forward on all correspondence. I know it's only got two more weeks to go, but a lot of things could happen in two weeks and projects moving forward. But I would really like to be copied on some -- or

notified of what's going on in my region with these public dollars. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So, Madam Chair, my understanding is that -- so firstly, that the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment did provide SEED funding to the band at their request. They made an application for a contribution to their fishery initiative, which is what gave them the opportunity to put this asset into use. And then as I said, there's -- and that's quite common that -- you know, whether it's a community band or community government or local organization or individual or business, they approach ITI through SEED for access to funding, whether for tourism initiatives or other. And in this case, it was for the micro fishery. And then separate and apart to that is the fishery initiative which is where the training and some funding for supplies was also provided.

Madam Chair, I -- you know, we do typically, you know -- all the information about what capital projects the GNWT is paying for in communities is provided in the infrastructure acquisition plan, which is provided in advance of becoming the capital budgets. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Chair. No further questions.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, I see here North Arm. I know -- territory park accessible shower and electrification. I know this project has been ongoing for quite some time, and I know my colleague did ask too, do you have an estimated date of when this project will be completed? It says 2024-2025. I know it's not going to be this. But it's just that do we have a date and how much is it going to cost?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. There have been a few delays with some of the work happening in the North Arm Park. Madam Chair, this was one of the earlier projects that was going through under the Tlicho infrastructure -- the agreement that is with the Tlicho government with respect to procurement and work undertaken on Tlicho lands. So that process just took, therefore, a

little bit longer to go through procurement because trying to work under a new program and to do so in a way that was respectful of maximizing that, it just took a bit longer in the first few goes. But it is for this particular project, the shower, it is my understanding that this is the total budget anticipated, and that it will be constructed in the 2024-2025, within that fiscal period. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Okay, thank you. I know this year was -- we had some people staying in North Arm Park area this year. And same thing like what my colleague said regarding the washroom, because I did hear quite a few complaints from the local as well because people are using that area, and the outhouse is in terrible condition. And there was a lot of complaint. And I did send an email to the Minister on that that if there is a contractor, whoever's looking after it should be going out there. And we do -- we're aware of the fire ban and all those things, but that place was very popular this year. And, you know, to Whati, there's an all-season road going to Whati and we've seen quite a few people going to Whati during the evacuations. And there's going to be -- next year it's going to be the same. You know, like, there's going to be tourism coming and going. And Whati does not have any outhouse or anything like that along their highway. And I just wanted to know if the Minister is working with Tlicho government or investment corporation regarding installing an outhouse along that highway. And on Highway 3 as well, there's nothing there for people. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, there was a contract with a Tlicho business for the cleaning of the facilities at the North Arm Park. I, you know, anecdotically would not be surprised if the usage was far and away what that cleaning contract was anticipating in the circumstances. But, again, I know that there was also a number that was available for users to call and that there was a path by which folks would then attend and provide services.

With respect to Whati, Madam Chair, that's a topic that hasn't come up in a while, but, again, you know, in speaking somewhat outside of capital planning but more about operations, the idea of tourism to Whati, I agree that is -- it is a great opportunity for the community. There's -- it's obviously an unexplored region and comes with the opportunity for an authentic

experience that I think many people are seeking. But it is Tlicho lands, and it would be Tlicho led. I know that ITI has been involved in the past to going into the community and offering -- there's mentorship programs. I believe Tlicho citizens have taken the tourism mentorship. There is -- you know, again, there's engagement locally in terms of asking what they want to work on, but it really will need to be led by the community, and then ITI's there to, either through SEED or through tourism funds, provide operational support. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, just a couple of quick comments. I'd like to thank my colleague, Ms. Nokleby, for bringing it up in regard to the pull-outs for the Tuk-Inuvik Highway. More importantly is the hamlet of Tuk is still having to pay for the -- on recovered their costs -- trying to recover their costs and using hamlet funds to provide rental for RVs that are coming into the community and staffing. I know we put in a visitors centre that we still never really officially opened yet, but it's open and we're thankful for that. But I think -- I would like to know what's the plan because I don't see anything in here. You know, we're putting cabins 200 miles out in places but -- which is really needed because my buddy Norman Yakeleya walks on that trail. But I have no issue with that. But the issue I have is are we looking at helping Tuktoyaktuk, the hamlet of Tuk, to provide services there for the RVs, RV park, or are we going to hire somebody there through the government to do that for the tourism? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, at the risk of repeating myself, I've had the opportunity to be on that highway and be in the community, and this is truly a gem for the Northwest Territories tourism industry. It should be -- I mean, it's a gem. And, you know, it would be such a wonderful opportunity to see it flooded with tourism but with the facilities there to properly receive the tourists and to maximize the opportunity for the community.

So my understanding is that the visitors centre, albeit small, is open. I agree there was no -- there wasn't quite the flash opening that any of us had perhaps hoped for, but this summer certainly wasn't what anyone expected it to be. There is right now a secondment from one of the ITI staff to the community of Tuktoyaktuk to help really vision what a bigger picture for tourism might be. For example, the

opportunity for a culture centre in Tuktoyaktuk, which I have an impression that the federal government has taken some interest in as well. So I think there is more to come but, as I was just saying with Whati, it's -- it really ideally should be the community that says, here's our vision and idea. ITI can then provide some of the supports, whether through, again, tourism funding and/or with liaising with the federal government and being a kind of cochampion to the federal government. So I think there's a lot of opportunity. I agree. There's nothing in the capital plan because there's not -- you know, again, the tourism centre right now is opened. The RV park, again, too, Madam Chair, I don't have an answer on the RV park. I think there was some disagreement on location and that involved the federal government lands location. So quite a few things not that I can fix with the capital plan here, Madam Chair. But it's one that I hope this is a discussion that continues for whomever's back in this House. Again, my view is that Tuktoyaktuk should be really, again, an absolute gem.

I will one last note, Madam Chair, tourism numbers were big this year notwithstanding the fires along the Dempster, notwithstanding the challenges. Numbers were up already, and they'll hopefully continue to go up, but they're going to need proper resources. I don't disagree with that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Madam Chair, no, just in regards to that, you know, I think the one that we have seconded into the community, I think she should be focusing a little bit more on working with the hamlet of Tuk in regards to the RV park and getting a plan ready instead of, you know, focusing wholly on the visitors centre and trying to find funding. I think that the community of Tuk, the hamlet of Tuk is stretched to the limit already. And they're providing the service that should be provided by the territorial government as an RV park. I see we got a list here two pages long in regards to different projects that are happening in the communities, but I don't see nothing -- they say it's a gem. Yes, it is a gem in regards to the -- it's on Tuk 71A lands through the IRC which, like I said, we have to make a plan to get the locations picked through the HTCs and for the pull-outs, access to Husky Lake, to finish off that program. We have to help the community in regards to -- we have the visitors centre but I think more emphasis has to be put on actually helping the community and the hamlet of Tuk instead of letting them utilize their own money to provide a service that this government should be providing. So am I going to -- are we working toward getting funds for, I guess, an RV park in

the community of Tuk? It's already made. But at the end of the day, though, the bottom line is the hamlet of Tuk is paying for it, not the GNWT out of their funds. Are they able to look at that in the future? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So, Madam Chair, the complicating factor here is there are no GNWT lands that can be turned into a territorial park, nor -- unless there was to be some sort of lands swap. But, I mean, right now this is not GNWT land. They are IFR -- or Inuvialuit lands and/or Tuk community corp lands. So my -- in speaking with the department over the last couple of years and wondering why there isn't more development, quite frankly, in Tuktoyaktuk and/or along the highway, part of it is, again, that's not our land to develop and it's not our land to do anything with. We can support the community, provide the funding. We provided a staff member. The staff member is now theirs. The staff member's been seconded. She can do as is directed by the community corporation. That's how secondment works. And can be applying for tourism funds, can be applying to do different things. That's entirely at the behest of the community. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Minister could correct me if I'm wrong. The RV park is in the hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk, in the hamlet boundaries. So in the hamlet boundaries, the hamlet falls under the GNWT. The GNWT should be providing this service. Am I wrong? Can she correct me? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I understand there was an RV park that was privately run, and they have burnt down. But, again, I'm -- I wouldn't -- I mean, I'm not from Tuktoyaktuk, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, there is a private RV park in the community of Tuk. We have -- and then we have the -- because there's so many RVers that -- and tourists that come up to the community, the hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk came upon themselves to try to solve the problem because it's just been too much vehicles

coming in, nowhere to park, parking everywhere. So they put allotted -- like, allotted from 1 to 25. They're paying for that out of their hamlet budget. So under the Hamlet Act, they fall under the Government of the Northwest Territories. They should be getting funds. Are they going to start being able to get funds for the community of Tuktoyaktuk for the RV park in the community? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. And I think that would be under operations. And so as this is capital, but I'll give it to the Minister and then since -- if she has any comments or not, then -- thank you. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Chair, I'm not going to create a new project sitting here in the chair. But what I can do is -- I know we do have a new regional superintendent, I believe -- I hope in place already for the Beaufort Delta, or soon to be in place in the Beaufort Delta. And that seems like exactly the kind of thing that that individual should be going into Tuktoyaktuk and really, you know, making it their flagship project to sort this out. It's the first -- there are community infrastructure funds for tourism that the community may want to be applying for, and they could be getting the support of the regional office to do that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Small, final question, Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Okay, thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for that because it's the lack of support in the community of Tuk for that tourism. It's a lack of support our government is giving them. Using their own money that's taking away from the community for their roads, for the water, their sewage, for sporting events. It's not that we're not creating a new -- a new expenditure here. It's just what we're not doing. And I see two pages on this of everything else being covered but that. Tuk shouldn't -- the mayor and the council shouldn't be picking and choosing what they could do with what little they have. It's not a new project. It's -- I want to make that clear. This is a project that they -- our department fell short on, and we need it sorted out. So it's got to be looked at in the future. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to -- you know, we had the fire here this -- you know, I guess in the spring and in the -- you know, this last one here and some of it impacted some of the parks. I'm just wondering if any of this infrastructure -- any of these infrastructure projects have been

impacted by the fire. Are we seeing anything being pushed back because of that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So we've seen some delays to the 2023-2024 plan. Obviously what we're looking to see approved now is the 2024-2025 plan, so looking forward. There have been certainly delays in the current fiscal year's plan, and I can certainly provide a bit of a list to the Member if that's easier. I mean, yes, there's delays, but hopefully -- yes. Yes, I can provide a list if that's helpful. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, like, I guess, just to use, say, Alexander Falls campsite and Louise, there was some extensive damage. Not to the structures themselves, but to the area around it, which I suspect was going to compromise the use of it possibly this summer. And so that's kind of concern to me because tourism is going to be very important in the South Slave. You know, with the low water levels, shipping problems, and all that, we're seeing a decrease, I guess, in opportunities there. So, you know, we're going to be losing stalls and that. So I'm just wondering if -- and this, I guess, is more of an operational, I'm sorry. But we have, you know, two tourism operators that we could be supporting who do have beds to take up that slack. Is that something that we are looking at doing to kind of offset some of that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So what I have with me is the 2022-2023 delays. And with respect simply to Hay River and to parks in particular, I don't see that there's been any expressed delays there. There was a bit of a delay in getting the fish processing plant online, but it wasn't damaged.

As far as any damage to facilities and damage to park facilities specifically, that would likely be coming in either in a supplementary appropriation under the infrastructure budget or into the future infrastructure budget because that damage assessment hasn't been done yet. Obviously hoping that it would fall under the Disaster Assistance Policy and see funding through the federal government. But, again, without the assessments done, I can't -- I certainly can't put it forward here. And then more generally, I mean, yes, tourism broadly speaking is really more of an operations issue

in terms of what supports are there. I'm quite live to it, Madam Chair, and the week after we are done here, I have one more FPT, and it's in tourism. So it's not lost on me. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I just wanted to make sure that -- you know, that we talked about, you know, fire damage and the impact on tourism. So I'm glad that, you know, your department is on it and watching it and understand the importance of tourism in the South Slave and throughout the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Are there any further questions under tourism and parks? Seeing none.

Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, tourism and parks, infrastructure investments, \$2,978,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Members. Please return now to the departmental summary found on page 47.

Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, infrastructure -- or sorry, Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, 2024-2025 Capital Estimates, \$4,428,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Does committee agree that consideration of Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment is now complete?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Did you wish to switch out your witnesses, Minister?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Yes, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witness from the Chamber.

Please introduce your witness for the record.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I now have the pleasure of introducing Gary Brennan. He is the assistant deputy minister for regional operations for infrastructure.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Welcome. Committee, we will now consider the Department of Infrastructure which begins on page 55. We will defer the departmental totals and review the estimates by activity beginning on page 56 with asset management with information items on page 57 and 58. Do you have any questions or comments? Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. First off, I just wanted to note again that something I had said in the opening remarks for the capital estimates is that we see a lot of 100 percent dollars this time around in the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan, which is a huge chunk of these large capital projects that are \$82 million here. So that being said, it's great to see that this is not -- even though it's an \$82 million sum, the majority of it is not our money, which is great. It's going to be an influx into our territory and our communities, which is sorely needed.

When I look at all the highway reconstruction jobs that are going on, again, the only one that's not at 100 percent funded is Highway 10, so -- which is at 75, which isn't too bad either.

I guess just to get into some of the details of this, I'm really quite concerned given our summer and my statement the other day about climate change and our lack of preparedness. I'm seeing that the Fort Simpson liquefied natural gas plant is in here. And it's only at \$500,000 right now. Oh, you know what, sorry, I'm in the wrong spot for that one. My apologies. Sorry, I'll go back to the Frank Channel bridge.

The Frank Channel bridge, it's my understanding that the last -- when the Minister gave us the update was that they were awarding the engineer -- the owner's engineer for the contract. I see that that is closed. Can the Minister tell us if that work has actually been awarded and is now start -- has started? Where is that at? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: I'll take that to Mr. Brennan, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Brennan.

MR. GARY BRENNAN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, I can confirm that the engineering contract has been awarded. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can the Minister or department tell me who was awarded that contract and how much it was for? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Brennan

MR. GARY BRENNAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, so it was awarded to Associated Engineering Limited. And I do not have the amount of the contract here today. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. That's fine. I would like to just ask a little bit about the Redknife River Bridge replacement. It's my understanding that this comes -- the money for this work will be coming from De Beers in exchange for some sort of a regulatory offset that they were doing. Can the Minister speak to whether that is the truth, and how much that project is going to bring in? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, so De Beers Canada was required by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada to do a fish habitat compensation, and that was just part of the regulatory process that they went through. They worked with, I gather, multiple departments of the GNWT in order to identify an appropriate site where they could maximize the usage of that perspective funding for a project that was in need here for the Northwest Territories, and they identified that the Redknife River Bridge, which was built back in 1971, was way beyond its design life and was not providing adequate fish passage for migratory fish coming from upstream. So having landed on that site, there's now three culverts that are being replaced, and the total value to the GNWT I understand is \$9.5 million. Thank you

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate that information. And, again, always happy to hear other people are paying money for things that we need.

I'm just looking at the highway reconstruction projects. And, like I said, great to hear they're at 100 percent. I note that the highway -- Highway no. 3 is not on there. So is any work that would needed to be done in order to the -- sort of the approaches, etcetera, with regards to the bridge, would that come in under the bridge

replacement costs, or will there be a separate piece at some point under highway reconstruction or highway costs? I guess I'm just trying to get a feel for is the Frank Channel bridge amount that was given to us by the federal government the all-in cost, or will we see some accommodation costs on the highway that we need to take care of ourselves? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I am looking at the document -- the tabled document. I do actually have an amount. So I'm not sure what has gone wrong. I do have \$2.5 million for 2024-2025 showing here for the Highway 3, and specifically contemplating the fact that there would be some sections that would require strengthening in order to service the potential here. So -- or to service that highway in light of what is going to be happening with the bridge. So, yes. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would be remiss if we were talking about bridges and I didn't bring up the Great Bear River bridge. It has, I have to say, would have been a disappointment for me to not see this project advance at all, really, in the four years considering I had actually tried to be part of the team to build it in 2018 or 2017. So knowing the money has been sitting around for that long, it's quite concerning to me that we are not advancing that. And I guess just to kind of get a little bit of a plug in for anybody listening that may want to sit in the 20th, to me I can't stress an infrastructure project that's more needed than the Mackenzie Valley Highway. If I could go back now -- and this'll make my colleague from Frame Lake happy, if I could go back now I would scrap the other two infrastructure projects and have focused ourselves only on Mackenzie Valley Highway. I have noticed that over the last four years -- or note the just absolute inability for those regions to move forward without having a proper accessible route for their supplies, for their building materials. Having tried to execute projects in Tulita, in Norman Wells, in places where I only had limited access to equipment, it was very, very difficult, costly, and quite frankly, not even necessary often because by the time you would do the work, you couldn't do enough of it to really have any impact. So that's kind of more just a comment that I wanted to make.

But could the Minister please give us an update, are we actually go to see anything happen -- I'm

very -- struggling with the word planning that's in there, and that makes me think that this is just going to be yet another round of consultants' reports that go nowhere. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, it certainly has been a long road coming. That is the wrong choice of words there. But it is still in planning. But staying in planning is important, Madam Chair. Sometimes these projects, as we've seen, advance too quickly without adequate planning and then wind up getting bogged down at the environmental assessment stage or in the geotechnical stage or whatnot. So it is my hope that that won't yet continue to happen here.

As I understand it, there were some challenges in terms of determining what type of contracting and what kind of a final routing there might be here. And it is unfortunate that it has gotten to that point. We are -- we did need to be -- to identify also parcels of land in an area where there are different ownerships over the parcels of land. If that is resolved and settled, then the next step is to actually get ready to build, and, of course, now the estimates that were in place at one time are several years old and very much predating all of the inflation that we are now all labouring under.

So, again, having the planning budget here, if the land issues have been resolved and some decisions within the communities are resolved as to where the placement of the bridge might go and how the contracting might take place, then the planning dollars here can bring about a new estimate and a higher estimate and figure out exactly what this is going to cost. It's the entirety of the Mackenzie Valley highway is -- I mean, we're into a very large number, and this bridge will be a very large part of it. And we're going to have to get a new estimate because what we have right now isn't accurate. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I'm super aware of how long cost estimates last and quotes even. I mean, you're lucky sometimes if you even get three months out of a company after they've given you a quote, so. I guess I just would be very remiss if I didn't speak a bit further to this, and general projects around the Tulita area, and the very big feeling of lack of engagement that I hear from the community, including on this bridge.

They -- I have Members of that community come to me on numerous occasions to ask for updates on what is happening there. And the mayor has told me he does not feel engaged and such and so -- and not just with this project, but with the health care centre which I missed in the earliest portion.

So to me, I'm kind of starting to feel like the Great Bear River bridge is going to be this nebulous -- it's going to be the Taltson of the next project because it's just going nowhere. So has the Minister or the department considered an alternative here, rather than building this bridge on treacherous waters and such, maybe going towards a ferry system instead in which they could then employ about 12 people seasonally on the ferry as well as creating a tourism opportunity. So I guess I'd just like to know are there other things being now thought of instead of this bridge that's never happening. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I -- in the last few years of sitting here, I have not seen anything come across in the capital plans that would have considered as a ferry option, so I don't know what the full history of that might be. But I can tell you with respect to the other part of the question and public consultation, there actually have been some recent public consultations in the region around specifically the land and the access and the lead points on the bridge. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Are there any further questions under asset management? Seeing none. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I note that the Deh Cho bridge repair work is not listed in here. It's -- I think it's probably repair work but that's the one dealing with the cable failure. I'm just wondering if it's a bigger -- it's a bigger task than originally expected, if they have to bring in an expert from the United Kingdom, and what's the projected estimated cost to repair that project and what's the timeline? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, it is still -- you know, would certainly be my hope that we'd actually be able to get compensation for any repair work as a warranty on the bridge. Obviously that, or some form of insurance on the bridge. I don't have a final on that. The issues arose only just this summer. What -- and

then the -- so the final completion of any repairs will be in June of 2024. But as I think the Member has previously mentioned -- or the Minister has previously mentioned, there was certainly work done adequate to ensure the safety of the bridge for continued usage and passage made between now and then. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi for that. Also, infrastructure highways went into the community to shore up the riverbank where it was about five feet from the road -- the access road into the community. And what I noticed that they did there was they just compacted the fill in that area. And that's right next to the river where the ice -- when you look on the riverbanks of -- in that area there, the ice really chews up, you know, the -- the banks there pretty -- you know, a significant amount. And why did infrastructure just put compact fill, knowing that when you do stuff like that it's going to slump anyways once the ice hits it? If you can provide details on that. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Chair, we're beyond my skill. I'll turn that one to Mr. Brennan, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): ADM Brennan

MR. GARY BRENNAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, so there was some erosion of the banks last year with the ice there, and it was noted last year. We did send a team in to take a look at it from the operations side, and we did do some short-term work on there by placing some fill until we can get some engineer studies completed to determine what we need to do that embankment going long term. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Chair. Has the department hired engineers, or they're using in-house engineers and have they been to the community yet? What's the expected timeline for this type of work here? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. ADM Brennan

MR. GARY BRENNAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, so we have not been into the community with our engineers yet so we don't have an anticipated timeline. We had hope to

try to get something this year but with the -- all the activity around evacuations, wildfires, we never -- we never quite got to it. So it'll be a 2024 issue. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Chair. That's all I have right now. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I'll just be brief here. I just want to make a couple comments, is that, you know, when I look at this part of the -- you know, the capital budget, it's a big chunk, and it's really meaningful to contractors in the Northwest Territories. They're relying on this portion of the budget to continue operating through this transition period of government and going forward as well. So I just want to make sure that -- you know, that government is aware of that and that this is needed. And the other thing as well is that, you know, we got to make sure that, you know, the Indigenous governments, you know, have a strong role to play in that part of it as well, to make sure that they are getting some of this work. And if they get that work, you know, I would be -- I would hope that they would actually joint venture if they're going to do that with northern contractors versus southern contractors as well. So I guess it's just more of a comment there just to keep it upfront that we want to make sure the work stays in the North and it actually happens to keep businesses alive here. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. I didn't hear any questions in there. So I'll go to the next Member. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you. This is further to the Frank Channel bridge, Dehk'e. It says here the completion date is going to be 2026-2027. And now that we know that the contract was -- you know, the engineer contract was awarded that, you know, it's just been mentioned. So I just wanted to ask when is the actual work going to start for the construction of the Frank Channel bridge?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So, I mean, this is right now in the 2024-2025 plan. So we are -- there's already crushing happening this year with significant expenditure for the 2024-2025 plan which, yes, is -- I mean, that's when it will begin. I don't know if the Member's looking for an exact month, I don't have that in front of me. If she'd

like a month, I could see if ADM Brennan has that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Brennan

MR. GARY BRENNAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, so we did award a crushing contract for 2023-2024, the current fiscal year, and in 2024-2025 we're hoping that we will get the design work done and start on the actual procurement of those for the construction. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Yeah, another one too is that -- so who will be supplying all the materials for the constructions? Like, from the steel to the gravel and all that, you know, to build the -- to build the bridge? Like, I just wanted to know, because it should -- will it be supplied by the Indigenous government?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So, again, at this point only the crush contract has been completed. That one is being done by a local community contractor. Anything on the Frank Channel bridge would have to go through the Tlicho Infrastructure Cooperation Agreement, which there's a presumption in a way that -- or an initial attempt to negotiate directly with the Tlicho government or subsidiary thereof. If there's an inability to reach conclusion, then even so, any outside agreement that may be reached would still then be subject to having provisions within it for employment and I believe also for procurement of some materials, goods, or services. So the point of which is, either way, whether it's a direct contract with the Tlicho or their subsidiary development arms or whether it's private, there are guarantees within that process to ensure that there's benefits directly to the community. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you. Okay, the Frank Channel bridge is beneficial for everybody for the Northwest Territories. It's a busy, busy bridge, and I'm very grateful for that because it's going to be providing employment for the people in the regions. It's -- you know, like, and from Yellowknife as well too. So there's going to be a lot of people benefitting from that so, and that is part of North Slave region. And we are part of North Slave. And so there's nothing actually in the budget for Tlicho

region alone. If Tlicho region alone was identified, there would be nothing. And we even had in there where Gameti want an all-season road. They did identify that. And Wekweeti identified that as well. And I really do support, you know, like, what they're asking for. But I just wanted to ask the Minister if there is a plan in place and if there is a plan in place, do they have -- do they have a date of when the actual work or if there was an agreement made with the Tlicho investment -- or infrastructure agreement or with the Tlicho government or with a tech -- or was there any agreement made? I just wanted to ask the Minister that.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So the Tlicho region, or the Monfwi riding, does -- is -- I can summarize they're getting \$36,615,000 this year. It is actually 10 percent of the total capital estimates. And that is not including the territorial portion which may well include some of the highway work if that is deemed as territorial. So I can provide a breakdown. I only have that number right now; I don't have a breakdown.

And as for an agreement, I mean, again, I -- I'm not sure I'm entirely understanding the context but the Tlicho Infrastructure Cooperation Agreement does exist between the Tlicho government and the Government of the Northwest Territories. So, I mean, beyond -- and sorry, and just to confirm, Madam Chair, indeed the capital estimates, I'm saying the 10 percent that's going to Monfwi is -- it is it actually quite far and apart beyond the bridge, which although it is on Tlicho lands and so subject to the agreement, quite rightfully does have a tremendous impact and benefit to the whole of the territory. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you. Yes, I know that with -- it would be nice if there was a Tlicho region. All the projects that they're going to be working on within this coming -- upcoming fiscal year identified, it would have been great because I think -- I know that my -- the people in my region, they would like to know. And there's a lot of -- we have a lot of people there with their own business that they would -- you know, if they were aware of some of these things, I think they would plan better because all we see in this budget is a small project, not large projects. And there's no other -- they don't identify what is being -- what is under the small project and large project, and there's no estimate. There's no numbers beside

it at the budget. So that's why I ask because if we had that, it would have been great. And even, like -- like she just said, the \$36 million, like, I would like to know what kind of project is that that's going into Tlicho region. You know, is it the school? Is it the health centre? You know, all our -- there's -- we have a lot of aging infrastructure in our communities, water pipe in Edzo. So it would have been -- it would be good if those were identified so then that people, they know. So that's all I wanted to ask. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I will send a consolidation of the list of projects to the Member for Monfwi. I mean, part of the challenge, of course, is, for example, that there's, you know, a Housing NWT project that is taking place in the Monfwi region. There is, you know, runway and apron overlays at one of the airports. That's under infrastructure. There's the North Arm Park. That is under ITI. So each and every one of these projects is listed in the capital estimates with its budget and the location but because they're in the different departments, we organize by department, so you're seeing them in each department. But, again, Department of Finance can put together a list here, and I can send it to the Member so she can see them and then would have that cross-referenced ability.

My understanding under the Tlicho Infrastructure Cooperation Agreement is that the Tlicho government themselves do take a leading role in communicating and identifying contractors in those communities. Again, I may -- I may be overstating that. I don't mean to put them on the spot, but I think this is a part of the understanding is that they are the lead on their lands. So and then in addition to that, Madam Chair, there are contracting seminars that are run fairly regularly for contractors and the dashboard that we have for all of the details of what's coming up. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Are there any further questions? Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, thank you. Thank you for the information. And it's good to know. And I just wanted to note that for next fiscal year, will the Minister commit to create, you know, our own Tlicho region, part of their budgeting, so that way we will know, you know -- don't include us in the North Slave because North Slave includes Yellowknife and, you know, Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh's riding, my neighbour, my colleague here. And then, you know, we need to get away from North Slave. We need to have

our own region or our own so that way we will know, you know, how much is being spent to Tlicho region. And right now, it's at 20 percent but that's not, you know -- it doesn't say much for Tlicho region. So that's just more of a comment. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Are there any further questions under asset management from Members? Seeing none.

Department of Infrastructure, asset management, infrastructure investments, \$83,595,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Next, turn to page 59 for energy and strategic initiatives with information items on page 60. Are there any questions? Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you. I see we have some pre-construction engineering regulatory activities for Taltson Expansion pre-construction. Do we have a rough cost estimate of what we think the Taltson Expansion will cost? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the Member might recall that a preliminary business case was shared with the standing committee and did have in it some initial cost estimates for both generation and transmission. More recent to that, as of May, a final business case was prepared. It does, however, first go to the MOU signatories who we are contemplating as being the partners on the project. I understand that Members may wish to have access to that. I don't have the ability right here to speak to that. So I'm not able to speak to the numbers that are in that cost estimate. But, again, I can assure the Member that that work has been done, along with quite a lot of other work to get us to the point where we are looking at doing some of the pre-construction. So engineering, environmental, and regulatory activities which is what is contemplated in the 2024-2025 plans. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Can I get an over/under on \$2 billion? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, I'm not doing over/unders. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, you know, I don't want it in confidence. I think this is just completely undemocratic. We're heading into an election, and the next Assembly has to make the decision to do the same thing we did where you put the three major infrastructure projects in your mandate or to pick one. And there's strong arguments on either side. You know, there is some argument the way you get these built is you just kind of always keep them on the books and you play the lottery with the feds and, you know, you try and get the money based on what their priorities are. There's also an argument that maybe we should just pick one and try and get it done. But I think it's really unfair to the public, to everyone who's running, and to the next Assembly to not have an idea of the costs of the projects. It's worth noting that almost every hydro project everywhere goes over budget and over time. I don't think one's been built in Canada in the last decade that was on budget. So even if we're saying it's \$2 billion, I think, like, 2.5, we'd be lucky. But I'm making these numbers up because the Minister will not share them. And I don't want them; I want the public to know how much it costs to build the Taltson Expansion. I guess I'll try and ask some other questions.

It's 60 megawatts. We did this over a decade ago. At that point, it was \$1.2 billion, and we abandoned it because we couldn't get any long-term power purchasing agreements. Do we have anyone who wants to buy this power? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So part of what -- a significant portion of the work that was done was an analysis of the potential mining needs for -- really, for the entire region. I think people sometimes presume it's just for Slave Geologic only, but it does go far beyond that. I know that NTPC have already entered into MOU agreements with Pine Point and I believe with Norra Zinc, although I could stand to be corrected about that. But are also in discussions with some of the other mines in and around -- in the South Slave but also then through the North Slave and, again, not only with respect to Slave Geologic but also with respect to some of the gold mines and gold projects. You know, examples being, you know, Nighthawk for instance. They are similarly

interested, of late, the mining project -- and I don't it in front of me, I'm forgetting the name, just outside of Yellowknife, a gold project. And then also the lithium companies that have been coming in and looking in and around Yellowknife. So the challenge that we do get into, Madam Chair, and I think -- if I may, 30 years ago got into, is do you build it and then hope that someone, you know, will buy the power, or do you wait for someone to promise you that they're going the power? We are at risk of being in that situation yet again and at risk of missing out on the opportunity to resolve the energy sustainability challenges that we have in the Northwest Territories, whether that is through an expansion of the hydropower capabilities that we have or whether it is because we decide we need another alternative. One way or another in the next ten years, we need an alternative because what we're doing now is not going to work and is not green and it is not cheap, and the federal government are only taxing us more. So we can certainly come to the conclusion of expanding the hydro capacity that we have in a way that will not include any further flooding, looking at that as an option and considering whether that's a priority, and then putting a final number to it when we've made that choice or not. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, that's all fine. I get the debate. I get the debate when to build it and, you know, this debate if you build it they will come. You know, I just don't understand why we can't have a rough estimate of what it's going to cost. It just doesn't -- it's like I'm having a debate with no idea. I don't even know what to ask next. Do we know the route yet? Did we make a decision on whether it's submarine or going around the lake? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So Madam Chair, that is, I think, probably the critical decision that needs to be made at the steering committee. And so, again, I suspect the Member knows, but for the public, there's a steering committee that is composed of the signatories to the original MOU, aside from the Salt River, who at the present moment have opted to not participate although are certainly welcome back, and that the steering committee is composed as the leadership and then the working group is composed of the officers or officials from GNWT as well along with those other governments. And that is part of my struggle with -- I don't disagree that the public has the opportunity in a territorial election

to state their preference for a future economy, for energy resilience, for how we go about building big projects. But we are in a situation where if this project is going to be done differently and done right and done well and not get into a situation of, you know, extended blockages or concerns amongst the governments on whose traditional lands the project would be, doing it through the MOU and the steering committee process is taking some time. That is, back to the original question, it is precisely that. It's to ask when -- you know what that routing would be. We're down to a couple of choices. And with that in hand, it's deciding what that might look like in terms of an agreement between governments. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you. You know, I think this requires a very fulsome public debate. How much are we selling the power for? How much power are we selling? How long -- how many mines do we need to exist to buy it? What's the payback? You know, what is -- what are these projects doing in other jurisdictions? How much are their cost overruns? How much is it roughly going to cost? I just can't believe I'm being asked for money without any of that information. I guess can I have how much money right now is the government asking for this Taltson Expansion pre-construction? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Sorry, Madam Chair. Let me take that to Mr. Brennan. I may have just missed the question there.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Brennan

MR. GARY BRENNAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. For 2024-2025, we're proposing \$3.5 million. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you. You know, and I get that's the nature of these; you got to do a lot of planning work and you got to spend a few million dollars. I mean, we've been spending -- I think since the 16th Assembly we've been spending a few million dollars every budget on Taltson to do some engineering assessments. And I get the project is kind of evolving and it's, you know, no longer going to the diamond mines and it's relying on a bunch of metal mines. I know Pine Point in their preliminary economic assessment says they're buying power from the Taltson at 11 cents a

kilowatt hour, which is very, very cheap compared to everyone else. Do we have any idea what we would sell the power at Taltson for? Is it going to be significantly lower than everyone else in the territory pays? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So if I recall, there are estimates and ranges built in to the business case that depend upon what the market may be doing at any one time. I don't, in front of me, have whether it's above or below 11 cents.

Madam Chair, if I might just -- and I am conscious of time, but if I might just venture, I think if the MOU and steering committee partners can make a decision on the routing and then be able to say here is the project. The challenge we are in is we don't quite have the project and that's where the planning of the money that's being requested is to get to that point where we can come forward and say, here's the project. I fully agree that when you can say here is the project, that should be then part of fulsome debate here before the final big dollars are actually agreed to. I'll stop so the Member can ask me one more. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Yellowknife North. A quick one.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, I understand we've been asking the federal government for money for this so they must have a guess of what it's going to cost. And actually at one point, the Minister Vandal said that the money was very close. Like, he almost said he was giving it to us. I think it was coming out of the Canada Infrastructure Bank. So I'm assuming the feds know how much the project costs. And I mean, I don't know how they can if we haven't picked a route but they must know something. Are the feds giving us any money for Taltson any time soon, or did that kind of disappear with this whole first we have to go through the MOU process? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, they are quite keen on the project. The project has a sense of -- so many senses of being chicken and egg, whether it's with the mineral resource industry or whether it's with the federal government. It is difficult to make a decision amongst ourselves and the Indigenous governments within the territories and say here's our project and go to the federal government without knowing what the federal government is going to put on the table or just how much at the table they're going

to sit. So those are two challenges, I think, with this. Again, I want to emphasize that when there is a project with a route and a commercial structure to be proposed of who is involved, it won't proceed and can't proceed until this House approves that money to go and to be spent. And at that point, there will be a project to be debated. There are, of course, earlier points in that decision-making. I'm, you know, mentioning some of them now, routing for example. But, again, given that the project partners are Indigenous governments, that's where the time is being spent right now is there with the notion that the -- or with the knowledge that the project would then come forward here. Right now, all of the funding is 100 percent federal, and wouldn't it be wonderful if it stays that way. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. And with that, Members, we're going to take a short break to give our interpreters some time to rest. They're the ones that are constantly speaking while we get to take turns. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we are on Infrastructure, energy and strategic initiatives. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Now I'm in the right place to ask about the Fort Simpson LNG and such.

In a presentation we were given, it was told that the relocation of the diesel plant was changed but it had a \$3 million price tag. I'm a little bit confused as to where the two different projects are at. Are we still relocating the diesel plant? Is that not happening now? Sort of what's going on; could the Minister maybe speak a little bit more to that situation. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: This will go to ADM Brennan, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): ADM Brennan.

MR. GARY BRENNAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, so we are still planning to move ahead with both projects but in 2021, I believe there was an assessment done to combine both projects. So to plan to relocate the diesel plant and combine it with a new LNG plant. So right now we have some money for the LNG, but we don't have any funding for the diesel. So we're basically looking for federal money to complete

both projects at the same time. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. So this seems to be something different than the last time we were sitting here talking about this project because at that point, it was just a one standalone supplementary LNG, and we were told that it would be going back to get a full amount of money for the LNG plant. When did this change to become a co-locate of the old diesel plant with the new LNG component. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Brennan

MR. GARY BRENNAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's my understanding that that decision was made in -- I have in my notes 2022. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair; it's been a long week. That's pretty broad, in 2022, and just makes me think that perhaps it was not communicated to us properly in the last sitting, what was actually going on with this project. I struggle to see why we are continuing to waffle or go back and forth on what's happening here given that, really, our increased flooding and climate change driven emergencies are likely going to mean that that diesel plant where it is now is no longer going to be useable. Can the Minister or the department speak to the fact of why a decision was made not to move to full LNG and remove the diesel component all together? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm going to go to ADM Brennan one more time and it certainly can -- yes, let's do that for now, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): ADM Brennan

MR. GARY BRENNAN: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. So essentially what happened was there was a risk assessment done at the existing site of the diesel plant, and it was decided that it had to be moved as well. So at that point in time a decision was made to combine both projects and move it off the island. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Okay, so that does make sense to me with what we were talking about last time. However, then, I was not aware that the plan was to reuse the existing diesel plant in the new combination one. And if there is a relocation with the \$3 million, is that still happening? So we are going to be repurposing old equipment or infrastructure from the old plant rather than going to new diesel equipment? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Chair, I'll certainly take this back to ADM Brennan, but the information I have is that is actually part of the challenge right now, is NTPC is trying to still work through the relocation and get a proper cost estimate as to how that relocation takes place given that with a relocation you may or may not be able to reuse the equipment. So, again, happy to redirect that as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Yeah, that would make sense. I guess my concern is what is our contingency plan should NTPC, in all of their infinite wisdom, struggle to find a solution here to what is going on and then we have all these supply chain challenges that are only continuing to get worse as we have disruptions to services through fires and other -- and flooding and other events? I'm very, very concerned that this is being left in NTPC's hands and that at some point, the diesel plant will fall into the river, or at least become unusable and unsafe, and there will be no LNG plant to replace it. So are we going to then pay for everybody to have solar panels in Fort Simpson; what's the contingency plan here? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I would suggest that asking about the contingency plans for GNWT's, and really the NWT's energy security, is probably a reasonable question for every community in the Northwest Territories. I don't know that there's anything particularly more or less urgent here. You know, the current plant does still have life. It is still functional in that regard. It is at least at the planning stage to move forward for a more secure long term and sustainable location. We, you know, again are taking that message to the federal government because any projects that we had planned, in

this case interrupted by a flood, you know, now the cost of everything have gone up quite significantly. So, you know, the backup plan is to get this plan moving and to make some decisions so that it can be relocated in a way that makes sense to use the assets that are there if possible and, if not, to have an estimate that is current so that that can be brought back here to determine if that's where we want to go. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. With all due respect, I wonder if the Minister's actually gone out and seen the roadway and looked at the amount of erosion that has occurred at that site in the last two years. And I think it's all pretty safe to say that it's not going to get any better. You know, I just have to reiterate I have no faith in the fact that this is a department that over four years has failed to spend hundreds of millions of dollars in money to the point where the federal government has said they'll cut our funding off and we have to use pots that have already been promised to us but we get no new money promised because we can't spend what we've got. And then here I see that we're -- we've had money, we've known about this problem. I knew about this problem as a consultant in Fort Simpson when I worked there in 2012. So for us to now be sitting here waiting on NTPC to figure out what they're going to do with this falling down plant and can they salvage some of it because they have no financial stability, I have to wonder what the village of Fort Simpson is going to do. Yeah, I think that they're all going to find themselves with no power at some point in the next few years or a very piecemealed-together project. And, really, this is a failure of this department to exercise and to get their mandates and their work done. This department hasn't moved for four years. And that's not all the pandemic. That is not all the fires. That is a lack of will and push to get things done and get the money spent that could have kept our economy going through COVID and other things. I have nothing else to say. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. I want to thank my colleague from Yellowknife North for raising a number of concerns and issues, particularly around the Taltson project. But I guess I just want to go on record as well. This is the area of the capital budget that I have the most difficulty with, and folks in this House are not going to be surprised to hear me say

that I think many of these projects are very dubious value. I don't think they're all -- it's not possible for them to all go ahead at the same time. I think it was a mistake to try to say to the public that we're going to get these three projects going at the same time, the three big ones in particular. And through the work that I've done here, when you actually see the contracts that are out for, certainly Taltson Expansion, the Slave Geological Province, the planning work mainly goes to southern companies. So I think the economic value of these is really quite dubious. And I would much rather see the money being -- and effort that's going into these projects put into housing. We need to start treating housing like it's a big infrastructure project. I have said that many, many times in this House, and it's just water off a duck's back.

Now, I do want to talk -- or ask some questions about the Slave Geological Province funding that's in here. I'd like to know how much of this is our own money for the next year. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Let me go to ADM Brennan. He'll know, I hope, of the exact numbers -- or the exact cost sharing ratio. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Brennan

MR. GARY BRENNAN: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. So the SGP is 75 percent feds, 25 percent GNWT. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks. I think I knew that but how much are we spending of our own money then in 2024-2025 on SGP work? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. We'll just get that number for the Member. So, well, looking at \$9 million, that's the total that's being spent, Madam Chair. That's inclusive of the amount coming from the feds. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, okay, thanks. Yeah, so there is some of our own money going in here. This is one that's experienced very significant

slippage. Quite frankly, I just don't think we should be doing it for a whole variety of other reasons; I might get into some of that. But at what point will this project be in by the end of 2024-2025; what's the status of the work going to be and what will we get out of the 2 or \$3 million of our own money that we're putting into it? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. The federal money that was secured was intended to support work up to the point of an environmental assessment. And anticipating where this may well go, there, of course, is the regional strategic environmental assessment that is now also underway. That is not falling under the same pot of funding but that -- to the extent that there is -- I wouldn't say slippage but perhaps a delay in the work, as that work also needed to get done and needed to be considered. But, again, the funding is provided for the purpose of being ready to put forward the environment -- or to complete the environmental assessment work. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, I think that's a big mistake, quite frankly, and I've said that before in this House, and I hope that future governments will listen to this as well. This government cannot have it both ways. You cannot trigger an EA for the Slave Geological Province or Lockhart all-season road while it's in a regional study. What's the point of doing a regional study? Tliche government, others have asked for the regional study so that we don't make irrevocable mistakes so why trigger an EA while the regional study's going on? That would be just ridiculous and, quite frankly, contrary to good project management, good environmental management, sound public policy. And I've said this before in the House, if this government ends up triggering an EA while the regional study is on, that's really bad. I can't emphasize that enough. Why do the regional study? So, yeah, I just don't agree with this, quite frankly, and especially at a time where the caribou herds -- the Bathurst caribou herd has not recovered. There's no evidence whatsoever of recovery in the last four years I've been here; it's gotten worse. So I don't know why we would continue to push this when the caribou herd is in crisis while a regional study is going on. This is just bad public policy, bad spending. Benefits don't stay here. I just don't understand why we do this, Madam Chair. This is wrong.

Now, I do want to say a couple of other things, and I think I've also heard it said in this House,

if there's one project on this list this government should pursue it's the Mackenzie Valley Highway. It actually connects communities. It's for the benefit of communities. This other stuff, a lot of this is not for the benefit of communities, some of this stuff. So if you're going to do the Mackenzie Valley Highway, the problem is this has been a project that is in environmental assessment now for ten years because we submitted it way too early before we even had money. So you're gobbling -- we've been gobbling up regulatory time. The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review board, they almost cancelled the environmental assessment at one point because our government wouldn't submit necessary information. Why trigger an EA on something when you're not ready to do it? And that's what you're going to do with the Slave Geological Province application as well. You're going to trigger an EA before it's even ready and you're going to gobble up, waste taxpayers' money on it. It's going to turn into a boondoggle. And I think the same thing will happen with Taltson. I have no doubt if the current attitudes continue to prevail here.

So my advice is you concentrate on one project. That's what I've heard informally from the federal contacts that I have. Those guys, they just can't figure out what they want to do. They keep coming after us for all kinds of crazy things. If they had one project and they brought it to us with a real plan, we could probably work with that. This other stuff, crazy. Why do it? So that's my advice to the next Assembly, concentrate on one big infrastructure project and make it the Mackenzie Valley Highway and finish it. And do it in small enough chunks that communities will actually benefit from it. Don't try to do it all at the same time and gobble up ten years of an EA before a board and waste taxpayers' money. Get the money in place and do it right.

Thanks, Madam Chair. I think that's probably all I have to say. It sounds like a lecture and quite frankly it is because I'm fed up after eight years of sitting here wasting taxpayers' money on these boondoggle projects. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further comments or questions under energy and strategic initiatives? Seeing none.

Department of Infrastructure, energy and strategic initiatives, infrastructure investments, \$45,150,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Next turn to page 61 for programs and services with information items on page 62 and 63.

Department of Infrastructure, programs and services, infrastructure investments, \$72,334,000. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm just, sorry, trying to frantically scroll through my notes here. But I just wanted to talk a little bit about the Inuvik airport, the Mike Zubko air terminal building, the runway extension project, and the adaptation for climate change. It's my understanding that these projects have come in under -- sorry, I'm just looking, the trade corridor -- no, these are the DND. Can the Minister confirm that these are all being 100 percent funded by the federal government? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Let's go to ADM Brennan, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Brennan

MR. GARY BRENNAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. So the DND runway extension is 100 percent federally funded. There is also a Disaster Mitigation Adaptation Fund project underway at the runway that's 75 percent funded. And the airport terminal building is currently 75 percent funded. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I recall a couple years back talking about this project, and there was a bit of back and forth around getting the project going. Can the Minister or the department please give me just a bit of an update on where things are at? Considering it's been very quiet from the people that I was hearing from before, I'm assuming things have been moving along well but if I could just get an idea of when -- are things progressing on time and on budget? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Again, ADM Brennan has probably the latest numbers on that, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Brennan.

MR. GARY BRENNAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. So for the runway project, things are

progressing on time and on the adjusted budget. We recently signed the contract for, I think, about \$82 million to continue the airports and all that work would take us up to completion of the runway except for electrical and paving. I think that will take us about another year and a half, I do believe.

In terms of the airport terminal building, so that project is currently under negotiations, so. The proponent did submit a bid. We're working through that bid right now, and that work continues. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Can the Minister or department tell me how much of this money is staying with northern businesses? It is my understanding that the engineers on this project are not BIP'd or northern businesses. Can the Minister or department speak to that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So I know we're just looking for -- I mean, there's the three different projects here. The lead, of course, was a joint venture between the two landowners of the region, that being IRC and GTC. So they would be the lead in terms of ensuring that their own beneficiaries would be benefitting in a maximum capacity. And I would have no sort of direct say in terms of saying to them who is or is not a beneficiary. Let me double check with ADM Brennan, though, if there's anyone else involved. Again, there may well be some -- particularly the technical supports, that would not -- we would not have the capacity for that here in the Northwest Territories, and so I just send it to him so see if I've missed any major players. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Brennan.

MR. GARY BRENNAN: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. So I think the only thing I would add to what the Minister said was that our most recent report was that it was 80 percent local and NWT labour on that project. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to note, that is just the labour portion, not materials and supplies. And I see that the ADM is nodding his head, so it is not 80 percent of

the total cost of the project for anybody listening.

I do want to come back to this comment -- the comment the Minister said that she has no direct say in the subcontractors used by the joint venture between the IRC and the GTC. This has come up before in other projects where, I believe, under NTPC where the GNWT sort of washes its hands of its fiscal responsibility under the Free Trade Acts, as well as under our own policies, to ensure that northern business is used and to ensure that it's going the right way.

Can the Minister speak to what controls or measures are in place to ensure that what is happening within those groups is actually benefitting the people that it's meant to? Because I'm sure you're aware, and I've heard it too, there are a lot of beneficiaries in the Beaufort Delta that are not getting a piece of any of this pie and that others are being brought in from outside and being deemed as northern and beneficiaries. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Well, Madam Chair, I am quite happy to talk about vendor performance management. So one of the many things that has proceeded under and in response to the procurement review was a move for vendor performance management. I certainly don't want to suggest that the Government of the Northwest Territories doesn't play a role in managing its own contracts; however, up and to the time of the procurement review, there wasn't anything in the contracts to say that they would be monitored and then there was no mechanism by which to enforce, say, BIP policies that businesses were using to bid on contracts.

So with the introduction of BIP vendor performance management, initially a couple of years ago, which introduced the monitoring component and started to change our contracts so that contractors would know that they were being monitored. The last piece of the puzzle, if you will, was an app to create and establish enforcement mechanisms which would be up to and including the ability to hold back the holdback amounts if, in fact, companies were not meeting the obligations that they had purported to be meeting when they initially made their contracted bids. So I do certainly agree with that concern. Our BIP program and procurement in general will only be as strong as our ability to monitor it and enforce it. Those tools are now in place. It has taken some time. So I acknowledge that. But those tools are there now. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, you know, I have heard the Minister say this before but it's really disappointing that it took four years, or at least two, in order to have a couple line items put into the contractor's reporting regarding things like per diems, which I raised with her numerous times, and brought up in Cabinet when I first got in.

I ordered a procurement review to the Department of Infrastructure in the spring of 2020. We are now sitting at the fall of 2023, and a lot of the things that I directed them to do have not come forward and are taking four years to do.

In order to have a reporting sheet, which the federal government has been doing on this type of thing for decades now, it has taken this government four years to develop that. And I can tell them right now that their contractors still keeps the incidental piece of the per diems from their northern workers. So I don't have a lot of faith in this enforcement that's been going on or been put forward. It took way too long to come forward, and I don't think there's any teeth in it. When members or people can move to a community, rent a residential address, label that as their office address and become local to take away contracts from others in that region and therefore then be able to actually establish a business location in that town -- and I'm talking about your own town, Madam Chair, you know, they're very much gaming the system. So I really hope that the next Assembly takes this to heart because a lot of our money is going to the south and to people that have worked for this government before and are sitting with cozy pensions and are also still now taking money away from people here. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Did you have any further questions? Infrastructure, programs and services. Any further questions from Members? Seeing none.

Department of Infrastructure, programs and services, infrastructure investments, \$72,334,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Members. Please return now to the department summary found at page 55.

Department of Infrastructure, 2024-2025 Capital Estimates, \$201,079,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Does committee agree that consideration of Department of Infrastructure is now complete?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Committee, we will now consider the Department of Justice. Does the Minister wish to switch witnesses?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witness from the Chamber.

Minister, would you please -- oh, sorry, welcome back, Ms. Melanson.

So Members, we are now considering the Department of Justice which begins on page 64. We will defer the departmental totals and review the estimates by activity summary beginning on page 65, with corrections, with information items on page 66.

Department of Justice, corrections, infrastructure investments, \$780,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Turn next to page 67 for court services with information items on page 68. Department of Justice, court services, infrastructure investments, \$700,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Members, please return now to the departmental total found on page 64.

Department of Justice, 2024-2025 Capital Estimates, \$1,480,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Does committee agree that consideration of the Department of Justice is now complete?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Committee, we will now consider the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Minister, did you need to change your witnesses for this department?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): This department begins on page 70. We will defer the departmental totals and review the estimates by activity summary beginning on page 71 with community operations, with information on page 72.

Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, community operations, infrastructure investments, \$22,201,000. Does committee agree? Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can someone just explain to me what's going on here with this line item? It was, last fiscal, the actuals were \$18 million, and then we were advised -- sorry, two fiscals there was 18 then we were advised it was 66 and now it's 22. Can I just have a high level explanation of what's going on? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. This, I believe, arises because of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Communities fund, and that is where we have seen a significant increase in, first, the revised and then in the revised estimates for 2023-2024. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you. Can I just confirm -- I think before that this was money administered on behalf of others and then we changed the financial reporting, and it shows up this way. And essentially we're just holding this money for the communities and these fluctuations are based on how we get it out the door, is that correct? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, this is, if you all think back to the time when we talked about a change in accounting treatment, here it is in real life form showing up here. So very exciting to learn about some accounting principles. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Any further questions under this community operations? Seeing none.

Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, community operations, infrastructure investments, \$22,201,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Next, turn to page 73 for regional operations with information items on page 74.

Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, regional operations, infrastructure investments, \$32,545,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Members. Please return now to the departmental summary found on page 70.

Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, 2024-2025 Capital Estimates, \$54,746,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Does committee agree that consideration of Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is now complete?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. We will now consider Housing Northwest Territories. Committee, Housing Northwest Territories is included in the capital estimates as an information item, and the totals are not voteable. We will continue to review these estimates as we have for the previously considered departments; however, we will not vote on the totals. If Members have comments or questions, they can be raised at the appropriate time.

Committee, Housing Northwest Territories begins on page 75. We will defer the totals and review the estimates by activity summary beginning on page 76 with finance and infrastructure services, with information items on page 77. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I always find when we start looking at the Housing Northwest Territories budgets -- and I know that they're information items but I always get very frustrated. Pardon me?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I have to change out the witnesses. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witness out.

Minister, would you please introduce your witness.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have Mr. Jim Martin, the vice-president of finance and infrastructure services for Housing Northwest Territories.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, and welcome. Member for Kam Lake, sorry, can you start over.

MS. CLEVELAND: Sure. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, whenever we review the budgets for Housing Northwest Territories, I find that I get very frustrated. And one of the reasons for that is we never have a really good indication of what kind of investment we're making in housing and what specifically we're getting for that, especially when we're talking to residents of the Northwest Territories.

And so one example of that is if you look at the 2023-2024 Capital Estimates, the capital estimates were \$35 million, 35 five, and then when you look at the revised estimates, all of a sudden we have 136. And so there was a lot of money that came from somewhere, and that's a really good news story but I, sitting on this of the House, there's no way for people who are reading this document in the public to know where that money came from, how the government got it, did it come from the feds? We're assuming it came from the feds. We don't have an idea if there was federal monies that went directly to Indigenous governments and what housing in the Northwest Territories really looks like and what the investment in housing in the Northwest Territories really looks like. And so it would be really great if, going forward, if there was some kind of a table that could go with these information items as additional information to help kind of paint that full picture of not only investment in the Northwest Territories but what some of these numbers look like.

And if you look back at all of the both main estimate conversations and capital conversations that happen on the floor of this House over a four-year period, a lot of our questions are the same, a lot of the information that we're asking for is the same, and some of those questions, Madam Chair, you even asked today in your Member's statement and in question period, again, today.

So my first question is are we anticipating, in addition to this \$13 million, any additional influxes of funding for housing from either the feds, or somewhere else, for the Northwest Territories because \$13 million is not going to help us solve what we, up until, you know, our wildfire crisis, was really the conversation you heard frequently in the House, which was our housing crisis. So I'm wondering if we're expecting any additional funding for housing this year. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Chair, you know, I want to say a simple yes. Housing is one that has a lot of attention obviously from the federal government. Housing is an area that has a lot of attention going to Indigenous governments. And there's been significant growth in money going directly to Indigenous governments and community governments, not the GNWT, which is a perfectly good solution and one that we have, in fact, advocated for because it allows communities to be in charge of delivering their own housing solutions. So I would say that there is one -- one of the challenges here is that this number does not represent the total investment in housing in the Northwest Territories, and so I certainly would want that to be clear.

Now, I'm not sure if there's some further details right now that Mr. Martin might be able to provide. Obviously -- but let me see if he's in a position to do that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Martin

MR. JIM MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, so as the Minister noted, there is certainly additional funding out there for housing. The revised capital estimates for housing's -- for this fiscal year actually include an additional \$43 million that was approved since April 1st of this fiscal year. So there is a few projects that are included, and we included those to ensure that, you know, we were able to give a full order and magnitude of official housing investment occurring this fiscal year.

But looking -- and as was mentioned, you know, in addition to the funding that is throwing to Housing NWT, we do recognize that there is additional funding flowing to Indigenous governments. Some previous public announcements indicated upwards of \$400 million over the next number of years that reflect commitments made during the life of the 19th Legislative Assembly. So there is significant dollars still out there, and these all present opportunities for partnership with Housing NWT, and we continue to work very closely with Indigenous governments to leverage projects as they come forward. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. So what I want to be clear about is I am very much in support of dollars going from the federal government directly to Indigenous governments. This is absolutely a good news story. What I think would be very

helpful, and would also be a good news story for Housing NWT, is to be very honest about the influx of dollars for housing because they have a role in advocating for that. So they're doing themselves a communication and a public relations favour by ensuring that that information is publicly available and is tracked in these documents. And so what I'm going to say again, and I know it's been asked before, is for some type of information sharing that shows the information of public dollars being spent in the Northwest Territories, whether that comes from the GNWT or the federal government.

My next question, though, is in regards to the list of major retrofits on the back page. It outlines about major retrofits to about a hundred units, and so I'm wondering if Housing NWT can now confirm, at the last capital acquisition plan for this Assembly, what their total stock is of public housing units? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm going to turn that number to Mr. Martin, but I do want to just note that with respect to the extent to which an Indigenous government or community government wants to tell us or make public the amount that they're receiving from the federal government is not entirely up to us, but the Council of Leaders housing group is, I believe, now up and running. I don't know how -- what frequency or with which it's meeting just yet, but that will be a forum that is significant in achieving exactly what the Member has suggested. As for total numbers, I'll go to Mr. Martin, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Martin

MR. JIM MARTIN: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. Currently right now, we have approximately 2,700 owned housing units within our inventory. So it's approximately 2,300 public housing, 250 market, and about a hundred -- well, based on the last count, 186 HELP, Homeownership Entry Level Program, units. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. What I'd like to know is if these units that are incurring major retrofits, are they currently empty or are they currently being lived in. If they're empty, then I would assume this will reduce the wait time. And so I'm wondering if Mr. Martin can also speak to that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Martin, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Martin

MR. JIM MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, like, our programs working closely with the districts program staff, working closely with districts and LHOs, yes, as the units become available, they are allocated in a very timely manner. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. I think the question was is are the units that are on the list currently empty, or are they occupied? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Chair, I'm not sure if we have an occupancy list necessarily with respect to planning, but if we do -- let me see if we can get it. I'm just conscious of the time. We certainly can provide that if we don't have it handy. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Martin

MR. JIM MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. According to a recent report, we have about 58 units that are vacant and now ready for occupancy. So they're in the process of being filled as soon as possible. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. So will this influx of \$13 million and major retrofits reduce the wait time for housing in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I mean, that is certainly -- that is the logical conclusion. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to go back to that one because I'd like to hear it from housing because I'm not going to make assumptions on that one. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Martin

MR. JIM MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, most definitely. As we can complete our

retrofits with the resources we have available, the communities come online as soon as possible and allocations do occur as soon as possible as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I've got about a minute left, and so I'm wondering there's about a hundred units here out of the stock of 2,700, how many are still waiting or in need of major retrofits in order to bring our housing stock out of core need? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: To Mr. Martin, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Martin

MR. JIM MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Right now in the current fiscal year, we have approximately 300 M and I units that are undergoing repairs, retrofits, as was alluded to. We currently have about 175 units across the system that are vacant requiring those repairs to be completed. They are being completed as soon as possible. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just in regards to the increase on -- the increases that we're getting in regards, there will never be an increase in housing because of CMHC and the housing allotment from CMHC to the communities. Is our government looking at that, to work with CMHC to get the housing allotments in the communities risen? Because when the housing allotment are -- if we're putting in new units into a community, we're not able -- they're taking one out of the previous, our old stock. So is there any way that our government and our Minister is able to try to get increases for the housing stock for the communities in numbers? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. That is a bit out of the capital that I've prepared for. I'll turn it to Mr. Martin, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Martin

MR. JIM MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, the federal government is a very strong partner with housing, of course, and the GNWT,

and we were fortunate over the last several years to have support from CMHC. They provided us, for example back in 2021, \$25.5 million to put towards new builds and to put towards expansion of new public housing for the territory. CIRNAC also came along shortly after that and provided, you know, about \$55 million actually over a few years after that. These resources enabled us to resource the hundred unit expansion for the territory which, as noted previously, are scheduled to be fully constructed in this fiscal year. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just in regards to that, that comment, I think with the CMHC, they might give us money but they don't give us housing allotments. Who's got the authority to change the housing numbers per community? Is it the territorial government or CMHC for the funding that we're getting? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: To Mr. Martin, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Martin

MR. JIM MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. This additional hundred units that are being delivered, Housing NWT obviously did undertake a fair amount of review in terms of where these units would be appropriately allocated, and we did consider a number of factors, primarily the public housing waitlist, so those decisions certainly are made, you know, by Housing NWT, taking into consideration the input certainly from MLAs and the communities. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, so with the housing numbers, who is in charge of increasing housing numbers? Is it CMHC for the funding that we're getting? Because they're saying we're getting a lot of money, but I don't see no new houses. I seen a new house going to Tuk and then one gets pulled out of the system. We have so many young people in the communities now. We have -- for instance, there's a family back home and there's, like -- they all got -- they're old enough, and they all have a girlfriend or a boyfriend. They're all staying in -- they have one House with about 15 people, and it's sad to say. So what I'm asking for who is in charge of getting these hundred new units into the

communities? Who is in charge of putting the increase -- increasing the number of units? Say, for instance, Tuktoyaktuk has 176 houses allotted to the community. And if I get a new house in Tuk, they're going to take one out of the housing stock and put that new one in. Then the other one gets left behind. There's no increase. We're never going to see that growth that we try to talk about, because of CMHC. But now the question is, clear as day, I want an answer, who is in charge of increasing the housing stock in the communities? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I gather there unfortunately is not a clear as day answer and the reason is that it depends on the operational funding associated to the housing unit. Again, I don't strictly have that in my preparations from the perspective of providing a capital plan. I understand the frustration, and I understand the question does sound like it should have a simple answer. So what I'd suggest -- I can certainly turn it back -- there's five minutes -- to Mr. Martin to try to explain that now but I can also commit to providing in writing an answer as to how the determinations are made because it takes into account factors more than just by one single authority. CMHC is involved. I gather the LHOs may be involved as well as GNWT. So there's three different levels of authority and, again, different funding mechanisms. But, again, I'm happy to have maybe Mr. Martin try one more time, but I'd be prepared to make a commitment to provide something. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Martin.

MR. JIM MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, I believe the Minister outlined certainly the key messages for today, but we will certainly support with that written response. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. You know, the federal government likes to make these big grand announcements of funding that they're giving to the territory, to everywhere across our territory in regards to housing projects and other projects, but that still doesn't change the CMHC's housing allotment for a community. Until that changes, that's the biggest hurdle that we have to deal with in this government in regards to housing for the communities and the numbers. I could use another 20 houses in Paulatuk, another 20 in Ulu, same thing, 5 or 6 in Sachs maybe, and 20

in Tuk. We have no housing. Everything's run down. These retrofits -- I'm getting retrofits for Paulatuk. I got two -- Tuk is two. Major retrofit for Ulu is one. And the outlying communities are the worst hit in regards to housing. And then we're getting a big federal minister comes in, oh yeah, we're giving you \$64 million, but that don't mean nothing. The unit increase from CMHC -- until the federal government gets rid of CMHC and how they calculate their funds, that's when we're going to finally start getting some traction, start getting more housing. And that's what we have to push for as a territorial government. They say the LHO has requirements when they look off the housing list. Look off the housing list in Paulatuk and all the young families that are having kids, young adults having children now, and they have nowhere to go. They all got to go to Inuvik. But at the end of the day, I urge this -- like, our government, I know it's coming to an end for you guys but at the end of the day, on a go forward, the CMHC is the one that has to be changed. That's the problem. We're never going to have any increases. We're only going to get new units, and you're taking in and out of the housing stock. Our communities are hurting. We got no housing. People have to move to Inuvik to get into a unit. And you have no units in Inuvik too. But at the end of the day, on a go forward, when the Minister -- the new Minister, former Minister, whatever, goes forward, that's the thing that has to be changed is CMHC's got to be taken out of the picture in regards to increasing numbers into the communities because we're not 1960 or '70 now. And the housing numbers got to be brought up. That's just a comment.

And, like I -- for the communities that I represent, this is not enough. I got places that two years ago and you could almost -- it's just like jumping on a trampoline in some of the floors that we went in on. There's got to be -- the LHOs, they got to start stepping up in the communities in the ridings. And with the federal government want to come and give funds to our local governments. The biggest concern that I have is, just like here, how do we track them? So the tracking is with the council, the community leaders. They're the ones that have to track this. They're the ones that have to apply the pressure because we're sitting on money that's not being utilized, that's earmarked for housing. So we're failing. It's not so much my Minister's fault in regards to numbers, in regards to getting more houses, because it's CMHC's fault and the federal government's fault for doing what they're doing to her. And she's wearing it, you know. So I -- and I thank you for the work you're doing and I -- but, Madam Chair, that's just a big rant because this

is such an important issue for my riding. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you. I want to really bring this one up as well. I mean, it's a 2024-2025 Capital Estimates budgets. You know, for what we're looking at housing this year, I'm not sure where to start, but I already voiced my concerns in March about this issue of housing. You know, I guess as the Finance minister and the next government coming in, they're going to have some tough decisions ahead of them. Overall, you know, we got a budget of \$2.2 billion, we're \$1.6 billion in the hole with this fire season as it is; we're going to be reaching that in no time. You know, we got grants and contributions coming from the Government of Canada and more or less 75 cents on the dollar but yet, you know, we -- the communities in the Northwest Territories, the housing is still a number one issue no matter which community you look at. But to me, when I look at the housing corporation, you know, if I remember the last estimates, you know, I think the budget was -- or \$247 million not including the cost share of the finance of 72 or \$74 million, but overall, I mean, we get -- I could see numbers but then on the ground in the communities, I don't see housing. I don't see new construction. Yes, we got some money from CIRNAC, which is \$60 million over two years and what's not -- what's in here is -- and compared to the last budget I looked at, on the side note there were monies coming from CIRNAC. And I'm assuming that this is the same thing where that we're dealing with a housing crisis of \$60 million but yet the monies that are coming in are not addressing the housing crisis here in the Northwest Territories. I mean, we as a government are not doing enough.

You know, when I look at Nunavut, when you look at IRC, it's getting to the point now where our own Indigenous governments are reaching out to Ottawa and getting their own money directly because we got so much hurdles, barriers that we have to jump through with this government. And it's really frustrating now. And so going forward, you know, maybe it's time that we review the housing corporation. You know, maybe it's time we bring back the Jim Burke report and start talking about a constitution. We got constitutional settled claims here in the Northwest Territories and yet we need -- I think we need to start having those discussions, because whenever you guys come back, all these departments come in front of me, every time they come back they want more money. Every department, year after year

it seems like, that's the way it is. But we're still don't have any construction in our communities. Homeownership repairs we need. And we're not doing enough. So going forward, you know, the new government coming in are going to be faced with deficits. We're living beyond our means as a government. I mentioned that austerity is going to happen. It's concerning.

When I hear the people in the communities are really frustrated with this government, it's not on this side of the House they're frustrated. It's on that side of the House. I hear it firsthand from the leadership.

So, Madam Chairman, I just want to make this -- say this because I don't have questions for the Premier or the Minister or anybody. I'm just saying that, you know, here we are again approving another set of budget for this coming year, and I got small repairs here, and this is coming from CIRNAC. So this government's competing with Indigenous governments to get money for housing from CIRNAC. Is that our mandate? Yes, we signed a partnership agreement. That's not good enough. I think we're going backwards here. We got to start looking at building new relationships and partnership.

But anyway, I just want to say that because I'm tired here. I see these budgets. No problem. My colleague says ching ching, pass it, no problem. But the day's coming, in the next government. We really need to take a look at how we're going to coexist here in the Northwest Territories. 75 cents on the dollar comes from grants and contributions but yet we hide behind policies. Maybe it's time that we really review the whole government. That should be the mandate.

We talk about consensus government. Today I heard consensus government a few times here. I made notes here. When I see this and then I see that we don't go into the communities and engage with community government on what their needs are, you know, we need ambulances in the community and so on. We need a lot of stuff. But it's not -- my community is not on here. So when we talk about \$2.2 billion budget, I get next to half a percent of that budget. You know, shame on this government.

So, anyway, I just want to make those comments because as an MLA sitting here for a year and a half, I've been asking stuff for my community. It goes onto deaf ears. I was told that the train left. You want stuff for your community, put it on a suitcase and throw it on the train but the train's moving, it just bounces off. So anyway, we got big problems coming up. And we're broke. This is not a joke.

This fire here, we should learn from it. But I think going forward, I'm to the point now where I want to introduce a motion to call for an independent review of that fire. And we're going to look at how we're going to do it. We're going to talk about that next week. But we got to hold this government to account, and to me, it's not consensus government, not the way it's been working.

So Madam Chair, I just want to -- I sat here. I listened to everybody today. I've been watching, listening. And I'm a little bit frustrated because, again, here I am, I'm going to be asked to vote on this budget. And how could I vote on it if I get less than half a percent for my community? We got big problem with mental health in our community. Alcohol, drugs. Where are the RCMP? I asked, again, you know, where are they? You know, we buy a service but yet at the same time they only come out -- in our community, they just come out at certain times, drive around. That's it. So overall, you know, we got to figure a way out we could fix these problems we're having. Anyway, Madam Chair, I just want to say those comments. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to first reiterate a bit what my colleague for Kam Lake said regarding the way that this is all presented to me. Whenever I look at the housing budgets, I'm always wondering like well, where are the houses, you know. I keep hearing for four years we've built this, we've built that and all of this. So then I look at this that we have, and it's all this \$13 million is just retrofits and a bit of, like, some boiler stuff. Now that being said, I have since then heard the assistant deputy minister make the comment that the hundred units have already -- will be completed as of this year. So that makes me ask well, why are we not building more in the upcoming year? To me, it seems really strange that we would go an entire year without constructing any units or even starting on the construction of any units given that, you know, we are in such a major deficit to the point where, like, you know, my plans after this, if I'm not successful, is to run away and rent my house. So it's actually becoming quite lucrative now to become almost these little sort of mini landlords and such and live yourself in one room of your house and rent the rest of it out. So that being said, can the Minister or the department confirm that there will be no building of any units for the housing corp in 2024-2025? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I did just want to note there are -- the promise of 100 new units in the life of this Assembly will be realized by the end of the current fiscal year of 2023-2024. With respect to 2024-2025 -- sorry, and I actually was -- I'm looking at 2023-2024. Let me take that to Mr. Martin to detail. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. The proposed 2024-2025 capital plan at this time, the \$13.47 million, it does include a few components here. But it does include four public housing replacement projects, so that's just four units being constructed. But we did want to highlight that the current revised capital estimates of \$136 million for this year, you know, that does include about 70 percent of federal funding that has been received over the last couple of years to help support the multi unit delivery of our projects. And for 2024-2025, we have yet to receive, and hope to receive, additional federal funding to put towards additional builds in 2024-2025. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I think, again, this comes back to the point that my colleague was making that the communication out of this department is terrible. You know, there is -- the way things are presented to us, it's been impossible to figure out where things have actually been built and been constructed. I repeatedly have asked at times for updates for units in my own riding, and then to be surprised when an announcement is made with the federal government that, you know, that the Aspen Apartments is going to become public housing units, and I've had no update even though I've been asking for six months what was happening there.

So it's kind of frustrating to sit here, and we ask questions, and then the responses are coming back to us well, there's all this other stuff and sort of this don't you know about all of this because we've been sending you these things over the last four years. However, it just goes to show that there is no real attempt to ensure that people on this side of the House understand where things are going. And so if we have to go and tease out every single little thing from the department to figure out where things are going, what's being built, then this as an informational item and the communication from

the department has failed. I still sit here at the end of four years, and I'm on the committee that deals with housing, and I still could not tell you where units were built. I have been asking since, like, last year when people would be moving into the Nordic Arms, which I'm assuming is part of maybe either this major retrofit Yellowknife or whatever, but my constituent that was promised that she was going to move there has been strung along now for six or seven months on that, as her son is continuously still exposed to crack smoke at Norseman Apartments.

I do want to thank the department, and the Minister, for listening at least and installing better security options when I did come to them two years ago. But the issue I have here too is that we hear from this department saying that there is, you know, so many -- 300 units that are on M and I, and I know that's their acronym for things that are being retrofitted and fixed up, but I have to wonder how robust is their assessment for the units that are remaining. So yes, they tell us well, we've got 300 that we're working on but who's to say that another one of like a thousand of these 2,700 units are in dire need of repair and it's the department that's just choosing to not assess that? I hear constantly communications about things with mold and issues and all of our things. The department, when I ask them why there's a window boarded up next to their unit, can't answer. And to me, that's concerning because if you know even the basics of building science, you know that what happens in one unit affects the next unit. But this shows the mentality of the department, to only focus on their small pieces and to treat that in an infrastructure type manner and a fiscal manner instead of, like I said yesterday, acknowledging that they are a social department and that they need to be getting people housed. So I would like to ask where is the assessment of the remaining units that are not on their retrofit, or their I and M schedule, how far behind are they in looking at those units to ensure that they are habitable, and are they actually ever looking at the fact that they're liable for a lot of the health issues that people in our territory are experiencing because they have not fixed these units? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Do you have any questions for the department? Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, with respect to our assessment schedule, so there is an assessment schedule that is prepared year over year. I don't have the assessment schedule with us because that's not -- I mean, again, I -- and I appreciate the connection to the capital estimates planning process, but I don't

have the schedule that is for assessments for future years. I can certainly get my hands on it and provide it. And that may also then -- with that, we could probably speak to the rating and the risk assessment that goes in. So there is an assessment that is done -- it's put through a risk assessment process. That then allows for the decisions about which units are subject to retrofits and which ones wait for the next round of retrofits, so. And hopefully that will help to explain some of that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I appreciate the Minister's commitment. I would like to better understand the process through which the assessments are made, including any standard operating procedures that are given to assessors to use.

I guess the last thing that I feel the need to comment on is the conversation around the money that is going directly to Indigenous governments. And, you know, I, again, sat here and listened time and time again to this Cabinet talk about their great relationship with Indigenous governments but then when push comes to shove and it's time of actually sharing information, the Indigenous governments don't trust this department to share their information with them. So what does that tell you, really, about the actual work that's being done with the Indigenous governments? This is an area where nobody is disagreeing that it's important and it needs to be taken care of. It should be the one area where you think everybody would be on the same page. So I think it really speaks volumes to the distrust that Indigenous governments have for the housing corporation. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I did want to know -- I'm glad I have the chance, there was a working group, it actually does have a new name now, it's the Northwest Territories Housing Forum. And I'm not sure whether or not terms of reference can be shared. Obviously, we'd be only one seat at that table but let me make that inquiry. And perhaps that, again, also can demonstrate the level of commitment between all the parties at that forum and what they're attempting to do at that forum. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I do hope that there will be some transparency

with this group. I think that if there is a hesitancy to share and to allow MLAs to have a part in this, I think the Cabinet and Minister could be pointing back to the good work that's been done through the Forest Act and really a collaborative effort. And that's where we should be moving with all of our work between -- that we do in this House, is to have that triangle piece that we often hear about where it is actually meaningfully done, not where Cabinet sits as the go between between the two and filters the information back and forth. I think a fulsome conversation with all three groups would be worthwhile.

I just want to note that on my last comment is that this department, I think, really needs to get their communications under control, and I would suggest that they actually hire somebody that can facilitate these conversations, and not this person that we ended up with that was supposed to administer all these projects that was just one employee, again, situated in headquarters. They need to have people - elders, Indigenous leaders - in communities employed by them to be the facilitator and go-between between the housing clients who are traumatized and the LHOs and the LHAs because they are not operating in a trauma-informed way. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Are there any further questions or comments from committee? Seeing no further questions -- oh, Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Okay, I see here there's major retrofit, two units for public housing. There's two in Behchoko and one in Whati. And I said this morning too that, you know, in all the Northwest Territories, I know there's housing crisis and even in Behchoko alone, we have a housing crisis where I have -- there's a family -- there is a family, there's -- it's not just this family but there are other family, but this one has seven kids. Seven children, age ranging from 13 years old to one years old that are homeless in my community. And we have lots of housing that need retrofit too as well. There's some houses that have been boarded up for over ten years. And I just want to ask the Minister -- or, you know, the housing, I know she is the Finance minister, but what is the housing doing to try to eliminate homelessness in small communities? It's not just my communities. There are other communities as well. And we do have one homeless shelter and it's -- I mean, we do have -- it's -- we do need more houses to accommodate the homeless because this homeless shelter that we have, it's being used a lot by the communities and sometimes when it's full, what some of the -- we notice that

homeless population do is that they go to jail. They go to the RCMP local station so that they can have a safe place to sleep. I mean, this is, like, two retrofit and one in Whati. Whati also has the same problem as well. We do have a lot of family in that community that are waiting for housing. And for Tlicho region, with over 2,000 population -- I'm just saying over 2,000. Behchoko is a little bit over 2,000 and Whati is, like, close to 600 now since the road opened, all-season road. But we do need more housing. So I just wanted to know what is this government trying -- what is this government doing? Can they commit to build more houses to accommodate and to eliminate the homelessness? I know it was the Premier's portfolio before to -- you know, it was the housing issues -- it was the housing responsibility but now it got transferred to Premier's office. So I just wanted to ask the Minister what are they doing, are they going to be building more houses any time soon? This one is for 2024-2025, that it's going to be completed in both communities. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I have both the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 plans in front of me. The 2023-2024 still does stretch into the coming few months before the turnover of the fiscal year. There are five new public housing units going into Behchoko under the current fiscal year, and that is being done through the Tlicho Infrastructure Agreement. And then there were other additional major retrofits, both to Behchoko as well as to Whati, two different units -- two units going into Whati, again under the current fiscal year. Then we get into the present year and that's where it is retrofits, not new units but, again, I know that some of those units, as we detailed earlier, are currently vacant. I don't know if the vacancy rates are in the Behchoko and Whati units or elsewhere but that may well be.

More broadly speaking, though, Madam Chair, the question with respect to the homelessness strategy, that did go to EIA and to the Premier's office. Obviously, I think we're reflective -- as I think the Premier has said, reflective of the importance and placed upon that strategy and placed upon resolving and reaching a place where there can be -- a place where there's not functionally -- or that functionally that we past homelessness. So obviously that reflects the importance of it. It does need to continue to be implemented. It's only a few months old. You know, there's a lot in there with everything at the spectrum of housing from homelessness to transitional housing to folks who may be looking to move up. So I'm not in a position here at the

capital planning table to speak to the homelessness strategy but there's still a few days left to ask questions certainly to all my colleagues about the status of the homelessness strategy and the implementation of that strategy will take more than a few months. It will take a lot of time. And as you will all recall, we, in the course of our main estimates, actually were able to put money to that homelessness strategy so that it's more than just a plan. It is actually a plan with some dollars attached to it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Monfwi, did you have any follow-up questions?

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Yes, thank you. Yes, there's 165 units that's being retrofitted, and three in Tlicho region and with highest population of all the small -- or of the Indigenous communities. I mean, that is a shame because it's really sad that, you know, some of our homeless populations, when that warming shelter is at its capacity, that they walk over to the RCMP station and check themselves in. I mean, that's wrong. You know, like, I mean it is sad. It's really sad. I don't like that. So I just -- yeah, and I know that she did say that there is some -- this current -- or this past current fiscal year, but there were some houses that were supposed to be -- there were some houses -- new houses that were allocated in Behchoko and in Whati as well, but we haven't seen any of those houses. When are those houses going to be in the communities for families to move in because there are -- like, with this family of seven kids, there are some others with children that are still waiting. And Minister has my email of all those that I submitted within the last two/three weeks that families are waiting for housing. And winter is coming, and we have nothing. And that is a shame that, you know, that we're not doing enough. And there are some units that housing has, 14 units, that Tlicho would like to take over so they can help with the homelessness too. And that -- nobody -- they're not even going -- they don't want to transfer those units to Tlicho government as well. So it would have -- it would have helped with the homelessness issues too. Now we're -- you know, like, I mean, we have no housing. We have lots of housing that are boarded up, that's been boarded up some of them for over ten years. And I don't know why it's still there if they're not going to fix -- if they're not going to fix it, give it away. And that's what we been saying for quite some time. And it's -- the housing is slow at giving those units away to some people. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further comments? Questions? Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess as I sit here and I listen to, you know, the comments and the answers from the Minister is that, you know, there's no doubt that -- you know, there's no doubt that we need housing. And it seems like the only game in town is the housing corporation and I think that's -- you know, it's a good approach but I think we have to expand that, and we -- you know, we talk about it -- you know, we talk about Indigenous governments. I don't see them in front of us to tell me personally what they're doing to increase housing stock. You know, we've got to tie housing into economic development. When we're looking at -- when we're looking at providing land and resources to companies -- or maybe part of the component should be providing housing to communities, to communities where they're getting workers from. You know, those are the -- we've got to look outside the box and find other ways to do it.

The other thing we've got to do is jobs. You know, we've got to be able to -- if we can provide jobs to people, that's another way to do it. We can -- you know, we can assist people and make it -- you know, buying their own homes. I don't really care how people get their homes. We just need them to get it, and we have to look outside the box. I don't -- you know what, I understand housing has a role to play here and, you know, we have -- you know, and they have HELP units that are -- that go sit empty for -- you know, for months or years. We realize that. Our utilization rate for public housing units should be near a 100 percent all the time. If we're doing retrofits, we should be doing them quickly. And we should be using local and northern contractors to do it. But those are the type of things we have to do. But, again, this is -- you know, we're caught up in bureaucracy and government is slow. We know that. So we've got to find other ways to do it. You know, I realize government has, you know, to do something. And then we've got the federal government on the other hand. You know, we're counting on them to provide us the money. You know, that's where the money comes from at the end of the day. So we've got to -- you know, we've got to kind of look at everything and we -- it's always the same story, you know, housing is not doing this, or housing is -- you know, houses are sitting empty and all this. We've been preaching that for four years and other guys been -- other people have been preaching that before that. So, you know, I'm kind of getting tired of it, and we have to do something different. And this next government

has to do it. We're not going to do it in this next week, I tell you that. So somebody has to do it, and whoever is in here for the next government, I hope that they take a look at other approaches because that's what it's going to take. It's not going to take just this government doing it.

You know, to me, you know, if it's looked after in the communities -- you know, I feel the Indigenous governments could probably build houses and I know they build houses and provide housing a lot faster than we can do it sometimes. So, you know, it's just a comment that I want to make because we're not going to -- we're not going to solve this problem. We're not going to build a house for every person in the Northwest Territories even though we'd like to. You know, some people are going to have to buy their own. You know, maybe we can get, like I said, resource companies, you know, when they come in here and extract resources to help buy houses. And the federal government will provide us money so we can provide houses. But everybody has to do their part and, you know -- and that's the way -- at least that's the way I see it, so. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Seeing that there are no other Members who I have on my list, I remind the committee that the estimates for Housing Northwest Territories are included in the capital estimates as information item only. The committee will not be voting on the activity total. Seeing no further questions, please return to the Housing Northwest Territories summary on page 75. Are there any further questions or comments from committee? Seeing no further questions.

Does committee agree that consideration of Housing Northwest Territories is now complete?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Sergeant-at-arms, you can escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

Does committee agree that you've concluded consideration of Tabled Document 973-19(2), 2024-2025 Capital Estimates?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 469-19(2):
TABLED DOCUMENT 973-19(2): 2024-2025
CAPITAL ESTIMATES – DEFERRAL OF
ESTIMATES,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Madam Chair, I move that this committee defer further consideration of Tabled Document 973-19(2), 2024-2025 Capital Estimates, at this time. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Thank you, committee, and thank you, Minister. We're going to take a ten-minute break, and then we are going to come back because we have our supplementary appropriations. Yes, we're going to take a ten-minute break, and then we've got -- you guys all want to talk on it? Then we'll be here longer. Unless you want to do a team talk and have one team talker.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Calling Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we've agreed to consider Tabled Document 974-19(2), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2023-2024. Does the Minister of Finance have any opening remarks?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you. Yes, I do, Madam Chair. I am here to present Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2023-2024. These supplementary estimates propose a total increase of \$120 million to the short-term borrowing authorization limit. The primary purpose of this increase is to address and respond to the unforeseen emergency costs as a result of wildfire activity this year.

That concludes my opening remarks. I am happy to answer questions, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Do you wish to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witness to the Chamber.

Would the Minister please introduce her witnesses.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So on my left, deputy minister of

finance Bill MacKay and, on my right, Julie Mujcin is the comptroller general.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Welcome. Members, can we forego general comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Does the committee agree to proceed to the detail contained in the tabled document?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, we will begin on page 2 with the Department of Finance.

Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2023-2024, Department of Finance, revised borrowing authorization, \$120 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Committee, do you agree that you have concluded consideration of Tabled Document 974-19(2)? Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, so I'm wondering if the Minister can explain in greater detail why we have a need for -- like, this is different than our normal sups that we get. Normally when we get a sup, it's to pay for something. And this one here, it expands our -- increases our borrowing limit, and so I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to, in more detail for the public, what that is, why it's needed, and then I'll have more questions after that, please, as a start. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So, Madam Chair, when the main estimates are tabled, the focus of the attention generally is predominantly on the ability or the authority to spend the money that we have in that budget. But another item that's in there, and it certainly does get some attention although perhaps not quite as much, is the sheet that includes the authority to borrow. And it's that number now that we're looking to have amended by way of this supplementary appropriation.

So you have the authority to spend, which is the department by department budget lines that we all look at and that are -- as you typically see as a supplementary appropriation. If a department, for example ECC, needs additional money to support their wildfire fighting efforts, that goes in as their ability or authority to spend.

However, in order for the government to actually spend money, they have to have the cash on hand. The timing on when we have cash on hand depends on a few things.

It depends, for example, on the timing of receiving taxation revenues and, in particular, the timing of receiving revenues from the federal government, which I think most folks are aware that is the dominant amount of our budget in revenues does come from one form or another of federal transfer. We don't necessarily get those as one lump sum. We get the territorial formula of financing as a lump sum, but the rest does come in over the course of the year at different times. And at present, because of the significant outlay of additional cash over the course of this summer, significantly because of the wildfires but certainly not exclusively, there's been -- the low water levels have also resulted in a higher expenditures, all of those things combined put us into a situation where we are concerned that, particularly with an election and the scheduling changes around when the Assembly's sitting, we were expecting that there's a reasonable possibility of running into a state where the government won't be able to pay with cash without increasing the short-term borrowing. So the short-term borrowing just gives that ability of flexibility to increase the amount of cash available to us if needed. And let me stop there so that the clock doesn't run down further. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Yeah, thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, and I know that this has been a very difficult Assembly and, as such, that's reflected, I suppose, in the requests for increases to the borrowing limit. And so in the life of this Assembly, this is our third now request for increases to the borrowing limit, and I'm wondering what is this government going to do in order for us to see, or for the next Assembly to see, more money in surpluses and to be able to kind of be a little bit more prepared for additional dollars in emergencies because we know that we're going to see more in the years to come. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So let me first start with respect to the idea of there being -- about the borrowing limit, because that is a term that generally is associated to the federally-imposed borrowing limit of \$1.8 billion. This is different. So we're not seeking any change to the

federally-imposed borrowing limit and, in fact, what we did when we changed the Fiscal Responsibility Policy is rather than kind of -- you would see over the course of many years, and long before this current government, you know, the Assembly would see sort of creep up towards whatever that federally-imposed borrowing limit might be and then see the federally-imposed limit go up. With the current -- or the most recent changes to the FRP, what we've imposed is our own internal limit to say that if we hit that line that we will at that point -- you know, we are obligating ourselves to take steps to engage the federal government and discuss where we're at in that borrowing limit. We are not at that internal line. We are coming up to that line, but we are not at the line. We've kept ourselves under it intentionally. We're hoping, again, to not even need to borrow what is here, but we certainly want to not be in a position of having to come back at the very beginning of the 20th Assembly with a group of new Members and to have to go through this process. We want to have this cushion now to be able to get through to the next properly constituted Assembly and sitting of that Assembly.

Now, the second part of the question being around, you know, what are we doing longer term in the fiscal update, Madam Chair.

I spoke to the medium-term outlook. The medium-term outlook, of course, is -- you know, as we said, does still provide us stability and does bring us back to a point where we actually create further room between our total debt and the borrowing limit. The current year was particularly significant. Last year, there were also some fairly significant cash outlays because of the summer wildfire and floods. This year was just particularly extraordinary. So, you know, again, I can't predict in the future what next summer might be. Certainly hopeful that it will not be anywhere on the scale of present. And if that's the case, then we are projecting ongoing operating surpluses and then not requiring any further adjustments to the borrowing plan beyond what would be in the main estimates of next year. The question is whether and when to pay down total debt, and if that's something that the Government of the Northwest Territories does want to prioritize is probably a discussion for the 20th Assembly at this point. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. The Minister spoke briefly to conversations with the federal government, and I'm wondering if some conversations with the federal government are occurring and hopefully

gaining some success in giving us some advanced payments on some of the dollars that we've spent that they know that they're going to be reimbursing us down the road. I know that it sometimes takes years for those payments to catch up. And are these conversations progressing, and would those dollars actually help this situation that we find ourselves in now so that our purse strings aren't quite so tight? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. First, apologies to the translators. I think I'm speaking quickly.

Yes, so the short answer is most definitely there have been conversations with the federal government, including from the Premier's office but also from other Ministers' offices, including in particular ECC as our EMO lead, and their counterpart at public safety. The federal government is aware of the challenges created by this huge outlay of cash without an advance on what will otherwise be at least some amount of funding coming from the federal government to help offset those costs. The trick is I don't know when -- and although the response has been positive and, really, the federal government invited us to put in a request for an advance. So that, I would suggest, indicates that they are well aware that we need it and that we need it to happen quickly.

For 2022's flood season, we received a 50 percent advance, but we only got it in this fiscal year. So, again, you know, we are quite hopeful right now and, you know, optimistic that we will see an advance on the current wildfire season in this fiscal year, but I would be remiss in this role to say that's good enough and we'll see what happens. So that is why we are before the Assembly saying that the borrowing authorization, that's what gives us the appropriate cushion and legal authority to borrow short term if we need so that we can pay vendors and pay staff and pay our bills in cash. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to without the approval of the supplementary appropriation and the increase to short-term borrowing limit will the GNWT be in compliance with the FAA? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Well, it would depend. And it would depend, again, if -- I mean, and, really, there are other steps that we could take to ensure that we remain in compliance. If the advance from the federal government were to come in, if other anticipated transfer amounts come in, and that offsets, you know, the outlays of cash that are going out by bringing in more, then we may not find ourselves in as difficult a position. Right now, that's -- our projection is that over the course of this fall, we will need something extra and if we didn't have that something extra then, yes, we wind up -- if we take on more borrowing not authorized by the Appropriations Act, then that puts out of compliance.

To avoid going out of compliance, we could simply stop spending, which means putting holds on our payments and, you know, or other project delays, which is also not a situation that we want to find ourselves in. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Kam Lake. Short question.

MS. CLEVELAND: A short question. Would the approval of this create room to pay for additional resident and business supports for people who are evacuated from the territory? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: No, Madam Chair, this is not new money to spend. This is the ability and the authority to borrow money to pay the bills that we already have. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Are there any further questions?

Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2023-2024, Department of Finance revised borrowing authorization, \$120 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Do you agree that you have concluded consideration of Tabled Document 974-19(2), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2023-2024? Ms. Cleveland.

COMMITTEE MOTION 470-19(2):
TABLED DOCUMENT 974-19(2):
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES), NO. 3,
2023-2024 – DEFERRAL OF ESTIMATES,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: No, thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I move that committee defer further consideration of Tabled Document 974-19(2), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2023-2024, at this time. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried. Consideration of Tabled Document 974-19(2) is deferred.

---Carried

Thank you, committee. Thank you, Minister. Thank you, witnesses. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

Committee, we've agreed to consider Committee Report 61-19(2), Standing Committee on Social Development Report on the Review of Bill 81, An Act to Amend the Education Act, No. 2. I will go to the chair of Standing Committee on Social Development for any opening comments. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the Standing Committee on Social Development has advocated for improvements to education in the Northwest Territories over the life of the Assembly. While Bill 81 represents just phase 1 of the department's proposed improvements to education, which focus on operational and administrative amendments, the committee, along with overwhelming public concurrence, was disappointed in the phased approach. The phased approach lacked a thorough engagement process in which to inform meaningful change to address the uneven and poor state of education in the territory.

The Minister did provide a commitment that phase 2 of the Education Act amendments will include robust engagement and result in substantive amendments to the act aimed at improving educational outcomes of Northwest Territories students.

While Bill 81 is very limited and technical in nature, because it proposes changes to education, the committee took on the task to review the bill very seriously. Through the engagement process, the committee received six written submissions and met with residents and stakeholders from Inuvik, Norman Wells, Deline, Colville Lake, and Yellowknife. The committee took the concerns received in the engagement process and moved amendments

to the bill to address these issues. The committee received ministerial concurrence to amend Bill 81 with regards to student transportation, education oversight committee and parental consent, and student education program modifications.

Based on the breadth of grave concerns the committee heard from stakeholders in the engagement process, the committee provides recommendations to the government to inform phase 2 of the amendments to the Education Act expected in the 20th Assembly.

Recommendations for phase 2 amendments of the Education Act include improvements to the approach and engagement process, absenteeism, wraparound services, and support for students with disabilities.

The committee expresses gratitude to everyone who met in person with the committee and provided their thoughts in writing. The committee acknowledges the disparities in education outcomes in small communities and lived experience of small community residents. The committee acknowledges many stakeholders shared very personal and even shocking experiences as a result of gaps in the education system. The committee would also like to recognize this information was shared in an effort to address the desperate need for improvements to the education system in the Northwest Territories. Committee would like to thank all stakeholders for their contributions.

Madam Chair, individual Members may have additional comments at this time. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. I will now open the floor to general comments on the committee report. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have to say that this bill, and our taking it on the road, was probably one of the more impactful ones that I have had in the last while, or has struck me in the last while, was that just how deeply and passionate the people in the territory are about the education system and really where the state of it is when you look outside of Yellowknife. I didn't expect to hear the stories that I heard I guess, really. And I do want to -- like I my colleague said, express my thank you to those that shared with us. A lot of it, and you know yourself, Madam Chair, as being part of that committee, there were a lot of really tragic stories. You know, I never thought about the fact that somebody who was upgrading and then going off to an education in the south would become so demoralized upon not being able to keep up with their colleagues that they would then turn to self-harm. And I

really wanted to thank the mother that shared that story with us. It was very painful. But it really impacted me in seeing the bigger picture of how these failures in our education system is impacting the youth in every way. Even the ones that have done what they're supposed to do and have made it through and have upgraded and have gone on only to find out that they don't meet the criteria and they don't have the same qualifications as the rest of Canada. And I can't imagine what that does to someone's psyche and their mental health when, you know, they've been this crowning jewel of their community and only to then come back and feel like a failure.

You know, I was really impressed upon me doing this was as we toured schools and such -- I had already mentioned the state of the school in Deline, that was really impactful. But I think the biggest thing was the disappointment from members of the public that this wasn't the be all/end all opening of the Education Act that was going to be, you know, the driver for the mandate item to improve educational outcomes.

I understand why it was done this way and that there were certain things that administratively needed to be done but, in retrospect, I think that it felt then very much -- very dismissive in a sense to community members that they were being told that they were yet going to have to wait even further.

When this Assembly first got in, it spoke a lot about education and about the children and the youth, and that seems to really have gone by the by. And I get that we've had, you know, crises after crises and environmental issues and pandemics and such, but it's not an excuse to not do things in the right manner. And so I'm glad that there was a good back and forth with the department. We heard a lot of concern around the transportation and that was not carried forward, and I appreciate that that was, you know, a compromise, and I think we worked well with the department in this regard on this bill. But I felt just the disappointment of the people in what this was.

And I guess just to not belabour that point any further, one piece that I think is really key that needs to be taken forward into the next Assembly is that the Indigenous governments that have their self-government already figured out, their next plan is to take on their Education Acts. So as we're moving this legislation forward and we embark on phase 2, it really needs to be done in that collaborative manner so that we're not setting up a new system that then contradicts whatever the community of Deline wants to do for themselves or what the Tlicho may want to do with their Education Act.

And I'm excited for that. I actually -- it was sort of the thing about it all that I was like, you know what, let's let the Indigenous people do this, let's let them take it on and take care of the children because it's not working the way it is right now.

So just some of my rambling thoughts on our bill. But I do want to also say thank you very much to the communities that welcomed us in. It really was a pretty fabulous trip, and they were very welcoming, and we had some amazing discussions with people there. So thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Are there any further comments on the committee report? Seeing none. Member for Kam Lake -- oh, Mr. Bonnetrouge.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Chair. Yeah, I was on the committee that travelled with social development on this Education Act. Although it was specific to several items that would give some leverage to the department in accessing school records from the communities, we did hear, as my colleague from -- the MLA for the Great Slave spoke passionately about here, she pretty much captured everything that was out there. But there was other ones that I heard from the Beau-Del, you know, education council members up there that they're saying well, all these changes we're looking at making on this first round, you know, how is that going to improve the education of the students? And I was really, you know, taken aback by that because that was -- that's been my, you know, concern since the start of the 19th Assembly when I took on education as a campaign issue from all the concerns I've been hearing from even my community, which is quite surprising. And then finding out a little bit here and there that, you know, even the attendance records were being fudged, you know, they were being overbloomed compared to what was actually in the school. So there is -- you know, and the grade levels as mentioned before, that was very dismal. It's surprising that I'm just hearing -- hearing like oh, the grade 12 graduates, they only have grade 8 or less as an actual grade level. And I hope the Minister appreciates why I've been after, you know, what were the actual grade levels in our schools because it becomes important when you have to go out into the world and we don't have our students getting grade 12. And then, you know, I've been saying that before, too, even for the university that NWT is contemplating is that our people are not going to be walking those halls. You know, I really believe that there are, you know, very good educated students out there who we just need to push them a little bit more.

We need to challenge, you know, challenge them at the community levels. We grew up; I think everybody -- everything was all right, you know. My aunts and my uncles, they were Dene. They spoke the language. They didn't have the education, but I turned out okay. That's because it was the fundamentals of the three Rs - reading, writing, arithmetic. That's what I see is kind of lacking in the schools. We don't know what's really happening in the schools either because nobody is having meetings with the community. It was just specific to parents, they get little notes. There's no community meetings, you know, and nobody knows what's going on in the school.

I know some of the problems that I've been hearing from parents, you know -- I'm not against the Dene Immersion Program. I know that the Dene are really concerned that there will be a total loss of language. When I was a leader in 2000-2001 for my community, there was a group of people tasked with putting up a language wheel where it showed, you know, the fluent speakers and it goes out and out and that. It really showed that we were losing our language. And with the Dene Immersion Program, I realize it creates employment. That's what it was doing. It created employment. And when we went to school concerts it was just, you know, glorious to see that our students were singing in the Dene Zachtie language. But I'm wondering if there's a different way we could approach it because there's concern that our students weren't learning English or the alphabet in English until grade 4. That's what I was told, grade 4. They didn't know how to read the alphabet. They didn't know how to write the alphabet. That's what I was told. And that became a concern to me because I always said at graduation ceremonies, I always said what the elders -- I still remember what they said. You know, we want good education for our children so they can become doctors, lawyers, engineers, teachers and such. That speaks about what we expect from the education system. And from what I see in the small communities, we're not even going to get there. We've lost it.

So everybody that's out there in the district education authorities or councils, the DDECs, the divisional educational councils, chiefs, mayors, Metis presidents, we all have to start talking about the education in the NWT and specifically in our small communities because we've lost -- like, in my community, we've lost a lot of really good southern teachers that were gung-ho about teaching our children. They had the drive but after social passing, all I've been hearing is, you know, out -- it's out there. Teachers are saying well, I don't need to teach them this because they're going to pass

anyways. So that complacency is hurting us from the vision of what our elders had been saying, that message that I still preach at graduation ceremonies.

But education is a pretty big topic because everybody says you need the education to get a job. We know there's always other avenues but, you know, to our technical schools you can go to work on equipment and everything else that way, nursing, whatever. But as I've been saying, you know, if we know the student's not going to have grade 12 level when they graduate, at least we should be helping them so that they can pass a trades entrance exam. That's almost like a cop out still.

And we don't have enough teachers in our school systems in the small communities. We've got two, three, four grades for one teacher. And perhaps we don't have enough students. Now that comes another problem.

So everything that I'm saying here, you know, it really warrants almost like a royal commission on Indigenous education in the small communities. In the next Assembly, I really would encourage them to really consider that. We need to go to every community, not cop out and say oh, regional centre and fly them there. Go to every community so you can even see their living standards and what is happening in their community. You really have to understand what's going on here with education. And we need the education department to be a lead in a lot of areas for us as I've been, you know, jumping all over the department because they weren't doing their job I'm saying. Maybe they were doing their job but they just weren't doing it the right way or something. We weren't focused in the area. Because I don't know, I see education, like it could be having a major shift is what I'm kind of seeing. I thought I would mention that. Mahsi for listening.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Do any other Members have any comments on the committee report? Thank you. Member for Montwi.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I know that this one, it's phase 1 and phase 2, but phase 1 was an important part of this legislation. Phase 1 is the one that, you know, that included to work with the Indigenous government. And I still feel that this Minister missed the opportunity of working with the Indigenous government to modernize the Education Act. This was a step for us, for especially with the Indigenous government and this would have been a good start to the reconciliation. And they missed that. They missed that opportunity. And that is why a lot of Indigenous government, they were

opposed with the phase 1. Phase 2. I mean, phase 2 is also important, it's good, but that's after the fact. It was the phase 1. For the first time, the Indigenous government would have been part of working on the education system for their people. But no, we were left out. So I still feel that they missed the opportunity because, you know, just like what my colleague said over there, Ron and Caitlin and Katrina, talking about the education system, you know, on the tour and a lot of people did say that, you know. And I don't mean to discredit anyone. I don't mean to discredit the Indigenous teachers, language teachers; they are doing their best. But we are lacking a lot of resources in small communities. And we even have some schools that are still teaching multi grade. I mean, that's -- that's not right because there lots of kids are falling through the crack. You know, they're not getting the proper education. When a teacher is focusing on grade 1 and 2, like, and 3, and only have one support sometimes, they don't have the support, so the teacher is teaching all grades in one class. Those kinds of things have to stop. And we don't even have access to speech and language pathologists in a lot of small communities.

This is one of the things that we're -- the department can come in, wait and fix if later. It's too later for many by then because you can't do nothing. There's -- that's where lots of -- a lot of young kids, we noticed that they quit because they can't function. They miss out on lots of things. So this is where I think -- that's why I said that, you know, this was -- phase 1 was the one that -- we could have made lot of the mistakes that were made in the past right through this in phase 1. Phase 2 is okay. That's after, like I said. But I think that -- it's just more program and more resources is needed in small communities so that our young people can catch up so we can have -- we all want a lot of our youth to be educated in two languages, you know, and we all want our kids to become doctors, lawyers, astronauts, all those high level professionals that in other regions take advantage of. We can't take advantage of any of those things because we're still lacking. And I know that today is the Orange Shirt Day, and I know that a lot of -- I heard lot of comment made before that education starts from the house, from our home. But how can it -- how can that be when a lot of these young -- these parents did not know how to parent and they just -- and it goes to the next generation, and that's why we have 98 percent of children in child welfare systems. So this is where I think we could have made all those -- the mistakes that were made from the beginning, we could have fixed it.

And I don't blame -- I don't blame any of those Indigenous government that wants to take over the education program because they don't want their next generation to go through what our past generation, us, we went through. We don't want that. And we want our kids to function at that level. And it's just -- yes, larger regional centre do have the advantage and we don't. And even us in Tlicho region, where just right next door we're still being denied a lot of programs and services and we have to come to Yellowknife to access those. Even for speech and language, some of those parents they have to come here. And for small communities in Sahtu, you know, like, they have to come here or Inuvik to access those programs. And it's just really, really frustrating, and this is where -- like, what I would like to see for the next government is that more programs and services should be going out to the small communities and start focusing on the little kids. We still have hope, we can still do it; it's just that we need more resources. And let's not focus too much on larger regional centre because we have the same rights as anybody else. Our kids have the same rights as anybody else. And this is very shameful for me even to talk about it, to say these things. It's really shameful. And it shouldn't be like that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions for the social development report? Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: I just want to thank my colleagues for going out to the communities and hearing all the concerns that we do have and, like, with the social passing has to stop. We have to put more emphasis into our children and our youth that are coming up and giving them a chance to succeed in life instead of putting up roadblocks and barriers. I think that the social passing and with the new curriculum coming in, I really hope that we could really get in front of it and start working with the communities and all of the local community governments and the -- like, with us it's the Beaufort Delta Education Council. And, like, I do have communities in my riding that have one teacher, two teachers that, you know, it's tough on them, extra work, and a lot less students. But at the end of the day, you want to give all that student all the tools to succeed in life. I think what we have to really realize here that all the problems and issues we have right now is because of not being our children educated. And right now, from the youth, the kids from 30 down, are having a tough time. They're really having a tough time because of the drugs, the alcohol, that's all happening, and they're having -- there's no -- and the biggest part of that is because of the education, and they don't think they could do it. But once you apply

yourself and put a hundred percent effort in what you're doing, anybody could do whatever they want. But just a matter of encouraging them. And I just wonder, yeah, for the next government and that going forward, I think we have to put more emphasis on -- like, everybody, like it's so easy for us to say oh yeah, our youth are our future. But there's nothing backing that up. We have to back it up. We have to make a difference now. And all the problems that we're having with the housing and all these problems that we're having in this Assembly with, you know, justice, health care, it's all going to start pulling back. It's not going to be so bad once everybody's educated. And like I said, I'm going to stop here but social passing has to stop in the communities and across our territory because it's just going to alleviate the pressure as us as legislators in this Assembly on the go forward. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Nunakput. I will now turn -- Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I also want to make a couple comments. We got to keep remembering that education is a treaty right. Based on the treaties that was made in 1900, and Treaty 8, my great great grandfather's the one that signed the treaty in Fort Resolution. And Treaty 8 -- Treaty 11 was made in 1921 up and down the valley. And when the treaty was made, it was made with the Crown. And the Government of Canada was supposed to uphold those treaties. That's why we got a Governor General, and here we have a Commissioner of the Northwest Territories. When we do an oath to office here, it says that we're supposed to recognize and respect the treaties that are made. And what's going on now is that the way the Government of Canada is managing how they're going to deal with Aboriginal people here in Canada are done so through land claims and self-government agreements. And not everybody signed onto the agreements as well; there's still ongoing agreements that are being negotiated. But right now as it is, the Government of Canada has agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories that was created in 1967. And a lot of the Aboriginal people still don't recognize this government as their government. It's still recognized as a territorial council, Territorial Act under Indian and Northern Affairs.

The thing is that what's happening now is that we have -- now that we got some settled claims, a lot of these governments are now -- are really frustrated because they want to enhance the education at the community level, build new schools -- I've been advocating to get a new

school in Dettah. And the dates on those schools that I seen in some of the material I was reading before are saying that that school is probably 1987 or even '88. But that's not right. You know, it goes back to probably even earlier, to 1978, when they were trailers. And, again, you know, it's getting to the point now where the Indigenous governments are actually wanting to do a letter to the Governor General themselves and say hey look, we need a new school. We can't continue to go after the territorial government for a school because they're not delivering, and they're not honouring and respecting those treaties but yet 75 cents on the dollar is grants and contributions that comes from the Government of Canada.

So I think it's something that we really need to take a look at as a government, is that, you know, we got to start working -- start working together, start building relationships, and we need to start building trust. But a part of this committee, we got a letter from the N'dilo DEA expressing their issues and concerns. There's a lot of DEAs up and down the Valley but we all have to fall under the Education Act. But that Act also is competing with our treaties, and that needs to be recognized and -- because it's a -- our treaties are in the Canadian Constitution on section 35 (1) and (2). And the Territorial Council is -- you know, they've -- basically, in theory maybe we're agents of the Government of Canada. We're, in theory, meaning the Crown, we're doing the Crown work but we're not upholding those treaties.

So I guess what I'm trying to say is that it's getting to the point now where -- and I mentioned earlier that the Indigenous governments are now -- are concluding their claims. Some are not there yet. But they're really frustrated because, you know, they want to go directly to Canada now and start getting that money that they give to the territorial government to be diverted to them so they could provide their own education, maybe create their own Education Act, etcetera.

But anyway, Madam Chair, I just want to make a note of this because I want to continue to emphasize that education is a treaty right. And I want to make sure that this government continues to respect that because we have an oath. It's in the Canadian Constitution. We can't change it; it's there. And going forward, we need to think about doing business different now. And that's why I'm -- sometimes I wonder now maybe we need to start having those discussions about how we're going to move forward and coexist down the line.

Whenever I sit here and I see committees come in front of this desk here and asking for all these

monies for these departments, it's really frustrating because when I sit here and I look at it, no problem but yet whenever the communities want something, it's different. So I just want to just make a note of that because to me, again, I want to emphasize we do have a treaty. It's alive and well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 471-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 61-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BILL 81: AN
ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION ACT,
NO. 2 – ENGAGEMENT PROCESS,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment create a stakeholder plan that prioritizes meaningful engagement and face-to-face meetings with Indigenous governments, youths, students, community members, and elders. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to reemphasize how important this one is. I was really struck by how invested all the community members were that came about having a say in the curriculum and how things move forward and how the schools are operating within their communities. So I thought this was a great motion for us to put forward. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 472-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 61-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BILL 81: AN
ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION ACT,
NO. 2 – ABSENTEEISM,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Madam Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment draft aspirational legislation for its next iteration of the Education Act that takes a holistic, trauma-informed, and culturally-responsive approach to education that is accountable to all NWT communities, its residents and, most of all, its youth. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Madam Chair, I think it would be very remiss if we didn't talk with this motion about the incidences that we have seen over the last while in some of our schools, which includes some pretty disturbing video footage that was shot in the community of Fort Simpson. I did not see anything in that video that showed a trauma-informed or culturally-appropriate approach.

And giving -- in watching that video, it was very disturbing to see that there was comments being made, and in contact with the family afterwards, they told me that their child no longer wants to go to school and very much spoke to me about the legacy of the residential schools and how this had invoked for the family a lot of -- a history of trauma. I think this has been a conversation that us on social development and AOC as a whole has had throughout the entire time on the Assembly, was this trauma-informed approach. As I deal with other departments that deal with marginalized people in the territory, I time and again see that this is not happening. A case in point was the income assistance letters that went out and slid under doors threatening everybody that their rent was going from \$80 up to \$1,600 because they hadn't filed income tax. So this government has a really long way to go in being trauma-informed and actually carrying that out in their work instead of just speaking to it and paying lip service to it. So I think that this is a very important motion, and I hope that everybody will support it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 473-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 61-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BILL 81: AN
ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION ACT,
NO. 2 – ABSENTEEISM,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment work with education bodies and schools to promote school attendance by building on community strengths and parental involvement.

Madam Chair, if I can speak to this one briefly. When we were visiting communities, attendance was something that came up quite frequently. And what we were met with was a lot of people from a place of wanting to positively participate as a community and as a parent group in finding solutions along with the department and supporting one another in order to increase student attendance. And so I think this is one where there's a lot of desire to use creativity to find different ways to get students back into schools and keep them there. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Next time wait until after the motion is called, and then you can make your statement. No, I won't want make you repeat yourself.

The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 474-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 61-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BILL 81: AN
ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION ACT,
NO. 2 – WRAP-AROUND SERVICES,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment build a northern-specific model of coordinated wraparound services for NWT schools. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 475-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 61-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BILL 81: AN
ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION ACT,
NO. 2 – SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that this committee recommends the Department of Education, Culture and Employment:

- a) Increase funding and expand professional development opportunities for staff to best support students with disabilities;
- b) Expand the suite of programs and services available to students with disabilities in their home communities; and
- c) Improve data collection as it relates to students with disabilities.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 476-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 61-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BILL 81: AN
ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION ACT,
NO. 2 –TERRITORIAL-BASED SUPPORT
TEAM,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I move that this committee recommends the Department of Education, Culture and Employment review the

territorial-based support team function to ensure teachers and students receive the support they need in a way that meets the community's needs and establish outcome-focused measures to determine if the team is achieving its goals. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Thank you, committee. Do you agree that you've concluded consideration of Committee Report 61-19(2)?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. We've concluded consideration of Committee Report 61-19(2), Standing Committee on Social Development Report on the Review of Bill 81: An Act to Amend the Education Act, No. 2.

BILL 81:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION ACT,
NO. 2

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm here today to present Bill 81, An Act to Amend the Education Act, No. 2.

Bill 81 represents the first phase of amendments that make operational and technical improvements necessary to improve the education system. A second phase will continue beyond the 19th Assembly to allow for more in-depth discussions with Indigenous governments, education bodies and the public on the future of education governance in the Northwest Territories.

This bill seeks to amend the Education Act to recognize the vital role Indigenous peoples and Indigenous governments have in education; eliminate confusion about roles and responsibilities of the Minister and education bodies; protect parental involvement in decisions around student grade placement and education program modifications; and support information sharing and accountability. These amendments also help to address the findings and recommendations of internal evaluations and reports of the Office of the Auditor General of Canada.

Bill 81 was informed by the extensive public engagement that occurred in 2021, as well as detailed engagement sessions with education bodies throughout the development the bill.

I wish to thank standing committee for its thoughtful review and collaboration in helping to strengthen this bill through their motions to amend. I wasn't quite sure we'd get here, but here we are, so thank you to standing committee. This concludes my opening remarks. I'd be pleased to answer any questions that Members may have. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Yes, I would.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witness into the Chamber.

Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses for the record?

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. To my left, I have John MacDonald, the deputy minister of Education, Culture and Employment. And on my right, Laura Jeffrey, legislative counsel with legislation division and the Department of Justice.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Welcome. I will now turn to the chair of Standing Committee on Social Development, the committee that reviewed the bill for any opening comments on Bill 81.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, Bill 81, An Act to Amend the Education Act, No. 2, received second reading in the Legislative Assembly on March 30th, 2023, and was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Development for review. The standing committee held a public hearing in Yellowknife on May 31st, 2023. The committee then travelled to Inuvik, Norman Wells, and Deline from June 6th to the 9th, 2023, for further engagement on the bill.

The public hearings in communities were very well attended with impassioned concerns expressed from residents. The committee met with the chief and council of Behdzi Ahda' First Nation and also received six written submissions for the engagement process.

The committee held a clause-by-clause review of the bill with the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment on August 15th, 2023. In an effort to address the concerns raised by residents, communities and organizations, the

committee advanced five motions to amend the bill, all of which the Minister concurred with.

These motions make changes which include the removal of the requirement for education bodies to be responsible for transportation, provide greater participation of Indigenous governments in an oversight committee, and increase parental involvement in student education modification programs.

I would like to thank the public for their time to meet with committee to provide heartfelt and, at times, unsettling stories regarding their experience with the Northwest Territories education system. I'd like to thank committee members, legal experts, and staff for the work that they did on Bill 81. I'd also like to acknowledge the collaborative work by the Minister and the department in getting this bill to where it is today.

Individual Members may have additional comments or questions. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Members, can we forego comments and proceed to the clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Committee, we will defer the bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses. Please turn to page 3 of the bill.

---Clause 1 through 34 inclusive approved

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, to the bill as a whole, does committee agree that Bill 81, An Act to Amend the Education Act, No. 2, is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 81, An Act to Amend the Education Act, No. 2?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Thank you to your witnesses. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

Committee, we've agreed to consider Bill 94, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2023. I will ask the Minister of Justice to introduce the bill.

BILL 94:
MISCELLANEOUS STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT, 2023

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm here today to present Bill 94: Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2023.

The purpose of Bill 94 is to amend various statutes of the Northwest Territories for which minor changes are proposed or errors or inconsistencies have been identified. Each amendment included in the bill had to meet the following criteria:

- a) it must not be controversial;
- b) It must not involve the spending of public funds;
- c) It must not prejudicially affect rights; and,
- d) It must not create a new offence or subject a new class of persons to an existing offence.

Departments responsible for the various statutes being amended have reviewed and approved the changes brought forward in this bill.

The proposed amendments are minor, uncontroversial or non-substantive and many consist of technical corrections. The amendments are of such a nature that the preparation and legislative consideration of individual bills to correct each statute would be time-consuming for the government and the Legislative Assembly.

This concludes my opening remarks. I'd be happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Yes, I would.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witness into the Chamber.

Minister, please introduce your witness.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. I'd like to welcome back Laura Jeffrey, legislative counsel with Justice. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. I will now turn to the chair of Standing Committee on Social Development, the committee that reviewed the bill for any opening comments on Bill 94. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, your committee would like to report on its consideration of Bill 94,

Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2023.

Bill 94 received second reading in the Legislative Assembly on June 2nd, 2023, and was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Development for review. On June 29th, 2023, the standing committee held a clause-by-clause reading with the Minister of Justice.

Madam Chair, the committee reports that Bill 94, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2023 is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Can we forego general comments on Bill 94 and proceed to the clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, we will defer the bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses. Please turn to page 1 of the bill.

Clauses 1 through 5, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clauses 6 through 10, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clauses 11 through 13, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, to the bill as a whole, does committee agree that Bill 94, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2023, is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 94, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2023?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister, and thank you to your witness. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witness from the Chamber.

Committee, we have agreed to consider Bill 93, Practice of Engineering, Geoscience and

Applied Science Technology Act. I will ask the Minister of Infrastructure to introduce the bill.

**BILL 93:
PRACTICE OF ENGINEERING,
GEOSCIENCE AND APPLIED SCIENCE
TECHNOLOGY ACT**

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you. I'm here to present Bill 93, the Practice of Engineering, Geoscience and Applied Science Technology Act. Bill 93 seeks to repeal and replace the existing Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act.

I met with Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment to answer questions about the bill on July 18th and 25th, 2023. In addition to engaging with the NWT engineering firms on the regulation of technologists, the Department of Infrastructure also met with the Government of Nunavut to discuss how the bill might affect engineers in that territory. Legislative partners in Nunavut already made significant progress towards a draft bill aligning that territory's laws to our new act, which they hope to introduce that into territory's Legislative Assembly shortly.

This new version of the act will keep responsibility for overseeing the territory's engineering and geoscience professionals with the Northwest Territories and Nunavut Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists, otherwise known as NAPEG. The Department of Infrastructure worked closely with NAPEG in developing this bill to make sure the new governance framework will meet NAPEG's needs and capacity while allowing public oversight where necessary. Most importantly, this bill will increase public safety by requiring NAPEG members to undergo continuing professional development throughout their careers and by giving NAPEG responsibility for accreditation of applied science technologists and technicians which are unregulated occupations in the two territories.

This bill will also help encourage engineers to work in the Territories in two ways:

- By allowing NAPEG to grant restricted engineering licenses to professionals with foreign credentials; and,
- By making it easier for engineers to resume work after parental leave.

Standing committee has indicated its support for this passage of Bill 93, and I thank the Members for their work in reviewing the bill.

That concludes my opening remarks, and I'm happy to answer questions if the Members have any.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Minister, would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Yes, I do.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Minister, please introduce your witnesses.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, with me I have Celeste McCabe, further to my left, ADM of asset management. I also have Ms. Alison Scott who is manager of our legislative affairs at the Department of Infrastructure. And to my right, I have Laura Jeffrey who is the legislative counsel with the Department of Justice. And at the end, I have Mr. Mark Cronk who is director of design and technical services with the Department of Infrastructure.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Welcome. I will now turn to the chair of the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment, the committee that reviewed the bill for any opening comments on Bill 93. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Bill 93, Practice of Engineering, Geoscience and Applied Science Technology Act received second reading in the Legislative Assembly on June 2nd, 2023. It was referred to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment for review.

Bill 93 gives the Northwest Territories Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists new powers and duties. In the committee's review period, the committee received two verbal submissions on the bill. Clause-by-clause review of Bill 93 was held on July 25th, 2023. The committee proposed the amendment of legislation -- or to legislate the online publishing of more information, and the Minister concurred.

I'd like to thank the committee for its hard work, because economic development committee is the best, and on the review of the bill 93. Individual Members may have additional comments, Madam Chair, or questions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Committee, may we forego general comments and proceed to a clause-by-clause review of the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, we will defer the bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses. We will go through the clauses in groups. Please turn to page 1 of the bill.

Clause 1 through 10, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Clauses 1 through 81 inclusive approved

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, to the bill as a whole, does committee agree that Bill 93, Practice of Engineering, Geoscience and Applied Science Technology Act, is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 93, Practice of Engineering, Geoscience and Applied Science Technology Act?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Thank you, Minister. Thank you to all your witnesses. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

Member for Kam Lake, what is the wish of committee?

MS. CLEVELAND: Madam Chair, I move that the chair rise and report progress. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): There's a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---CARRIED

I will now rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: May I please have the report of Committee of the Whole.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MS. SEMMLER: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 973-19(2), Tabled Document 974-19(2), Committee Report 61-19(2), Bills 81, 93, and 94.

And would like to report progress. And Mr, Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed? Any abstentions. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 77: NURSING PROFESSION ACT

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 77, Nursing Profession Act, be read for a third time and, Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. The Minister has requested a recorded vote. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. The Minister has requested a recorded vote. All those in favour, please rise.

RECORDED VOTE

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Michael Ball): The Member for Yellowknife Centre. The Member for Hay River North. The Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. The Member for Deh Cho. The Member for Hay River South. The Member for Kam Lake. The Member for Nunakput. The Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. The Member for Monfwi. The Member for Great Slave. The Member for Nahendeh. The Member for Yellowknife South. The Member for Sahtu. The Member for Range Lake. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please rise. All those abstaining, please rise.

The results of the recorded vote, 15 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is carried. Bill 77 has had third reading.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Michael Ball): Orders of the day for Tuesday, October 3rd, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements

3. Members' Statements
4. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
5. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
6. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
7. Returns to Oral Questions
 - Oral Question 1578-19(2), Fire Management Policy Effect on Indigenous Culture
8. Acknowledgements
9. Oral Questions
10. Written Questions
11. Returns to Written Questions
12. Replies to the Commissioner's Address
13. Petitions
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motions
16. Motions
17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 64, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 3
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 23, An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act
 - Bill 65, Builder's Lien Act
 - Bill 74, Forest Act
 - Bill 75, Council of Women and Gender Diversity Act
 - Bill 78, Waste Reduction and Resource Recovery Act
 - Bill 80, Dental Hygienists Profession Statutes Amendment Act
 - Bill 83, Liquor Act
 - Bill 84, An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation Act
- Bill 85, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act
- Bill 92, An Act to Amend the Petroleum Products and Carbon Tax Act, No. 3
- Committee Report 52-19(2), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on the Review of the Rules of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly
- Committee Report 53-19(2), Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment Report on Supporting Northern Businesses
- Committee Report 55-19(2), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on Bill 55: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act
- Committee Report 62-19(2), Report on Bill 74: Forest Act
- Minister's Statement 264-19(2), Response to the NWT Chief Coroner's Report on Suicide
- Tabled Document 681-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 26-19(2): Report on the Child and Family Services Act – Lifting Children, Youth and Families: An All of Territory Approach to Keeping Families Together
- Tabled Document 973-19(2), 2024-2025 Capital Estimates
- Tabled Document 974-19(2), Supplementary Estimates Operations Expenditures, No. 3, 2023-2024
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
 - Bill 81, An Act to Amend the Education Act, No. 2
 - Bill 93, Practice of Engineering, Geoscience and Applied Science Technology Act
 - Bill 94, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2023
23. Orders of the Day

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, October 3, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

