



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
**LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY**

2nd Session

Day 166

19th Assembly

HANSARD

Wednesday, October 4, 2023

Pages 6721 - 6786

The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker

Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.
(Mackenzie Delta)

Hon. Diane Archie

(Inuvik Boot Lake)
Deputy Premier
Minister of Infrastructure
Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation

Mr. Ronald Bonnetrouge

(Deh Cho)

Ms. Caitlin Cleveland

(Kam Lake)

Hon. Paulie Chinna

(Sahtu)
Minister responsible for Housing Northwest Territories
Minister responsible for Homelessness
Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board
Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

Hon. Caroline Cochrane

(Range Lake)
Premier
Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs
Minister responsible for the COVID-19 Coordinating Secretariat

Mr. Richard Edjericon

(Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh)

Hon. Julie Green

(Yellowknife Centre)
Minister of Health and Social Services
Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities
Minister responsible for Seniors

Mr. Jackie Jacobson

(Nunakput)

Mr. Rylund Johnson

(Yellowknife North)

Ms. Frieda Martselos

(Thebacha)

Ms. Katrina Nokleby

(Great Slave)

Mr. Kevin O'Reilly

(Frame Lake)

Ms. Lesa Semmler

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

Mr. Rocky Simpson

(Hay River South)

Hon. R.J. Simpson

(Hay River North)
Government House Leader
Minister of Education, Culture & Employment
Minister of Justice

Hon. Shane Thompson

(Nahendah)
Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs
Minister of Environment and Climate Change
Minister responsible for Youth

Hon. Caroline Wawzonek

(Yellowknife South)
Minister of Finance
Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, including responsibility for the Business Development and Investment Corporation
Minister responsible for the Status of Women

Ms. Jane Weyallon Armstrong

(Monfwi)

Officers

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Glen Rutland

Deputy Clerks

Ms. Kim Wickens
Mr. Michael Ball
Ms. Jolene Saturnino

Committee Clerks

Ms. Amy Lizotte
Ms. Cynthia James
Ms. Katie Weaver

Law Clerks

Mr. Toby Kruger
Ms. Sandra Mackenzie

Box 1320

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Tel: (867) 767-9010 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784

www.ntassembly.ca

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	6721
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	6721
Residential and Recreational Public Land Leasing Pricing Revisions (Thompson)	6721
Early Learning and Child Care (Simpson)	6721
Improvements in Mental Health Supports (Green).....	6723
Reclaiming the Capable Person – A Strategic Framework for Addressing Family Violence In the Northwest Territories (Wawzonek).....	6724
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	6724
Business Supports for 2023 Wildfire Evacuations (Rocky Simpson)	6724
Medical Travel (Weyallon Armstrong).....	6725
Northwest Territories Power Corporation (Martselos).....	6726
Environmental Guideline for Contaminated Sites (O'Reilly).....	6726
National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (Semmler)	6727
Inadequate Housing in Nunakput (Jacobson)	6727
Imperial Oil Tailings Pond Seepage (Bonnetrouge).....	6728
Appointment of Administrator for Hamlet of Fort Resolution (Edjericon).....	6728
Violence against Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ (Nokleby)	6729
Settling Land Claims (Johnson)	6729
Safe and Affordable Housing for Women (Cleveland)	6730
2021 and 2022 Band Manager Mentor Award Winner (Thompson).....	6730
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	6731, 6741
ORAL QUESTIONS	6731
REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES	6742
REPLIES TO THE COMMISSIONER'S ADDRESS	6671
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	6745
NOTICES OF MOTION	6745
Motion 86-19(2) – Recommendations of Integrity Commissioner Respecting Conduct of MLA Great Slave	6745
Motion 87 – 19(2) – Dissolution of the 19 th Assembly.....	6746
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	6746
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	6783

THIRD READING OF BILLS	6783
Bill 74 – Forest Act.....	6783
Bill 78 – Waste Reduction and Resource Recovery Act	6784
Bill 92 – An Act to Amend the Petroleum Products and Carbon Tax, No.3.....	6784
ORDERS OF THE DAY	6784

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, October 4, 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 1:32 a.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Environment and Climate Change.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 388-19(2):
RESIDENTIAL AND RECREATIONAL
PUBLIC LAND LEASING PRICING
REVISIONS**

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the cost of living challenges have been raised by Northwest Territories residents and Members of the Legislative Assembly in both the 18th and 19th Legislative Assemblies. One of those challenges is rent for residential and recreational public land leases, including those that support traditional harvesting activities. The lease rent minimum increased to \$840 annually for residential and recreational leases in the last Legislative Assembly, implemented over the last five years, has proven to be challenging for many residents given our current economic situation. To help ease financial pressures and assist with cost-of-living challenges for leaseholders, lease rent rates will be reduced for all residential and recreational leases. Lease rent minimums will be reduced for all residential lessees from \$840 to \$800 annually. We are also reducing the percentage of assessed value charged to residential leases for Commissioner's land from 5 percent of assessed value to 2.5 percent of assessed land value.

Mr. Speaker, we will also reduce lease rents for recreational leases. The Department of Environment and Climate Change will implement a three-tier system for all recreational leases with rates reduced from a minimum of \$840 to fixed amount of either \$600, \$400 or \$300 annually depending on

access to the leased parcel. This approach will ensure that those with limited and seasonal access will pay less than those with year-round access.

Residential and recreational leases will see these savings at their next rent review period. These changes will not only result in lower lease rates for all individuals but will also make rent more comparable between Commissioner's and territorial land until the Public Land Act comes into force and creates a single public land pricing regime.

Mr. Speaker, we also tabled a response to Motion 77-19(2) related to lease rents for Indigenous-owned cabins. Significant work and engagement are ongoing to develop a long-term approach which will address concerns expressed by Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations regarding the management of rights-based cabins on public land. Our government is committed to working with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to resolve this issue in a collaborative way that considers and respects Aboriginal and treaty rights.

While this work is underway, the rent reductions being put in place will help reduce the financial burden for all residential and recreational leases, including Indigenous leaseholders that have asserted or established Aboriginal and/or treaty right to harvest in that area. We will also be pausing collections on lease rent arrears and will consider forgiving arrears on a case-by-case basis for these Indigenous leaseholders. The Department of Environment and Climate Change remains committed to working with Indigenous leadership to develop a long-term approach that meets the interests of Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, and the Government of the Northwest Territories for right-based cabins on public land.

Mr. Speaker, today I have made important commitments to finish our work on collaboratively developing a policy-based approach for rights-based cabins with our

Indigenous government partners and to lower the cost of living for residents. Reducing rents for residential and recreational leases will help address the cost of living for individuals with public land leases, including Indigenous land leaseholders. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 389-19(2):
EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, this Legislative Assembly has made it a priority to advance universal child care for residents of the Northwest Territories. In December 2021, we signed the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement with the federal government, and since then we have worked closely with licensed early learning and child care programs and early childhood educators to advance this mandate. As of April 1st, the average cost of licensed child care for children five years of age and younger has been reduced, on average, by 60 percent. This means that families in the NWT are now saving up to \$545 a month per child in child care fees. Families can expect to see further cost reductions until we reach our goal of an average of \$10 a day child care.

Mr. Speaker, amendments to the Child Day Care Act and two related regulations came into force on May 1st, 2023. These changes establish limits on child care fees charged to families by licensed programs receiving government subsidies and increased reporting provided by licensed programs in response to our commitments within the Canada-wide agreement. We are taking a phased approach to updating the regulations to take the time to consider our next action as we change the early learning and child care system. Later this year, we will continue engaging with the sector on more changes to regulations as we work to introduce a wage grid for educators, a certification process, and establish a new funding process for licensed programs in response to a program review that was completed in spring 2021.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this summer we gathered feedback on these initiatives by engaging with Indigenous governments, the Northwest Territories Early Childhood Association, licensed early learning and child care program operators, and early childhood educators working in licensed centre-based programs. We know that the NWT needs a flexible certification process that recognizes and considers post-secondary education equivalencies, as well as a wage grid that is

comparable to other positions within the early learning and child care sector and will attract and retain educators. Participants appreciated our proposed shift away from basing operating subsidies on attendance and highlighted the need for additional funding to support long-term sustainability. The full What We Heard report summarizing the GNWT's findings is posted on the Education, Culture and Employment website.

We continue to collaborate with the Government of Canada to help achieve our shared vision of a Canada-wide system that meets the needs of our communities, families, and young children. I am pleased to share that at the end of June, the Government of Canada announced the new Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund to help deliver affordable child care for families by funding the cost of physical infrastructure needed to create more spaces like real estate and building materials. Through this fund, provinces and territories will receive \$625 million over the next four years, which will take into consideration the unique infrastructure challenges in the three territories. I look forward to sharing more details on what this means for the NWT as we work collaboratively with the federal government to implement this funding.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to support our licensed programs to create welcoming and inclusive early learning environments that incorporate local cultures and languages and support the developmental needs of all children in their care. To ensure early learning environments in the NWT are a place where all children are welcomed and supported, we are reviewing how children from vulnerable or equity-seeking families, including those with specific developmental needs, are included in early learning opportunities across the territory. The aim is to identify strengths and barriers that exist within the early childhood sector, enhance the overall quality of licensed programs throughout the NWT, and support the creation of new licensed spaces so more families have access to quality early learning and child care in their community.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize the need for flexibility as we continue to build the foundation for the NWT's early learning and child care system and are working to address affordability for families, develop the early childhood workforce, and improve wages and incentives for those employed as early childhood educators. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 390-19(2):
IMPROVEMENTS IN MENTAL HEALTH
SUPPORTS

HON. JULIE GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share the progress we have made in strengthening our mental health support services. Our focus is on the pressing issue of suicide prevention as well as our ongoing efforts to enhance the mental wellness and addictions recovery system.

Each suicide and suicide attempt has a profound impact on friends, families, and communities. The distressing surge in suicide rates during 2022 has underscored the urgent need for a renewed approach. In June, I had the privilege of travelling to Iqaluit with key staff from the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority, and the department, to discuss suicide prevention with our counterparts in Nunavut. Our goal was to exchange insights, experiences, and best practices.

Mr. Speaker, our discussions highlighted the importance of a collaborative response. Suicide prevention is complex, and no single solution can fully address it. To that end, we've formed a GNWT working group to establish guiding principles for a collective suicide prevention approach as well as a renewed commitment to support community-lead initiatives.

Budget 2023-2024 allocates an additional \$500,000 to the community suicide prevention fund, bringing the total annual funding to \$725,000 for communities and organizations to access. Our conversations with colleagues in Nunavut emphasized the importance of supporting community-led, grassroots approaches to suicide prevention. The enhancement of this fund is an important step towards that goal.

Mr. Speaker, supporting regional and community-led initiatives beyond providing funding is equally important. When the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation released its suicide prevention strategy last September, officials from department and the NTHSSA traveled to Inuvik to meet with the IRC staff to offer support for their work. Together, they came up with tangible ways that the health and social services system can reduce barriers to help the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation help individuals and families.

The same spirit of collaboration and commitment underpins our efforts to enhance the mental wellness and addictions recovery system, with a particular focus on the community counselling program.

Mr. Speaker, in 2020 we introduced the Stepped Care 2.0 approach in the community counselling program, tailoring support to individual needs. Collaborating with partners such as the Mental Health Commission of Canada, Stepped Care Solutions, and the health and social services authorities, we have expanded our services to reduce wait times and improve accessibility. We have achieved remarkable outcomes, including same-day counselling, and a noteworthy 79 percent reduction in wait times. Furthermore, we have launched e-mental health options and established the mental wellness and addictions recovery advisory group to guide our efforts based on lived experience.

Mr. Speaker, additional work is underway to further transform the way mental health and addictions counselling services are being delivered. This work is being led by the Beaufort Delta region. There was extensive engagement with residents on what services they need, how they want to receive them, and who they want delivering them. This work highlighted that educational qualifications are not what is most valued by residents, and so changes will be made in job descriptions and hiring practices to reflect this. The lessons learned from this work are being shared with other regions to inspire similar shifts in approach.

Mr. Speaker, it is also key to ensure that there are relevant, culturally-based child and youth mental health services in the territory. We strive to evolve to a model that aligns and supports this goal as we move away from the historical institutional model of child and adolescent treatment facilities such as Trailcross and the Territorial Treatment Centre.

While a review is underway to provide longer term recommendations to ensure programming is available, there are two youth wellness camps scheduled for pilot in the 2023-2024 fiscal year. These camps are land-based with culture, individual and group counselling embedded throughout, as well as a three-month aftercare component. Following this pilot, there will be a review to assess the effectiveness of this approach.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize our unwavering commitment to these crucial issues and to continue to grow and learn from the people we serve. I am looking forward to hearing about new community and regional-based suicide prevention strategies that affirm the value of every life. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 391-19(2):
RECLAIMING THE CAPABLE PERSON – A
STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR
ADDRESSING FAMILY VIOLENCE IN THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories recently completed a comprehensive strategic framework aimed at addressing the concerning rates of family violence in the Northwest Territories. The framework is called Reclaiming the Capable Person: We Are All Capable Persons When We Have Community. In it, elders from communities across the territory provide their definitions of a capable person based on traditional knowledge passed down from generations. Their knowledge teaches us that every child and every person is born capable and that we all share the responsibility to nurture and provide opportunities and guidance to help everyone become their own capable person.

Mr. Speaker, all survivors and perpetrators of family violence are capable persons. The Government of the Northwest Territories can best support them by assuming a role that better equips them to make empowered decisions for themselves, their families, and their communities. We evoke the idea of a capable person to emphasize that this strategic framework focuses on individual agency and the importance of programs and services that support the empowerment of individuals affected by family violence so that they can make decisions for themselves that build resiliency and the capacity to heal so they can lead fulfilling lives.

This strategic framework focuses on people, adopting a holistic approach to prevention and intervention measures across all levels of government and non-governmental organizations. This approach calls for a significant shift in the way we perceive the collective healing needs of all residents, including survivors, their families, and those who use violence in their relationships.

Earlier this summer, we shared the draft framework with Indigenous and community governments as well as key stakeholders for input. And, Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time today, I will table the feedback we received. Now that the framework has been finalized, we will create an action plan to implement new initiatives and enhance existing programs and services, including a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess and adjust our efforts along the way to ensure that our approach is effective and responsive to evolving needs.

Many of the implementation actions relate closely to A Way Home: A Comprehensive Strategy to Address Homelessness in the Northwest Territories. It is well known that family violence is among the primary issues that cause people to experience homelessness. Advancing these strategies creates an opportunity to better coordinate person-centered services across departments and address some of the Northwest Territories' most urgent social needs.

Mr. Speaker, to be effective, our strategy to address family violence must also take into consideration gender-based violence, elder abuse, and the problems underlying gender inequality and discrimination against 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals.

Today, I particularly note the tragic and nation-wide issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, which must also be considered in any strategies addressing domestic and family violence. I emphasize today due to the new monument unveiled honouring the lives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. This monument is nestled in the woods just to the right of the entrance pathway to the Legislative Assembly building. It is located in a quiet place, surrounded by trees, which will allow people and families time and space to reflect on losses and, perhaps, experience a little hope. The national conversation on MMIWG has reached a critical mass and while there is so much more to do, I, like so many others, have hope that we are starting to see awareness walking side by side with reconciliation.

Mr. Speaker, by adopting an inclusive, comprehensive strategy, and a coordinated approach to implementation, we will promote gender equality, protect the rights and safety of all individuals, and work towards a society free from violence and discrimination. This approach reflects strong commitment to recognizing the diverse needs of different communities and ensuring that the solutions put forward are genuinely transformative and inclusive. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Members' statements. Member for Hay River South.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1630-19(2):
BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR 2023 WILDFIRE
EVACUATIONS

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I want to start off by first congratulating Wab Kinew of the NDP on being elected as the next Premier of

Manitoba. I know he will be a great leader for the province and its people.

Mr. Speaker, over the last 16 months, businesses in the communities of Hay River, K'atłodeeche, and Enterprise, have been affected by floods and fires. They are now asking for reasonable and timely financial support to rebuild or reopen. Mr. Speaker, to put some perspective on this, I want to provide examples of affected businesses:

Firstly, Castaways Cottages & Campground, a tourist destination, was flooded in 2022 and now lost several cabins because of the wildfire.

Patterson's sawmill and Patterson's firewood businesses were decimated by the latest fire. The damage was so extensive, not only did they lose their businesses, but all the homes along Patterson Road were consumed by the fire.

The heart of our agriculture sector, Paradise Valley, experienced damage from flooding last year, now it was wildfire damage; the more reason to use the property acquisition program offered by the federal government.

In Enterprise, we have Sunrise Cabinets, a supplier of cabinets throughout the North and a major supplier to this government. Their building and equipment is gone.

The Gateway Motel was also consumed by the fire along with the building housing Winnie's Dene Art Gallery and Darcy Moses Fashion Designs.

Mr. Speaker, there are other businesses that are still standing but nevertheless were impacted because of forced closures. These businesses, in a sixteen-month period, lost approximately two to four months of revenue, however, fixed business costs continued and needed to be met. As government, we must do our part. It is our responsibility to assist those businesses whether it is with general advice, DAP, BDIC, ITI, or ECE financial supports.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this government to consider the overall impact and severity that flooding, wildfires, and evacuations had on Hay River, K'atłodeeche, and Enterprise over the past 16 months. We need financial supports that take that reality into consideration. It was not once; it was not twice; it was three times that our communities have been dealt a blow by Mother Nature. We need that financial support not to be limited in scope but must consider the effects of lost revenue, lost labour, lost equipment, lost infrastructure, and the reality of business devaluation. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, due to the magnitude of financial support required for businesses in Hay River, K'atłodeeche, and Enterprise, these supports cannot come from the GNWT alone. We need the federal government to step up and provide some serious investment to support those business impacted, and we need it now. And I will relay that message to our MP as well. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1631-19(2): MEDICAL TRAVEL

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the health care system is failing our Indigenous population from access to quality and timely care. Our residents face systemic barriers, and more work is needed to break through the red tape to improve accessibility to programs and services. Many community members in my region travel to Yellowknife to get health care services. I am disappointed to hear from constituents who travelled to Yellowknife who feel their concerns are not taken seriously. I have also heard concerns that some people have been told they cannot book appointments in Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, recently I had two constituents informing me of their concerns with the care they received in Yellowknife. They felt their concerns were dismissed with multiple attempts to access service. They chose to travel on their own to seek medical attention in the south. Both constituents were diagnosed with serious illness; illnesses that required immediate medical attention.

Mr. Speaker, it is very unfortunate. My condolence to the family. One of my constituents, after 19 days in the hospital, died in Edmonton without the opportunity to say good-bye to family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, the existing medical travel policy has failed the people of my region and other NWT small communities. Both of my constituents, even after receiving a critical diagnosis and being hospitalized, were refused any type of support from GNWT medical travel.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to see more community members accessing services outside of the NWT. We need to review and change the medical travel policy to be more flexible, especially in cases that are serious enough to warrant admissions and/or treatments that are unavailable in the NWT. Mr.

Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

Mr. Speaker, this is an unbelievable situation. If my constituents would have received a timely diagnosis in Yellowknife, they would have been sent south to access treatment and been covered by medical travel. But because they chose to travel on their own, they cannot receive any support from medical travel even after being diagnosed with a serious medical condition that resulted in specialized treatment.

Fundamentally, Mr. Speaker, there should be no barriers to access health care for the residents of the NWT. Interpreters-translators are also denied for the most vulnerable as well. Mr. Speaker, this is unacceptable. I will have question for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1632-19(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES POWER
CORPORATION

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to speak once again about a major infrastructure project that our government has been pursuing for years and has committed to construct at some point in the future. The project I'm talking about is the Taltson hydro expansion.

Mr. Speaker, I know that there are some Members from past and present in this House who are strongly against the expansion of the Taltson dam, and each Members' reasons are varied. I, however, wanted to stand up here today and state once again, as I have on numerous occasions, that I am somebody who is strongly in favour of the expansion of the Taltson expansion dam.

Mr. Speaker, there are tonnes of potential that a mega project such as the Talston hydro expansion can bring to the economy and the residents of the NWT. For example, given that such a large project would require significant investment, there is a high likelihood that along with those new investments, there will also be increased economic development within the NWT by spinoff industries that is created as a result of the project's construction and maintenance.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, some people are wondering who we're going to sell all the new excess power that will be generated from the expanded Taltson dam. Well, Mr. Speaker,

provinces and territories make cross-border deals all the time on various matters, such as pipelines, fibre optic lines, and yes, hydropower too. For instance, just a few months ago Quebec signed a deal with New York state to sell them excess hydropower that's worth billions of dollars. This would be no different. We could do the same with Alberta and Saskatchewan. Plus, the federal government has long-term goals to make Canada net-zero on greenhouse gas emissions. But in order to do so, there must be more green energy projects built across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I know there is still work that needs to be done with the Indigenous groups whose lands are nearest to the Talston Dam to ensure they will get their fair share in the benefits of this project. I know that our government will continue with the work on the Taltson steering committee and in bilateral meetings with the affected Indigenous groups. I will have questions for the Minister of NWT Power corporation later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1633-19(2):
ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDELINE FOR
CONTAMINATED SITES

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I have been waiting patiently for almost eight years for this government to do something, anything, to prevent and better manage contaminated sites that have cost us literally tens of millions of dollars. With little to no fanfare, Environment and Climate Change has finally released a new environmental guideline for contaminated site remediation with a public comment period of about six weeks less the evacuation period. While the steps and process laid out in the document appear to be sound, there are some critical admissions and failures. It is hard to believe that it is the best that we could do nine years after devolution.

It's not clear whether this guideline is legally binding or enforceable. It has no specific legislative authorization as cited. It's also not clear whether it would apply to contaminated sites on privately-owned lands. Once again, the department has completely forgotten any role for the public in the process other than as a recipient of some vague notice if a site is found to be contaminated. The document is completely silent as to whether any of the information and approvals generated would be publicly disclosed. It is not clear to me whether the department is attempting to set up a parallel unlegislated process for contaminated site

management when some sites are under active remediation and are regulated by the land and water boards. This could be a parallel GNWT system for contaminated sites with no role for the public and no public information. There is also no mention of working with Indigenous governments in the document. The guideline is not consistent with Cabinet's so-called open government policy, but it is what I have come to expect as a pattern of Cabinet not acting as a public government.

A few other problems with the guideline: Site restoration is completely optional but no one will know anyway. Under this guideline, the department can accept sites with known liabilities and perpetual care requirements without any public knowledge. There are no provisions, or even consideration in the document, of an institutional control program like Saskatchewan's where owners could put up money and GNWT would assume liability for sites, something that standing committee recommended but was ignored.

I am frustrated and disappointed that after eight years, I have failed to move this government towards any meaningful legislated or policy approach to prevention and better management of contaminated sites. I will have questions later today. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Members' statements. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1634-19(2):
NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION FOR MISSING
AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today we commemorate the National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Gender-Diverse People. My heart and prayer goes out to the families who have lost loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, it was an honour to be able to take part in unveiling the monument in front of our Legislative Assembly with you. This monument represents our missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, two-spirit -- sorry, LGBTQQIA+ people. And I would like to thank the people who participated in the ceremony:

- President of the Native Women's, Grace Blake for her opening prayer and her words that she shared;
- Rassi Nashalik for lighting the kudlik;
- Yellowknife's First Nation Dene drummers for their opening prayer song;

- The Mandevilles for their playing of the Red River Jig;
- William Greenland for his music with his flute throughout the ceremony and during the feeding of the fire ceremony;
- Gerri Sharpe, the president of Pauktuuti Inuit Women of Canada for her words and her closing prayer.

I'd also like to recognize and thank the artist Myrna Pokiak who designed and constructed, with her team, the monument. Her design into the monument reflects the Northwest Territories as a whole, and she explained it very well. I thank you for this beautiful piece of art. Quyananni, Myrna.

As I mentioned in my comments at the ceremony, since becoming an MLA I more thoroughly understand the importance of our roles as a Legislative Assembly and to make and introduce laws and rules that affect people of our territory. Walking past this monument every day will remind us of the work that is done and continues to be done for our Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people but also of the work that still needs to be done to protect them. The work has just begun, Mr. Speaker. It's just begun. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1635-19(2):
INADEQUATE HOUSING IN NUNAKPUT

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my Member's statement is on homelessness in Nunakput and water delivery schedules in the communities. Homelessness is a hidden burden in communities in my riding. Communities are most likely residents that had fallen on hard times. Inuvialuit values and tradition make everyone to take care of one another, to keep each other safe, but it brings a lot of stress on the family and sometimes elder abuse. Today we have three governments in the systems in Nunakput - the Inuvialuit government, the territorial government, and the federal government. Each of these governments play a role to keep Nunakput constituents safe and healthy and a roof over their head.

The NWT government is in power to look after housing and homelessness throughout the NWT. The NWT government has housing and homeless legislation as their power means to look at housing and homelessness in the NWT. The NWT needs to step up to power to keep the NWT residents in safe and healthy houses. Us

as a territory, we need to keep residents in home. I want the NWT government to step up and start taking care of residents who are homeless. And I have two constituents that I know of right now living in tents.

Also, Mr. Speaker, water delivery in public housing units across my riding. The concern is rationing of water being delivered to housing units and the households that many tenants run and are well overcrowded. Before the next water delivery, they have no choice but to wait for water delivery on delivery time. And if they want water delivered to the unit, they have to pay for the water to be delivered at their own expense. There's a fee and the water rate and they have to pay it to run out. They have to get a call out and then they'll have to pay for the water. Some tenants cannot afford to pay these fees, Mr. Speaker.

The majority of residents in Nunakput live in public housing. These public housing units get their water delivered by trucks in public housing units as it's like all housing businesses in Nunakput. In Nunakput communities, it become a health and safety concern. Because some of the public housing units run out of water before next water delivery schedule, that means no water to wash themselves. When they get up in the morning, no water for breakfast, no water for washing clothes, no water for doing dishes or home cleaning. Mr. Speaker, this is unacceptable in the NWT right now.

It's my recommendation that the housing review and change their policy and budget to ensure public housing in Nunakput receive adequate funding for the LHOs for potable water and daily use. Without water, it becomes a health and safety concern. Let us find the means and address these health issues and safety and provide adequate in the NWT Housing Association. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1636-19(2):
IMPERIAL OIL TAILINGS POND SEEPAGE

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I previously spoke on the subject of the Alberta oil sands tailings ponds spills, perhaps several times in the life of this 19th Assembly. This House has heard of a couple of incidents of tailings ponds breaches. One was 5.3 million litres of industrial wastewater in February 2023 and another one in May 2023. The tailings ponds contain hazardous chemicals used in separating the oil from the sand. Both incidences were not reported to our

territorial government although there is a bilateral agreement with Alberta.

I would like to reiterate the current bilateral water management agreement with Alberta. It's not an effective mechanism to protect our waterways.

Now there is a news article claiming that Imperial Oil and the Alberta regulator knew for years about tailings seepage at the mine. It is reported the Alberta regulator had reports of seepage as early as 2019. Both Imperial Oil and the Alberta regulator knew the Kearn oil sands mine was seeping tailings into the groundwater for a number of years. They decided not to notify the public and tried to manage it internally. Substances found at the tailings ponds include naphthenic acids, dissolved solids, and sulfates. Oil sands tailings are considered toxic to fish and other wildlife.

A spokesperson for the Alberta regulator has stated that the agency is committed to strong oversight of the Kearn site. Yet, the tailings seepage continues. The Mikisew Cree First Nation chief has stated the regulator did not stop the seepage in 2022, and they didn't acknowledge it since 2019. The chief went on to state, They say they have contained the seepage. They have not. The fact that they did not tell us about the seepage for nine months is the tip of the iceberg.

Mr. Speaker, this issue and actions by regulators, oil companies, and the Alberta government are blasphemous, outlandish, and sickening in that they won't take simple regulatory measures in the face of known human and environmental health problems. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1637-19(2):
APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATOR FOR
HAMLET OF FORT RESOLUTION

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to bring a serious concern before the House. It has been over three months since the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs dissolved the elected Fort Resolution council and then appointed an administrator to oversee the local government.

Mr. Speaker, at this time MACA Minister said that this appointment was a significant step to the hamlet of Fort Resolution towards having a strong and stable community government. But, Mr. Speaker, isn't it ironic that the Minister's actions have done just the opposite? Instead of

a stable community government with local leaders chosen by local people, the community has been totally uninformed about this decision and is awash with rumors, instability, and serious concerns about the future.

Mr. Speaker, when MACA Minister invoked section 159.2 of the Hamlet Act on June 5th, 2023, the purpose was to appoint an administrator who shall perform the duties of the council. The Hamlet Act is very specific about the duties of the council and core elements of the council administration is that it is business to be carried out in the public. This is why this is in clear rules about public meetings, for example.

Section 25, 27, and 28 state that notice to a public must be posted in advance. Agendas must also be posted in advance. Public meetings must be scheduled at least on a monthly basis. All bylaws must be passed in public meetings. Mr. Speaker, all these public meetings, the residents of Fort Resolution would have the opportunity to be informed about the business of their community. Normally, the meeting would include various reports such as public safety, financial reports, and operational reports. So why have there been no public meetings since Fort Resolution was placed under an administration by the Minister?

The statute requires public meetings and public disclosure of the hamlet documents but despite the legislative imperative, Fort Resolution's currently under the shroud of secrecy with the community unaware of even basic decisions that have been made on their behalf. Mr. Speaker, this must change immediately, and I'm calling on the MACA Minister to direct his administrator to follow the Hamlet Act and initiate a public meeting that the community originally deserves. This is an unacceptable situation and is continuing to hold the Fort Resolution back from the path to full self-government. It is time. It is time that the Minister corrects this issue and ensure that all our communities are made to follow the laws of the Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1638-19(2):
VIOLENCE AGAINST INDIGENOUS
WOMEN, GIRLS AND 2SLGBTQIA+ PEOPLE

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, the abuses and violations committed and condoned by the Government of Canada against Indigenous people and, in particular, women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIPA+ people, is

genocide. These abuses and violations have resulted in the denial of safety, security, and human dignity for Indigenous people and are the root causes of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIPA+ people. Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIPA+ people are forced to confront violence on a daily basis and live in a world where perpetrators act with impunity. The steps to end and redress this genocide must be no less monumental than the combination of systems and actions that has worked to maintain colonial violence for generations. We must address the historical, multigenerational, and intergenerational trauma, and social and economic marginalization of Indigenous people. We must break the status quo and stop ignoring the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIPA+ people.

The Calls for Justice arise from international and domestic human and Indigenous rights laws, including the Charter, the Constitution, and the honour of the Crown. As such, Canada has a legal obligation to fully implement these Calls for Justice and to ensure Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIPA+ people live in dignity. First Nations, Inuit, and Metis families can raise their children with the same safety, security, and human rights that non-Indigenous families do.

Mr. Speaker, past efforts in this area have been reactive rather than preventative, which is a significant barrier to addressing the root causes of violence. Further, insufficient political will continues to be a roadblock. Proper prioritization and resourcing of solutions by governments must come with real partnerships with Indigenous peoples that support self-determination in a decolonizing way. The Calls for Justice represent a path forward towards ending Canada's genocide and to transforming the systemic and societal values that have worked to maintain colonial violence. The Calls for Justice aren't just about institutions or governments, although they do have foundational obligations to uphold. There is a role for everyone, both in the short and long-term. Individuals, institutions, and governments must all play a part. I encourage everyone to read the Calls to Action and to understand and, most importantly, to act on their roles in them."

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1639-19(2):
SETTLING LAND CLAIMS

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we can all agree we hoped that progress

on land claim and self-government agreements went differently in the life of this Assembly. Even in our own mandate, we weren't all that inspiring, hoping to settle two of those agreements. And here we find ourselves four years later with zero agreements concluded and many outstanding implementation agreements in ones that were settled over 20 years ago, Mr. Speaker.

Last time I asked these questions, Mr. Speaker, the Premier said she was hopeful that perhaps in the life of this government, a Norman Wells self-government agreement could be signed and an Akaitcho AIP agreement was out for consultation and, pending any issues, the AIP could be signed. I'm still hopeful. We got a one-month extension on this Assembly so perhaps some signatures were reached. I'll have questions for the Premier about whether there has been any progress on outstanding land claims and self-government agreements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1640-19(2):
SAFE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR
WOMEN

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, homelessness prevention is not a passive process. It needs aspiration, and it needs action. Today is the National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. On this Day of Action, where better to start than safe and secure housing.

Lack of housing and lack of affordable housing has an accumulative impact on the health and safety of Northerners, especially women and especially women with children. Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirited people experience disproportionately higher rates of violence, marital assault, familial violence, and sexual assault. Persistent gaps in living standards between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada, along with disparities in education, transportation, and employment, contribute to high rates of violence against Indigenous women and girls.

Across this country, women living off reserves are more likely to live in poverty even more so than women of visible minorities, women with disabilities, single parent women, and single senior women. Many women have shared with me that they are one missed paycheque away from homelessness.

If housing truly is a human right, and we mean no more stolen sisters, this government needs

to actively increase the number of, and access to, affordable housing, promote strong social networks for women, increase efforts to prevent family violence through healing, recognize and address intersectionality of women experiencing or at high risk of experiencing homelessness, and expand and enhance social support systems.

Mr. Speaker, too many NWT residents find that to gain support they need to fall through the cracks at the right time to the right depth and ask the right questions to the right person to access social supports. This year, after a five-year wait, this government tabled its homelessness strategy. Members on this side of the House demanded accountability and eventually used tabling this strategy as a bargaining chip. The strategy we did get was a framework. It lacked data to inform who was being impacted and in which NWT communities to inform policy and budgetary decisions. It was silent on the funding deficit to maintain a fleet of aging assets and the influx of dollars needed to address housing in core need and lack of housing.

Mr. Speaker, we need aspirational goals that address the housing needs specifically of those Northerners experiencing or on the brink of experiencing homelessness, especially our youth who continue to put themselves in vulnerable situations in exchange for a roof over their heads. Mr. Speaker, if this territory is to reach zero homelessness, bold, aspirational, targeted, funded, actions specific to those who need it is required because all of us know someone who depends on it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1641-19(2):
2021 AND 2022 BAND MANAGER MENTOR
AWARD WINNER

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to attend part of the previous NWTAC and LGANT AGM. Part of the agenda was their awards ceremony. NWTAC was pleased to present the first of two 2022 community service awards. The first award winner was Soham Srimani. They spoke about his commitment, drive, and creative skills that has nurtured the community of Nahanni Butte. Through his administrative efforts and drive, the community has received funding for various projects, some which include housing projects, infrastructure projects, tourism, and marketing projects. All of this has benefited the community of Nahanni Butte. He has also done a commendable job in

conducting mental health and youth development programs in the community. Nominated by several members of the Nahanni Butte's council, the NWTAC was pleased to present the community service award to Soham.

Mr. Speaker, LGANT presented the 2021 and 2022 Band Manager Mentor Award winner to Soham, the band manager from Nahanni Butte Dene Band. This award was given out by the band managers working group and encourages professional learning and peer support among First Nation administrators in the Northwest Territories. The award goes to the band manager that has exemplified the spirit of the band managers working group by offering support and advice to their colleagues in the past year.

Mr. Speaker, I realize that I am not going to do justice to Soham's nomination, but I did take a few paragraphs from many of the letters of support for him from the community and their leadership.

Before Soham took the job, they had six band managers over a four-year span. This resulted in a lot of administrative issues for the community. Thanks to Soham, he managed these issues well, created a proper record management system in both offline and online module and took care of past due reports for various funding received, even pending reports dated back to 2014. He has proved his administrative, managerial, and reporting skills and the community is very fond of him.

Apart from his regular band management duties, he is also involved in the community youth training, conducting seminars, and helping out community members in various capacities. His involvement in housing projects, infrastructure projects, tourism and marketing projects, coordinating with various government departments for funding proposals, approvals, implementation, and team management have been commendable and the community is very happy to have him.

Mr. Speaker, I realize my time and I would like to thank Soham for great work and ask that the rest of this statement be deemed as read. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Soham was instrumental in securing funding for a 4-plex residential construction project (funded by NWT Housing Corporation), a 10-plex residential construction project (SEED funding approved by CMHC), Arbor construction project (funded by CanNor), an all-weather stage construction project (funding approved from Infrastructure Canada), a new boat ramp project (funded by Department of Infrastructure,

GNWT) and getting a Canada Post office in community with a dedicated postal code. He has done commendable job in conducting mental health programs and youth development programs in the community. He had helped to restructure our development corporation this year and getting approval from Nutrition North for our general store. Apart from being one of the best band managers Nahanni Butte ever had, Soham has been instrumental in restructuring the Naha Dehe Development Corporation. He has hired people to operate the corporation from community and training them in-person. The development corporation, under his guidance, started generating income in less than three months. In previous years, the corporation was suffering loss after loss, but thanks to Soham, we have taken the necessary actions to make the corporation operational and profitable.

Mr. Speaker, as I said previously, the nominations and letters of support came in from members of council, their employees, and residents of the community. One of the key themes in all the letters of support were Soham's willingness and eagerness to help people. He is patient and willing to invest the time in training and involving himself as part of the training process. He has made a great impact on the community in many various ways including financial, mentoring, teaching and learning from the community.

Mr. Speaker, Soham was a worthy winner for the awards by both organizations. As the MLA for the riding, I am very proud to recognize him here today. Mashi cho, Soham.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nahendeh. Members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife North.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize a former co-worker of mine, as well as a candidate for Great Slave in the upcoming election, and as well as president of the YWCA, Ms. Kate Reid. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Acknowledgements. Oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 1611-19(2):
AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING IN NUNAKPUT

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I brought up homelessness in my riding in Nunakput and water delivery in public housing because they both intertwine. The stresses on the family and elder abuse in regards to homelessness and people not having a safe place to live.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister provide the House today, in my riding, how many safe houses that we have and if they're furnished in the communities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Minister responsible for Homelessness.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the question. I don't have the number of safe homes we do have in Nunakput. But housing is available and ready to be working with Indigenous governments and with community membership. If this is something that -- a project that we'd like to work towards, I'm more than open to having those conversations with the community leaders if this is something that they'd want to accomplish. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just in regards to that, you know, I asked this question about, I think it was two years ago in regards to housing numbers. I need a House number and if it's furnished and they're ready to go in the community for safe housing. I have two individuals in, say for instance Tuktoyaktuk. One's living in a tent and one's living in a shack. I had another one in Paulatuk that was living in a trailer. All I need to know is this Minister, who's in charge of homelessness and housing, do we have units available for the community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was quickly trying to go through my material here to see if we have any vacancies in Nunakput. I don't have those numbers in front of me. But like I had said before, if the leadership is willing to work with us and if this is a project that they want to work towards, I'm more than open to be working towards addressing homelessness. I've done a similar project throughout the Northwest Territories. We recently worked with Hay River. We worked with Fort Simpson. We have ongoing communication with Inuvik and also with K'asho Got'ine Housing Society, so this is something that has been addressed throughout the Northwest Territories. But I'm willing to work in partnership. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, the -- under the homelessness

strategy, we were told in this House that they do have units available in the community. And I'd like to make the Minister -- if she could get -- provide that information to me, not here today. If she could get that information so I could provide it to my leadership and to the people that are homelessness in the communities that I represent.

Also, Mr. Speaker, with the water shortage that we have in our communities in public housing, you know as well as I do that we have communities with overallocated with their children because we don't have new houses because the CMHC has a certain number of houses in the community. There's -- when a new House gets built, they take an old one out of the system. So there's no growth. We have a lot of young families, and you know it as well as I do, that need a place to live. And we're not going to let them go on to the street; we're going to take them in. So say, for instance, we have a family with four kids, four children, and they bring -- they move in with mom and dad and they're not going to get kicked out. So water delivery is so important. Is there increase in the community; is it possible for local LHOs to get an increase for water delivery to daily if there's a certain number of people that's overallocated in the unit? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And yes, we do have an increase of our housing delivery for the Northwest Territories. And I just have the numbers here.

We have four units going to be constructed in Paulatuk. We've got two that would be constructed in Ulukhaktok. And we've got four in Tuk. I don't see anything for Sachs Harbour, but I have to get back to the Member; I'm just trying to look at this very quickly.

And also for the increase of water delivery, the Member -- the client should be able to contact the local housing authority. I know they are budgeted according to what they receive for their utilities and services in each of the communities and if there's anything that's above and beyond that, that it would be at the charge of the client. But that's a file I can follow up on as well because I do understand there is overcrowding in each of the communities. There is couch surfing in the communities so the occupancy of these units might have increased. But I'd have to get that detail from the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I really want to thank the Minister for that, for the update for the new houses in the

communities. But I really urge her and her staff to make sure that we do have units available for homelessness, and we do have extra funding going in for the LHOs, local LHOs, because it's not their fault that they don't have a house and a roof over their head. And under the United Nations Act, it's like -- Mr. O'Reilly told me it's 12 cups of water for a man and nine cups for a woman; I don't know what's the difference there. But we have to make this a priority for this government because the communities are hurting, and the ones that are taking the brunt of it in this situation. It's not a question. It's just I'm urging the Minister to do -- to do right here. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Taken as a comment. Oral questions. Member for Thebacha.

QUESTION 1612-19(2):
TALTSON HYDROELECTRIC EXPANSION
PROJECT

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of NTPC commit to have bilateral meetings with the First Nation who has reserve lands right beside the Taltson dam and come to an agreement? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Minister responsible for Northwest Territories Power Corporation.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the GNWT departments of both infrastructure and finance are working with interested Indigenous partners to be able to advance the Taltson Hydro Expansion Project. We remain open to working on a business partnership with all the NWT-based Indigenous groups that have traditional territory in the Taltson watershed. This includes those that are on reserve lands. We'll also consult with Indigenous groups, governments, as the project advances. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, despite opposition or doubts from some about the viability of the Taltson Hydro Expansion, can the Minister confirm that this project is still a priority for the Government of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, this project is a priority of this 19th Assembly. We also have federal funding, Mr. Speaker, that's in place to do things like advance the business case, formalize business partners, define a preferred transformation route. Also at the end to be able to file this regulatory application. Mr. Speaker,

I'll say it again, big picture thinking, thinking about the future that stabilizes the cost of energy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, I realize that the end of the 19th Assembly is upon us. So I just wanted to ask the Minister if she can confirm that this project will continue to be pursued by NTPC and the Government of the Northwest Territories regardless of the upcoming election. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can't really speak for the next government; however, the Taltson expansion is funded and continues to be a central to our strategy to stabilize cost of energy, support some community electrification, provide access to clean energy for them. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Finance and Department of Infrastructure are both working together to ensure that we continue this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister provide any update on her engagements with the federal government regarding the Taltson expansion? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, our department staff are engaged with federal officials on the potential, and all parties recognize the value of building relationships with Indigenous partners, better defining the project footprint, working towards filing this regulatory application.

I also raised the issue with Minister Fraser who is the Minister -- federal minister of housing, infrastructure, and communities. I know that Minister -- we had an introductory meeting in September to have discussion on infrastructure, community, and housing. I also know that Minister Wawzonek and the Premier has raised the issue of federal participation every opportunity we get to speak with federal Ministers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1613-19(2):
IMPERIAL OIL TAILING PONDS SEEPAGE

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are related to my Member's statement on the tailings ponds contamination and seepage and are for the ECC Minister.

In light of the recent updated news, can the ECC Minister advise this House and the residents of the waterways what has been done to address the serious issue of water contamination? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Minister responsible for Environment and Climate Change.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Member for the question. The GNWT understands and shares the concerns that Indigenous governments and all NWT residents have for our shared waters. This spill and seepage has been a priority for me and this government. The GNWT, in collaboration with the Fort Smith Metis Council, Smith Landing First Nation, and the Town of Fort Smith, collected weekly water quality samples to track potential impacts of the incident upstream and address human health concerns until early summer of 2023 with the regular water sampling schedule resumed. Primary results analysis in June showed that the water in the Slave River are safe for people and animals with no evidence of chemicals from the seepage and spill and contaminated Slave River within the NWT. The GNWT also initiated a formal dispute resolution process under the bilateral agreement as we are of the view that Alberta was required to notify the GNWT of the seepage and spill as early as practical and didn't.

We continue to work through the dispute resolution process, Mr. Speaker. Since the process was initiated in March, information sharing from the Government of Alberta has significantly improved.

Finally, I was successful in asking the federal Minister to include a representative of the GNWT and NWT Indigenous governments in a joint federal, provincial, and territorial Indigenous notification working group. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi to the Minister for that answer. Mr. Speaker, I'm not privy to the workings with another jurisdiction, such as the province of Alberta, to draft up bilateral water management agreements. Can the Minister apprise this House as to the process for reaching an agreement to monitor and receive reports related to the contaminants? Mahsi.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Alberta-NWT Bilateral Water Management Agreement has specific provisions for sharing water monitoring results and reports, and information is regularly shared between our governments. For

example, the GNWT and Alberta co-drafted transboundary agreement annual reports using monitoring information from both jurisdictions. There has been some challenges with Alberta sharing information previously and a transboundary agreement provisions are what allowed the GNWT to compel Alberta to share information despite a dispute if they don't and conduct regular agreed upon monitoring. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, and to the Minister also. I think my Member's statement has clearly pointed out, from all news reports and whatnot, that we can't trust the Alberta government to work with our territorial government in providing any notices or advanced notices of the contaminants. They clearly don't have any control over what is happening at the tailings ponds at the tar sands mine sites. It's just run amuck right now.

In light of that, Mr. Speaker, the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation and the Mikisew Cree First Nations of Fort Chipewyan, south of us in Alberta, have dealt with this issue since the development of the tar sands mining projects. Has the ECC Minister and department staff reached out to have a meeting with the two group to hear their concerns with the tailings ponds? Mahsi.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The GNWT is aware of the water-related concerns of Athabasca, Chipewyan, and the Mikisew Cree First Nation and Fort Chip Metis Nation. The GNWT has collaborated with members from these First Nations through the Peace-Athabasca Delta Ecological Monitoring Program as well as the fish monitoring camps and watering sample. The GNWT regularly communicates with NWT Indigenous governments to share information about the transboundary water, including Kearl spill and seepage through direct contact as well as through regular dialogue with the Indigenous steering committee with the NWT water strategy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, and mahsi to the Minister. I'm just curious to know if the Minister's department has any reports or minutes of meeting that they may have had with the counterparts that I mentioned in Alberta, and if they could share that with the House or with the Members.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister, as being part of Cabinet who controls all of government, have they reached out to the Premier of Alberta to strongly urge dialogue to discuss grave

concerns regarding the mines tailing ponds, seepage, and quite possibly breaching the enclosures? Mahsi.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On a number of occasions, including when the Minister from Alberta phoned me last night, I expressed to the Alberta Minister of Environment and Protected Areas my strong concerns about the oil sand tailing pond seepage and the potential release of treated oil sands tailing water in the Athabasca River. And, Mr. Speaker, the Members will be receiving an e-mail that I received from the Minister last night. We looked at it, and we're sharing it with our colleagues, and we'll be sharing it with the communities across there.

They are taking it seriously. They've heard our concerns. They heard what we're trying to do. And she was very committed to making sure we get that information to us as soon as she got it. So for that, I thank Minister Schulz for that.

I have stated publicly the GNWT is not supportive of the release of treated tailing waters from the oil sands until we have the information, data, and science that demonstrates this can be done safely and will not affect the ecological integrity of our shared waters. A condition of regular dialogue between Ministers and senior officials, the GNWT is using the Alberta-NWT Bilateral Water Management Agreement and its bilateral management committee as a primary tool to address transboundary concerns related to water management and to protect the interests of the NWT residents.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Member talked about reports, and we are working with them getting these reports now. We're just one -- there's one pillar that we're waiting for to get that information. And then we're looking at that. So then once we have all that information, we hopefully will be able to share some of it with committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1614-19(2):
REIMBURSEMENT OF COSTS FOR
MEDICAL TRAVEL

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell this House why residents who choose to travel on their own to seek medical attention are unable to seek immediate reimbursement for medical travel? Especially when they are diagnosed with an illness that would require medical travel out of the territory. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the Member that the way medical travel works is that the patient needs to see a care provider in the Northwest Territories who refers them for services in the south that are not available here. And then in that case, medical travel pays for the travel, the hotel, the ground transportation, and so on. If people go and book travel on their own to see their own practitioners, the expense is theirs. Thank you.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we need more programs and services in small communities. Indeed, the health care systems needs to be improved, especially in small communities. If it was okay, then all these things would not be necessary.

Can the Minister explain if any review of the medical travel policy is underway to allow for more flexibility in these circumstances for the residents of the NWT? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're always interested in hearing about people's experience with medical travel in an effort to improve it. We have done reviews of different aspects of the medical travel policy while I have been the Minister. And at this point, our primary focus is negotiating with Canada to sign a new NIHB agreement, which includes the compensation for medical travel, to include a wider range of escorts. We hear many complaints about the lack of escorts, and we would like to improve that but we need the funding from Canada to make that work. Thank you.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are losing services in our communities and when we go to regional centres to access treatment, our residents are being turned away and denied access to care. What is being done to ensure there are no systemic barriers to accessing programs and services? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the Member for that question. No one who turns up at the emergency department in Yellowknife is denied treatment, and people from anywhere in the Northwest Territories are welcomed to make appointments in Yellowknife when they think they're going to be here. So I'm not really clear what the barriers are that the Member is talking about. Thank you.

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

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: I don't want to get into it, but I will do it later, okay.

Will the Minister of health commit to a medical policy review to ensure that residents who access care outside of the NWT, especially in urgent situations that require hospitalizations or treatments that are unavailable in the NWT, can qualify for medical travel? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my time as health Minister is drawing to a close so I'm unable to commit to any further examinations of the medical travel policy. But I encourage the next Assembly to continue its focus on improving those services. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Order. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

QUESTION 1615-19(2):
HAMLET OF FORT RESOLUTION

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of MACA. Can the Minister provide a reason why the Act hasn't been followed by his appointed administrator in Fort Resolution with respect to public meetings and community engagement? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we did put a Minister in there, I did contact the MLA and explain that we would be doing this. Mr. Speaker, the first thing that the Minister had to do was find out about the deficit. Right now, we're at \$2.5 million, and we're still looking into the situation. So that there is part of the situation. The other part of the situation is this past summer, we've had, you know, fires, evacuations. The South Slave staff has been pretty busy dealing with that, but we now have them back in and we will be working with them on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you, Minister. Will the Minister direct his administrator to follow the Act and to ensure public meetings are in the public and public documents are being disclosed to residents and to work with chief Louis Balsillie, DKFN, and president Arthur Beck, Fort Resolution Metis Council? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, right now we're still doing the investigation on the financial stability of this hamlet. Like I said, \$2.5 million right now, and we're still looking into things. What I can do

is I can make a commitment is that with -- once we're able to, we will get our staff in there to have a public meeting to meet with the residents there. So we will make that commitment moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. EDJERICON: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister also update the House, this House, on the status report on the issue that led Fort Resolution being placed under administration by the Minister and when will the hamlet of Fort Resolution return to the local government by local leaders? Thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I apologize to the Member. I may have missed his first part of the question. But I believe what he's talking about is asking when will we get the hamlet back up to be elected council.

As soon as we can address this deficit as we move forward, get the governance and everything in there. We want to be able to have an elected council that is actually on a clean slate. So once that is done and we're able to do that, we will make sure we have an elected council representing the people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In Fort Resolution, we have a very high young population and we also have a beautiful arena that hasn't been opened for years. The GNWT and MACA spend a lot of money in the late '80s to tear down the Pine Point arena and to relocate it to the community of Fort Resolution and only to shut the doors to the young population years down the road.

Mr. Speaker, right now the hamlet in Fort Resolution are storing heavy equipment in the arena, and that may be hazardous and also a liability to the hamlet of Fort Resolution. Can the Minister commit to look at -- I know that he mentioned that we -- there is a deficit but at the same time, like I said, we have a high population but we really need help in that community to keep the kids busy and that kind of thing. So can the Minister commit to also to hire maybe a recreation coordinator and to open the arena in Fort Resolution to the public, maybe in November/December 2023, to keep the young population busy through minor hockey, recreation hockey, broomball, public skating, and to be used by the local schools in Fort Resolution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, right now we're just trying to provide the basic services for the

residents of that community. As the Member said, the arena was closed for a long period of time. To get it up and operational, there's some work that has to be done. We will work with the administrator to see if we can get the money and funds to have a position in there. We used to. But the biggest challenge right now we're also facing is the ability to find people to work. That's one of the challenges that we're facing. I've got numerous phone calls about water delivery and stuff like that, so. And I'm pretty sure the Member's received those phone calls as well. So we will look at this. We will have those conversations with the administrator as well as with the regional staff working with the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1616-19(2):
BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR 2023 WILDFIRE
EVACUATIONS

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked the Minister of Finance and the Minister of ECC to come into this House today and bring with them their compassion, empathy, and a commitment for financial support for businesses and individuals impacted by the wildfire. I guess the answers to my questions, which will be asked, will determine if they did.

So, Mr. Speaker, has the Minister of Finance given any consideration for additional financial support for those that fled the fires and received no financial support for rooms and meals? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Members on this side, including myself, have received no shortage of information, contacts, and stories of folks who have gone through all sorts and manner of difficult times in the last while, and not for any lack of compassion or empathy that the circumstances and the supports that we have in place are what they are. There were supports put in place for rooms and for meals. I realize some people may have not been able to access them immediately or may have chosen not to for a variety of reasons. But, again, certainly it's not for lack of there being unavailability. It's recognizing, however, that, of course, as we've done throughout all of the emergencies we've had through this Assembly, that we can try to find ways to better serve residents and to better address the needs as we understand them and as they might evolve.

But we certainly are turning our minds to that and continue to turn our minds to that. I'm not going to be announcing a new program here on the floor of the House, Mr. Speaker. But trying, certainly, to look at what collective of people were not or may not be able to access the supports that have been in place. That certainly is an ongoing consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister confirm if there has been any consideration for increased business financial support for the communities of Hay River, K'atloodchee, and Enterprise based on the devastation over the past 16 months on those communities? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, although the immediate SEED directive around wildfires was created or established still in the midst of the emergency, and in the midst of the evacuation, we did quite quickly start to look at what other options there would be available. And I can say that I do expect, in the coming really short days, that we'll be able to singling some enhancements and increases to the existing programs and that that would, indeed, take into a consideration all of the affected communities but, in particular, looking at those that were affected by the most lengthy periods of evacuation over the summer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'm pleased to hear that, and I think the residents and businesses of Hay River will be as well.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister tell me if the criteria for financial business support will be flexible? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we establish programs or modify programs with speed, it is most easy to do that within the context of programs we have, which is why we've done the wildfire within the existing SEED policy, which does have some parameters to it. That said, as well as looking at increases and modifications based on the impacts to different communities I would say that, yes, we are also looking at whether there's some additional flexibility that we could have in terms of what is covered as well as some additional flexibility in terms of the periods to be covered again taking into consideration the uniqueness of this last summer and its impacts on businesses across the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, you know, I'm glad with those answers and I think the Minister, you know, heard the pleas, I guess, from, you know, people in the South Slave that have been really devastated over the last while.

So, Mr. Speaker, will the Minister confirm if she and her department continue to pursue additional financial support from the federal government for businesses and individuals impacted by disasters in the South Slave because we need their support as well; we can't do it on our own. Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: The short answer is yes, Mr. Speaker. I certainly am; I'm certainly not alone in that. I know my colleagues, certainly led in the Premier's office to highest levels of the federal government, are actively putting forward the circumstances that we face here in the Northwest Territories not only for the costs to government but then to the costs to residents and obviously providing us that flexibility to respond. But also, yes, ITI is also directly reaching out to our counterparts. And, Mr. Speaker, knowing that the tourism sector as well is one that has been particularly impacted, I'd note some of the examples given earlier during the Member's statement highlighted areas that were, in fact, tourism businesses. This is a sector that's been particularly affected over the last few years, and I will be attending one last Ministers' meeting with the hope that we can bring some attention to this area that has been affected so much by the wildfires. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1617-19(2):
ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDELINES FOR
CONTAMINATED SITES

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Environment and Climate Change on the environmental guideline for contaminated site remediation. I mentioned in my statement that there's no specific legislative authority sited in the document. The most logical would be the Environmental Protection Act. But can the Minister tell us whether this guideline is intended to be legally binding and enforceable? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the guidelines has existed in the NWT since 2003 and has now been updated. The guidelines is one of the many tools under the Environmental Protection Act that is administered by ECC. The guideline describes the general contaminant sites remediation process. Although not legally binding, it sets soil, surface water, and groundwater quality standards for the site remediation to act in compliance with the Environmental Protection Act. Most of the contaminant sites that the guidelines apply to occur on private lands within communities. And in these cases, environment and climate change officers can direct or order remediation of contaminated sites to the standards specified in the guidelines. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. It might be helpful to actually amend the document to cite the Environmental Protection Act. But I also wonder whether this guideline will apply to privately-owned lands or a contaminated site might be located even if the contamination has not escaped the site. So can the Minister tell us whether this guideline will apply to privately-owned lands and how? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Environmental Protection Act and this guideline applies to the whole of the Northwest Territories, including privately-owned land.

Environment and climate change officers, under the authority of the Environmental Protection Act, can direct or order the remediation of contaminated sites even if the contaminants had not escaped the site. The land use permits, and water licenses issued under the authority of the Water Act or the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, boards can choose to apply the guidelines or select their own standards. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that because I know one site, in Yellowknife, I'm going to direct his way, probably right at the end of this day. In my statement, though, I also said that the only mention of the public in this document is as a recipient of some sort of vague notice that a site is found to be contaminated. There's no role for the public in the remediation process, nothing about whether any of the information or decisions are public. So can the Minister explain this failure to include any role for the public in the remediation process as set out in the document? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned previously -- or mentioned before, most of the contaminant sites that this guideline applies to occur on private lands within the communities. The site remediation process is primarily between the owner of the residence or business and the environment and climate change officer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. Sometimes neighbours want to know what's happening next door, and this doesn't provide any mechanism for that to happen. But the site closure section of this document is particularly troubling. It would enable GNWT to accept contaminated sites where there could be residual environmental liabilities without any financial security and could allow GNWT to accept sites requiring perpetual care at taxpayers' expense. So can the Minister explain why this guideline would allow GNWT to accept financial liabilities and perpetual care at public costs without any public disclosure? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As mentioned earlier, this guideline does not apply to sites that have land use permits and/or water license. The guideline does not allow the GNWT to accept financial liability or perpetual care at the GNWT cost. Under the Environment Protection Act, the parties responsible for the contamination is responsible for cleaning it up. If the responsible party is unable to address the contamination and is deemed an environmental emergency, the Act gives environment and climate change the authority to undertake the work required and recover the costs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1618-19(2):
SETTLING LAND CLAIMS

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned earlier when I asked the Premier some questions about progress on land claims in the spring, there was some perhaps minor optimism that she would sign a document in the life of this government. I'm just hoping the Premier can update this House whether there will be any signatures in the life of our government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad the MLA's hopeful. I'm hopeful. We've got an extra month, but I'll see. If not in this government, early in the next government. We have a couple that are on the -- really close. One final self-government agreement is out for section 35 consultation, the Norman Wells agreement. Pending the outcome of that consultation, it could move to the ratification process. I'm hopeful that that'll be probably the soonest one. One reconciliation progress agreement is out for section 35 consultation, the K'atloodeeche First Nation. Pending the outcome of that consultation, it could move to the final agreement negotiation stage. And two final transboundary land and resource agreements are on the verge of starting the ratification processes - the Athabasca Denesuline and the Ghotelnene K'odtineh Dene. Pending the outcome of the ratification, these deals could be finalized. So we're hopeful, Mr. Speaker. But it's not really good to count on hope. If not by the end of this government, then my projection would be really early in the next government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, that's a slightly different list than I heard before, that we had Norman Wells self-government. We had the two transboundary; I was aware of those. There was the KFN reconciliation agreement there and hopefully leading to a treaty land entitlement. I understand that is largely federal negotiations. But there was no mention of the Akaitcho AIP which last time I asked this question was out for consultation. Does the Premier have an update on whether the Akaitcho agreement-in-principle is still on track? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would say it's still on track. We had agreed on a draft agreement-in-principle in the fall of 2020. We thought it was going to go out to consultation. The Akaitcho has asked to hold off a while on that one. They want to do some internal review of that as well. So one step forward, one step backwards, that's the way of negotiations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't usually ask open-ended questions because -- you know, but it's the end of the Assembly, and I'm just wondering if the Premier has any sort of reflection or a lessons learned, or perhaps that is something the negotiators are doing, about, you know, how we could perhaps speed up some of our negotiations. We have over 17 tables and, you know, to get something signed in four years is, I think, a disappointment. Is there any sort of reflecting occurring either by the Premier or

within the department to look how we could speed some of these tables up? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I love open-ended questions; I can just answer them wherever I want. The reality is that, Mr. Speaker, if I was to reflect back, there is -- advice to the next government would be always be flexible, always be open minded, truly hear what people are saying, not just what they speak but what they mean by that. Negotiations take decades is something I've realized. So, you know, I'd like to take credit for all the work. I'd like to be envious a little bit of the next government being able to sign some of these really early on. But the reality is they take decades; there's three parties that have to come to agreements.

I think the biggest thing that I reflect on in this government's work, though, Mr. Speaker, is that we listened. When I first got elected as Premier and took on the file, I talked to the Indigenous governments. They said there was two things that were really -- and the MLAs -- that were really obstacles. One was the core principles and objectives. Many of the Indigenous governments had problems with that, standards that the GNWT in fairness couldn't even meet ourselves. After many discussions with our own departments, we took that off. And so that will forward negotiations.

And the biggest thing, Members at the beginning asked me what is the negotiating mandate not realizing that it's not one mandate just to get some settled, it's negotiating mandates. Every area has a mandate. So I think I was challenged, correct me if I'm wrong, but by Members in the House to publicize them. So, again, I took it to the department and asked them and reflected on it and after many, many discussions, we published them. And, you know what, Mr. Speaker, we never heard a lot of flack from the Indigenous governments. I think that by publishing the core mandates of the negotiating process and taking off standards that no one else could expect to meet will be -- serve us well going forward in all future land claim and self-government agreements. That's my reflection. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1619-19(2):
HOMELESSNESS

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are in regards to the homelessness strategy A Way Home. The homelessness strategy was tabled earlier this year and my first question that I'd like to gain some perspective on is who is ultimately

responsible for homelessness and the homelessness strategy within our government? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister responsible for Homelessness.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Who's -- there was a couple questions. Who is responsible for homelessness, and who is responsible for the strategy within our government?

Many factors impact homelessness, Mr. Speaker. I think all of society has to look at that and how we treat people, how we give opportunities to people, because I think we all have a role in that to look at. I think that government departments, each department, we have a Minister responsible for Housing. She's responsible to make sure that we have houses on the ground. But we have a justice Minister here. We have an education Minister. We have a health Minister. We have ITI. We have -- all Ministers have to take ownership and look at what they can do within their departments to address housing and homelessness specifically.

As for the homelessness strategy, Mr. Speaker, the MLA's right. We waited five years for that strategy, and there was no way I was going to leave this government without one. It's where my passion, my heart is as well. So the homelessness strategy has now been taken in under the Premier's portfolio under Executive and Indigenous Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if the intent is for this strategy, in the life of this strategy as it works through all of the deliverables, will remain with the Premier's office or if the intent is to eventually shift it to housing or into department land, or is that going to be seen moving forward as almost like a new unit that then lives within EIA? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't really speak for the next government or governments to come. The Premier does have the option to be able to shuffle departments, move Ministers as appropriate, consolidate as we did, or make departments bigger. That's always under the purview of the Premier. However, I did my best, Mr. Speaker, to try to make it sustainable within the Executive and Indigenous Affairs, and that's why purposely I brought the homelessness strategy under the Premier's portfolio in this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's a lot in here, and a lot of

really important work in here, but a lot of it, before we end up with houses on the ground and before we end up with things like integrated service delivery, a lot of it is things that need to happen within the back end of department land. And so it's really important that we see this work get done and get done on time. And so I'm wondering if the Premier can speak to -- since it was tabled -- since this strategy was tabled, what has been accomplished within the GNWT? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So the commitments for the -- by the end of this government would be that the integrated case management workers would be housed within the Executive and Indigenous Affairs. We were working on the job descriptions, the evaluations, etcetera, just before the evacuation happened. I believe that process, if it's not finished already, will be close to. And I'll make a point of making sure that it's done before I leave. And so before the end of this government, the job descriptions, the people that will be hired, that integrated case management team will be located in the Executive and Indigenous Affairs, and we will begin to make those connections with all of the agencies because it can't be done alone by the GNWT. It has to be done in consultation, side by side, with the agencies addressing homelessness. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if the Premier can next speak to what, in the next six months, we can expect to see come from this government. My biggest concern is that a lot of the things that we see happening are going to be internal, and we really need action on the ground so that people of the Northwest Territories feel it and, at the end of the day, we reach zero homelessness. Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What can be addressed in -- what's going to happen in the next six months, I can't speak to that, Mr. Speaker, because there will be an election within the next six months. So what I can speak to is by the end of this government, we shall have that team organized and put into the Executive and Indigenous Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, though, this cannot -- this issue is huge and it needs to be addressed. The reason that we did the homelessness strategy, the reason that we pulled it into the executive is because it's been off the side of the table for departments for many, many decades, and we've realized that that is not okay. So

personally, I'm going to do my piece to make sure that this gets integrated into the executive to be as strong as it can. I need MLAs in the next Assembly, and residents -- I will be part of that chain banging the drum. We need to make sure that homelessness is a priority, that homelessness stays a priority, and that the integrated services, not just the people, but departments working together continue so that we can address homelessness so that people have the basic standard -- a home to live in. If you don't have a place to live, Mr. Speaker -- food, clothing, and shelter -- lots of research says you won't prosper. So my hope is that the MLAs sitting across the table, those that get re-elected, will continue to make this a priority and will continue to push government because even if you are or not, I will be doing that as a resident to the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to make a comment. I know that the Minister is going to be retiring and not returning in the fall. But the question that I asked, it needed to be asked. The Assembly may be ending but the work is not ending, so I just wanted to make that comment. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Taken as a comment. Oral questions. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Sorry, Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I speak unanimous consent to return to recognition of visitors in the gallery. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 5. Are there any nays? Member for Great Slave.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery (Reversion)

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope she's still here because I do really struggle sitting where I sit -- yeah, okay, excellent. I'd like to recognize my constituent Kate Reid. Kate is the president of the YWCA, and I'm super excited for the opening of the family centre. Welcome, Kate.

MR. SPEAKER: Welcome. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. If we have missed anyone in the gallery, I'd like to welcome you to the Chamber, and I hope you're enjoying our session today. Thank you.

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 Hay River South.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees

COMMITTEE REPORT 76-19(2): SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON TRANSITION MATTERS MOVING FORWARD: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON TRANSITION MATTERS

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your special committee on transition matters is pleased to provide its report on transition matters titled Moving Forward: Recommendations for the Incoming 20th Assembly and commends it to the House.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Frame Lake, that the Committee Report 76-19(2) be deemed read and printed in Hansard in its entirety. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. 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. Committee report is deemed read.

---Carried

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:

Introduction

A democratic society relies on the peaceful, coordinated, and timely transition of power from one group of elected leaders to another. Following the Territorial General Election, the Members-elect of the 20th Legislative Assembly will meet in Yellowknife to transition power from one Assembly to another. In our consensus style of government, the incoming Assembly must make important decisions right away. This includes how they will set their priorities and budgets, who will lead the government, and the structure and membership of standing committees.

As Members of the 19th Assembly, we benefited from our predecessors' recommendations. In this report, we make recommendations we hope will benefit our successors. The recommendations and observations in this report are suggestions for improvements to the current system.

We hope Members of the 20th Legislative Assembly find these recommendations useful, and we wish them every success.

Priority Setting

The process for priority setting in each Assembly is set out in the Consensus Government Process Conventions, specifically the Priority Setting and Reporting Convention (Appendix A). The outcome of that process, the priorities of the 19th Legislative Assembly are attached (Appendix B).

Committee reflected upon the priorities and mandate development processes employed in the 19th Assembly. The 19th Assembly engaged early with key partners before facilitating the priority setting process. All of this occurred before December. Although Committee agreed on the importance and continuation of engaging with elected Indigenous government and community leaders in the development of priorities, more is required for this process. Priorities were identified at the beginning of the term with minimal ability to adjust the actions and commitments based on new events and developments.

Members noted that the priority setting process may have benefited from a greater understanding of their own roles, the roles of government departments, and the relationship with key partners. Allowing for a more flexible and extended input process to occur between October and January would give more time for all Members to better understand the operational and budgetary realities of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and still provide an opportunity for fulsome engagement with partners. It would promote a more informed priority setting process.

Although it was noted that this additional time for on-boarding and engagement could delay the implementation of priorities, Committee agreed that ensuring Members are fully aware of all aspects of government and their roles and responsibilities would ensure a more informed priority setting process. This more wholesome understanding would allow Members to shift resources towards established priorities through their budgetary exercises.

Committee agreed that future Assemblies should attempt to limit the number and scope of their priorities to reflect a more strategic vision. Priorities should be high-level in nature and limited in number. A recent example discussed by Committee were the five priorities released by the 6th Legislative Assembly of Nunavut (Appendix C). The Priorities should focus on

outcomes that the Assembly would like to achieve as opposed to identifying specific actions the GNWT should take. By focusing on outcomes, the Executive and Legislative Branches of government would have the flexibility to work through actions needed to achieve these outcomes and to adapt their actions as necessary.

The additional time taken in priority setting allows Members to make public statements around their own priorities, ensure Members meet with Indigenous Governments and Non-Governmental Organizations, provide Cabinet Members time for departmental briefings, and provide Regular Members time for briefings.

The Committee is making the following recommendation to the 20th Assembly:

Recommendation 1

The Special Committee on Transition Matters recommends that the Input Process for Priority Setting occur between October 2023 and January 2024. Once all Members have a better grasp of their responsibilities, capacity, and other priorities, it is recommended that the 20th Assembly use the February-March sitting to finalize their priorities. Should the 20th Assembly identify the need for a separate mandate document versus mandate letters, this can be completed for the May/June sitting. This additional time will allow Members to better shape their priorities and ensure those priorities are reflected in subsequent business and budget planning processes for the next year and the rest of the 20th Assembly.

The advantage of this delayed priority setting process is that it allows time for Members to become more familiar with their roles, the government, services already offered, and a better sense of what they hope to accomplish together. Members of Cabinet will have been briefed on their departments and Regular Members will have completed a first budget review of each department. Members should be in a better position to critically assess priorities. They can also reflect on their priorities and the priorities identified by stakeholders when first elected, and how that may be changed by their understanding of how government currently operates.

The Committee is making the following recommendation to the 20th Assembly:

Recommendation 2

The Special Committee on Transition Matters recommends that the priorities are tabled before the end of the February-March 2024 Sitting to allow for a mandate style document to be introduced in the May-June sitting.

Orientation Of Members

In each Assembly, an independent commission is struck that reviews Members' compensation and benefits. That commission makes recommendations which Members consider in the House as motions. In the 19th Assembly, the Commission considered Members' orientation, and made several recommendations that were adopted by Members of the 19th Legislative Assembly. These recommendations included that initial Member orientation be mandatory and that it be given over a 30-day period.

The enclosed Orientation Schedule for the 20th Legislative Assembly was prepared with these recommendations in mind (Appendix D). The schedule had to be reworked once the election date was changed following the wildfires and evacuations in communities across the Northwest Territories. In this schedule orientation will continue into January and February.

Committee recommended to the Office of the Clerk that the orientation focus on providing information that Members need to know when they need it. For example, understanding roles and responsibilities is the focus prior to selection of a Cabinet. Orientation to committees and the legislative process is later, when they will be facing their first sitting.

Revised Budget Cycle

Committee identified that the current budget cycle has several disadvantages from a timing and communications perspective. A key issue under the current regime is that Business Plans are developed approximately four months prior to the Main Estimates. This timing creates financial schedules that do not align between these documents. This also creates a duplication of staff efforts in creating two financial schedules leading to a less efficient process and unclear financial statements.

In addition to this, during an election year, the current budgetary process would have new MLAs approve two business plans in their first year in government (December/January and September). This again duplicates work, creates complications in financial reporting between Business Plans and Main Estimates, and most importantly limits the ability of MLAs to ensure their priorities are reflected in the first full Budget of the new Assembly.

Combining Business Plans and Main Estimates would create a more succinct and clearer financial schedule that allows Members and the public to better understand, articulate, and influence the budgetary cycle.

The Special Committee on Transition Matters makes the following recommendation:

Recommendation 3:

The Special Committee on Transition Matters recommends that the development of Business Plans and Main Estimates, in non-election years, are completed concurrently to allow for release and review by standing committees in December/January.

Under the Financial Administration Act, the Government is required to have an operating plan in place by April 1 of each year. As a result, departments are called upon to develop interim operating plans in an election year, until full business plans are developed.

The Committee agreed that given the recommendations involving the Priority Setting Process discussed in Section 2 of this Report, it is important that the budget processes have an opportunity to reflect the Priorities of the 20th Assembly.

An Interim Budget for an election year gives ability for Members to have a comprehensive understanding of the work of departments while developing their Priorities. It further gives room for flexibility to determine how funding should be allocated towards the established priorities for the 20th Assembly.

The Special Committee on Transition Matters makes the following recommendation:

Recommendation 4

The Special Committee on Transition Matters recommends that, after the election, an interim budget that provides supply through the Spring of 2024 is presented followed by a full budget in the first May-June sitting of the 20th Assembly.

Cabinet Selection

The selection and structure of Cabinet is decided by each Assembly at the commencement of its term. There is nothing in legislation that determines the size and composition of Cabinet or the process used to recommend the appointment of the Premier and individual Ministers. The Territorial Leadership Committee, consisting of all 19 members, has historically met to determine these positions through a public forum.

Committee considered a discussion paper on options for cabinet selection. Since Division, the Cabinet has consisted of six Members, each representing a distinct geographical region of the Territory; two from those constituencies north of Great Slave Lake, two from those south of Great Slave Lake, and two

from Yellowknife. This system has come to be known as the 2-2-2 structure. Nominations are accepted for each of the three distinct regions. Each nominee is then called upon to deliver a ten-minute speech before a series of ballots are held for each of the three regions until two nominees from each attain a majority of support.

Committee agreed that the advantages of the 2-2-2 system outweighed any advantages discussed in other potential Cabinet criteria systems. The 2-2-2 system helps to limit the ability of a single region or urban centre to dominate Cabinet; provides acceptable levels of small and medium community representation; and is well understood by the public and new Members.

Mid-Term Review

The 19th Legislative Assembly did not conduct a mid-term review of Cabinet. It was determined that the performance of Members of Cabinet would be reviewed as needed by way of a motion without the need for a formal, scheduled review.

The 19th Assembly did conduct a mid-term review of the mandate. The government would table an annual update on progress on implementation of the mandate. The second annual update on the mandate was referred to Committee of the Whole. The Premier and the Secretary to Cabinet appeared as witnesses and answered questions related to mandate items within each priority. Members had 10 minutes to make comments or ask questions on each priority, not individual mandate items. It was through these considerations that

Committee agreed to recommend the following:

Recommendation 5

The Special Committee on Transition Matters recommends that the 20th Assembly not hold a mid-term review on the performance of Members of Cabinet but address their performance through other measures.

Recommendation 6

The Special Committee on Transition Matters recommends that the 20th Assembly determine a method for reviewing the Government's progress on the mandate after a mandate document has been identified.

Conclusion

The recommendations included in this report were drafted to provide the members of the next Assembly with practical advice that will support their efforts to shape what Government focuses

on, how it operates, and how Cabinet is selected. Consensus government is a unique and ever-evolving system of parliamentary democracy. This report was written to give the next Assembly a platform to better operate and implement key priorities important to them. It was done with the best intentions of supporting their efforts and their goals. The committee wishes to extend its very best wishes to all elected Members of the 20th Legislative Assembly

MR. SPEAKER: Reports of standing and special committees. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Frame Lake, that Committee Report 76-19(2), titled Moving Forward: Recommendations for the Incoming 20th Assembly, Report of the Special Committee on Transition Matters, be received by the Assembly and referred to Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. 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 referred to Committee of the Whole.

---Carried

Reports of standing and special committees. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 1024-19(2):
RECLAIMING THE CAPABLE PERSON: WE
ARE ALL CAPABLE PERSONS WHEN WE
HAVE COMMUNITY – A STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK FOR ADDRESSING FAMILY
VIOLENCE IN THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: Reclaiming the Capable Person: We Are All Capable Persons When We Have Community - A Strategic Framework for Addressing Family Violence in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 1025-19(2):
CORRESPONDENCE DATED MARCH 1,
2023 FROM THE CANADIAN DENTAL
HYGIENISTS ASSOCIATION RE:
MODERNIZING THE DENTAL AUXILIARIES
ACT FOR INCREASED ACCESS TO
PREVENTATIVE HEALTHCARE

TABLED DOCUMENT 1026-19(2):
CORRESPONDENCE DATED MARCH 7,
2023 FROM THE BRITISH COLUMBIA
DENTAL HYGIENISTS ASSOCIATION RE:
MODERNIZING THE DENTAL AUXILIARIES
ACT FOR INCREASED ACCESS TO
PREVENTATIVE HEALTHCARE

TABLED DOCUMENT 1027-19(2):
CORRESPONDENCE DATED MARCH 29,
2023 FROM THE ONTARIO DENTAL
HYGIENISTS ASSOCIATION

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table three letters. The first is from the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association; the second from the British Columbia Dental Hygienists Association; and, the third is from the Ontario Dental Hygienists Association. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Member for Frame Lake.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 86–19(2):
RECOMMENDATIONS OF INTEGRITY
COMMISSIONER RESPECTING CONDUCT
OF MLA GREAT SLAVE

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I give notice that on Friday, October 6th, 2023, I will move the following motion: Whereas the Integrity Commissioner received a written complaint and carried out an investigation pursuant to Section 100(2) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act;

And whereas the Integrity Commissioner submitted an investigation report dated October 3rd, 2023, to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly into the conduct of Ms. Katrina Nokleby, MLA Great Slave, by returning to and remaining in Yellowknife after it was ordered to be evacuated in August 2023;

And whereas the Integrity Commissioner has concluded that the MLA for Great Slave violated section 2 of the Members' Code of Conduct;

And whereas based on that conclusion, section 102(c) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act provides that the

Integrity Commissioner may recommend to the Legislative Assembly one or more punishments in accordance with Section 106;

And whereas the Integrity Commissioner, pursuant to section 106(1)(a) of the Act, had recommended the Legislative Assembly:

- (a) reprimand Ms. Nokleby; and,
- (b) fine Ms. Nokleby \$7,500 to be reduced by the \$3,500 contribution she has made to charity for a net amount of \$4,000.

Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that the recommendations of the Integrity Commissioner be accepted and that this Assembly reprimand the Member for Great Slave and impose a fine of \$7,500 to be reduced by \$3,500, for charitable contributions made, for a net amount of \$4,000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Notices of motion. Member for Thebacha.

MOTION 87-19(2):
DISSOLUTION OF THE 19TH ASSEMBLY

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, October the 6th, 2023, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, second by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that this Legislative Assembly request the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories to dissolve the 19th Assembly of Northwest Territories on October 15th, 2023 to permit polling day for a general election to be held on November 14th, 2023.

And further, that the Speaker transmit this resolution to the Commissioner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Notices of motion. 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, 75, 80, 84, and 85, Committee Report 52, 53, 55, and 74-19(2), Minister's Statement 264-19(2), Tabled Document 681-19(2), Tabled Document 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 deal with Committee Report 55-19(2) and Bill 85. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Government House Leader.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. We wish to deal with Bill 65 and Bill 84 as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we've agreed to consider Committee Report 55-19(2), Report on Bill 85: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act. I will go to the chair of the Standing committee of Government Operations for any opening comments. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Bill 85, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act, received second reading in the Legislative Assembly on March 30th, 2023, and was referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations for review.

The standing committee held public hearings in Fort Simpson, Fort Smith, Yellowknife, Tuktoyaktuk, Inuvik, and Deline. Due to forest fires, committee was unable to travel to Hay River but held a virtual meeting with the Metis Local 51 as requested. Committee held a public meeting with the Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs and completed its clause-by-clause review on the bill on September 20th, 2023. Committee received four written submissions on this bill.

I thank the committee for their efforts in reviewing this legislation. Individual Members may have additional comments or questions. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. I will now open the floor to general comments on the committee report 55-19(2), Report on Bill 85: United Nations Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act. Do any Members have general comments? Seeing none, may we please proceed to the motion? Member for Yellowknife North.

COMMITTEE MOTION 493-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 55-19(2) STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
OPERATIONS REPORT ON THE REVIEW
OF BILL 85: UNITED NATIONS
DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IMPLEMENTATION
ACT – INDIGENOUS GOVERNMENT AND
ORGANIZATIONS CONSENT,
CARRIED

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories, in collaboration and cooperation with Indigenous governments or organizations, develop and release a clear statement on how it interprets and intends to apply free prior and informed consent. 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 Yellowknife North.

COMMITTEE MOTION 494-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 55-19(2) STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
OPERATIONS REPORT ON THE REVIEW
OF BILL 85: UNITED NATIONS
DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IMPLEMENTATION
ACT – ACTION PLAN,
CARRIED

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories, in collaboration and cooperation with Indigenous governments or organizations include, in the action plan developed under section 9 of Bill 85, specific measures to confirm rights, devolve jurisdiction, build institutional capacity, strengthen fiscal autonomy, set service standards, and facilitate nation-to-nation relationships, among others. This work should

refer to the written submission of the First Nations Financial Management Board to committee's review of Bill 85. 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 Yellowknife North.

COMMITTEE MOTION 495-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 55-19(2) STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
OPERATIONS REPORT ON THE REVIEW
OF BILL 85: UNITED NATIONS
DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IMPLEMENTATION
ACT – FUNDING FRAMEWORK,
CARRIED

MR. JOHNSON: Madam Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories should set up a funding framework to support Indigenous governments or organizations' capacity to engage with work to implement the declaration going forward. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, I'm kind of a bit surprised we're just rushing through this because I think there's some pretty significant public policy issues here. And this recommendation, I certainly support because I think there's going to be a lot of work necessary to come up with an action plan to revise policy legislation of this government. And that does require resourcing of some of the Indigenous governments to participate in that process. And then, you know, we get to the stage of actually -- this won't happen in this Assembly but in the next Assembly and the Assembly after that, individual pieces of legislation are going to have to be reviewed. Policies are going to have to be reviewed. Indigenous governments, not all of them have the capacity to do a lot of that work at probably the pace that some others would like.

So I do support this recommendation. And I guess I also have to express some concern that not all the Indigenous governments were a part of the memorandum of understanding or the working group in developing this legislation.

You know, I think Cabinet probably tried to engage everybody but not everybody maybe wanted to or had the capacity to or thought that this was the best use of their resources for whatever reason. But, you know, as I understand it, at least a couple of very significant regional Indigenous governments, Akaitcho and the Deh Cho, were not engaged, not involved in this work to develop the bill. But maybe if there's sufficient resources made available, maybe they would have the ability to participate in the future in the implementation. So I do support this recommendation. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

COMMITTEE MOTION 496-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 55-19(2) STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
OPERATIONS REPORT ON THE REVIEW
OF BILL 85: UNITED NATIONS
DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IMPLEMENTATION
ACT – MECHANISM ON ACTION PLAN
COMMITTEE,
CARRIED

MR. JOHNSON: Madam Chair, I move that this committee recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories, in consultation with the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight and Indigenous governments or organizations, set up a mechanism that ensures Regular Members can access timely, comprehensive, and detailed information about the action plan committee's work. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks. I can certainly support this. I am concerned about the level of engagement there was with Regular MLAs in the development of the bill. Unfortunately, it all happened behind closed doors so I can't say much, but it certainly didn't meet my expectation. And the bill, I don't think, really reflected, in my opinion, the legislative proposal, which I can't speak to either, was at such a high vague level that the bill I guess didn't really -- the bill had a lot more in it than I

think I'd expected as a result of the legislative proposal, and there's a number of issues that I'm sure we're going to discuss further when we get to the actual -- the bill itself. But we do have process conventions in place now that allow for information sharing on a confidential basis. And I guess there's been a number of cases in this Assembly where that hasn't happened, and I continue to highlight those.

But moving forward, Cabinet's got to find a better way to do this, especially with this bill because this bill can and probably should change the way we do our business. It will. It'll affect the legislative agenda for the next Assembly and the one after that. It'll affect the policy work, the kind of things that committees are asked to do. A big part of it is going to be related to the implementation of this declaration, and the Regular MLAs can and need to be part of that process. Relying on Cabinet to get information secondhand, in my experience in the last Assembly, in this Assembly, just doesn't work. It doesn't work. And I -- you know, great if some effort can be put into some kind of a mechanism to share timely, comprehensive, and detailed information on the action plan committee's work, but I don't really -- I just haven't seen that implemented even in the development of this bill itself. And I'm going to speak to that when we get to the bill itself and at least one other recommendation here. So I can support this, but I think there's a better fix for this and I'm going to be raising that when we get to the bill itself. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstaining? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Yellowknife North.

COMMITTEE MOTION 497-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 55-19(2) STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
OPERATIONS REPORT ON THE REVIEW
OF BILL 85: UNITED NATIONS
DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IMPLEMENTATION
ACT – SHARED DECISION-MAKING
AGREEMENT,
CARRIED

MR. JOHNSON: Madam Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories should, without

delay, make all authorizations provided to a Minister to negotiate or enter into a shared decision-making agreement under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act publicly available by publishing it on a government-maintained website. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. So this is an interesting feature of this bill is that the Cabinet will authorize individual Ministers to go off and negotiate something called shared decision-making agreements with Indigenous governments. It's also part of BC's legislation to implement the declaration. I think this -- that's a good thing. I support it in principle. But I do think that Cabinet dropped the ball in terms of not adopting the approach that BC has of actually making that delegation of authority or at least not providing notice to the public that that's going to happen. What has been added to the bill as a result of the committee review is that, you know, the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight basically -- and its successors, which is basically the Regular MLAs -- will get that notice. But it's not a public document. The Cabinet, in putting this bill together, completely forgot about the public. And I'm going to talk more about that in my general remarks on the bill itself, but.

So this notice is going to go to the Regular MLAs through the standing committee, but it's not going to be made public. I don't think that's good enough, and I think we need to do a lot more work around public education and how this is going to work. Some of that's just going to roll out as we get into this process. But Cabinet just didn't do a very good job in terms of the public interest, public participation in its own public government -- sorry, open government policy in preparing this bill. And I'm going to continue to shine a light on that. So great that these agreements are going to be shared publicly after the fact, but I don't think that that's good enough. I think that they should actually be shared publicly before they're finalized so that the public can see what the government's doing. That's what open, transparent, and accountable government's all about. And Cabinet just doesn't seem to want to go there, so I'm quite disappointed. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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 Yellowknife North.

COMMITTEE MOTION 498-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 55-19(2) STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
OPERATIONS REPORT ON THE REVIEW
OF BILL 85: UNITED NATIONS
DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IMPLEMENTATION
ACT – PROVIDE NOTICE TO STANDING
COMMITTEE,
CARRIED

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide notice and seek comments from the Standing Committee of Accountability and Oversight before entering into a shared decision-making agreement under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. So the reason why this recommendation is here is that committee tried to get this included in the bill at the clause-by-clause review, and the Minister would not concur. So the fallback position for committee is to try to bring it forward as a recommendation and I guess at the appropriate time when we're in the bill itself, I'll move a motion to try to get back -- to get it in. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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 Yellowknife North.

COMMITTEE MOTION 499-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 55-19(2) STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
OPERATIONS REPORT ON THE REVIEW
OF BILL 85: UNITED NATIONS
DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IMPLEMENTATION
ACT – FIVE YEAR REVIEW,
CARRIED

MR. JOHNSON: Madam Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories in its capacity as a member of the action plan committee, advocate for the action plan committee to choose an independent person or entity to lead the five-year review of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act. 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

Member for Yellowknife North.

COMMITTEE MOTION 500-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 55-19(2) STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
OPERATIONS REPORT ON THE REVIEW
OF BILL 85: UNITED NATIONS
DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IMPLEMENTATION
ACT – GUIDELINES FOR STATEMENTS,
CARRIED

MR. JOHNSON: Madam Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories consult the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight when developing guidelines for statements of consistency required under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I can't let this one go without raising some concerns and issues that I think are well reflected in the report itself. But I like this idea of a statement of consistency for government bills. I think government has the resources, and they can and should be doing this. The difficulty is that

the way the bill was drafted is that requirement for a statement of consistency was also imposed on Private Member's bills without any discussion/consultation with this side of the House. And I'll confirm this when the Minister's up in the witness chair when we get to it but just no thought whatsoever. Didn't even tell us.

That's just not how this place is supposed to work. And I guess we did get some advice about this that this might not be -- or that it would not be -- I can't really talk much about it but we do have certain privileges in this House, and one of them is the ability to bring forward Private Member's bills.

In my experience in eight years, it's very daunting for an individual MLA to bring forward a Private Member's bill. The cards are stacked against you right from the very start in terms of yeah, we can access the assistance from a law clerk but we don't have departments. We don't have resources at our disposal to go out and do consultations on bills, discussion papers, What We Heard reports. Private Members don't have any of those kind of resources. So now adding on a requirement for -- sorry, and that's just the start of it. You know, and if Cabinet doesn't support your Private Member's bill, quite frankly it's a very, very difficult task to try to get it through this House. I want to -- hats off to my colleague from Yellowknife North who managed to get a Private Member's bill through amending the Ombud Act with the support of Regular MLAs even though Cabinet wouldn't support it. But the cards are stacked against you right from the beginning as a Regular Member on Private Member's bills. We don't even have proper procedures for standing committees to review them. It's very difficult. I just -- you know, and having tried it a few times, it's a monument -- and you really have to have a lot of discipline and gumption to actually get up and try to do it but sometimes that's the only way change actually ever happens. This bill is going to impose one more barrier.

Now Regular Members are going to have to do a statement of consistency, work with the law clerk. And I think that statement of consistency, when it comes to at least one of the items in the declaration, FPIC, free prior informed consent. How can Regular MLAs honestly say that they have done consultation with Indigenous governments about FPIC for their bills coming forward? It's just an impossible barrier to get over. Absolutely impossible. But Cabinet just threw it in the bill. Didn't even bother to ask us. I'm really upset about this. That's not to say I don't support this. But we don't have the resources to do this kind of work but just thrown in by Cabinet, didn't bother to talk to us. One more hurdle for Private Member's bills. I think I'll leave it at that, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. 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 have concluded consideration of Committee Report 55-19(2)?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. We've concluded consideration of Committee Report 55-19(2), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on Bill 85: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act.

Committee, we've agreed to consider Bill 85, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act. I will ask the Premier, the Minister responsible for the Executive and Indigenous Affairs, to introduce the bill. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am here to introduce Bill 85, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act.

This bill represents an important step forward in advancing one of the priorities of the 19th Legislative Assembly tabled in October 2019 which directed this government to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The drafting of this legislation has been done with Indigenous governments in a way that respects their diverse needs and priorities. This is consistent with the requirements on the GNWT set out in the United Nations Declaration when undertaking implementation. The collaborative development of the legislation, as well as the requirement in Bill 85 to collaboratively develop an action plan, is just a first step. This legislation will be yet another tool we have to formalize an ongoing relationship between the Government of the Northwest Territories and Indigenous governments to support the long-term work of implementing the United Nations Declaration in the Northwest Territories.

This government has taken significant steps forward to be inclusive. Among them, our co-development of legislation through the Intergovernmental Council and the inception of

the Northwest Territories Council of Leaders have not only been resounding successes here, but are also being watched by other provinces and territories who are keen to learn from our progress and adapt our lessons into their own systems. Within this context, our consensus system includes distinct roles for Regular MLAs and for the executive. Among them, the executive works directly with Indigenous or other governments to advance shared priorities while Regular MLAs have the power and responsibility to debate, amend, and pass laws. Both functions are necessary to a healthy public government, and it is crucially important that the separation of these branches, consistent across all public governments in Canada, is respected in the way we implement the United Nations Declaration in the Northwest Territories.

I want to thank the Standing Committee on Government Operations for the opportunity to review the bill in detail on September 20th. It was helpful to provide some insight on the bill and receive clarity on the proposed amendments.

Madam Chair, we have much work ahead of us. We've gotten this far by working together, and we'll continue to do so as we advance the goal we have set for ourselves to implement the United Nations Declaration in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Madam Chair. That concludes my opening remarks.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Madam Premier. Would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Yes, Madam Chair.

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

Madam Premier, would you introduce your witnesses for the record.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. On my right, I have Mr. Martin Goldney, the deputy minister of executive and Indigenous affairs. On my left is Anne-Marie Guedon, the manager of Indigenous affairs. And, in fact, on the right behind me is Christina Duffy who is the legislative drafter. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. And welcome. I'll turn to the chair of Standing Committee on Government Operations, the committee that reviewed the bill, for any opening comments on Bill 85. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I just will make some general comments on my thoughts. I think we as the government are in a pretty good place in implementing UNDRIP. We have a bill here before us today which is, you know, essentially identical to the ones passed by the federal government and British Columbia with a few minor tweaks. You know, there was a bit of a debate whether we should have done this earlier in the Assembly or a bit of a debate whether we should not have done it at all. I think, you know, getting it done within the life of this Assembly, considering it's a bill that -- you know, the reality is that it doesn't really accomplish anything. It's a plan to create a plan.

The real details are in the government's action plan that is to come. But I want to commend the government and the Premier for all of the work on getting agreement with Indigenous governments. Even after, you know, the MOU was signed and the bill was tabled, I note that the Premier went out and her staff went out, and Salt River and IRC have now signed onto the MOU. So, you know, there's still hope that we could eventually get everyone to the table, which is really what the goal of, I think, this government has been, and the Premier's goal has been, with the Council of Leaders and other similar bodies.

I look forward to following the work of the action plan committee and seeing, you know, what we really can do. We've now seen a federal version of the action plan. We've seen what BC has done. We've seen some of their failings. And I think there's an opportunity yes, for us to go well beyond what they're doing, get it right, and be true leaders in implementing UNDRIP.

I would like to thank everyone for their work in committee, thank all of the communities we visited, and all of the people who provided submissions. This work is just getting started. It will make many more years to come but I do think it is a moment to be proud of. And I am happy that, you know, despite perhaps some hesitancy, we got it done in the life of this Assembly. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. I will now open the floor to general comments on Bill 85. Are there any general comments? Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Chair. I want to express a few concerns I have with this bill. I know at the outset when UNDRIP was being discussed, for quite some time, even in 2019, I think there was high hopes that it would be implemented by all levels of government across the country which would give a lot of autonomy to Indigenous governments. That's

what I saw then. But then being in this government -- or not the government, I should clarify that.

Seeing the actions of this government and how they deal with First Nations governments in the Northwest Territories, I sense that there's lots of disrespect when dealing with First Nations that haven't settled their self-government agreements. And what I see happening leading up to this was -- I think it was the year 2014, the devolution agreement and the creation of the Intergovernmental Council. When the creation was there, what was dangled in front of everybody was money. I mean, large chunks of cash. Some were getting, you know, \$200,000 or \$300,000. And they all signed on the dotted line.

The unity that the Dene people had, Indigenous organizations had, was broken at that point. It was all because of money. Prior to that, all First Nations within the territories were unified. It was one nation, and that was witnessed through the birth of the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories which brought all First Nations groups together. And that included the Metis. It went on to create the Dene Nation. Because of some dispute and some wanting to settle their claims, the comprehensive claims agreements, there was splintered groups, and everybody went on their own. But I wanted to express that the DFN, the Deh Cho First Nations, is not at the IGC table. They are still currently in negotiations which have been stalled for quite some time. And they are working on their own lands and resources and that's the big sticking point in any negotiations.

The Dene Nation, in the summer of 2022, the Wiillideh site, voted down the UNDRIP because they needed more clarity and a lot of it was the stickler with article 46.

I can't explain that article 46 very well. I think I would need a lawyer to really decipher and disseminate all that for me. I think I've asked the Premier's office to, but I wasn't getting any answers there.

You know, I'm just wondering what the rush is to implement this when all First Nations are not on board. There was no, you know, going out to the communities to talk to all First Nations, even at the Assemblies, which is the important part where everybody -- where the Premier and her party should have been at the Assemblies. They were never there. Never. Not at any of these Assemblies. That's, you know, a shame that that didn't come to fruition. When you're going to bring about something that's highly important, if you figure it's highly important for the First Nations, you're controlling them, you

should have been there. You weren't at that Dene Nation meeting.

And I'm just wondering, you know, you always operate on critical mass. It's majority votes that you get. That's all you operate on. And I'm not even sure if we even looked at what are the ramifications to the GNWT legislation and financial resources. There's concerns there. You know, it's good to move on this, all right, but, you know, there are -- there wasn't a lot of informed and meaningful dialogue, meaningful consultation. I think there's federal legislation in that regard. There was nothing of that happening. And I don't want to just see it as a -- you know, our Premier leaving a legacy for herself saying well, we've introduced UNDRIP. That's what I did. You know, if that's all what it's about. Because the whole thing wasn't fleshed out with all groups, all Indigenous groups. We're leaving out the DFN and the Akaitcho.

And the Premier knows since I started my concerns with that, with this whole IGC first, where's the DFN? They make the Deh Cho First Nations look like the bad group but in fact they're not. They are strongly stating they are on unceded unsundered territory and will not give up their treaty rights. And after consultation with Deh Cho First Nations grand chief, I'll be voting to abstain from this motion. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Are there any other general comments? Seeing none, can we proceed -- oh, Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. So I've spent most of my adult life here in the Northwest Territories actually supporting and advocating for Indigenous rights. I came up here in 1985 to work at the Dene Nation. It's kind of ironic I'm at the point now, you know, we've got this bill in front of us to try to implement Indigenous rights, and I've got very serious concerns about it. That is just -- I'm finding this very difficult. And I think part of it is the way the bill was drafted and put together.

You know, when I look at this bill, there just -- okay, part of the problem is that people conflate us MLAs as part of the Government of the Northwest Territories. The other side of the House is part of the Government of the Northwest Territories. That's the executive branch. But there's very little appreciation or understanding of what the legislative branch is all about and what the role is of Regular MLAs. You know, part of our job, and most of our job, is to actually hold Cabinet to account for what they promise, for what they say. Maybe once in a while we get some input into what they develop and bring forward. And that's the way consensus government is supposed to work.

But I think it's going to be increasingly hard for Regular MLAs to do their jobs if the bill is passed in its current form. And the reason why I say that is because this bill will significantly -- as I said earlier is going to significantly change the way the House business, the legislative agenda, the work of committees; it's all going to change, and it's going to change -- it could change quite dramatically. And it probably should. But the Regular MLAs are going to be kind of kept in the dark about a lot of this, the way the bill has been put together. So, yeah, that's, I guess, one of my biggest fears here is the only role that I can see for Regular MLAs in this bill, other than our ordinary roles as, you know, making Member statements, asking questions in the House, you know, committees can invite Ministers in, public hearings, you know, we can discuss things, recommend things. But the only role in here is to get a notice if there's going to be a shared decision-making agreement negotiation starting. That's it. Or the Ministers identified as having some authority to go off and negotiate. That's the only role for Regular MLAs in the bill. But I'd like to ask the Minister am I misinterpreting something? Where else specifically in this bill is there a role for Regular MLAs? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thanks, Madam Chair. Am I just answering the one question or the two? Just the one.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question to the Member.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Within this bill, I mean, like the Member pointed out that they were given notice -- or advice if there's a shared agreement that's to be signed.

Madam Chair, I'd like to say that within a lot of the acts in the Northwest Territories, they don't define the roles of Members that I can point out. I may be wrong. If that's wrong, then please correct me. But I don't think that's the role of acts. The acts defines what shall happen and then the roles of Regular Members are in our legislative protocol that we all adhere before a bill gets passed in the House. They have a chance for questions and answers, they have their own roles, and those maintained. But, again, going back to not every act in the Northwest Territories has the roles of Regular Members that I can point out. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Yeah, no, I appreciate that. And the Minister has confirmed that the only specific role in here is about getting notice about authorization for a Cabinet Minister to go off and negotiate a shared decision-making agreement. But, you know, we're supposed to be a consensus government system, and this is not any regular kind of bill. This is a bill to implement Indigenous rights and has the potential to very significantly change the way the Legislative Assembly operates, the way the legislative agenda's formulated, what happens in committees.

And to exclude Regular MLAs from that process, not good. Not good. And it's not within keeping of how consensus government is supposed to work in my humble opinion. And you know, the committee tried to build in ways for Regular MLAs to be direct observers, dare I say, in some of this. And that was rejected by the Premier. And we're going to get so some of that a little bit further.

But the other two other issues, if I can get to them quickly, is I want the Premier to confirm that there was no engagement with Regular MLAs about the statement of consistency on a Private Member's bill. And a simple yes or no will do. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. We agreed to work with Regular Members on developing the statement of consistency. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, that's good to hear. But I asked whether there was any work with Regular MLAs about including Private Member's bill within the scope of this bill before it was given to us. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd like to pass it to Martin Goldney.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Goldney.

MR. MARTIN GOLDNEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I believe the question is: was there work prior to the bill being shared with committee around certain features including the requirement of the statement of consistency for Private Member's bills. And there was not pre-engagement with Regular Members on

that. We anticipated that will would be part of the conversations that we had after the bill was provided to Members. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks for that confirmation. I do want to thank the committee for its work. You know, and there's some good features in here. Don't anybody characterize me as trying to stop or oppose this. The action plan is a good idea.

The idea of doing a review, the shared decision-making agreements-in-principle, all good things, and certainly consistent with the declaration. The issue is none of that was going to be public. Absolutely nothing. No public information about it, no opportunity for public engagement. I just -- one of the most frustrating things I found, certainly in this Assembly, is I want to give the Premier and Cabinet lots of credit. They did a great job in engaging and working with Indigenous governments. Maybe not all of them. But they have completely forgotten that they're actually supposed to be a public government. Committee had to fix this up. Committee shouldn't have to fix that up. So I want the Minister to tell me how they actually considered the open government policy in putting this bill together. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd like to start and then pass it to Martin Goldney for additional comments.

The role of the executive -- so within consensus government system, Madam Chair, Regular Members, all of us 19 Members, determine our Cabinet. And the reason we pick Cabinet is so that the Cabinet can take oversight of the government programs, developing legislation, etcetera. What was --

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Do you want to repeat your question, Member for Frame Lake

MR. O'REILLY: I don't want the clock to be run out. I want to know how specifically the open government policy was used in drafting this bill. I don't want to hear about the roles of Cabinet. I don't want to hear about roles of Regular MLAs. I want to know how the open government policy was implemented in the drafting of this bill. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I will pass that question to Mr. Goldney. Thank you.

MR. MARTIN GOLDNEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. So with respect to the open government policy as it applies to the development of the bill, what we considered is once the bill informs the work of government, we do anticipate that policy continuing to apply and those principles to be considered in the ongoing work of government under this bill.

One thing that was considered when we were drafting this bill in collaboration with Indigenous governments is the need to sometimes balance openness and transparency with the ability for discussions and collaboration free and frankly with our Indigenous government partners. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any other general comments on this? Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I support the bill because I think the majority of the people of the Northwest Territories are of Indigenous. I just -- I want to talk about a couple things.

The IGC is with three governments. Okay, I mean, with the federal and territorial government and the government that signs on. And it's not necessarily that -- I want to make this very clear because I think clarity is very important.

When you sign on, that means you have a say in land and resources now that we're actually doing some of the work with -- especially with the process convention. You have to realize the different things that have to happen when -- and it's only happening now in this Assembly. It never happened before. Even though they signed on and a lot of times there was -- there wasn't -- the dialogue was not there. And because a couple of groups are not signed on doesn't mean that they didn't have the opportunity to sign on. They chose not to sign on because they're in negotiation of their land claim, and they want to make sure the lands are available of what they wanted in the claim before -- and they still have an opportunity to do just that. The door is always open.

Because I was with -- I sat with the Akaitcho territory for many years. And that was their argument when I'd ask them why they don't do this. And the same with -- and I'm sure that's the same with the Deh Cho. You know, there are reasons why people do certain things or why groups do certain things. I was in leadership and I sat with all these chiefs across the territories.

I think this bill is extremely important in the time of reconciliation and moving forward. There will be flaws. There will be challenges. There's always flaws and challenges. There's always loopholes. There's always everything that will come with it. But we have to be able to move forward and work to make it better.

And if we work together as a group, as we're supposed to in consensus government, that's what's supposed to happen. Many times I don't agree with a letter that comes across the desk. I immediately run down the hall. I don't like this word. What does that mean? How is that going to affect my community? I mean, I do it all the time. People have got to be able to have dialogue, a lot of dialogue sometimes. Dialogue with who is putting it out or which department. And sometimes we don't always use that tool. And there are going to be flaws. There are some flaws. And even when the hearing was in Fort Smith, there were people -- a couple of chiefs were there and the Metis and some of these people are part of the drafters of this -- you know, had input into this. And I'd like to say that it's a start. Sure, there's going to be challenges but we have to work through them.

And, you know, many times it's easy to criticize, it's easy to blame someone else for other people's mistakes but taking onus for your mistakes and saying you made a mistake is very important. And I think that, you know, I have a lot of friends that are within the territories, especially in leadership, and people always, you know, are easy to criticize. As soon as one of them makes a mistake, they're easy to criticize. But you can't do that. You've got to see the reason why this happened. And, you know, this bill -- I think Bill 85 is extremely important to the Northwest Territories, to all people in the Northwest Territories, including the non-Indigenous population because many of them understand why we have to have this bill. It's a really -- it's not posing anything on anyone. It's a collaboration of ideas to make things better. And that's what the UNDRIP bill is all about. I don't have any questions but just for clarity. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Are there any further general comments? Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a quick comment, I guess. Madam Chair, Bill 85 is a start of a new relationship between this government and Indigenous people of the Northwest Territories. Is it a perfect start? Probably not. But it's a move -- but it is a move in the right direction. It provides the framework for the recognition of a cooperative relationship based on principles of

justice, democracy, and human rights. Some, not all Indigenous governments we know, have signed on to this declaration. And in time, I believe that will happen as claims are settled. The Government of Canada, this government, and the people of Canada have talked reconciliation. And now we have an opportunity to make that reality through passing Bill 85. And I'll provide my support to make that happen. You know, we've talked enough. But at some point, we have to walk the talk, and I think we can start that by passing this bill. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Are there any further general comments to this? Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll just keep my comments short. I guess the overall, I've been around for a while here in Aboriginal politics. And, you know, when we keep thinking about the early days of the Northern Accord in 1989, was more or less again another way of transferring a lot of these authorities from Ottawa to the GNWT.

And in 2004, they created the Aboriginal Summit and the Aboriginal Summit, again, was made of all these Aboriginal leaders in the Northwest Territories and trying to work on an arrangement with GNWT. And my colleague, Ron Bonnetrouge here from the Deh Cho, had talked about devolution 2014. And that was the beginning of the transfer of a lot of the responsibilities from Ottawa, even on leased land. At one time the Government of Canada used to provide those services for about \$200 a year on leased lands and somehow it got transferred to the territorial government and the leases went up to, I don't know, \$1,600, and if you're an elder it goes down to \$800 and for those services. And it's really frustrating for the elders in my community. But at the end of the day, you know, when you really think about it, it's the GNWT is actually in the process of moving towards a provincial-like type of government or overall. So they have greater control on the lands and resources here in the Northwest Territories.

So when the devolution gave way, that's exactly what happened. But going forward, I'm just wondering, like, there's going to be a set of check boxes with the GNWT as to how we can get to that where we are to the point where we're an actual province of Canada, you know. And right now as it is, there's still hurdles in the way though, that we need to talk about, and I keep mentioning it over and over again, is that we have section 35 constitutional rights. We got claims. We got self-government agreements. Sooner or later, this government here is going to have to deal with that. And it may have to be

done through a constitution that be created between the GNWT and Indigenous governments. And that needs to be talked about. So we just want to make sure that, you know, this bill that's going forward doesn't impede -- and we already know it doesn't impede on those constitutional rights. But overall, you know, I keep thinking about this and when I hear the discussion around the table, you know, at the end of the day, you it's -- this government here, the ultimate goal and mandate of this government is going to be become a province.

And when that happens, then the authority's going to be here. But we need to figure how we're going to work together and co-exist and what kind of relationship we're going to have. So it's more or less a comment because, as a former leader, I mean, I've been around -- I've been to all these meetings as a former leader. And I seen it. So anyway it's just going to be -- Madam Chair, it's just a comment. But the thing is that I guess overall this bill, there's some issues there that we could take a look at but we'll get it sorted out. Thank you.

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

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, I am -- I'm going to support this. It's moving forward. We're going to bring everybody to the table. And that's good news about what's happening here. Devolution in '14, I was here when that happened. And Inuvialuit, we signed on and everybody was given opportunity. But now if this bill passes, we get to pull it, bring everybody to the table and everybody will have a voice and a say in what they think is right. You know, I really hear what Ron says but, you know, at the end of the day we have to work together, and what Mr. Simpson said is we have to -- a starting point. This is a starting point to something bigger than what we're talking about here. It's going to bring all the nations together, to work together for the betterment of our people who we serve. And that's why we're here. And that's one thing we can't take -- when we take away with this, it's a steppingstone and we leave it to the next government to try to do better and to finish it off. And, you know, I hope in one day they could get all this sorted out. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Nunakput. General comments? Seeing none, can we proceed to the 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. I will call the clauses in groups. Please turn to page 1 of the bill.

Clause 1 through 5, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clauses 6 through 7, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 8. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. I guess this is one of the areas that I highlighted in some of my earlier remarks. You know, we do need an action plan to help implement the declaration. Section 8 sets out the membership of the action plan committee. And, you know, 8(2) says the action plan committee must be comprised of members appointed by Indigenous governments and the Government of the Northwest Territories. So can the Minister speak to why there's no role for Regular MLAs with regard to the action plan committee? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Every one of the motions that were brought forward by the standing committee were brought back to the Indigenous governments. The comment was made that this will be the Premier's legacy. This is not the Premier's legacy. The Premier did not direct this. This was done at the table. The GNWT was one member at the table of the Council of Leaders. This is the Council of Leaders legacy, Madam Chair.

So within that spirit of working together in consensus, every single suggestion was brought forward to the Council of Leaders table. When we brought this motion forward and said, you know, the Regular Members would like to have a say in it, the Council of Leaders pointed out the power imbalances.

Within the act, it does state that the Members will be appointed by Indigenous governments, organizations and the Government of the Northwest Territories. That action plan committee will be taking off, probably in the next government. They can elect to have their officials there. They can elect to be there themselves if they wish to.

Any official that works for the GNWT is well aware that they report directly to the Minister, in

this case myself, and they have accountability with that.

When we brought this forward, the officials had concerns, Madam Chair. They talked about the power imbalance. They know that -- they know the structure of the Legislative Assembly. They know that when Members -- Ministers are elected by the Regular Members, they represent all residents of the NWT, but they also know that Regular Members don't necessarily have to represent all members of the -- all residents of the NWT.

In fact, they are mostly reportable to their constituents and often will lobby for their constituents' needs versus all needs although there's some overlap often. So when we brought it forward, they said no, it would put them in a place that they weren't comfortable. If they had to have representation from the Legislative Assembly as the Regular Members, then they would have to consider inviting their leadership and then there couldn't be the frank discussions that happen at that table. So there was a real concern about the power imbalance, about the obligations, about the freedom to speak at will, because often when your Minister or your chief or your leader is there, you don't have the -- you have to be very careful what you say. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, okay. Thanks for that. I guess I'll -- we're going to get to a debate about something a little later here, but.

So I just want to turn to the -- there's a process convention on communications between Cabinet Ministers, standing committees, and Regular Members, and section 3 is consultations with standing committees. I'm just going to paraphrase something in here.

You know, from time to time Cabinet may wish to see considered input from a standing committee on a proposed government initiative plan, activity, or discussion paper. In these instances, Cabinet may provide a committee with proposals, draft plans, or discussion papers for the committee's formal review and comment.

So, you know, I suspect this -- you know, we don't know what's going to happen in the next Assembly but the usual starting point for the process conventions is the ones that are currently in place. So, you know, how does the Minister then see sharing information progress on the action plan with Regular Members? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. There's several methods that the Regular Members can use to determine progress on the action plan committee. In theory, Madam Chair, the Minister that's applicable would actually offer that to standing committee or make a statement in the House. But if that doesn't happen, then the Regular Members have the option to ask questions in the House of the applicable Minister and the applicable standing committee can ask the Minister to present to standing committee either as a technical or as a political one. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, okay, that's very interesting. But what should the Minister do about this, Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. What sort of tools or things would this Minister expect they would use to communicate what's happening with the action plan committee to Regular MLAs maybe on a more proactive basis? Not wait for questions in the House, not wait to be called before a standing committee. What should happen? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Perhaps I wasn't loud enough or clear enough when I started with saying what a Minister should do. A Minister should be making statements in the House about the work they're doing. They should be offering briefings to standing committee. And, in my opinion, they should have an open door whenever a Member has a question or a comment or a concern, they should be available to them. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks. Yeah, we have -- you know, the Intergovernmental Council's in place now for a number of years; it's actually established through legislation. The Council of Leaders is in place, and that was through a series of discussions and negotiations led by the Premier, and I compliment her for that. Regular Members have actually been able to send observers to those meetings. I personally attended Intergovernmental Council meetings. They've actually asked me to say things once or twice. I actually give my colleagues in the standing committee written reports from my meetings. I

share agendas with them. What's the problem with having some kind of, whether it's an MLA or a representative, being, you know, there to observe and share the information with the colleagues back on the AOC or, you know -- I don't think we ever want to put a staff person here in that position but maybe AOC would have to hire somebody to -- an experienced person to go and observe and provide feedback. I just don't understand what the problem is. Maybe it's because we do such a bad job in explaining the difference between the legislative and executive branches of government. But I'm kind of thinking if it I was an Indigenous government, I would actually want Regular MLAs to know what's happening in those meetings so that if things go off the rails, the Regular MLAs can then start to raise those issues and hold Cabinet to account. But what do I know? So if we're already doing this in a couple of other -- you know, in the Intergovernmental Council, the Council of Leaders, why can't it be done with the action plan committee? And maybe it's just trust or we're so new at this we don't know what we're doing yet, but I just don't get it. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. There is a difference. And, Madam Chair, the Member is right. There is a Regular Member that's invited to the Intergovernmental Council table, and there's a Regular Member that's invited to the Council of Leaders table. Those tables, both the Intergovernmental Council and the Council of Leaders, are the leaders of the governments - GNWT, Indigenous governments, and organizations. They are chiefs, Ministers, Premier, presidents, whatever chair, whatever the title may be. The difference, Madam Chair, is that this is an action plan committee. There may be the occasional leader there if that Indigenous government or organization deems that they need to be there. But the majority of them, my guesstimate, will be officials. And as stated before, and right up to this morning when we asked about it again, it was really clear from the Indigenous governments that doing this will put them in a very challenging position of having to consider bringing their own political leadership to the conversation. They stated very clearly that it might jeopardize the good collaborative working relationship that we have built on this file.

We have taken four years to work on this file, Madam Chair. And to jeopardize it -- and even, Madam Chair, I have to clarify. Even myself, as the Premier, was not at every single meeting. I

had faith in my officials to be able to carry the concerns of my own and the government's and the general public forward. So that is the difference. Those two tables that the Member identified are leader tables. This action plan working group might not all be leaders. Thank you, Madam Chair. And there is power imbalance.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. I'd like to move a motion if I may.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The motion is being distributed. Member for Frame Lake, go ahead.

COMMITTEE MOTION 501-19(2):
BILL 85: UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION
ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES IMPLEMENTATION ACT –
AMEND SUBCLAUSE 8(2),
DEFEATED

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that Bill 85 be amended by deleting subclause 8(2) and substituting the following:

(2) The action plan committee must be comprised of

(a) members appointed by Indigenous governments or organizations of the Northwest Territories;

(b) members appointed by the Government of the Northwest Territories; and

(c) subject to subsection (2.1), one member appointed by motion of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight or any successor committee that may be established by the Legislative Assembly.

(2.1) The action plan committee may, in respect of a Member appointed under paragraph (2)(c), limit or specify

(a) the classes of persons eligible for appointment; and

(b) the rights of participation of the member in the work of the action plan committee.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. So what this would do is create the ability for the Regular Members to have a representative, whether it's a Member or some other

representative of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight, be at the committee meetings -- the action plan committee meetings. And this is further, though, restricted and so basically it would be up to the action plan committee itself to determine the classes of persons that might be eligible, whether that's an elected official or a hired person by AOC. The action plan committee would decide this itself.

The action plan committee would also decide how, where, and when that person could be involved in the action plan committee. The action plan committee could say, you know what, you're not going to be at -- you're only going to be at portions of meetings, or you're not going to be at this meeting or that meeting. And you can only send a staff person; you can't send an elected official. So basically this would put the authority with the action plan committee itself as to how and who from the Regular Members would be allowed to observe, participate in whatever capacity, at the action plan committee.

And the reason why I moved this and bring it forward is because, as I said in my earlier remarks, I think this has the potential to significantly change the work of this Legislative Assembly, the legislation that comes before it, the policies that will come before committees. And I'm sorry, I think that the best way to convey that information is for the Regular MLAs to have somebody at the meetings. Cabinet has not demonstrated to me that they can share the information that the Regular Members need sometimes. And we've seen that in the development of this bill. They didn't bother to talk to us about Private Member's bills, having statements of consistencies, a number of other items in here. That's just one example. So I'll just leave it at that for now, Madam Chair.

No, I won't, I have -- look, I'm not trying to stop this bill. I'm not trying to slow it down in any way. People are going to say that about me; that's fine. I want to support this. I want to make this better. And I want both sides of the House to be involved in how we actually implement Indigenous rights. And that's how consensus government is supposed to work, and that's what this motion is about. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. To the motion. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't support this motion. I think the Premier has made it clear that it's going to be mostly made up of officials. And I think, you know, as a general understanding that politicians meet

with politicians and officials meet with officials. You know, I don't ever expect to show up to a deputy ministers committee, but I -- you know, I would appreciate, and I do appreciate, when Cabinet invites, you know, MLAs to the Council of Leaders or the IGC. And, you know, I even think they go a little farther when they're in bilaterals with an Indigenous government. If the leadership is there, they could invite the MLA from that region. But I don't view us either sending a staff person or sending an MLA to a group largely made up of officials.

I also think this is -- it's kind of -- it's pushing our role. And I get Regular MLAs, we always want to see how the sausage is made. But, you know, ultimately, we operate under the principle that, you know, Cabinet proposes and the legislature disposes. And there's going to be a bunch of lawyers in a room spending the next few years fighting over the definition of free prior informed consent. And we're going to get reports that they're sitting there fighting over the definition, and I don't know what that does. You know, really, at the end of the day, we have to wait and see what the end result is. It would be similar to, you know, me asking to attend a negotiation with a bunch of lead negotiators. I would love that opportunity but I recognize that that just isn't my role. You got to wait and you got -- sometimes you got to wait for decades to see what the end result is, and that's done in confidence, and that's so officials can speak frankly. And then when the time's finally done, they can take it back to their leadership who can go through their council approval process or their Assembly approval process or back to the Assembly and go through their legislative approval process. So, you know, given that the Premier has made it quite clear this will be mostly officials, I can't support this motion. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. To the motion. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: I too feel very -- you know, government to government is very important with this whole bill, okay. Government to government is the governments that -- the Indigenous all have their own governments. They make decisions in one day. They don't wait ten years. And so, you know, I always say that, and government to government relationship is really important. I think we have a role -- a different role. If something went wrong or someone said something that just wasn't quite right, I mean, you're already called on to the carpet to advocate on behalf of that First Nation as an MLA. I think we have roles to play all over. I played those roles with all the First Nations that are in my area. And you know, if they certainly let me know when something is not quite right. I mean, that's part of our role.

And I appreciate that role because, you know -- and being a First Nation leader for many years, I see that as -- it's a different part of my role now but I understand the whole way it comes about. Less interference is great because, you know, First Nations don't -- you know, you have to give them the benefit of the doubt. They have some -- they have pretty smart leaders. They've been through the mill. They've had -- a lot of people say no to them without really listening to both sides.

Our leaders, don't take them for granted, okay. The Indigenous leaders are extremely brilliant. I've worked with some extremely brilliant leaders, just like I'm working with extremely brilliant people around this table. And never take anybody for granted because, you know, I always say, even in business, you never know which door you're going to have to knock on. Always leave the door open. And I don't think that it is our role to be going to observe or try to influence in any way, shape, or form a decision that is being put forward on a working paper that the Indigenous government and our government has got to make a decision on. And, yes, they will inform us of that decision, I'm sure, because we'll make sure of that, right, as Regular Members. So that's my two cents, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Thebacha. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. Oh, did you -- sorry, Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate committee's careful consideration of the bill and that there is a strong interest in the future work of the action plan committee to be established. The action plan committee will have important work to do that will further guide the implementation of the United Nations Declaration for Indigenous People. It will help ensure that our laws and policies align with the principles of the declaration. This is a key feature to this legislation and the two other examples from Canada like it.

The action plan committee does not change the fundamental roles of Cabinet and Regular Members. We continue to have process conventions on the sharing of information, committee review of proposed legislation, and the opportunity to review policy changes. None of that changes as a result of the action plan committee meant to provide a place for Indigenous governments and the GNWT to work collaboratively on areas of shared priority.

To speak as plainly as I can, consensus government does not require MLAs to participate directly in the workings of the executive branch. That is why this Assembly elects Ministers from within its ranks to serve as Ministers. And Ministers are then responsible to consider the interests of all residents of the NWT. Indigenous governments do not want to muddy the waters of accountability and do not want to unnecessarily complicate the work of reconciliation. The concern from Indigenous governments is a real one. They are concerned that legislatively requiring MLA participation, even as observers, potentially challenges the hard work of reconciliation and could further complicate the balancing of interest that may be required as the United Nations Declaration for Indigenous Peoples matters are considered. Indigenous governments know that Ministers are accountable to MLAs. But they also know that Ministers must represent and promote the interests of all residents of the Northwest Territories. GNWT officials at intergovernmental meetings are accountable to Ministers.

And Indigenous governments organization officials know that their governments have their own intergovernmental relationship with Ministers as the heads of the executive branch of government. The same responsibilities and obligations are not part of the accountability of Regular MLAs. Their accountability is to their individual constituents. MLAs should and will continue to have oversight of government business, but we do need to keep a distinction between the executive branch and the legislative branch in our intergovernmental work. As stated, Madam Chair, the Indigenous governments and organizations are not in support of this motion and, therefore, Cabinet will not be supporting this motion. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. I will now go to the mover of the motion for any closing comments. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. Yeah, I respect all the comments I heard. You know, this motion does not require or enable elected MLAs to participate in any way in the action plan committee. It allows for a representative to be there on the terms and conditions that are set by the committee itself. This is not about interfering or trying to influence the process. It's about understanding what's happening there and how it will change the legislative branch of government. This is not about the executive branch of government. This is -- the plan, when it's done, will change the legislative branch of government. It'll change how we do things here. It'll change the legislation, the policies, the work that standing

committees do. And to exclude Regular MLAs from that process, I just don't think that that's a good idea and I don't think it's in keeping with the process conventions. And that's all I have to say.

But I think this was a worthwhile debate. And I expect that the next Cabinet, the next Minister, will actually find better ways to share information about this because it didn't happen in the drafting of this bill. So whoever the next Minister is is going to have to work a lot harder in sharing information, and maybe even finagling an occasional invitation or something, for Regular MLAs or their representative. Maybe come and see what happens once in a while. So the next Minister's going to have to do a way better job in communicating what's happening at that action plan committee with the Regular MLAs. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

---Defeated

Clause 8, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 9 through 11, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 12. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. I said in my earlier remarks -- before somebody tries to say otherwise -- that I agree in principle to the idea of shared decision-making agreements. And, you know, I think we probably have some kind of examples out there of those sorts of arrangements. You know, you might say that Deline self-government is that kind of an arrangement. But I guess one of the concerns I have here is, you know, we don't really know or understand what the scope of these agreements could look like; how frequent they may be; how many there may be; what is GNWT going to look like at the end of the day. Is it just going to be some kind of a rump government that doesn't do much? You know, I don't know. You know, I think we're starting to verge on constitutional change here or looking at what is the relationship between public and Indigenous governments. And, in any event, I

would like to get some understanding from the folks at the witness table as to what the scope of these agreements is going to be, how frequent they could be, what is GNWT going to look like after these agreements have been negotiated. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. So this concept of shared agreements comes actually from the BC legislation, the United Nations Declaration there. We had much discussion on that at the working level when we were drafting this bill.

The agreements might come in different forms. Martin Goldney can expand on that later. We don't know yet. We haven't had that experience and that's why we were careful with it as well.

But I do want to say, Madam Chair, that there's many agreements. The MLAs are not always part of every single agreement that the executive branch makes. For example, we make agreements with land claims, self-government agreements that are often not shared with MLAs until later, if ever. We have agreements with the federal government, Madam Chair, that we make. I mean, often the federal government binds us and says we're going to do this with you but you cannot say anything to anyone until we announce it publicly. So this is not a differing aspect of how we work. This has been done with other governments. We're just expanding this to Indigenous governments. We have it already with the federal government. Why should it be any different with the Indigenous governments? Okay, thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, no, thank you for that. Yeah, I think we're not like a lot of the governments that the Premier described that have party systems. This is supposed to be a consensus government. So the way that the bill has been drafted now -- and I think this was a helpful addition -- was that, you know, Regular MLAs will now at least get notice if negotiations -- a Minister's authorized to begin negotiations on a shared decision-making agreement. But the only time -- there's no requirement -- there's nothing in the bill about what happens with those agreements other than they're going to get published at the end of the day in the gazette, which not like anybody even reads. And I guess they're going to be published on a website as well thanks to the committee. But, you know, what happens between the time that a Minister's authorized to

negotiate something and an agreement is reached; is there any opportunity for Regular MLAs to know what's happening inside the bill, outside the bill? How's that going to happen? Thank, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Again, as I stated, the MLA has pointed out that I am not good at communicating with standing committee. I guess I'll take ownership. I was in the last Cabinet. I thought the same MLA had said that we were better than the last Cabinet, but perhaps not, and did state that the next government has to do better. I do believe, Madam Chair, that we all have to work at being better all the time. So I do think that's a process.

But I also think, Madam Chair, the Member has many times stated about consensus government. Consensus government is not about just getting your way, Madam Chair, in my opinion. Consensus government is about sitting around the table looking for compromises, looking at flexibility. When this was brought forward to myself, as the Minister applicable for this, by committee, we did make a compromise with committee. But I'm hearing now that the Member doesn't like the compromise. And that is consensus government. It's about being flexible. It's about compromising so that all Members' needs will be ideally satisfied. Maybe not get a hundred percent of what you want. But that's the reality of consensus government; we all have a say. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. Well, I don't think I can possibly respond to everything that I heard there. But, you know, I'm not here to get my way. If that's why any of us are here, we're here for the wrong reasons. I'm here to try to serve my constituents and try to think about the broader public interest. I've always tried to increase transparency, openness, accountability, as a public government. That's why I'm here so it's not about getting my way. Yeah, I'll leave that aside for now.

You know, I guess the issue here is the only way for Regular MLAs to hold the Cabinet to account with regard to these shared decision-making agreements is once they're publicly released because there's no other requirement. I think the process convention might allow for the Minister and Cabinet to come to the Regular MLAs and say, you know

what, we've actually got this arrangement we've negotiated and by the way here's actually a draft. We'd like to get your input before it's signed. You know, we put a lot of time and effort into this. Maybe even an update or two along the way depending on the scope and whatever of the agreement. You know, if it's a simple administrative delegation of something, that's probably not a big deal. But if it's, you know, giving decision-making in a major program area to a government, an Indigenous government that might have implications for other things, I don't know. But the only way it seems that Regular MLAs would be able to hold Cabinet to account is after the agreement's released publicly and then, you know -- but it could be a legally binding agreement that's already signed and nothing could be done at that point. So how can Regular MLAs hold Cabinet to account for these shared decision-making agreements? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Madam. Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. As stated earlier, the first role of -- one of the first roles of any Legislative Assembly is choosing your executive council, who are there to represent the interests of all residents of the NWT. And so therefore, Madam Chair, I would challenge to say that MLAs have to have faith in those that they elect as the executive council.

Madam Chair, there are -- I think we need to step back here a minute and look at it. If we -- we're signing self-government agreements with Indigenous governments. If we really believe in self-government, then we have to recognize that these Indigenous governments are going to have a role in decision-making. They are going to take on aspects of education, health, housing, you know, all -- right across the spectrum. So I'm sensing a fear of this. But perhaps we should have had this conversation 30 years ago when we started talking about self-government because that is what self-government is. So Indigenous governments are going to get there anyway, Madam Chair. If we really respect them, then we need to let them at the table. That's what this is about. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. Look, I've already said that I agree in principle with this, and I will take issue with the Premier's comments. This is not about me trying to exclude Indigenous governments from getting to shared decision-making agreements. This is

about trying to find out how Regular MLAs can have a say in agreements before they're finalized. And it's about MLAs doing their job. I'm just not prepared to give Cabinet a bank cheque, I guess. So that's what I think this is about. But in any event, Madam Chair, I do want to move to a motion if I could.

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

COMMITTEE MOTION 502-19(2):
BILL 85: UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION
ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES IMPLEMENTATION ACT –
AMEND SUBCLAUSE 12(2.1),
DEFEATED

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that Bill 85 be amended by adding the following after subclause 12(2):

(2.1) Before entering into an agreement under this section, a Minister authorized under subsection (1) shall provide notice to and seek comments from the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight, or any successor committee that may be established by the Legislative Assembly. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. I just find it a little bit ironic that standing committee will get notice now of an agreement being negotiated and then there doesn't seem to be any mechanism or way to have any input into that or oversight, dare I say, or ability to comment, ability to work together, other than at the whim of a Minister. And because I don't -- I'm not sure where we're going with all this stuff. I'm not afraid of it. I agree with it. I support it.

But I think if we're going to do constitutional development, you should come at it with that perspective and that kind of mindset. And in any event, this motion is really about trying to find a way for the Regular MLAs to have some better knowledge, understanding, of what is going to be negotiated and an opportunity to comment on it. It's not about interfering with it. It's not about trying to change it. It's about trying to understand what's happening. Otherwise, there's no other way to hold Cabinet to account until after the agreement's done. And I don't think that's a good place to be. That's all I can say. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. This motion just says that before we enter into one of these agreements, they're going to come to AOC and say, you got any thoughts. I found it odd the Premier said that, you know, we enter into agreements all the time without talking to Regular Members because it's actually been exact opposite in my experience. I think I got two briefings on the offshore accord negotiations before we actually signed them. I think we -- I got a briefing on almost every single land claim and what was going on through the special committee on reconciliation in Indigenous affairs. I mean, maybe officials weren't as forthcoming as I would have liked at times but there certainly was no sense that they were going not tell us anything before they signed an agreement. We actually got to see some of the correspondence on the carbon tax negotiations that was actually sent to the Ministers.

Similar when we were -- the feds were in negotiation for child care and the health care deal. So, you know, I felt whenever we've asked for a briefing on hey, where are you at with this, Ministers are more than willing to come and tell us what they're doing with the feds. And they do it in-camera. And I just expect if, you know, a Minister's going to enter into a shared decision-making on education or something, they would go to the applicable standing committee and say I'm about to sign this, this is what's happening, you got any thoughts? And, you know, sometimes they take the thoughts and sometimes they ignore them. But, you know, I'm kind of given the heads up and listening. It seems to already occur. I don't see any issue with this motion of kind of formalizing what we already do. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. To the motion. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I'll start by saying I'm really glad that Ministers, including myself, are working with standing committee. That's what the goal is.

But I agree with the Member that the Government of the Northwest Territories is the public government and must remain accountable to the public. I commend the Member's commitment to accountability. That is why in our consensus government system, MLAs have significant authority when it comes to ministerial accountability. This will not change as a result of the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples Implementation. MLAs elect Ministers to represent all residents of the NWT. And I expect that all Ministers will work appropriately with

MLAs and provide notice under our process conventions whenever required.

I also understand why notice for every shared decision-making negotiation is concerning to the Indigenous governments and organizations. If MLAs have concerns about the performance of a Minister, there are a number of ways these concerns can be raised, both directly with the Minister or in the Legislative Assembly. Shared decision-making will necessarily require a balancing of interests and is meant to help advance reconciliation. There may be authorizations that are straightforward and not at all controversial. There may also be others that Indigenous governments and organizations prefer not to be made immediately a public concern even before a Minister can give full and fair consideration to a proposal. That's why a blanket requirement to involve MLAs in each and every shared decision-making agreement that is proposed is not supported.

The Member is correct that there are not a lot of examples to draw experience from when it comes to shared decision-making. I look forward to seeing how such agreements may come forward in the context of the Northwest Territories. Perhaps with the benefit of experience, apprehension over the MLA's concern at the beginning of shared decision-making agreement negotiations would dissipate.

Madam Chair, Cabinet will not be supporting this motion. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. To the motion. I will go to the mover of the motion for any closing remarks. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. I'm just not sure I have anything further to say. I'm really tired, I just -- yeah, I think this was a good discussion and debate. I don't expect that it's going to pass but I want to, I guess, get on the record that I think whoever's negotiating these agreements in the future -- and I don't think there's any reason to be afraid of them. Some people are going to say that about whatever I said but that's fine.

I guess two things: I think Ministers doing their job well in a consensus government system, they should be coming to standing committee. They shouldn't just wait for the committee to come and ask them. And they should be providing regular updates about what's -- how things are going, what they're doing. And I don't think it has to be for every single shared decision-making agreement. You know, delegating some administrative stuff, who

cares. But if it's a cool subject matter like education, as my colleague from Yellowknife North said yeah, that's an important thing that might have implications for how we set up school boards and, you know, Yellowknife pays taxes, other communities don't. How's all that going to work? So for some of them, yeah, it's going to require more intensive work with standing committees. That can be done outside of the bill and probably should under the process conventions, but. So that's one point.

The second point, you know, if we really want to get at constitutional development, we should come to it with that mind. Shared decision-making agreements are good but what we really need to do is start to think about constitutional development and what is the government -- what is the Government of the Northwest Territories as a public government going to look like? So in any event, I offer that as a comment. We tried to get an Electoral Boundaries Commission to actually look at that question at one point, but we couldn't do it. But I think we do need to start to turn our mind to constitutional development in the Northwest Territories. And this bill, I think, might help facilitate that as well.

But in any event, I don't expect this is going to pass, but I do want Cabinet to take note of my comments and, whoever the next Minister is, to make sure that they come and work with Regular MLAs as these things are being negotiated. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

---Defeated.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 12, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 13 to 15, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Schedule, does committee agree? Does committee agree on the schedule?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, to the bill as a whole, does committee agree that Bill 85, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation 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 85, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Madam Premier. Thank you to the witnesses. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. We will take a short recess.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we've agreed to consider Bill 65, Builders' Lien Act. I will ask the Minister of Justice to introduce the bill.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm pleased to be here to present Bill 65, Builders' Lien Act.

The purpose of Bill 65 is to repeal the current Mechanics' Lien Act and replace it with a more modern Builders' Lien Act to address modern construction practices.

Lien legislation is in place to ensure that parties who contribute work, labour, or materials to a construction project in the NWT are paid, and to provide a remedy if they are not. Lien legislation also creates stability and predictability for owners of construction projects by setting out their obligations to other parties involved in a construction project. The new act will use plain language where possible and take into consideration evolving best practices in construction business and terminology. Some of the existing provisions will be maintained and adjusted. At the same time, substantive changes will be brought forward in 15 areas based on research conducted by the department and engagement with external stakeholders.

The new act will bring the NWT's lien legislation into the 21st century, support modern construction practices, provide more stability and predictability in the industry, and serve as a concrete example of this Legislative Assembly's support for our territory's business sector.

This concludes my opening remarks. 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 witnesses into the Chamber.

Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. To my right is Matthew Yap, director of legal registries with the Department of Justice. To my left, Brian Asmundson, registrar of land titles. And behind me is Mr. Ian Rennie, legislative counsel with the Department of Justice.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, and welcome. I will now turn to the chair of the Standing Committee on Social Development, the committee that reviewed the bill, for any opening comments on Bill 65. Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 503-19(2):
BILL 65: BUILDERS' LIEN ACT – NEW
CLAUSE 3.1,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, Bill 65, Builders' Lien Act, received second reading in the Legislative Assembly on November 3rd, 2022, and was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Development for review. On January 18th, 2023, the standing committee held a public hearing with the Minister of Justice.

At the public hearing, committee expressed serious concern about the lack of consultation on the bill. The Minister acknowledged this and made a commitment to conduct further engagement with the public.

Following this, committee sought an extension of the review period under Rule 8.3(2). Over the next several months, committee engaged extensively with the department to consider several potential amendments to the bill.

Bill 65, as drafted, does not bind the GNWT but it does bind municipalities. Committee does not want the GNWT to be exempt from the application of liens while other governments are subject to this clause. Committee was concerned that other levels of government in the Northwest Territories, such as municipalities and Indigenous governments, were not as protected from seizure and sale of

land as the GNWT. Committee wants to see all levels of government in the Northwest Territories treated the same. Committee recognized that if the bill was amended to bind the GNWT, municipalities, and Indigenous governments to liens, but not seizure and sale, that very little infrastructure in the Northwest Territories would be left for which seizure and sale could apply. Recognizing this, committee felt that the bill as drafted, which provides exemption for seizure and sale on the basis of who owns a project, was problematic.

After a lot of consideration on this point, committee felt that exemption for seizure and sale of land should rather apply to the type of project, not the owner of the project. This would ensure that critical public infrastructure like health centres, schools, and roads are always protected. Because this is such a substantial shift in how the bill is applied, committee feels the bill needs to be redrafted.

While Bill 65 is proposed to improve assurances that parties who contribute to construction projects are paid, committee believes the bill can do more to establish prompt payment in legislation. There are also other changes committee would like to see that address procedural and technical improvements to the administration and application of the bill. The unequal application of the bill to different levels of government, whether territorial, municipal, or Indigenous governments, remain the outstanding point of contention for committee.

Madam Chair, on June 29th, 2023, committee held a clause by clause with the Minister at which time committee passed a motion to report the bill as not ready to proceed.

Madam Chair, I'd be remiss if -- I am speaking first and foremost as the chair of social development but, second, I'm also the MLA for Kam Lake and ultimately I want to state that this -- the point of this bill is that private industry be paid for the work that it does and the material they provide. As the MLA for Kam Lake, I believe that this is first and foremost what we need to keep in mind as the goal of this bill.

The existing Mechanics' Lien Act has not changed substantially over -- in over a hundred years. Since then, practices and contractual arrangements in construction and real property development have changed considerably and continue to evolve. During committee's review and public hearing on Bill 65, participation focused on applying the Builders' Lien Act to the Government of the Northwest Territories, Indigenous governments, and municipalities, including questions on how provisions related to lands owned by those entities would work.

As a result of January's extension, no substantial amendments were brought forward by the GNWT. The same core concerns, though, remain, Madam Chair. Determining which land interests held by different levels of government and Indigenous governments would be subject to sale and seizures and that committee preferred the core structure that on exemptions to seizure and sale be made on the basis of the type of infrastructure rather than ownership to strike a balance between protecting critical public infrastructure and ensuring private industry is ultimately paid.

This is how British Columbia has successfully drafted its lien legislation and during the clause by clause, the Minister agreed with committee, that this would have been the preferred way forward for lien legislation. Ultimately, it was committee's desire that all levels of government be treated the same under the act.

Committee proposed several draft motions to amend this aspect of the bill and considered many draft motions proposed by the department. As these discussions progressed, though, Members quickly realized that this topic raised bigger questions about defining an Indigenous government that could not and should not be answered within the context of this bill or in the Standing Committee on Social Development.

I maintain my concern about the GNWT not being bound by this legislation. As the primary purchaser and builder in the Northwest Territories, business needs to ensure it is also getting paid by this government. Binding the GNWT was ultimately the impasse on this bill and as such, the majority of committee members wanted to see this bill reported back to the House as not ready, which we did.

Madam Chair, I also want to say a few words about prompt payment. Bill 65 did not include a provision to introduce a prompt payment system to ensure a timeline for both issuing and paying invoices on building projects or provide a dispute resolution mechanism to resolve payment disputes. Prompt payment is crucial to lien legislation. It assures private industry that within a set timeline for contractors and subcontractors to issue invoices for their work and for owners to pay invoices for services rendered. This is crucial when you have limited timelines to both preserve and protect a lien. When liens have deadlines but payment isn't legislated, it makes it hard for people to participate in the process. Where payment used to be 30 days, these days many organizations are working towards net 30-day payments, or others don't even need the net 90 days.

I am left, as the representative of Kam Lake, the home of multitude of NWT businesses, to either support a bill that isn't what I believe to be the best possible product for its purpose or hold out for something better with no guarantee of when that might make it through the legislative agenda. Bill 65 does have marked improvements from the original Mechanics' Lien Act, but I will be trying to move motions today to amend parts of this bill to make it even just a little bit better. None of the motions today will be able to address the issue of how governments are bound or prompt payment, both of which I believe need to be addressed sooner than later, and hopefully long before 100 years if this legislation passes today.

Madam Chair, individual Members may have comments or questions at this time. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. I will now open the floor to general comments on Bill 65. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't reiterate everything that my colleague from Kam Lake said, and I don't think I actually could after this long day in the House and week as well so far. I did just want to say that I too am disappointed that we didn't get this bill further along and kind of did get stuck in this conversation that ultimately did not end up going anywhere. However, I shouldn't say it that way because it really did sort of bring back the importance of ensuring the entire Government of the Northwest Territories has the same approach and all of the bills and acts have the same consideration to be made for what is that entity that we sometimes so loosely call Indigenous governments, which can have many different meanings in many different rooms. So I would have liked to have seen this get done. I, as coming from a consulting background where I dealt with a lot of contractors, I know how important it is for them to have this bill and this act updated. However, I feel that it really missed the mark with the prompt payment, which literally is the number 1 issue for most businesses in the Northwest Territories, is getting paid on time, so that they're not having to float costs which then ends up, you know, costing more because they're financing their work waiting on the government and others to pay. And oftentimes, their sub-consultants don't get paid until they get paid. So as you go further down the line, it becomes longer and longer to the smaller and smaller businesses who can't really take those types of hits and don't have any cash in the bank to sort of to float their business.

And, again, I've never been a person to just do something for the sake of doing it, and when I

hear that both sides recognized that this is not a good piece of legislation, it's not hitting the mark properly, for us to go forward with it, it seems kind of pointless. There are other bills where I can see why we could still pass something even though it -- we all agreed it wasn't perfect. But I don't think this is one of them. And I think rather -- it's never, in my opinion, a failure that we say we're not going to go forward with the bill because it's not like this work disappears. But the onus then is on the next government, the next committee, to ensure that the work that was done by the previous one isn't lost. And so all I can say for that is continuity is a good thing, Madam Chair. So I will leave it at that. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madam la Presidente. I guess I have a number of questions here. The first one is I distinctly remember the Minister at the clause-by-clause hearing saying something along the lines of, you know, if I had to start over again I would have done this very differently, and I think we should just go back and -- I think it should be reported as not ready, basically so. He was encouraging committee to not proceed with the bill. So I'd like to know why we're here tonight. What happened between the Minister saying those words and why are we here? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. Well, during that in-camera discussion, I didn't say that this is a bad piece of legislation. I said that if I would have started -- if I could have gone back, I would have started over again in a different way because I see that the GNWT, being exempt from this bill or being -- having different provisions applied to it under this bill would not go over well with the Regular Members. And lo and behold, here we are in this situation where it was reported back as not ready.

There is -- you know, when we see that the Government of the Northwest Territories is being treated differently, that in and of itself is enough to derail a bill. And so I would have gone forward in a different direction to avoid that. What we have is not a bad bill. It's a modern piece of legislation similar to other modern pieces of legislation in Canada recently modernized. But just -- it was a political comment more than a comment on the quality of the bill. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. Well, my apologies to the Minister. My recollection was that that was said during the clause-by-clause review and if my recollection is wrong, I sincerely apologize. But I guess I'd like to know, first off, just confirm with the Minister, will this bill apply to GNWT? Will it apply to Indigenous governments? Will it apply to municipal governments? What's the application of this bill. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. So this bill, the GNWT is exempt from provisions of this bill that other levels of government are not exempt from. And that's actually the current situation in the Northwest Territories right now under the current Mechanics' Lien Act. So this is a continuation of the status quo in terms of the application of the bill to governments. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Well, I guess I'm not really in favour of continuing what is probably not a good situation. You know, GNWT is the major contracting authority here in the Northwest Territories. Why doesn't this bind the GNWT? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. And there's been comments about protecting, you know, other -- protecting governments. The legislation's not about protecting governments, it's about ensuring that workers get paid. And the GNWT is not an entity that we're worried about being insolvent. There's not a concern that the GNWT won't pay their bills. There's -- you know, we hear concerns from the Members about when the bills get paid, but the issue isn't that they won't get paid. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. So okay, I got an explanation as to why the Minister and Cabinet believe that this shouldn't apply to GNWT. Why does it apply, then, to municipal governments? Thank you.

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

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. Municipal governments don't have the same powers of taxation. They don't have the same revenue as the GNWT. And there's chances that they could

be in a situation where they can't pay workers. And we also have to look at the bill as a whole and what is the point of the bill if, you know, we add more and more and more exclusions, then are we really fulfilling the spirit of this legislation. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Yeah, that's kind of my thoughts exactly. If this doesn't apply to GNWT, why are we doing it? Will this bill apply to Indigenous governments and will it allow seizure and sale of Indigenous owned lands? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. Indigenous governments are bound -- would be bound by this act as well. And I will say that if municipalities and Indigenous governments were in the same position as the GNWT, they would then have to comply with other -- they'd have to abide by the surety bond section of the act, which would mean that they would have to have contracts that are bondable, which would have an impact on -- could have an impact on their ability to get people to do work in certain regions of the territory as well. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks, Madam Chair. I'll try the second part of my question again. Will this bill enable the seizure and sale of Indigenous owned lands? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Private lands can be seized and sold. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. So will that include settlement lands; you know, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, some of the Sahtu entities, the Gwich'in Tribal Council actually own some lands surface, subsurface, sometimes both for the same parcel. This bill would enable seizure and sale of those settlement lands? I just want to confirm how GNWT's going to interpret this bill. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. So I will hand it to Mr. Yap for a more detailed explanation. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Yap.

MR. MATTHEW YAP: Thank you, Madam Chair. To answer the Member's question, it really depends on the nature of the land in question and the terms of that land in the land claim or self-government agreement. So depending on how that land is structured or the type of ownership, it may or may not be. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, okay, if I wasn't concerned before, now I really am. If GNWT's going to interpret this bill in a manner that may allow for seizure and sale of Indigenous settlement lands, I'm voting against it right now. This is just not right. And the department doesn't seem to have done the work to discuss this with Indigenous governments. This is not a good place to be. So I guess I -- let's start with what engagement was done with Indigenous governments on this bill? Thank you.

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

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. And further to Mr. Yap's comments, this would not apply to settlement lands.

Engagement that was done with Indigenous governments occurred during the committee process actually. The chair referenced this. We reached out to a number of the Indigenous governments and organizations in the territory explaining the situation and requested feedback on potential inclusion of Indigenous governments -- or exclusion from the act. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks. I don't know how do I get at this. The first answer I got was yes, it does apply or may -- and then it may apply in certain circumstances. And now it's not going to apply to settlement lands. So I kind of think I heard three different answers. And I'm not a lawyer, but I want to know how the government, GNWT's, going to interpret this, because I don't want this stuff to end up in the courts. I don't want workers to go unpaid because people -- there's some uncertainty as to the application of this bill. I don't want Indigenous governments to have to go to court to sort this stuff out. So I guess I just want a little more

detail here and explanation as to why I got three different answers. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. So there's settlement lands. There's other types of lands that might be owned by an Indigenous government. And the Member's probably -- I know the Member's more of an expert on land than I am. I know that's his background. He came here in 1985 to work on those types of issues, so. And I can perhaps hand it to Mr. Yap for some further explanation of how the land -- if the Member would like. I know we're on his clock here. So, yes, I see him shrugging. So to Mr. Yap. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Yap.

MR. MATTHEW YAP: In terms of how the GNWT would interpret it, it's not really a question for the GNWT to determine what land is sold or seized. That would be a question for the courts to determine. But I can say that settlement land would not be subject to seizure or sale because of the hierarchy of the laws and because it's done through a treaty process. There are different types of Indigenous governments and different terms of different land claim agreements. Some of them hold municipal lands. Some of them hold fee simple lands. Some of them hold lands that are owned by -- that may or may not be the holders of a current land claim agreement right now. So it really depends on what type of land. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further general comments? Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the Member finally getting there. Yeah, I just -- you -- I think if you applied to sell, you know, the Tlicho, Gwich'in, or Inuvialuit, or Sahtu settlement lands under a constitutionally-protected agreement, you just can't. That's pretty clear to me. But it's less clear to me whether how, you know -- that's kind of just a backstop saying you can't sell them. How is the government interpreting this applying to them? So this is passed. Someone doesn't get paid on a Tlicho project on their lands and goes to file a lien, is land titles going to accept a lien on those lands? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Yap.

MR. YAP: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, the land titles office would accept the submission of a claim of a lien because it's just a claim except in the situation where it is a stricter title that's

already been issued where it clearly states one of the basis for the title that it is settlement lands. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you. And just so I'm also abundantly clear about the binding the government part, I understand we're not selling public land or government land but if someone builds a health centre and doesn't get paid and it's on public land, assuming the Public Land Act has been implemented, and they go to file a lien, would they accept the claim of lien or would that be a no? Thank you.

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

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. No, but when it comes to the GNWT, there are other ways that we protect workers. So I know the Department of Finance has introduced new security requirements for bids and contracts earlier this year, and that will help protect small businesses, specifically those engaged in constructing GNWT projects, by providing adequate payment coverage through labour and material bonds. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further general comments? Does committee agree that there are no further general comments that we can proceed to a clause by clause review of the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Which committee, we will defer the bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses. We will now consider the clauses in groups. Please turn to page 12 of the bill.

Clauses 1 through to 3, does committee agree? Thank you, Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Madam Chair, I move that Bill 65 be amended by adding the following after clause 3:

(3.1) This act is to be interpreted in a manner consistent with the recognition and affirmation of existing Aboriginal and treaty rights in section 35 of the Constitution Act of 1982.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Minister of Justice.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. This is a standard non-derogation clause. You can find it in other pieces of

legislation. I think that this is a good idea. I'm happy to support this. And going forward, we should always consider including these in bills. 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

Clause 3.1, does committee agree? Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 504-19(2):
BILL 65: BUILDERS' LIEN ACT – AMEND
CLAUSE 3.1,
DEFEATED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. To the clause as amended, I move that Bill 65 be amended by deleting clause 3.1 and substituting the following:

3.1.(1) In this section, "land, resources and self-government agreement" means

(a) any of the following agreements:

(i) the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement entered into between Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada and the Gwich'in, as represented by the Gwich'in Tribal Council, on April 22, 1992, as amended,

(ii) the Inuvialuit Final Agreement entered into between the Inuvialuit of the Inuvialuit settlement region and the Government of Canada on June 5, 1984, as amended,

(iii) the Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement entered into between Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada and the Dene of Colville Lake, Deline, Fort Good Hope and Fort Norman and the Metis of Fort Good Hope, Fort Norman and Norman Wells, as represented by the Sahtu Tribal Council, on September 6, 1993, as amended,

(iv) the Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement among the Tlicho and the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada, signed on August 25, 2003, as amended,

(v) the Deline Final Self-Government Agreement among the Deline First Nation Band and the Deline Land Corporation, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada dated February 18, 2015, as amended;

(b) any legally binding agreement intended to be a treaty under section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, concluded between an Indigenous Government or Organization, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada; or

(c) any prescribed legally binding agreement.

(2) This act is to be interpreted. In a manner consistent with the recognition and affirmation of existing Aboriginal and treaty rights in section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

(3) An action or thing authorized by this act must be carried out in accordance with any applicable land, resources and self-government agreement.

(4) If there is a conflict or an inconsistency between a provision of this act or the regulations and a provision of a land, resources and self-government agreement or legislation approving, giving effect to and declaring valid a land, resources and self-government agreement, the provision of the land, resources and self-government agreement or legislation prevails to the extent of the conflict or inconsistency.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I just want to understand. I believe this language comes from -- is repeated in at least a couple of other pieces of GNWT legislation. And can I ask the law clerk to confirm that for me, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Can you repeat your question, sorry.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, okay. Well, let me just try it, yeah. I understand that this language comes from other laws of the Northwest Territories passed by the Assembly. So I just want to find a way to confirm that, and which pieces of legislation it comes from.

LAW CLERK (Mr. Kruger): Thanks, Madam Chair. If I understand the question correctly, it is does this clause appear in other pieces of legislation. The answer is yes, to my knowledge, at least two other pieces of legislation. They're substantially similar clauses. And those would be the Forest Act, Bill 74, not an act yet. And the Protected Areas Act as well. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks. That sound pretty good to me. I would prefer having a little bit more meat on this non-derogation clause, so to speak, that makes sure that, you know, we support the land resources and self-government agreements that have already been negotiated, and there's the ability to add more. So I think this is good language. And it's a little more specific than just section 35 rights. It brings it down to our situation in the Northwest Territories, so. But it includes those so, yeah, I agree with this. I support it. We've done it before, and I think we should do it again. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Members, there was just an error in the date of the motion that was on the print, but it's not the date that's in the legislation that we currently have. It's just our document that we're reading from. So I'm going to have to get MLA Cleveland to reread that section (4) of the Tlicho agreement section. So if we can go have you correct that, just to make a note to correct that, and we can -- if Members are okay, we can agree to go back to debate. Okay. MLA Cleveland.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. And thank you to my colleague for pointing that out to me. So just for the record, (iv) should read: the Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement among the Tlicho and the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada, signed on August 25, 2003, as amended.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, I'm not actually sure that this is in other acts, that it does anything to list the specific land claims. You know, the original motion says section 35 of the Constitution Act and existing Aboriginal treaty rights, which then is meant to include of them. But we've done this before. And then we've kind of been having this debates in every single piece of legislation since this wording was introduced. And I would encourage the government -- I guess we don't have any time but to just put this in the Interpretation Act and then it applies everywhere, and we can call it a day. But here we are. We'll have the debate again about whether the specific matters when we have the general. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. To the motion. Minister of Justice.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Cabinet won't be supporting this. As one of the Members pointed out, there is a specific

information in here and there's also very broad and general information in the subclauses -- I guess subclause (4). What we want this piece of legislation to be is something that people can look at and understand what lien legislation in the territories is, and what this would require people to do is go and now read agreements and before they do work for Indigenous government to determine whether there's any inconsistencies. They might just say, you know, bother. So I'm not quite clear what, you know, parts of this motion mean. It would take some analysis. And I don't really see any analysis here on what exactly this would do. We know some people might say well, it doesn't do anything. Other people might say well, we'll let the courts decide and we could wind up in the courts. So if there's legislation or if there's, you know, clauses that have ambiguous and unclear and aren't necessary, then I don't think they need to be in legislation. So I will not be -- and I'll say as well that this might appear in the Forest Act and the Protected Areas Act. Those Acts are not the business -- or sorry, the Builders' Lien Act. They're very different. They have very different purposes. When it comes to drafting a piece of legislation every word matters, and legislation isn't necessarily a copy and paste kind of thing. So I'll leave it at that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. To the motion. I will return to the mover of the motion for any closing comments on the motion. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I believe that being this specific is important. I believe that not only when we're talking about land and resources but when we're talking about land and resources in conjunction with doing business as well that we need to be able to reference land settlement agreements and that they matter in both. So I think that this is an important distinction. And I guess people will vote how they want to vote. So 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? The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

Clause 3.1, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clauses 4 through 10, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clauses 11 through 19, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 20. Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 505-19(2):
BILL 65: BUILDERS' LIEN ACT – AMEND
SUBCLAUSE 20(1),
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I move that Bill 65 be amended by striking out "landlord's interest" in that portion of subclause 20(1) preceding paragraph (a) and substituting "landlord's interest in the premises."

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

Clause 20 as amended, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 21 to 30, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 31 to 40, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 41 to 43, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 44. Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 506-19(2):
BILL 65: BUILDERS' LIEN ACT – AMEND
SUBCLAUSE 44(2),
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I move that Bill 65 be amended in that portion of subclause 44(2) preceding paragraph (a), by striking out "must set out" and

substituting "must set out, with an affidavit supporting the claim".

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

Clause 44 as amended, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 45, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 46. Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 507-19(2):
BILL 65: BUILDERS' LIEN ACT – AMEND
SUBCLAUSE 46(6),
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I move that subclause 46(6) of Bill 65 be deleted and the following substituted:

(6) The Court may, on application, order that a certificate of pending litigation expires if no significant steps toward trial have been taken after two years from the date of registration of the certificate.

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

Clause 46 as amended, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 47 to 50, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 51 to 60, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 61 to 70, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 71 to 80, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 81 to 89, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):

Clause 90. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I move that bill -- no.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Sorry, I need to get agreement on 90 because it's a new clause. So clause 90, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

COMMITTEE MOTION 508-19(2):
BILL 65: BUILDERS' LIEN ACT – NEW
CLAUSE 90.1,
DEFEATED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. To the clause as amended, I move that Bill 65 be amended by adding the following after clause 90:

Review of Act

90.1.(1) The provisions and operation of this Act must be reviewed by the department responsible for the administration of this Act within two years after the commencement of the twenty-first Legislative Assembly.

(2) The review

(A) shall include an examination of.

(i) an examination of the administration and implementation of the Act,

(ii) the effectiveness of its provisions,

(iii) the achievement of its objectives, and

(iv) which the entities and improvements that should be subject to the Act; and

(b) may include any recommendations for changes to the Act.

(3) The Minister shall make the results of a review completed under

(1) publicly available by publishing them on a website maintained by the department responsible for the administration of this Act.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the committee reported this bill back as not ready but we have called it and we are sitting here and we are reviewing it and at -- you know, it's not even the 11th hour I think at this point in the Assembly. It's the 12th hour. But we're sitting here with this piece of legislation that on one hand is very important. At the end of the day, the point of this bill is to make sure that private industry gets paid for the work that it does and the material it provides to do that work. At the same time, we've identified as committee a number of issues with this bill and a number of concerns. And so I'm bringing forward this motion here today because it's -- and I know that a lot of people don't like stat reviews. It's not a recurring stat review. It is a one time off review to be able to look at this legislation, how it is serving private industry, and to do a statutory review of it so that we can ensure that we're serving private industry and their objective and making sure that the objectives of this bill are meeting those to the best of our ability. So I think that this is a really important clause to kind of meet in the middle if this piece of legislation is going to go forward to make sure in short order that we are actually serving its purpose and ultimately serving the people of the the Northwest Territories. We need more business in this territory, Madam Chair, not less. Thank you.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I don't really like stat reviews ever. I don't even know if I want to review the act. To me, what I would have liked to see is basically two paragraphs added. One is that this act binds the Government of the Northwest Territories and then another one that says for further clarity, public lands can't be subject to sale or seizure.

I do think it's that simple. I get all of this other conversation about Indigenous land and municipalities and the nature of the

infrastructure. It's similar to BC's legislation. Got roped into this, and then we kind of went down this spiral. And then I get that prompt payment legislation got tied into all of this and I -- but I really do think you could just bind yourself and then exempt yourself from sale and call it a day. That's really all I -- if that review accomplished that, then I don't even need a review. If that legislation was introduced in the next Assembly after the department gave it some thought, that would make me very happy, and I would not feel so begrudgingly voting for this presently. But, that's all. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. To the motion. Minister of Justice.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: I don't have a problem generally with -- you know, with -- I wouldn't generally have a problem with something like this. You know, like the Member from Yellowknife North, I'm not a fan of the recurring statutory reviews. As a Regular Member, I've been part of those. I found that, if anything, they hinder progress on amending acts. But, you know, we just discussed the UNDRIP Act and, you know, we're moving in a different direction in the coming Assemblies. And in this -- even in this government, we have introduced protocols and processes that limit the amount of legislation that we can do. And going forward, it's going to take longer to do legislation. We're going to -- we're going to be forced to do less pieces of legislation unless the federal government decides that they actually want to, you know, give us the kind of money we need to operate the Northwest Territories. And so I don't want to burden that limited group of people who are tasked with these types of statutory reviews with doing that work because in six years, when this review would be scheduled, there could be more pressing things that need to be dealt with. And so I don't want to bind future operations. I want them to be able to make that decision. I share the Member's concern that we have this piece of legislation that for decades has really pretty much gone untouched but I won't be supporting this, this provision. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. It may not come as a surprise to the other side, I think this bill was not particularly well drafted. I don't think there was adequate consultation. And to have this bill not apply to GNWT, that's not good. This might actually help fix that through a one-time review that the department would undertake, would have to make public. So I'm going to support this motion. I think statutory reviews are actually good. I think it's a way to hold Cabinet to account. This one would

actually be done internally by the department; they just have to make it public. So it's not carried out by standing committee. But, yeah, I'll support this but I'm going to vote against the bill because I just think it's poorly done and should bind the NWT. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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?

---Defeated

The motion is defeated.

Clause 91. Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 509-19(2):
BILL 65: BUILDERS' LIEN ACT – AMEND
PARAGRAPH 91(K),
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Sorry, Madam Chair, the MLA for Frame Lake just let me know I joined a new club.

Madam Chair, I move that the English version of Bill 65 be amended by striking out "a certificates" in paragraph 91(k) and substituting "certificates."

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. The motion is order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstaining? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Clause 91 as amended, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 92 to 93, does committee agree? Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 510-19(2):
BILL 65: BUILDERS' LIEN ACT – NEW
CLAUSE 93.1,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I move that Bill 65 be amended by adding the following after clause 93:

Consequential Amendments

93.1.(1) The Land Titles Act is amended by this section.

(2) Each of the following provisions is amended by striking out "mechanics' lien" and substituting "builders' lien":

(a) subsection 24(2);

(b) subsection 96(2).

Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): 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

Clause 93.1, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 94, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, to the bill as a whole, does committee agree that Bill 65, Builders' Lien Act as amended, is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Committee has agreed that Bill 65, Builders' Lien Act as amended, is now ready for third reading. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 65, Builders' Lien Act?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. And thank you to your witnesses. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

Committee, we've agreed to consider Bill 84, An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation Act. I will ask the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment to introduce the bill. Minister Wawzonek.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I am here to present this evening Bill 84, An Act to Amend

the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation Act.

The Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation Act and regulations have not been comprehensively updated since their introduction in 2005, despite there being significant market changes over the years. Based on recommendations in the last five-year program review of the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation and direction received from the Board of Directors, an in-depth legislative review with public engagement over the last 18 months was conducted.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the 130 businesses and stakeholders who invested their time and resources to participate in the research and public engagement sessions. I also want to thank the chairpersons and members of the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation board of directors, both former and current, who played a central role in identifying the opportunity for change and who were involved throughout the legislative development process. Having an independent and public board supports an arm's length structure and offers a level of independence for the organization, which is highly valued and preferred by the public.

The result of this extensive undertaking by the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation and its board is Bill 84. Bill 84 modernizes and amends the act to enhance clarity, transparency, and value-added supports to NWT entrepreneurs and businesses. There are nine amendments being put forth that will create flexibility for the organization to better respond to business needs which can quickly change, especially during times of emergencies or crisis, like the wildfires, and will help community businesses thrive in the territory.

To support these proposed amendments and the organization's strategic direction, a new name for the organization is also being proposed. The proposed name, Prosper NWT, will enable the organization to overcome the significant challenges that exist with the current name, Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation, and better aligns to the ultimate purpose and goal of the organization which is to help bring greater prosperity to the Northwest Territories.

Prosper NWT has generated much interest from my colleagues. I want to assure my colleagues and the public, of two things: First, I am confident that the new name is a

well-informed, meaningful, and strategic choice made only after significant research; and second, that I have had the benefit of very strong boards, board chairs, and management staff on whom to rely for these recommendations, that remain arm's length and responsive to the needs of the private sector in a way that government cannot always achieve.

A comprehensive and professional approach was taken to arrive to this name, a process that is typically followed by many other companies and organizations, balancing stakeholder engagement with the expertise of branding professionals, legal considerations, and the organization's overall goals and vision. Of note, the proposed name, Prosper NWT, does appear to have support from the business community as demonstrated by a recent poll conducted by the Northwest Territories Chamber.

I strongly believe that with the proposed amendments in Bill 84, including the new name for the organization, we will be able to do more and do things differently to better support Northwest Territories businesses, contributing to a stronger and more diversified economy.

That concludes my opening remarks, Madam Chair. I would be happy to answer questions committee may have.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Yes.

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

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have two witnesses with me today. On my right, Ms. Joyce Taylor, the chief executive officer of the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation. And on my left, Christina Duffy, director of legislation division with the Department of Justice.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Welcome. I will now turn to the chair on the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment, the standing committee that reviewed the bill, for any opening comments on Bill 84. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Madam Chair, Bill 84, An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation Act, received second reading in the Legislative

Assembly on March 30th, 2023, and was referred to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment for review.

Bill 84 is proposed to make numerous changes to legislation that impacts the operations of the corporation. The bill would have also changed the name of the corporation to Prosper NWT. At the time, the committee had concerns about the board of the corporation, from the vacant board positions, inadequate representation from the communities. Further, the committee believes that the Crown corporation of the government, the corporation should have interacted more with the public when going through a rebranding exercise. While the amendment could not have been addressed the concerns about the board's composition, the lack of transparency, the name selection procedure could not be changed at the stage of the process. That is why the committee decided to do its clause by clause on Bill 84 on July 25th, 2023, that the bill was not ready to move forward.

I would like to thank the committee for its work on the review of Bill 84. Individuals and Members may have additional comments.

But before I hand it over to -- back to you, Madam Chair, I'd just like -- on a personal note, Prosper NWT, BDIC, it doesn't matter. As the chair, or board -- for myself, I just want to make sure access to funds for small businesses are into the communities. And I really think this is a really good program for our small businesses across the territory. And I think it doesn't matter the name in regards to it, just as long as it's getting out the door and helping who needs help. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. I will now open the floor to general comments on Bill 84. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I'd like to thank the committee for the work they did as well, and I will support this bill. I like some of the changes there. The name, I guess, always -- it seemed to be a concern to some. And I guess it was to me at the beginning but then I thought about it after a while, and Prosper NWT it's actually welcoming. And that's what we need that office to be is to allow people to go in there and feel like they're welcomed there and that they are going to get the support. And then I also see some of the other stuff.

Like, you know, to provide nonfinancial support, which is very important to its clientele, I think. And so there are a number of good items in

there. It's the meat of it that I'm looking at. The name, again, like, my colleague just stated, you know, it doesn't matter to me that much. But I think it's probably an okay name. And like I say, you know, anything that makes it better, makes it more accessible, and provides more support to our business community, then I'm in support of that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any other general comments? Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. I participated in the review of the bill. And I want to say I support the bill, except for the name change. And the other items in here, though, are good items that are covered here. They are in response to three independent reviews that were done of BDIC. And if I get the dates right, 2013, 2014, 20 -- I don't know -- 16 or something, 2018. Anyways, that part of the bill, I don't have any problems with, and I think they're helpful changes that will allow BDIC to do more of what it can and should be doing.

The name change, though, very problematic. And look, I want BDIC to be independent. I want them to be arm's length from the government. I want them to have a full functioning board that's probably more representative than what's there now. And I might speak to that a little bit more. But, you know, the name change was not part of the whole plan. You know, we got a legislative proposal as Regular MLAs. Can't talk about it. But what I can talk about is the discussion paper that was put out. The public engagement that was undertaken. The name change wasn't part of that process. And all of a sudden, it bubbled up in the bill. It was a complete surprise to committee. So we tried to find out what it was all about. We had to ask, I think, three times to get the information. Committee shouldn't have to ask three times to get information, and committee was ready to use its power to compel production of a document. That doesn't happen very often in the eight years I've been here. I just don't know why it had to go that far.

So the Minister talked about how, in her view, this was a well-informed decision. When committee got the documentation -- and I can't talk about it because it's top secret -- there was -- well, I think I can say that there was nothing in there about a name change. So then we had to go back and ask a second time, where's the information -- where's the background stuff for the name change. So then we got some more stuff.

And I disagree completely with the Minister's assessment that this is a well-informed decision. And I respect the board. I want boards

to be independent. But it's not a well-informed decision. I read the stuff. I'm a details guy. And I don't think it was done well. So anyways, one question I do want to ask is can the Minister agree to make that background work -- and if some of it needs to be redacted in some way, can the Minister agree to make that information public? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, we have had a fairly significant disagreement about the -- really, about the process of getting information to committee on this one. And I will say, Madam Chair, it is unusual, but we're also not dealing with a department of a government here. We are dealing with an entity that is meant to be arm's length in which, to be quite frank, over many years was not necessarily given as greater latitude as it could have been to be truly at arm's length from the department, from the Minister, from the Minister's office. So I certainly made it my point to really embody the idea of arm's length, to be committed to the notion of independence. And so when the board and their staff undertook this process -- which I would note, Madam Chair, that in our legislative proposal, we did say that they would be undertaking a rebranding exercise and that that had yet to be finalized.

So that was in the legislative proposal. When they undertook that process, Madam Chair, they undertook that process internally. There was research done that did engage market research obviously looking at the market. So they then felt strongly that they're -- the process they undertook was not meant to be one that would then turn around and be shared. The products that were produced for that process were not meant to be produced for public consumption. I respected that, and so that's where unfortunately we did get into this dispute with committee. It was never meant to be anything other than that. And I think that that had left us with a bit of a bad taste in our mouths which was, again, unfortunate because it could otherwise be a positive name change.

Madam Chair, I fear I'm now in the same situation. I'm sitting in front of committee. I'm now sitting in front of Committee of the Whole. It's a public question. And I'm in the same boat where I have a board and staff of an entity that's arm's length where they're asking me to keep their materials that were not created for public consumption to not be going out to public consumption. The situation hasn't changed. I was able to share with committee under the conventions of this House. I can't do the same thing if I'm sharing it to the public. I'm sure,

Madam Chair, we could come up with a draft document that would summarize the market research, that would summarize the process of the market research, and I would commit to putting that type of document out to the public. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, that's all great. And I do appreciate this Minister's approach to BDIC. And I think the new management has been great there too. I've heard lots of positive things. And I want to say that publicly. So, you know -- sorry, I'm picking on you on the name change, but the rest of it has been good. Everything I've heard. But I have heard complaints from small businesses about the name change. People feel -- some businesses don't think it's a good idea. They don't like it. And I guess what I'm getting at here is that there wasn't, in my opinion, and from having reviewed the documents, that I'm not allowed to talk about, adequate public engagement to support the name change. And I'm not trying to reach in and interfere with what the board does. But it's just not there. Plus, I think it also sets a bad precedent where we say we're going to do something, people are engaged, and then all of a sudden, wow, something new is thrown in at the end without an opportunity for people to express views or concerns, whatever, about it. So that's a bad precedent. And I'm sorry, I can't support a bad precedent in that way. But in any event, I've asked the questions about trying to get more information out there about the basis for the name change and how that was done.

The Minister is of the view it was well informed. I disagree completely, having seen the information. I think there can and should have been public engagement around that. And if it -- if it had been up to me, I would have found a way to try to split this bill so we deal with the stuff that we can all agree on, which is getting these improvements to BDIC so that they can get money out the door and do their job better. That's different than the name change. That's a completely different thing. And that was not part of the original package. Rebranding might have been but I didn't clue to the fact that this was going to result in a name change. But maybe that's my fault, my failing. So.

At the end of the day, Madam Chair, I'm not sure I can support this bill because it sets a bad precedent where something pops up at the end of the process and wasn't -- people didn't have a chance to participate and express views about it. So the rest of it, good stuff. Keep doing what you're doing. And I want BDIC to continue to invest in things like the Fort McPherson Tent & Canvas, Dene Fur Clouds, the Fort Liard arts

and crafts stuff. Those are great projects. It's at your own initiative. I believe in government intervention. I believe in government creating jobs in communities. And that is a big part of BDIC's mandate, and I want to see more of that, please. Please do it. So that's it. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, I -- I like the discussion we're having here right now. In regards to government rebranding and, you know, you have to think about that too as well. I know, you know -- you know, we take a look at housing corporation, NWT Housing Corporation. They went through a whole exercise and at the end, they called it Housing NWT. But the policies are still the same. The people are still the same. The monies are still the same. Everything -- I mean, when you really look at it, it's just a different set of clothes the next day they're wearing. Everything else is still the same.

In regards to changing the name for BDIC to Prosper NWT, I'm not really sure -- you know, I think a lot of people here in the Northwest Territories are familiar with the term BCIA, BNI, so it was called BCIC? Is that what it is? Yeah, but, anyway, you know, I just wanted to know -- like, I'm surprised that this came up now. But at the same time, had the board had an opportunity to be part of this process and when you said you had 130 business people and stakeholders, what were their thoughts on this idea of changing the name? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Chair, again, this was led by the board and their director, CEOs. So I'd like to turn it over to the CEO, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Ms. Taylor.

MS. JOYCE TAYLOR: Yes, the board was engaged throughout the process. With the board of eight members at the time, they initiated the process through the strategic planning process to look into improving the image of the BDIC and to look into branding as a part of the mandate under my tenure. They also engaged in the conversations with the 11 engagement sessions that were held with the stakeholders. And during that time, it was continually expressed that there was a ton of confusion, especially with BDIC, and BDC, as well as at least ten other organizations. And there was continual concern that there was bad goodwill coming from other organizations. And

that was also exemplified today in the newspaper for the Yellowknifer.

The media confused the BDIC with the BDC. There was allegations of fraud in the newspaper where the tag line referred to BDIC when, in fact, the loan was from the BDC. We had nothing to do with that lending and that media and confusion continues. So the board throughout the process looked at and discussed the name and they looked at what the professionals had stated should be done. They deferred it to the marketing and communications specialist that indicated that there was a problem with our branding. There was extensive confusion with the BDIC and the BDC and to create a simple ownable name that was easy in English, easy in French, and could be also identified easily in the communities as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. EDJERICON: Like, again, I know the rebranding portion, you know, I mean, we're changing the housing corporation to Housing NWT. Maybe we could have build ten houses just on that note, all the letterheads and everything else, the cost of doing all that. You know, this can be just a simple fix, you know. All you got to do is -- where it says BDIC, just put a little polar bear there or something like that. And the other ones BDC, that's a federal organization. Put a Canada flag or something there. But anyway, I guess I'm just wondering, Madam Chair, can you maybe elaborate a little bit more as to how your engagement process of this bill with your board and in the -- what kind of feedbacks you were getting from -- or some of the concerns as well in regards to this bill from your board. Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. So I mean, as a general process, again, I suppose it's -- sorry, I'm struggling with the long question. There was a lot -- I mean, one of the things I guess I would speak to would be the need to get the venture program to a place where it was more accessible and more useable. There was significant interest in being able to deliver business supports, business programs in a way that right now under the current legislation was not authorized. There was a desire to move an authority from an executive council, which requires all of Cabinet, to the ministerial level, but also to give greater authority directly to the board itself so that we're not, again, as reliant upon the department of ITI or the Minister.

You know, again, there was recognition of -- you know, if we're talking -- if we're still talking about the rebranding, I'm not sure. But certainly, again, the concern being -- I mean, the Member mentioned earlier BCIC. So, yes, there's BCIC, BDIC, BDC. There's -- I mean, First Nations Financial. There's other financials. There's this financial. So there was a long list of names and, again, there was a marketing -- a whole marketing process undertaken to do the research on this. I am not an expert in that. I'm quite content to rely on those who are the experts in that. There was a need to define conflicts of interest. This has come up in the time that I've been in this role. So, yes, I mean, all of those things were -- you know, the occasions when the board gets together, have a chance to meet with me as well. They had done -- the What We Heard report on this was fairly extensive and lengthy and spoke to a lot of these issues. So I -- Madam Chair, I'm not sure where else to go. I don't want to take all the Member's time. So I'll pause there and see if there's one that he would like more information on. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. EDJERICON: Take all my time, add another ten minutes. I'm just kidding. No, no. Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you, Minister, for that response.

So you talked about the involvement of your board. How about the independent board? I know BDIC has an independent board. Can you let me know how were they involved in this bill and what kind of comments and feedback were you getting from them as well. Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Let me turn that to Ms. Taylor.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Ms. Taylor.

MS. JOYCE TAYLOR: So thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, the board was initially from the strategic planning session to involvement in the drafting of the discussion paper after the engagement through surveys, 78 survey respondents as to what we should address. They were also involved in the engagement sessions with the public prior, and there were 51 participants in 11 sessions. That spanned from May of 2022 right through to July of 2022, and they were held in French and English. They were held -- for the regions at different times of the day to accommodate.

The board spoke to them. The board was involved in the review of the What We Heard

report. And then they were also involved with the drafting of the legislation and the changes that were proposed that came out of the What We Heard report in response to what the public and the various stakeholders had to say. And then they were also engaged as a part of the interview process where there were 11 interviews with business advisory, businesses themselves, board members, senior management.

There were representatives from the business communities at an association level speaking to the whole issue of the brand audit. And they contributed to that process. There were -- and then once the branding audit results came, they saw what the experts had said. They also had presentations on the proposed names. 50 names were reviewed. So, anyway, their involvement was throughout. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you for that response. I guess my last question would be for the Minister is what does she feel will be the biggest impacts for NWT businesses with the proposed amendments of this bill? Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm happy to give my own views on it. I do think it would be beneficial to also hear from the CEO. But, I mean, I suppose at this point I'd probably highlight -- I don't like to pick favourites; it's like picking your favorite child. But, I mean, to be -- to be quite honest, actually, I would actually put the rebranding on there because there is confusion in the space, in the ecosystem of supports for businesses. I'm not -- it doesn't even matter to me necessarily. As it has been said already, whether it's Prosper NWT or something different, but it needs to be something different. I'm glad that it is something that has been done by a professional organization to make that determination because there needs to be clarity around the business ecosystems that are available to support businesses in the Northwest Territories. There's not right now. They don't know who to go to for what level of service or for what type of service. And so second to that, I would say is the ability here for BDIC to provide business supports, which right now have to go through the Minister if they can be supported at all. So the ability for them to start to do that on their own in a responsive way will be more responsive and more timely. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I think Prosper NWT is the greatest name ever; I love it, I'm excited. I'm really excited for the CEO and board and to truly become arm's length and hopefully they don't have to deal with any more MLAs for a long time. My only concern, though, is I think the board right now has four Yellowknife Members and one Fort Smith Member, and then has some vacancies. Can I get an update on how we're doing with trying to add some diversity to the board. Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Chair. Recently under the last board composition, our chair was from Inuvik and we had a member from Aklavik. The current board members, I have numbers but I don't necessarily have where they're from. So I might see if the CEO can respond to that, please.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Ms. Taylor.

MS. TAYLOR: Thank you, Madam Chair. There is one board member from Fort Smith, and there are four members from Yellowknife. And we are engaging in a broad media campaign in order to attract more board members for the vacant positions, and we're going out for at a minimum of six members. And we are going to be doing five weeks of advertising, and there will be a nomination committee that will ensure that using our matrix that there is a diversity both from community representation as well as from various disciplines and industries. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. And thank you to the Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. He asked some of the questions that I wanted out on the floor, which was what are the biggest impacts of this bill going to be? At the end of the day, you know, am I in love with Prosper NWT? Maybe not. My concern is that will businesses know where to go. And I guess that is another marketing campaign that will have to happen. But ultimately, I don't believe that it is the role of this House to jump into marketing activities.

The idea of Members from either side of the House, whether you are a Minister or a Regular Member, jumping in to any kind of marketing activity for the GNWT or their arm's length organizations, in my mind, is definitely not our

jobs, and I definitely don't want to see that precedent set here today. We have, over the last four years, gotten really good at poking one another when we get into the weeds. And I think this is definitely one where this is too far into the weeds in my opinion. And I will be supporting this bill because of the impacts listed by the Minister and by the executive director. At the end of the day, it's our job to provide political direction and not to decide what the name of an organization will be. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Members, are there any more general comments? Can we proceed to a clause-by-clause review of the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Committee, we will defer the bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses. We will consider clauses in groups. Please turn to page 1 of the bill.

Clauses 1 through 6, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 7. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: One second, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Go ahead, Member for Nunakput.

COMMITTEE MOTION 511-19(2):
BILL 84: AN ACT TO AMEND THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT
CORPORATION ACT – AMEND CLAUSE 7,
CARRIED

MR. JACOBSON: Okay, thank you, Madam Chair. An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Business Development Investment Act Corporation clause 7 of Bill 84 be numbered as subclause 7(1) and following to be added after renumbered subclause. The following added -- what are you doing? You're waving your little arm around here.

The following is added after subsection 5(1.2):

(1.3) The Minister shall make reasonable efforts to appoint directors who are representative of the economic sectors and communities of the Northwest Territories.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): 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? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Clause 7 as amended, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 8 through 10, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 10 through 15, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 16 through 20, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clause 21 through 25, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Clauses 25 to 29, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, to the bill as a whole, does committee agree that Bill 84, An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Business Development Investment Corporation Act as amended, is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. Committee has agreed that Bill 84, An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Business Development Investment Corporation Act as amended, is now ready for third reading.

Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 84, An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Business Development Investment Corporation Act as amended?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Thank you, Minister. Thank you to your witnesses. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I move that the chair rise and report progress.

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: Order. May I please have the report of Committee of the Whole. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MS. SEMMLER: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Committee Report 55-19(2), Bill 65, Bill 84, Bill 85, and would like to report progress with 15 motions carried, and that Committee Report 55-19(2) is concluded and that Bill 85 is ready for third reading, and Bill 65 and 84 are ready for third reading as amended. And, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Do we have a seconder? Member for Yellowknife South. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Minister responsible for Environment and Climate Change.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 74:
FOREST ACT,
CARRIED

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, second by the honourable Member from Yellowknife South, that Bill 74, the Forest Act, be read for the third time. And, Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote. 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. The Minister has requested a recorded vote. All those in favour, please rise.

RECORDED VOTE

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Rutland): The Member for Nahendeh. The Member for

Yellowknife South. The Member for Sahtu. The Member for Range Lake. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake. 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 Frame Lake. The Member for Nunakput. The Member for Yellowknife North. The Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. The Member for Monfwi. The Member for Great Slave.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please rise. All those abstaining, please rise. Thank you.

The results of the recorded vote: 17 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is carried. Bill 74 has had third reading.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Minister responsible for Environment and Climate Change.

BILL 78:
WASTE REDUCTION AND RESOURCE
RECOVERY ACT,
CARRIED

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, second by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 78, Waste Reduction and Resource Recovery Act, be read for the third time. And, Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote. 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. The Minister has requested a recorded vote. All those in favour, please rise.

RECORDED VOTE

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Rutland): The Member for Nahendeh. The Member for Yellowknife South. The Member for Sahtu. The Member for Range Lake. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake. 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 Frame Lake. The Member for Nunakput. The Member for Yellowknife North. The Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. The Member for Monfwi. The Member for Great Slave.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please rise. All those abstaining, please rise.

The results of the recorded vote: 17 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is carried. Bill 78 has had third reading.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Minister responsible for Finance.

BILL 83:
LIQUOR ACT,
CARRIED

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for the Sahtu, that Bill 83, Liquor Act, be read for the third time. Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote. 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, please rise.

RECORDED VOTE

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Rutland): The Member for Yellowknife South. The Member for Sahtu. The Member for Range Lake. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake. 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 Frame Lake. The Member for Nunakput. The Member for Yellowknife North. The Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. The Member for Monfwi. The Member for Great Slave. The Member for Nahendeh.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please rise. All those abstaining, please rise.

The results of the recorded vote: 17 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is carried. Bill 83 has had third reading.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Minister responsible for Finance.

BILL 92:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE PETROLEUM
PRODUCTS AND CARBON TAX, NO. 3,
CARRIED

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 92, An Act to Amend the Petroleum Products and Carbon Tax Act, No. 3, be read for the third time. And, Mr. Speaker,

I request a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Tonight I'll be voting with the carbon tax but I just want to put clarity is the reason I'm supporting the carbon tax bill tonight, it's going to give our communities their funds with the local community governments, and it's going to get the monies to the people, the individual peoples that need it. And I'm still praying it's a tiered system. And we're -- that's why I'm supporting it tonight. But as the carbon tax bill as a whole, I don't support it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. The Minister's requested a recorded vote. All those in favour, please rise.

RECORDED VOTE

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Yellowknife South. The Member for Sahtu. The Member for Range Lake. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake. 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 Frame Lake. The Member for Nunakput. The Member for Yellowknife North. The Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. The Member for Monfwi. The Member for Great Slave. The Member for Nahendeh.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please rise. All those abstaining, please rise.

Order. The results of the recorded vote: 17 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is carried. Bill 92 has had third reading.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Rutland): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Orders of the day for Thursday, October 5th, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.

1. Prayer

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2. Ministers' Statements | - Minister's Statement 264-19(2), Response to the NWT Chief Coroner's Report on Suicide |
| 3. Members' Statements | |
| 4. Returns to Oral Questions | - 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 |
| " - Oral Question 1578-19(2), Fire Management Policy Effect on Indigenous Culture | |
| 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery | |
| 6. Acknowledgements | - Tabled Document 973-19(2), 2024-2025 Capital Estimates |
| 7. Oral Questions | |
| 8. Written Questions | - Tabled Document 974-19(2), Supplementary Estimates Operations Expenditures, No. 3, 2023-2024 |
| 9. Returns to Written Questions | |
| 10. Replies to the Commissioner's Address | 21. Report of Committee of the Whole |
| 11. Petitions | 22. Third Reading of Bills |
| 12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills | - Bill 65, Builder's Lien Act |
| 13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees | - Bill 84, An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation Act |
| 14. Tabling of Documents | - Bill 85, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act |
| 15. Notices of Motions | |
| 16. Motions | 23. Orders of the Day |
| 17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills | Thank you, Mr. Speaker. |
| 18. First Reading of Bills | MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Thursday, October 5th, 2023, at 1:30 p.m. |
| 19. Second Reading of Bills | ---ADJOURNMENT |
| - Bill 64, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 3 | The House adjourned at 8:00 p.m. |
| 20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters | |
| - Bill 23, An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act | |
| - Bill 75, Council of Women and Gender Diversity Act | |
| - Bill 80, Dental Hygienists Profession Statutes Amendment Act | |
| - 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 | |

