



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
**LEGISLATIVE  
ASSEMBLY**

**1<sup>st</sup> Session**

**Day 2**

**20<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

**HANSARD**

**Tuesday, February 6, 2024**

Pages 17 - 40

**The Honourable Shane Thompson, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

**Hon. Shane Thompson**  
(Nahendeh)

---

**Hon. Caitlin Cleveland**

(Kam Lake)  
*Minister of Education, Culture and  
Employment*  
*Minister of Industry, Tourism and  
Investment*

**Mr. Richard Edjericon**

(Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh)

**Mr. Robert Hawkins**

(Yellowknife Centre)

**Hon. Lucy Kuptana**

(Nunakput)  
*Minister responsible for Housing  
Northwest Territories*  
*Minister responsible for the Status of  
Women*

**Hon. Jay MacDonald**

(Thebacha)  
*Minister of Environment and Climate  
Change*

**Hon. Vince McKay**

(Hay River South)  
*Minister of Municipal and Community  
Affairs*  
*Minister responsible for the Workers'  
Safety and Compensation  
Commission*  
*Minister responsible for the Public  
Utilities Board*

**Mr. Danny McNeely**

(Sahtu)

**Ms. Shauna Morgan**

(Yellowknife North)

**Mr. Julian Morse**

(Frame Lake)

**Mr. George Nerysoo**

(Mackenzie Delta)

**Ms. Kate Reid**

(Great Slave)

**Mr. Denny Rodgers**

(Inuvik Boot Lake)

**Hon. Lesa Semmler**

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)  
*Minister of Health and Social Services*

**Hon. R.J. Simpson**

(Hay River North)  
*Premier*  
*Government House Leader*  
*Minister of Executive and Indigenous  
Affairs*  
*Minister of Justice*

**Mr. Kieron Testart**

(Range Lake)

**Hon. Caroline Wawzonek**

(Yellowknife South)  
*Deputy Premier*  
*Minister of Finance*  
*Minister of Infrastructure*  
*Minister responsible for the NWT Power  
Corporation*

**Mrs. Jane Weyallon**

**Armstrong**

(Monfwi)

**Mrs. Sheryl Yakeleya**

(Dehcho)

---

### Officers

**Clerk of the Legislative Assembly**

Mr. Glen Rutland

**Deputy Clerks**

Ms. Kim Wickens  
Ms. Jolene Saturnino

**Committee Clerks**

Mr. Michael Ball (Clerk of Journals)  
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

<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

<b>PRAYER.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>MINISTERS' STATEMENTS .....</b>	<b>18</b>
MINISTER'S STATEMENT 1-20(1): SESSIONAL STATEMENT .....	18
MINISTER'S STATEMENT 2-20(1): MINISTER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE .....	20
<b>MEMBERS' STATEMENTS .....</b>	<b>20</b>
MEMBER'S STATEMENT 19-20(1): CONDOLENCES TO FORT SMITH .....	20
MEMBER'S STATEMENT 20-20(1): CONDOLENCES TO FORT SMITH .....	21
MEMBER'S STATEMENT 21-20(1): CHALLENGES FOR 20TH ASSEMBLY .....	21
MEMBER'S STATEMENT 22-20(1): ADDICTIONS .....	22
MEMBER'S STATEMENT 23-20(1): CONDOLENCES TO FORT SMITH .....	22
MEMBER'S STATEMENT 24-20(1): FUNDING FOR NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS .....	22
MEMBER'S STATEMENT 25-20(1): REGIONAL DIRECTOR POSITION IN INUVIK .....	23
MEMBER'S STATEMENT 26-20(1): RESPONSE TO HOUSING NWT MOTION ON MARCH 8, 2022.....	23
MEMBER'S STATEMENT 27-20(1): EVACUATION AND IMPACT ON UNHOUSED POPULATION .....	24
MEMBER'S STATEMENT 28-20(1): LACK OF FAMILY DOCTORS IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES .....	24
MEMBER'S STATEMENT 29-20(1): FORT SMITH TRAGEDY .....	25
MEMBER'S STATEMENT 30-20(1): HAY RIVER COMMUNITY SPIRT AWARDS.....	25
MEMBER'S STATEMENT 31-20(1): KOLE CROOK FIDDLE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL FIDDLE JAMBOREE .....	25
<b>RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>ORAL QUESTIONS .....</b>	<b>28</b>
QUESTION 1-20(1): MINISTERIAL MANDATE STATEMENTS.....	28
QUESTION 2-20(1): CARBON PRICING AND HOME HEATING.....	28
QUESTION 3-20(1): IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF STRENGTHENING SUPPORT FOR NON PROFIT SECTOR.....	29
QUESTION 4-20(1): REGIONAL DIRECTOR POSITION.....	30
QUESTION 5-20(1): INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR SENIORS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES .....	31
QUESTION 6-20(1): ADDICTIONS FACILITIES .....	31
QUESTION 7-20(1): EXPOSURE OF VULNERABLE POPULATION TO RISK IN 2023 EVACUATIONS .....	32
QUESTION 8-20(1): EVACUATION TRAVEL SUPPORT PROGRAM PAYMENTS .....	33
QUESTION 9-20(1): HOME HEATING REBATES .....	34
QUESTION 10-20(1): EVACUATION TRAVEL SUPPORT PROGRAM.....	35
QUESTION 11-20(1): HOME HEATING SUBSIDY FOR ELDERS .....	36
<b>TABLING OF DOCUMENTS.....</b>	<b>37</b>
TABLED DOCUMENT 5-20(1): NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE .....	37
TABLED DOCUMENT 6-20(1): OPEN LETTER FROM YELLOWKNIFE WOMEN'S SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOLLOWING THE YELLOWKNIFE EVACUATION EXPERIENCE .....	37
TABLED DOCUMENT 7-20(1): REPORT OF THE INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER OF THE INVESTIGATION INTO A COMPLAINT MADE BY NANCY VAIL THAT THEN-MLA KATRINA NOKLEBY BREACHED THE MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT .....	38
TABLED DOCUMENT 8-20(1): REPORT OF THE INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER OF THE INVESTIGATION INTO A COMPLAINT MADE BY ARNOLD MANUEL ALLEGING THAT THEN-MLA PAULIE CHINNA BREACHED THE MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT.....	38
TABLED DOCUMENT 9-20(1): ELECTIONS NWT TERRITORIAL GENERAL ELECTION 2023 OFFICIAL RESULTS REPORT .....	38
TABLED DOCUMENT 10-20(1): NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023 .....	38
TABLED DOCUMENT 11-20(1): NORTHWEST TERRITORIES OMBUD SPECIAL REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE OMBUD ACT.....	38
TABLED DOCUMENT 12-20(1): 2022-2023 PUBLIC ACCOUNTS, SECTIONS I, II, III, AND IV .....	38
<b>NOTICES OF MOTION.....</b>	<b>38</b>
MOTION 7-20(1): AMEND RULES OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY – STANDING COMMITTEE.....	38
MOTION 8-20(1): APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY SPEAKER.....	38
MOTION 9-20(1): ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO THE 2023 WILDFIRES.....	39
<b>MOTIONS .....</b>	<b>39</b>
MOTION 7-20(1): AMEND RULES OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY – STANDING COMMITTEE, CARRIED .....	39
MOTION 8-20(1): APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY SPEAKER, CARRIED.....	40
<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY.....</b>	<b>40</b>



**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Tuesday, February 6, 2024****Members Present**

Hon. Caitlin Cleveland, Mr. Edjericon, Mr. Hawkins, Hon. Jay MacDonald, Hon. Vince McKay, Mr. McNeely, Ms. Morgan, Mr. Morse, Mr. Nerysoo, Ms. Reid, Mr. Rodgers, Hon. Lesa Semmler, Hon. R.J. Simpson, Mr. Testart, Hon. Shane Thompson, Hon. Caroline Wawzonek, Mrs. Weyallon Armstrong, Mrs. Yakelaya.

The House met at 1:30 P.M.

**Prayer**

---National Anthem

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Shane Thompson):** Good afternoon. Please join me in thanking elder Sarah Cleary for her opening words and blessing today.

February is Indigenous language month and I look forward to hearing these languages spoken each day. Before we begin, I want to acknowledge the tragedy that took place in Fort Smith on January 23rd. A plane crash claimed the lives of six Northerners, leaving one survivor. Our residents and communities are connected to one another. When one community hurts, we all hurt. But the reverse holds true. When a community needs healing, we come together to help heal. It is my hope that Fort Smith and the friends and families of everyone involved feel the support of this House. Also, I want to thank the first responders who assisted with rescue operations.

Members, today we will continue the first session of the 20th Assembly. Eighty-four days ago, we were elected. Since that time, we have been learning our new roles and working to advance what is important to our residents. Your motivation to make meaningful change for residents of the Northwest Territories is exciting. Next week, we will set the priorities of the 20th Assembly. I am confident the priorities chosen will reflect the needs of this territory and clearly lay out a map forward for this Assembly.

When I became the Speaker, I called for thoughtful, meaningful, and honest debate. We all have different perspectives. This requires respect and understanding. There will of course be challenges but I am certain we will rise above them.

I also want to comment on His Majesty the King's cancer diagnosis. As head of state, this House wishes him well. Cancer touches us all. The King's openness about his cancer

encourages us to talk about it and support each other as we face personal health challenges.

Members, it is my pleasure to inform you that we have interpretation services for the following official languages, and I apologize if I say the pronouncements wrong.

- Dene Suline Yati,
- Inuvialuktun,
- Inuktitut,
- Innuinnaqtun,
- Dene Kede,
- Dene Zhatie,
- Dinjii Zhu Ginjik,
- Tlicho Yati, and
- French

And again, I apologize if I mispronounced the words. It is an honour to receive these services from such dedicated interpreters. Members, please remember to speak slowly and clearly for our interpreters.

As I said earlier, February is Indigenous language month. All month, the Assembly's social media will highlight unique words and phrases from our nine Indigenous official languages. We are proud to celebrate our linguistic diversity. Speaking a language, even a single word, breathes life into our cultural heritage.

Members, please also welcome our pages to the Chamber. Our youth are the future. We are pleased to have you here with us in this House. I also want to thank the youth from Ecole William MacDonald School in Yellowknife for singing Oh Canada in English, French and Tlicho.

I received the following correspondence from the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable Margaret Thom. It states:

Dear, Mr. Speaker. I wish to advise that I recommend to the Legislative Assembly of the

Northwest Territories the passage of Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), 2024-2025; Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 4, 2023-2024; Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2023-2024, during the first session of the 20th Legislative Assembly.

Now colleagues, let's rock and roll; let's get down to business. Ministers' statements. Premier.

### Ministers' Statements

#### MINISTER'S STATEMENT 1-20(1): SESSIONAL STATEMENT

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Mr. Speaker, I must begin by acknowledging the plane crash that occurred in Fort Smith on January 23rd. I send my deepest condolences to the families and friends who have been impacted by this tragedy, and to the entire community of Fort Smith. I visited Fort Smith shortly after the accident, and it was clear that the people we lost were loved deeply and will be sorely missed. I hope the families are able to find some comfort in the outpouring of community support that I witnessed.

Mr. Speaker, I must commend and thank all of the first responders involved in the efforts that day, as well as those who assisted them. The community leaders that I met with spoke very highly of their actions and wanted to ensure that their efforts are recognized.

The impact of this accident has been felt across the territory, with NWT residents coming together, grieving alongside one another, and supporting each other through the loss. In the Northwest Territories, we are all connected, and it is this connection, this strong sense of community and togetherness, that defines us. It is our greatest strength.

Mr. Speaker, as a candidate for Premier, when I first presented my vision for the NWT, I asked each Member of this House to imagine what our territory could look like in 50 years. I asked Members to believe that through hard work, we could build the foundation for an united, resilient, and prosperous Northwest Territories; a place rooted in our collective respect for each other and the land, where our cultures and languages thrive, and our communities and people are sustained by a strong, vibrant economy. I believe that in 50 years we can achieve that and that our cooperative consensus government system, integrated with Indigenous self-governments, will be unique in the world and a model for reconciliation.

Today, as we gather for the first session of the 20th Legislative Assembly, this vision is at the forefront of my mind. Since the beginning of this young government, we have emphasized that partnerships we form must extend beyond the walls of this House. Central to our success as a public government representing all Northerners will be our ability to work in meaningful, true partnership with Indigenous governments. We must continue the work of the NWT Council of Leaders and collaborate with Indigenous governments to achieve the objective of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We must accelerate the advancement of land claims and self-government negotiations. Concluding land claim and self-government agreements will improve the quality of life for residents by advancing reconciliation, bringing more money and opportunities into the regions and small communities, and making the NWT more attractive to investors. Together with Indigenous government partners, we will forge a path honouring our shared past while embracing a promising future.

One of the first tasks as the 20th Legislative Assembly is to set priorities. As elected officials with deep roots and connections in our communities and regions, we have been engaging with our constituents and hearing their thoughts on the territory's current and future challenges and opportunities. In my own conversations with residents and Indigenous leaders, I have heard recurring themes. One is climate change.

The impacts of climate change are seen all around us, all year round, and demand immediate attention. Last year's wildfire season was the worst in Canadian and NWT history and was a stark reminder of the need to adapt and prepare for emergency situations that are becoming more frequent and extreme due to climate change. Like many residents of the territory, I have seen my community evacuated several times in the last couple of years due to floods and wildfires.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is currently participating in two independent reviews: One through the Department of Environment and Climate Change and one through the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Guided by input from Indigenous leaders, community governments and residents, these reviews will assess last year's emergency response and recommend changes to future processes.

Last summer's evacuations were traumatic for many residents and communities, and it is incredibly important that the public has an opportunity to share their thoughts and

experiences as part of the review process. Not only does this play an important role in healing, but it also ensures that we are effectively supporting residents through difficult times. From wildfires and floods to permafrost degradation, we must prepare the territory for the impacts of climate change and instill public confidence in our ability to support residents.

Mr. Speaker, mental health and housing are other areas demanding immediate attention. From shortages in affordable housing to gaps in mental health and addiction support, we need to work closely with Indigenous and community partners to create solutions that lead to real, positive outcomes for residents. To ensure the success of these programs and services, they need to be flexible and easy for residents to access. This accessibility is something we need to apply to the delivery of all programs and services across the GNWT.

This government needs to closely examine how we deliver programs and services to our residents. We need to create a person-centered approach to service delivery that puts ease of access at the center of our program and service design. We want to reach a point where a resident can walk into their local government office and learn about the various supports available across several departments and get access to them from one place at one time. Improving our programs and services also entails a rigorous evaluation of their effectiveness, ensuring our efforts deliver tangible results.

The Government of the Northwest Territories faces a critical juncture. Despite increased spending on programs and services, many of the outcomes we strive for remain elusive. It is imperative that we carefully examine the services we deliver and ensure that we are focusing on areas where we can truly make a difference. Our approach must pivot towards ensuring that every dollar spent translates into meaningful improvements in the daily lives of our residents. This strategic reallocation is about maximizing impact where it matters most.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question we have many needs in the NWT, and the Government of the Northwest Territories cannot address them alone. Luckily, Mr. Speaker, we are not alone. The GNWT is only one of the governments in the Northwest Territories. I have spoken to many Indigenous leaders, and I know that across the territory there is a strong desire for the GNWT to work in partnership with Indigenous governments to address the issues facing our territory. We are stronger together and by working collaboratively and approaching the federal government with a united front, we will make a greater impact on the lives of our

residents than if we each go at it alone. However, we cannot rely on the Government of Canada to continue to increase our funding or our borrowing limit. We are responsible for ensuring that our financial situation is sustainable.

In addition to ensuring that we are focusing our limited resources to have maximum impact, we must place a strong focus on economic development.

Part of this focus involves addressing the significant infrastructure gap between our territory and the rest of Canada. By investing in vital infrastructure, we not only enhance our economic potential but also improve the quality of life for our residents. This includes developing transportation networks, energy systems, and digital infrastructure to ensure our communities are connected and competitive. Bridging this gap is essential to address our current economic needs and to lay the groundwork for future growth and sustainability. As we advance, we aim to create a robust economy that stands on its own, reducing dependency and strengthening our position in the national landscape.

In January, I attended AME Roundup, a mineral resource industry conference in Vancouver, accompanied by the Honourable Caitlin Cleveland, Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment; the Honourable Caroline Wawzonek, Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance and Infrastructure; the Honourable Jay MacDonald, Minister of Environment and Climate Change; and, Member of the Legislative Assembly Mr. Danny McNeely. We met with Indigenous leaders, industry leaders and elected officials and staff from federal, provincial, and territorial governments to discuss the territory's extraordinary wealth of mineral resources and how investment and partnership in the NWT's non-renewable resource sector will result in benefits for residents, communities, Indigenous governments, investors, industry, and Canada.

With a century-long history in mining, the NWT has assumed a leading role in sustainable and responsible mining development. Discussions at events like AME Roundup are pivotal to maintaining this position. Developing the NWT's mineral resources sector is deeply intertwined with partnership and collaboration with Indigenous communities. Recognizing this, the Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to actively supporting and engaging with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations. This collaborative approach ensures that the development of the non-renewable resource sector not only contributes to the territorial economy but also respects and incorporates Indigenous

knowledge, priorities, and rights. By working together, we aim to create a mining sector that is sustainable, equitable, predictable, and beneficial for all communities, fostering long-term prosperity and respect for our shared land and resources.

Emerging from all these critical areas are the recurring themes that I am sure many of the Members of this House have heard from their constituents, friends and neighbours. Residents of the Northwest Territories want to feel safe in their communities and homes, they want access to timely and appropriate health care, and they want their families and communities to benefit from the opportunities attained through education and employment. Safety, health and opportunity are the building blocks of a prosperous territory and I expect that as we come together to set our priorities, these themes will again emerge as areas of focus.

I believe that our path is clear. It is one of sensible, practical, and achievable solutions, and a steadfast commitment to the people and communities of the Northwest Territories. I look forward to working closely with all Members of the Legislative Assembly, Indigenous governments, and all levels of government as we move forward to define and implement the priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly and lead the territory towards a prosperous future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Premier. Ministers' statements. Premier.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 2-20(1):  
MINISTER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Lucy Kuptana will be absent from the House today due to travel delays in her flights to Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Premier. Ministers' statements. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

### Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 19-20(1):  
CONDOLENCES TO FORT SMITH

**MR. EDJERICON:** Mr. Speaker, today as we begin our sessions, I would like to take a moment to pay tribute to the victims of the devastating plane crash that took the lives of six extraordinary people last month in Fort Smith. They were taken from their loved ones too soon, in a sudden accident that has shaken the Northwest Territories to its very core. That flight

to Diavik was carrying some of the North's best and brightest. Many on board had their whole lives ahead of them. They all had so much love to give, and they were not ready to say good-bye. Their passing impacts everyone across the North in many different ways. Words alone cannot express how shaken I was when I heard the news. I know when we all first heard, we were praying for a different outcome. Sadly, the worst turned out to be true. So many across the North travel safely every day from community to community, from home to work and back again, never expecting something so tragic to happen.

Mr. Speaker, my thoughts and prayers are especially with the families of the victims and the survivors of this disaster. I hope that the families and loved ones of the deceased find all the comfort and healing they need during this very difficult time. I know that their communities are pulling together to offer love and support, and it moves me very deeply in addition to the work of the communities. Both private and public resources have been made available to support those who are suffering in the aftermath of the crash.

I want to say mahsi cho to all of the first responders involved who worked tirelessly to save as many lives as they could, and I am sure they are haunted by the scene they came across that day. I also want to extend my thoughts to the colleagues of the deceased and all the mine workers across the NWT who are shocked by this accident. To those continuing to travel and to work from, their best efforts are always in place to ensure your safety.

This investigation will produce a vital insight into how we can improve air transportation in the North. I thank all those who are helping others to grieve and heal. These dark times are bringing out the best in all of us to show how strong and resilient our communities truly are.

Before I conclude, Mr. Speaker, I've been very moved by my constituents' tributes to the late Diane Balsillie and her family from Fort Resolution. So much love for her has poured in since the accident. She was flying out that day to work as a long-time employee.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Member from Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh, your time is up.

**MR. EDJERICON:** I seek unanimous consent.

--Unanimous consent granted

**MR. EDJERICON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Her passing hits Fort Resolution very hard. Her colleagues together all fondly recall how much brighter she made her workplace every day. Her family will never



forget her big hugs, warm greetings, her laughter and joyful smile. She was an inspiration for all that knew her. The memories of her incredibly caring personality will live on forever. She will be deeply missed, and I wish all the best for her family and friends as they grieve her loss. May she rest in peace. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. Our condolences go out to the family and friends. Member from Range Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 20-20(1):  
CONDOLENCES TO FORT SMITH

**MR. TESTART:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today in this House on behalf of my constituents to offer our deepest sympathies to the families and communities affected by the recent tragedy that took place in Fort Smith. This accident came as such a shock for what felt like just another ordinary day to a flight of such dedicated northern workers who have passed away so suddenly who were simply on the job or heading back to work. They were pilots, mechanics, truck drivers, talented young diverse workers whose strength powers our territory towards shared opportunity and prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, we are poorer as a territory without these young women and men. They truly were the future of the Northwest Territories. Yet, we are also lonelier as a territory in their absence as, most importantly, they were irreplaceable family members, sons, daughters, husbands. They were loved and gave love to their families, their friends, their neighbours. They were proud members of the community, and those communities were nothing but proud of them. Today, their communities bear such grief because they are their vital pieces of collective soul but in their passing, they also leave behind incredible memories and knowledge that will surely be passed on over future generations and bring great comfort to those who knew them. Their memories will surely be a blessing.

Mr. Speaker, we don't know what caused this accident, though we will find out. But we do know that to live and work in our rugged vast territory, we are still working on the frontier. There are real dangers, and sometimes they can bring us closer to the edge than we may have expected. It can be unforgiveable and unpredictable that so many of us can brave the unknown and head out into this vast land to live and work is an integral part of our character as Northerners. And as Northerners, when we lose loved ones we wrap our communities around each other to grieve and heal together. Since this accident, we've seen such a tremendous

outpouring of love and support, and it should not come as a surprise. As Northerners, we practice our traditions of compassion and solidarity.

Mr. Speaker, I want to express that compassion and solidarity from my constituents. I want to show my optimism that this investigation comes to a thorough conclusion that could possibly lead to changes that save lives in the future. In closing, I want to show my utmost respect for the first responders who jumped right in and tried to save as many lives as possible. But most of all, I wish that those six who passed away may rest in peace. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 21-20(1):  
CHALLENGES FOR 20TH ASSEMBLY

**MR. McNEELY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome, 20th Assembly Government of the Northwest Territories. legislature. This term challenges part one.

Mr. Speaker, Northwest Territories is a small portion by comparison to the global community but impacted equally. We are in precarious times. This 20th Assembly is faced with many challenges, including our physical position. However, Mr. Speaker, through collaboration we can share the workload. If the plan doesn't work, change the plan but never the goals.

Mr. Speaker, an austerity with a 20th Assembly resiliency approach during the term of this government is my efforts and pathway. High on the list of created barriers, Mr. Speaker, is climate change. The natural disasters of the last two years will never be forgotten; however, this recognition will enhance our response and adaptation plans. We ask ourselves in consideration of the unprecedented wildfires, barging water levels, there's an immediate need for a new adaptation plan. In previous months, we have seen air lifted resupply of two generators and aviation fuels to the Sahtu region.

Mr. Speaker, our current water precipitation table is at levels never seen before. We need 750 millimeters, or 30 inches, of water to meet this normal condition. Mr. Speaker, adverse weather patterns, winter snow conditions, drought assessments in the southern NWT and northern Alberta raise concerns and views on our upcoming summer season. We must continue to monitor these conditions in preparation for the summer barging resupply, potential hot and dry weather conditions.

Mr. Speaker, there's no other way to explain. Climate change is inevitable. More importantly designing the adaptation plan is prudent leadership. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 22-20(1):  
ADDICTIONS

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

**MR. NERYSOO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to address the concern that plagues each of our communities in the Northwest Territories. That concern is alcohol and drug abuse. When someone is addicted to alcohol and/or drugs, it does not only affect the individual, but it also has a negative impact on the family and the whole community. At the present time, we as government are sending our own people to southern treatment centres where they do not know anyone, where the culture is totally different, and where they feel lost. Upon returning home, there is no aftercare for these individuals, and within a month these individuals are back using alcohol and drugs again.

Mr. Speaker, we must look at taking a different approach to healing our communities, our families, and our people. We need to provide a healing process where the whole family's involved in healing themselves. There are programs in other jurisdictions where they provide counselling services for the whole family for an extended period and not just the addict. Most notably, there's a centre in Whitehorse that provides this service for the whole family to benefit.

Mr. Speaker, as the government, we do not have to try and develop new innovative programs for our people. It is right there. We just need to implement the program for our people and their families and their communities. When we have an individual who is addicted to these substances, it affects multiple departments within the government. It stretches our resource people within our communities. These resource people have families and spending time with their families central to their mental health. If we target these individuals and his or her families, we will have a healthy community. Having a healthy community ensures the safety of all the residents of our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will have questions for the appropriate Minister at a later time. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Members' statements. Member for Great Slave.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 23-20(1):  
CONDOLENCES TO FORT SMITH

**MS. REID:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to offer my condolences to the tight-knit community of Fort Smith alongside my fellow Members of the House. When tragedy hits us in the NWT, I'm always heartened by the overwhelming outpouring of love and support for those who are hurting. It has been said countless times over the years, but it bears repeating: The NWT is a small town spread out over a large area. We almost always know someone who is affected by a deeply felt loss, and we will always stand shoulder to shoulder to support them in their grief. I know all of us stand here today with the town of Fort Smith. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Members' statements. Member from Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 24-20(1):  
FUNDING FOR NON-GOVERNMENTAL  
ORGANIZATIONS

**MR. MORSE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the nonprofit and charitable sector play a critical role in essential service delivery in the Northwest Territories. They fill numerous gaps in government service which would be much more expensive to fill if the GNWT tried to deliver these services alone. Our network of NGOs is essential to ensuring people aren't falling through the cracks. For many years, NGOs have been saying to government that they are overburdened with administration of numerous funding agreements, feel undervalued and disrespected, and struggle to keep the lights on year to year despite the territory's reliance on them for service delivery. In response to these concerns, the GNWT produced a program managers' guide for funding NGOs in 2014. Unfortunately, though, Mr. Speaker, it seems this guide did not result in much tangible change because nine years into its implementation, the concerns it was intended to address are being reiterated to MLAs as we engage on priorities for the 20th Assembly.

I am pleased to note that in 2023, the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs initiated an external committee focused on strengthening the nonprofit and charitable sector. The committee produced a report which was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on October 6th, 2023, and I am raising its profile now at the start of this Assembly to ensure it is not forgotten, which so often happens with this kind of report.

Somewhat ironically, one of the key recommendations of the report is simply that the GNWT implement the tools included in the 2014 program managers' guide. The report further recommends updating the program

managers' guide within a year with some recommendations for improvement. Lastly, the report recommends the GNWT provide additional support to increase capacity of the nonprofit sector in the NWT.

These are simple and actionable recommendations, Mr. Speaker, and I think as this renewed government looks to establish new ways of doing business, ensuring timely and tangible change in how the GNWT manages its relationships with the nonprofit and charitable sector, can be a quick win.

And since I have a little bit of time, I just wanted to say to all the folks in the nonprofit sector and charitable sector who have engaged with us so far, thank you for taking the time to engage with us. We see you, we hear you, and appreciate the work that you do. I'll have questions on this subject for the Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs at the appropriate time. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Members' statements. Inuvik Boot Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 25-20(1):  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR POSITION IN INUVIK

**MR. RODGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this government can only be successful when elected politicians are available to the people we serve. This means we must be present in the community. It means we must listen to the concerns that our communities raise. This means we must act at all times with the best interests of our communities in mind. The people elected us and to the people we must be accountable.

Mr. Speaker, the same can be said for our senior government staff. Residents need appropriately staffed regional offices where issues can be brought forward and addressed. It is not enough to have willing politicians - the staff must be present in the community.

Mr. Speaker, the regional director position in Inuvik has been vacant since the summer of 2020. This position was designed to ensure the government was accountable to the people, the businesses, and the communities of the Beaufort Delta. The regional director position served a key function. They were a liaison for all government departments and a crucial linchpin between the GNWT and Indigenous governments. The regional director was able to ensure that local Indigenous leadership and Indigenous senior staff had a community Member to go to in order to exchange ideas and take action to address important issues that affect us all.

Mr. Speaker, the Beaufort Delta, like other regions in the territory, has unique needs. The identification and expression of these needs can only be communicated by someone living and working in the region. The regional director position is even more vital when you consider that the Beaufort Delta is the furthest region from the capital. I often hear concerns from the people of Inuvik about the migration of senior positions - removing positions from the region and instead placing them in Yellowknife. I think it is time we did something about this, Mr. Speaker. Just like elected officials must be present in our communities, so too must our senior staff. Collaboration, progress, and the integrity of government are only possible when representation in communities is real and is sincerely felt by the people we serve. If we are truly going to listen, if we are truly going to be accountable, and if we are truly going to be a successful government, then we must create new positions in communities and moving existing ones out of Yellowknife and back to the communities we serve. This starts with the regional director in Inuvik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 26-20(1):  
RESPONSE TO HOUSING NWT MOTION  
ON MARCH 8, 2022

**MRS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

Housing NWT's 2015 collection policy posted on their website states garnishment is used for collections. This contradicts their response. If Housing NWT believes garnishment is outside their legislated authority, why is it included in their policy? Is this instead in reference specifically to garnishing pensions? What exactly is Housing NWT garnishing for retired elders with arrears?

The government ends their response with Housing NWT will continue to regularly review all arrears accounts and make every effort to assist our mortgage clients and tenants in addressing their arrears, including the possible introduction of new programs early in the new Assembly that will help to expedite the repayment of these remaining debts of pursue forgiveness. Mr. Speaker, let's seize this opportunity. The Housing Minister needs to consider new policies. Now is the time to conduct a full review of Housing NWT's debt collection practices. For our collective prosperity, we must avoid unnecessary and unjust burdens on our people.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 27-20(1):  
EVACUATION AND IMPACT ON UNHOUSED  
POPULATION

**MS. MORGAN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I wish to reflect on the 2023 evacuations and the lessons we need to learn about the importance of a harm reduction approach for the most vulnerable Members of our communities. I poach from an open letter that was sent in the aftermath of the Yellowknife evacuation from the board of the Yellowknife Women's Society which runs the women's shelter and transitional housing programs. The letter acknowledges that we may have sent people away from the threat of fires, but we sent them straight into the path of other harms. Many shelter users were flown out on their own and placed in hotel rooms scattered around Calgary or Edmonton with very limited health and wellness supports. Many were evicted from those hotels early on and wound up on the streets of southern cities and were denied a second chance for safe shelter.

By the end of August, in Calgary alone 58 people from the NWT had spent at least one night in a downtown shelter. Many experienced assaults, overdoses, and suffered various traumas. In contrast, some vulnerable groups such as seniors in long-term care, youth from Home Base Yellowknife, and transitional housing residents, were supported to evacuate all together to dedicated facilities, and here we see some important success stories.

At a camp north of Fort McMurray, women's society staff along with outreach nurses provided 24/7 wraparound supports to a group of 47 service users. And to quote from the letter, "some participants chose to come and go from the facility sometimes to use drugs or consume alcohol. Whatever their choice is, they were met with judgement-free support and able to return to the safe environment of the facility when they chose."

This is the kind of approach, Mr. Speaker, that we need to take to address the ongoing emergency that is homelessness in the North, which has gotten significantly worse since last year's displacements. We need to provide supportive living facilities that meet people wherever they're at and help stabilize their lives amidst addictions or other challenges that they're facing.

The women's society board of directors expressed to its participants and staff its, and I quote, "its deep and profound sorrow and regret for not being more prepared to weather this

storm with you. We believe in accountability for our own actions. We take these organizational failures seriously and vow to do better. We make this apology in the hope that other community leaders will also humbly identify where they have fallen short so that we can all learn and improve from one another." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 28-20(1):  
LACK OF FAMILY DOCTORS IN THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The North is a wonderful place and despite our struggles, it's a wonderful place we all call home. Now, the NWT isn't a wealthy territory in comparison to places like Ontario or even Alberta, you know, but we are wealthy in hearts and opportunities and resources and people, just poor in cash. Now things change over time, and sometimes we identify that as wisdom. But, you know, so when you're young you're adventurous at hearts and, you know, wanting to live in the fast lane, but as you get a little bit older, like people in this room, your priorities of riches change, such as family and health. That said, now that brings me to the issue of why I want to focus on today is on health.

Mr. Speaker, it should come to no surprise but rather more of an embarrassment that in Canada, it's so hard to believe that one in five people do not have a family doctor. So, Mr. Speaker, if you're planning a family, you're having health challenges, you're aging, you know, you really need that very critical and important relationship with a family doctor because having a doctor matters. So let's put a territorial lens on this, if I may.

Mr. Speaker, the bureau of stats recently published that there were 44,760 people in the Northwest Territories as of October 1. Now that's all post fire evacuation so things may have changed, but we're going to use that number for now. The bureau estimates that over that period of time now things may have changed, but we're going to work with what we've got.

So if you take the bureau's number, one in five, now that's 20 percent for those non-math people by the way, we have a rough underserved population of around 9,000 people. Now to be precise, for argument's sake, that's 8,955 people without a doctor. But I'm going to use 9,000 because it's an easier number to talk.

So putting it into perspective, now 9,000 people of our combined population do not have a family doctor. That's equal to the combined regions of the Deh Cho, the Sahtu, and even the Tl'cho. Could you imagine what type of scenario that is, all of those people combined? I'm talking about a number of people without a family doctor.

Mr. Speaker, I hope this is sinking in about how many people don't have a family doctor. This truly is a serious problem that needs a serious commitment that should be repaired because primary health, if neglected, can delay diagnosis in a very complex system. Mr. Speaker, the everyday family can only solve their problems on WebMD on their own for so long. I'm doing a call for action, and we can and need to do better. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 29-20(1):  
FORT SMITH TRAGEDY

**HON. JAY MacDONALD:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart as I acknowledge the recent catastrophic plane crash that occurred January 23rd in Fort Smith, which claimed the lives of six people. This tragic event has deeply impacted my community and the entire Northwest Territories. I am indebted to all the first responders and frontline staff who tirelessly assisted in the search and rescue operation, ultimately rescuing a sole survivor. Their unwavering dedication is a touching representation of how Northerners come together to support one another in the face of such devastating events. The levels of support that have been provided in the wake of the tragedy have come from all corners of the world, and it is heartwarming to see people come together in times of crisis.

As we collectively mourn, my heartfelt condolences extend to all those who are deeply affected by this incident. Together, we remember the loved ones who were tragically lost in this heartbreaking event. The journey of healing will be a difficult one but as is the northern way, we will be there for one another, providing the support and strength needed to navigate through. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. Again, our condolences go out to the family and friends in Fort Smith and the surrounding area. Members' statements. Member for Hay River South.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 30-20(1):  
HAY RIVER COMMUNITY SPIRIT AWARDS

**HON. VINCE McKAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Saturday, myself and the MLA for Hay River North had the opportunity to attend the 1st Annual Hay River Community Spirit Gala. It was a great opportunity to celebrate individuals and organizations who have contributed to a healthy community through volunteering and working on making Hay River a better place to live. The winners were as follow:

- Youth volunteer award, Samara Wilson;
- Senior volunteer award, Linda Dunford;
- Community beautification award, the Hay River Metis Council;
- Arts and Culture Award, Aaron Tambour;
- Community Spirit Award, Hay River Legion;
- Good Neighbor Award, Steve Anderson;
- Good business Award and Diversity Award, Soaring Eagle Friendship Centre;
- Community Safety Award, Hay River Fire Department;
- Trail Blazer Award, Chuck Lorette; and,
- Citizen of the Year Award, our very own mayor Kandice Jamison.

Again thank you to all the volunteers and organizations and businesses who make Hay River such a great place to live. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. Members' statements. I guess this is going to be me, last one.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 31-20(1):  
KOLE CROOK FIDDLE ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL FIDDLE JAMBOREE

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Good afternoon, colleagues. The Kole Crook Fiddle Association held its 19th Annual Fiddle Jamboree in Fort Simpson. We witnessed 55 fiddlers from six communities across the NWT who braved the -47° cold snap. They ranged in age from 6 to 16 years. We had several adults who joined in as well. Classes were offered for first-timers all the way up to advanced. They were joined by seven amazing fiddle instructors from across Canada and NWT. Some were former graduates of the association. The participants jigged, square-danced, fiddled, and sang. They learned lots of new tunes and made many new friends. A couple of the highlights were:

- They hosted a community feast and talent show on Saturday Night which saw a packed house.
- They held a concert on Sunday, which I got to witness.

Some of you are aware the Kole Crook Fiddle Association was formed in 2003 in memory of the well-known and beloved Metis fiddler from Hay River, Kole Crook, who tragically passed away at a young age while flying to a New Year's Eve celebration in Tulita. Kole traveled across the NWT and shared his love of music to youth and elders alike. The association's mission is to keep his legacy alive and spread the northern tradition of Metis style fiddling. They just celebrated their 20th anniversary last year and they have taught in 19 communities across the NWT. Being respectful of time, I would like to have these communities deemed as read and printed in the Hansard.

Hay River, Kakisa, Enterprise, K'atlodeeche, Yellowknife, Behchoko, Deline, Ft. Good Hope, Tulita, Norman Wells, Colville Lake, Wrigley, Jean Marie, Ft. Smith, Ft. Resolution, Ft. Simpson, Ft. Liard, Nahanni Butte and Samba Ke.

As you know, many youths in the smaller more remote communities in the North do not have regular access to music programs. Events such as the annual jamboree are beacons of light to so many and are talked about and excitedly anticipated months before the actual event. It is such a positive influence in the lives of these youth learning a traditional skill that brings much joy to not only them but their parents and grandparents and entire communities. All this would not have been possible without the financial support received by the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and the Deh Cho Divisional Board of Education. It is very much appreciated, and they send their sincere gratitude. Being respectful of time, I would like to have the bios of the amazing instructors deemed as read and printed in Hansard. Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

1. Stacey Read - Sackville, Nova Scotia  
The amazing Stacey has been fiddling since she was a young girl and has been one of our lead teachers for 15 years now. She plays and teaches not only fiddling but square-dancing and piano in her hometown and also travels to Nunavut to teach in the schools there.
2. Donna Turk - Forget, Saskatchewan.  
Donna is a world-renowned fiddler who taught the famous "Bow Valley

Fiddlers" out of Calgary for 17 years! She has been with the KCFA for over ten years now and we are always so happy when she can attend our events.

3. Deanna Dolstra - Cold Lake, Alberta.  
Deanna is another wonderful Fiddler who has been with us for many years. She is a highly sought-after performer at Metis fiddling/jigging events all across western Canada and teaches jigging and piano as well at her studio in Cold Lake.
4. Linda Duford - Hay River, NWT.  
Linda is a long-time northern fiddler who learned to play as a young girl and was mentored by the great Maurice Lafferty when her family moved to Ft. Simpson. She has been with the KCFA for 16 years and has happily shared her love of fiddling to countless youth across the Territories. Linda sits on the Board, currently as co-president.
5. Wesley Hardisty- Salt Spring Island, BC.  
Wesley, a native of Ft. Simpson, is their most famous alumnae. He is an amazing fiddler, composer and performer and has worked and collaborated with many artists across Canada. Wesley started fiddling as a student with them at the young age of 12, and had never looked back.
6. Elizabeth Ewen - Yellowknife, NWT.  
Elizabeth started lessons with the KCFA during her kindergarten year at Behchoko, where her father was the principal at the time. She is a wonderful fiddler and is in her first year of teaching with us.
7. Simara Wilson - Hay River.  
Simara, another product of our KCFA Fiddle Program, started playing in grade two, and has faithfully attended our after-school programs right up to graduation last year. We are thrilled she has now joined our Teaching roster as a junior instructor.
8. James Ross - Yellowknife, NWT.  
James is an amazing young fiddler who started winning Fiddle contests at the ripe old age of 12. Another product of the KCFA, he is considered one of the best "Red River Jig" players in the North.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Members' statements. Recognition of visitors in the gallery.

### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

**MR. SPEAKER:** Members, it is my honour to welcome Mr. Anthony W. J. Whitford to this Chamber today. As many of you know, Mr. Whitford is a former Commissioner, Speaker, Minister, Member, sergeant-at-arms, and is also an honorary clerk at the table. Please join me in welcoming Mr. Whitford to the House this wonderful afternoon. It is wonderful to have you here with us today.

As well in the gallery, I'd like to recognize Stephen Dunbar, chief electoral officer of the Northwest Territories. Welcome, Mr. Dunbar.

My favorite former MLA from the 19th Assembly, Mr. Rocky Simpson. And we'll miss you having questions but you have my phone number, we can talk later. Welcome.

As well, I would like to recognize Clarence Wood, the mayor of Inuvik. I greatly appreciate you being here and welcome you here.

And finally, I would like to recognize a former mentor of mine, Jackson Lafferty, Member of the 15th and 19th Assembly, a former Minister, Speaker, and now grand chief of the Tlicho. Welcome, Mr. Jackson.

Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Inuvik Boot Lake.

**MR. RODGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize His Lordship mayor Clarence Wood. Mr. Wood is in his 26th year serving the municipality of Inuvik, which makes him, I think, the longest serving municipal leader in the territory. I had the pleasure of serving with Mr. Wood, and I'd like to recognize him and thank him here today. Thank you.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize my friend and former colleague grand chief Jackson Lafferty. It's nice to see you here today.

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

**MS. REID:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a constituent, the chief electoral officer for Elections NWT, Mr. Stephen Dunbar. Thank you for being with us today.

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

**MRS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. I would like to acknowledge and recognize Tlicho grand chief Jackson Lafferty. And also I would like to recognize Rocky Simpson. I do miss talking to him. I do miss him here, so. But it's good that he is here visiting. Thank you.

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

**MR. McNEELY:** Mr. Speaker, I too would like to recognize Jackson Lafferty, grand chief of the Tlicho. I had the privilege of working with him during the 18th Assembly. Also a working colleague of mine, Mr. Rocky Simpson. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

**MR. EDJERICON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the grand chief of the Tlicho region, Mr. Jackson Lafferty. Mahsi and welcome.

And an old friend of mine, Tony Whitford. I seen him at Tim Hortons coffee shop. It's always good to see you.

And former colleague as well, Rocky Simpson Senior. Mahsi.

And the mayor from Inuvik as well, Clarence wood. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too wish to lend my voice to recognize the gentleman who is so well known to us, Mr. Anthony W. J. Whitford. He's many things to many of us, but very importantly to me he's been a friend for a very, very long time.

At the same time, I too wish to recognize Mr. Lafferty, or the grand chief for the Tlicho region. We go back to when we were kids. And he's a wonderful gentleman, and I'm glad to see him in the leadership in the Tlicho communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Hay River North.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to recognize a few members of the team that we've recently brought on. Our new principal secretary, Dr. Joe Dragon; the deputy secretary, Kyla Kakfwi Scott; and Fredrick Bergeron, the executive administrative coordinator in the principal secretary's office.

I also want to recognize Mr. Tony Whitford, former Member, former Minister, former Speaker, Commissioner, sergeant-at-arms. We're always happy to see him in the gallery.

Another former colleague, Mr. Jackson Lafferty, of course the Tlicho grand chief, former Member, former Minister, and former Speaker when I was Deputy Speaker. So I appreciate all of the support he's given me in that role.

Another former Member and former colleague and my father, Mr. Rocky Simpson; I want to recognize him as well. As well he's with Richard Skinner from GRC Camp Services. And, of course, my spouse Chantel Lafferty. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

**HON. LESA SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize my constituent, His Worship mayor of Inuvik Clarence Wood. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Hay River South.

**HON. VINCE MCKAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to recognize Mr. Rocky Simpson, constituent of mine, and Chantel Lafferty, resident of Hay River. Also Clarence Wood who I sat on the NWTAC board for a number of years with. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Kam Lake.

**HON. CAITLIN CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize not a Member of Kam Lake but somebody who helps me take care of Kam Lake, and that's Leslie Straker, who is my constituency assistant. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Reports of committee on the review of bills. Reports of standing and special committees. Returns to oral questions. Acknowledgements. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

### Oral Questions

#### QUESTION 1-20(1): MINISTERIAL MANDATE STATEMENTS

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my first question today will be focused to the Premier. It's been approximately three

months and 20 days, or in other words a way of looking at it it's been about 113 days since the election was called. And the reason I define it that way is the public service hasn't had a direction from its leadership, its mandates, that I'm aware of. Now that said, one of the issues that the Premier does in their role is issue mandate statements. I'd like to ask the Premier has he issued ministerial mandate letters to the departments. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. Premier.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, we have no priorities as an Assembly yet. The choice was made by the 19 Members in this House to extend the priority setting exercise, and so we haven't even set those priorities yet. So I don't think it would be appropriate to task the Ministers with achieving something over the next four years without knowing what the priorities of the Assembly are. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, then there lies the question what direction is being given to the public service for the last three months and 20 days? Thank you.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So similar to the election period where the public service still continues to exist despite the Cabinet not being active in providing direction, the public service continues to do their work. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if Cabinet's not actively doing their job, what are they doing? Thank you.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you that when you're a Cabinet Minister, it's a four-year work week. So we're busy. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Member for Yellowknife Centre. Last supplemental.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to ask the Premier when he finishes drafting the letters, will he share them with Members, and will he table them before the House? Thank you.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Of course. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Premier. Oral questions. Member for Range Lake.

#### QUESTION 2-20(1): CARBON PRICING AND HOME HEATING

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on November 8th of last year, the



federal government exempted home heating fuel as part of their carbon pricing regime for three years. The NWT has not made those changes yet but has made public statements committing to that. Can the Minister of Finance tell us will home heating fuel be exempt. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, home heating fuel will also be exempt in the Northwest Territories as it is now being allowed by the federal government for us to do so. Thank you.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you. Thank you to the Minister. I'm just wondering why it's taken so long to get to this point after the decision was made by the federal government. Can the Minister clarify what has taken us to this time? Thanks.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm certainly alive, as is everyone else in this territory, about the high costs associated with being in the North, the high cost of fuel, but specific to the carbon tax we are exempting the heating oil cost of carbon tax. It's taken this long for a couple of reasons, Mr. Speaker. First of all, people who are using propane or who are using LNG, other forms of fuel, they are not seeking any other kind of exemption to the carbon tax, so we wanted to make sure that we took that into consideration, and we took into consideration the impacts on revenues before seeing how this whole thing might roll out. We want to maintain as much fairness and equity in the system for residents in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And in the interest of fairness and equity, as this exemption has been enjoyed by Canadians outside of the Northwest Territories since November of last year, will the Minister backdate the exemption to November of last year and pass those savings along to our constituents who are paying a lot during the coldest months of the year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can't change the cost of fuel. I can only impact on the costs of the tax and rebates for the tax. And to that extent, our rebate system was taking into account the higher costs of the tax. So the rebate system we design in fact more than paid for the average cost of impact of carbon tax on average residents in the Northwest Territories. Anyone that paid or filed their taxes saw that

rebate in October, saw a rebate again in January, and they will see another rebate coming in April adjusted with the heating fuel impacts here.

So, Mr. Speaker, we aren't backdating because people did receive those rebates. That doesn't change the cost of fuel but I can't change the cost of fuel. All I can do is adjust based on the carbon tax impacts and, again, as I've said, they have received those higher rebates to account for that higher amount of tax. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Member for Range Lake, final supplementary.

**MR. TESTART:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Minister. So the Premier, the Honourable Premier, has made public statements calling for a blanket exemption for the Northwest Territories. Has the Minister or her department started those negotiations with Ottawa to get an exemption for the carbon tax in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm conscious that you want us to stick to our times. So I'll try to be brief, but this is a source of some frustration for myself and for the department.

Yes, the Department of Finance certainly has engaged with officials from ECC or Environment and Climate Change Canada. We've made the case. We've pled the case. We were told quite frankly that no, we will not get any extension in the amount of time that we can offer an exemption. No, there will not be any blanket exemptions. No, there will essentially be very little that accounts for the realities of costs of living, costs of heat, and costs of fuel in the Northwest Territories. We need to continue to fit ourselves in. Mr. Speaker, the fact that they've changed these goalposts is exactly why I wanted to hang on to the carbon tax administration here in the Northwest Territories so that we can continue to adapt as we need to as much as possible to conform to what the realities are that we see here for residents in the territories. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 3-20(1):  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
RECOMMENDATIONS OF  
STRENGTHENING SUPPORT FOR NON  
PROFIT SECTOR

**MR. MORSE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I earlier spoke to strengthening the nonprofit and charitable organization report. My question is for the Minister of EIA. What progress has been made so far, if any, on implementation of the recommendations from the strengthening the nonprofit and charitable sector report? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. Minister of EIA.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, I don't have that information at my fingertips. I'll be happy to get back to the Member. Thank you.

**MR. MORSE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yeah, that's unfortunate. I had a couple of follow-up questions that I won't be able to go through it. But in particular, we have a number of nonprofit and charitable organizations who have been operating for many years in our territory and are delivering ongoing programs which will be needed for the foreseeable future. What can we do to decrease administrative burden and secure long-term funding for these organizations? Thank you.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So in the past government, we did take the step of providing two- and three-year contribution agreements to a number of NGOs, which was a big step. You can't plan with just, you know, one year of top-up funding assured. And I do recognize the importance of NGOs and the work that they do. I talk a lot about partnerships and the fact that the GNWT can't do it alone. We can't do everything alone whereas NGOs they have a lot of expertise. They do a lot of things the government can't. So going forward, we will have to work more closely with NGOs, strengthen that relationship, and ensure that these nonprofit organizations are fiscally sustainable. Thank you.

**MR. MORSE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What is the plan and timeline for full implementation of all the recommendations from the strengthening the nonprofit and charitable sector report? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And similar to the first question, I don't have that at my fingertips. I suspect that the priorities set by this Assembly may impact any timelines that do exist. Thank you.

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

**MR. MORSE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And just in response to that answer, I ask has the department began to action this report, and is there an intention to action the report, or are

they simply sitting on it and waiting for priorities to come from this Assembly? Thank you.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. No, it is my understanding that work is happening on the report. It's not just sitting on a shelf collecting dust being ignored. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

QUESTION 4-20(1):  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR POSITION

**MR. RODGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I said in my opening Member's statement, there's concern in Inuvik that the regional director position is not filled. The question is for the Premier, Mr. Speaker, why hasn't the department filled that role since the current person retired in 2020? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. Premier.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And so the was decisions made in the previous government. I can't speak to those decisions, but I can say that, you know, as Minister of ECE I know I put a lot of jobs in Inuvik so, yes, I'm a big supporter of positions in communities and in the regions. And I'll say that it's both Members from Inuvik who have brought this to my attention, so it is definitely on my radar and something that I have initiated discussions with the department about. Thank you.

**MR. RODGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you, Mr. Premier, for the answer. Does the department have a timeline for when they see this position filled, and is it something that is now actively being advertised?

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And there is not an active competition. I think the department wants to look at all of our options, understanding that we are going to begin working with Indigenous governments and in a different way going forward. We want to ensure that the supports that we put in place are appropriate for that new way of doing business. Thank you.

**MR. RODGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you, Mr. Premier. Given this important role, there are positions in the region, I'm sure in other communities as well, in other regions, will the Premier commit to having the department do an assessment of senior leadership positions in the region at a whole, in its entirety? Thank you.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to task the department with a bunch of work at this point. Once we get those priorities in, then we're going to have the

opportunity to do that work and we will be looking at positions all across the North, funded positions, unfunded positions, vacant positions, filled positions. We really want a good overview of the positions that we have and how they're working and how they're supporting the regions. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member from Great Slave.

QUESTION 5-20(1):  
INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR  
SENIORS AND PERSONS WITH  
DISABILITIES

**MS. REID:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

In August of 2023, there was an announcement that the GNWT would improve the income assistance program and introduce income assistance program for seniors and persons with disabilities. And I'm wondering if the Minister can provide a status update of that work today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Minister of ECE.

**HON. CAITLIN CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member for the question. There was a lot of excitement in August when this announcement was made and, unfortunately, these changes to the programs have been delayed due to some systems issues that are outside the department's control, and we're currently working with the Department of Finance to resolve these. Thank you.

**MS. REID:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Minister for that. Do we have an idea of which of the programs would be implemented first? Would it be the one that was deemed complete in August? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAITLIN CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, we were able to make some changes over at Education, Culture and Employment in 2023. At that time, we were able to do some exempting of income. That included monies from self-government agreements, treaty agreements, land claim agreements, and impact benefit agreements. That also included compensation from residential school settlements, Indian Day School settlements, and 60s Scoop settlements. Also monies received on behalf of Jordan's Principle and Inuit Child First Initiative and agricultural benefits from Indigenous governments, as well as some other monies from Indigenous governments as approved by the director. The piece beyond this that is being

held up are the changes to all of the systems as far as increases to the financial benefits that are based on the northern basket measures and including removing the productive choices. However, I can say that while the productive choices are still required by income assistance, they are no longer reported monthly. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Member from Mackenzie Delta.

QUESTION 6-20(1):  
ADDICTIONS FACILITIES

**MR. NERYSOO:** My questions are directed to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. Will the Minister direct her staff to look at these existing programs in hopes of implementing them in the Northwest Territories?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Mackenzie Delta. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. LESA SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the questions. Based on the past engagement of addiction in the Northwest Territories, residents want options and so hearing from the Member, these are some of the things that we heard during the -- sorry, when it went out to the public, like, for their -- sorry, for their input on addictions in the Northwest Territories. So the department is considering how best to meet the needs of the residents knowing what we've heard from them, and we know that one facility type is not going to meet the needs. And so these are options that we're looking into and, you know, I thank the Member for the information on the one in Whitehorse as right now I don't have the information and so it would be good, like, for the Member to be able to provide that information to me, and then I can give that to my staff. Thank you.

**MR. NERYSOO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response. Will the Minister be willing to collaborate with the Indigenous leaders to implement these family orientated programs that are in existence in other jurisdictions? Thank you.

**HON. LESA SEMMLER:** Thank you to the Member for the question. And, yes, you know, I think that is how this government really wants to work, and that's how I kind of want to work within the department of health is getting that input and working in partnership with Indigenous governments. And as I've said, even in some -- the instances before becoming a Member is, you know, in order for us to do this properly, we need to be engaging with our

Indigenous partners as majority of our people that are struggling with addictions in our communities, in Yellowknife, we see it, it's visible, it's our Indigenous people. So working with our Indigenous partners is key to coming up with the programs and stuff that we need. Thank you.

**MR. NERYSOO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the past, we've been mainly targeting the individual. The families are the ones that are hurting at this time. So I would like to see this government target the families as well, where the whole family's counselled. Can the Minister give me a timeframe on when the department will be able to start the process of consultation to get these programs underway? Thank you.

**HON. LESA SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member. The process of consultation began under the last government and, yes, I'd like to continue this work, and I would like to be continuing the work with our Indigenous partners to fully understand what the needs are and, like the Member has said, in having family programs, if those are what is necessary, and that's what we're hearing from our Indigenous partners, then, you know, that's something that our department will take away and work with them. And if it's not us doing the programming and supporting them in how to run these types of programs, you know, and I think that's where the stage is right now. I don't have a timeline as to how this is going to be born, but it's key early on in this government, especially, you know, with our priority setting coming up that how fast this will move in this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister of Health and Social Services. Final supplementary. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

**MR. NERYSOO:** This approach is kind of sensitive area for me. Maybe if a family orientated counselling services was available or was available in the past, I would have definitely benefitted with my family. Will the Minister and her staff be willing to visit Whitehorse centre to get some information on the pros and cons of this family orientated counselling service? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. LESA SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm aware that as part of the work that we're doing -- the department is doing is exploring options for more addictions support. They're already in contact with colleagues both from Yukon and from Nunavut to see what sort they provide. As I mentioned before, I'm not familiar with this specific program but if I get the information from the Member, then I can forward that on to the department to get more details and, you know, that could be a

possibility in the future that, you know, the department does go to and see what the program offers. But I am aware that there are other programs, especially for Indigenous people under -- like the Indigenous Service Canada has approved programs throughout Canada, and there are some approved programs that target families. So if the Member wants more information on that, I can provide that information to him. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister of Health and Social Services. Oral questions. Member from Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 7-20(1):  
EXPOSURE OF VULNERABLE  
POPULATION TO RISK IN 2023  
EVACUATIONS

**MS. MORGAN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So following up on my Member's statement earlier and given that the government has committed to oversee an after-action review into the 2023 wildfire season and given the blind spots that I drew our attention to in our emergency planning response so far, so my question is for the Premier. Will this government be examining how the 2023 evacuations may have inadvertently increased risk or vulnerable people's exposure to risk during displacement to southern jurisdictions and to come up with a plan for how the government and its nonprofit agency partners will identify and mitigate those risks going forward in any future emergency response?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member from Yellowknife North. One question, please, not two. So if the Premier answers the one question, then you'll have a supplementary. Mr. Premier.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And what the Member is talking about is exactly what we need to make sure happens. We need to ensure that the things that went wrong, that we didn't prepare for, that we didn't know we needed to prepare for even, during the last number of evacuations are addressed and we do a better job going forward. The reviews will -- you know, maybe I'll just leave it at that and let the Member ask her other questions. I don't want to go on too much. Thank you.

**MS. MORGAN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to know does the Premier believe that the government's own after-action reviews are well equipped to evaluate how well vulnerable populations and frontline organizations were supported during last year's evacuations, or would this be a task better suited to an independent inquiry?

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And as I said, this is work we need to do. So they are -- I think they're well suited. I think they're designed to get that information. The reviews are going to include feedback from NGOs, the NGOs that were participating in the evacuation that were assisting the vulnerable populations. So we need to know the issues that they ran into, and we need to figure out how the government can better assist them going forward. One of the biggest issues that I saw during the evacuations was communicating and planning. Often people didn't have a plan. There wasn't a plan in place for a lot of these things. So getting the information, finding out exactly what happened, and putting measures in to ensure that we don't make the same mistakes again is essential, and that is the purpose of these reviews. And so, yes, I believe these reviews will get that and will help us address that in the future. Thank you.

**MS. MORGAN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And this is my final follow-up. What has this government done to ensure the timely reimbursement of nonprofit organizations who took on considerable expenses during the 2023 evacuations providing evacuation flights and ongoing supports to vulnerable populations given those agencies' already stretched budgets and resources?

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I want to encourage everyone, including NGOs, to look to their insurance first. That's often faster than the government than many of these expenses are often eligible. But, you know, I come from Hay River. I've been dealing with constituents who have been working through this system for a number of years now. It is not fast. Everyone would like it to be faster. We're working through that. We're trying to get policies in place that will ensure that it is faster. So we are working on it, Mr. Speaker. I can assure you of that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Premier. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 8-20(1):  
EVACUATION TRAVEL SUPPORT  
PROGRAM PAYMENTS

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess there's no wonder why I had the record questions asked a couple Assemblies ago. Enthusiasm.

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Mr. Speaker, I'm getting numerous e-mails and calls regarding the evacuation travel support program and the fact that people have applied two, three, four months ago and still haven't received payments. I'd like to hear

how the Minister is tracking these lack of payments; in other words, does she know who's applying for this program, and can she explain why so many people are waiting so long for their actual \$750 payment? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure which question to start with. I wasn't expecting them today. I am receiving quite a number of inquiries, and we are working through each one with respect to this program. This was a program that we started up quite at the last minute in the midst of the evacuations. And building on the last exchange that the Premier just spoke to, we were faced with an unprecedented situation and we're doing our best to try to create a program to support individual residents in the midst of our own staff having been evacuated in most cases.

So I am aware that there's quite a number of payments that have been missed. Sometimes we receive bank information that is incorrect. It gets inputted incorrectly. In other cases, I know payments have been sent out only to then be returned. Whether that's returned by a bank or returned through cheque or through mail. A lot of the requests that come through my office, Mr. Speaker, as I said, a number of different reasons for the delay. So right now we are trying to work through each one. I do encourage people to continue to use the online information about making inquiries or to certainly send their inquiry through their MLA. As I said, I know that when they come to me, they do get it rectified in general. It shouldn't be taking this long. I hope it doesn't. But we also very importantly are looking to change the system and the process so that if people are faced with a similar situation this summer, they won't be facing similar delays. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wasn't quite clear, and maybe no one else was, is how are they actually tracking these particular things, because Yellowknife Centre can't be the only riding who gets these questions from constituents, and I'm seeing nods here. So, Mr. Speaker, does the Minister track these things, and how are they monitored to make sure that they close the loop on these applications? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. I think there was two questions in there, so two -- but I will turn to the Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I suppose if I'm not

clear it's because the question is not clear what is being asked about the tracking. Every application that is sent to the department is logged, and every inquiry that is being sent in with respect to say that there's been an issue, that one, they are also being monitored. And to the best of my knowledge in terms of the tracking, most of those that have applied and have been processed are, indeed, paid and have been paid. So there's been some late payments. But, I mean, as far as someone saying that they made an application and haven't, again, I'm not -- because I'm not sure what it is I'm going asked to track. We tracked all the applications. We're tracking and they're at the process when they're being approved. And then we are watching and monitoring when an inquiry comes in to see that it does get resolved. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And by the way, I apologize, earlier I just restated the question, so it might have sounded like two. Mr. Speaker, my question -- the Minister says they track them, so then why do we have the department saying that they've issued payments when they haven't if they're tracking them?

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, again, Mr. Speaker, some people are finding that if they've sent incorrect banking information or if the banking information has been sent or has been inputted incorrectly as I've noted, so there may be a time where a payment doesn't get issued or that it's been delayed, so again, yes, in those instances, someone wouldn't receive a payment. They then -- there is a notification e-mail and phone number that folks can make contact with to confirm whether or not they have been -- had their payment issued or whether or not their payment has gone through. In those cases, those inquiries are then tracked. So at this point, I would like to hope that there's only a small number that are outstanding of individuals who made an application, who had their application accepted, and who still haven't seen a payment, and certainly would encourage them to use the resources available. The ones that have come to me do get resolved and generally get resolved quite quickly. And, again, the applications -- or the reasons for the errors or the reasons for the delays are noted. So in each case, there's -- I've seen a number of different -- or variety for those reasons. Some certainly reside with the department. Others may have other explanations. But if people are still waiting, I'd encourage them to contact us. We are working through any errors that arise. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final question is I see the program is closed for

people to make their applications to apply for the program. Why did it close so early before at least -- the very least, that is, the end of the fiscal year? And I want to understand why they closed it and when did they publicly announce it so it's transparent to people? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the details of this program, which I don't have standing in front of me right now in terms of the specific policy, but the details were communicated back in August when the program was announced. That included the timelines for making applications, the process for making applications. The initial evacuations when the programs that we had for those who were evacuated early in the year, we actually had staff attending at the facilities within the Northwest Territories to help people make their applications and to explain the process to them. And so all of those details were announced at that time. The intention was to make it so that this was a sometime -- somewhat time sensitive but not so time sensitive as to make it prohibited for those who were under evacuation as, again, tried to send out staff where they were available to help people through the process. That certainly have been intended also this coming year. But it was really about the evacuation timeline. And I believe it was within a certain amount of days thereafter the time when somebody was evacuated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Oral questions. Member for Range Lake.

#### QUESTION 9-20(1): HOME HEATING REBATES

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to return to carbon pricing and the home heating exemptions. So the Minister said that there's no need to backdate the exemption because residents have received their rebates. So can the Minister confirm that a hundred percent of the fuel charge related to home heating fuel related to the carbon tax in the Northwest Territories is being rebated to Northerners, a hundred percent? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Range Lake. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, firstly, the carbon tax rebates goes to those who are tax filers. So I would encourage everyone, even if they're getting rebates, even if they don't think they have to pay taxes on whatever they're receiving, they should be filing their taxes or at least filing a notice of tax with the government, and then that would give them, first of all,

access to these rebates and, I believe, probably others, such as the child care -- or child rebates. But, Mr. Speaker, what the carbon tax offset payments by the Government of the Northwest Territories does is there's three parts to it. The first one looks at the cost of fuel, the cost of tax on fuel not associated to home heating, then there's an indirect taxes that we calculated based on what is estimated businesses would be charged and paying for carbon tax on their various forms of fuel usage knowing that that might well be passed down to consumers, and then the third currently in place is for the tax on home heating fuel paid by an average household, and that's at this present time is still based on the use of heating oil. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure I heard a clear answer, but I'll ask what is that number; what is the amount of revenue, tax revenue is being collected off home heating oil in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Sorry, Mr. Speaker. If it's the amount of home heating fuel -- home heating oil revenue, I can certainly get that number for the Member. For the current year, that's the taxation -- just to be clear, so I can get the correct information, it's the tax -- the number I'm going to get is the tax being collected for home heating fuel in the Northwest Territories. We can certainly provide that in due course. Thank you.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I suppose if Northerners have already received their rebates, this isn't going to make a difference. If our system's already taking care of home heating fuel carbon taxes, why are we exempting this? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is arguably more convenient for residents to not have to pay the tax at the front end and to simply then to have that exempted from them rather than to have to get the rebate. That was certainly the source of much debate at the last time. And so given that that's now the approach that's being taken by many other jurisdictions due to the federal government's change, we were prepared to offer the same type of approach under our system so that the tax rebate -- or the tax itself on heating oil is not to be paid, won't have to be paid at the front end, and there will still be some heating -- or rather tax rebate being provided by the GNWT but adjusted to the fact that, as I've said, that heating oil component will now be exempted. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Final supplementary. Member for Range Lake.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I won't weigh into what I think of our system, but I think we can do some improvement here. My question is the federal government has also doubled the rural rebate supplement for Canadians under the climate action payment systems, the one that's administered by the federal government. Have we also doubled any of our -- or increased our COLO payments to follow suit and make sure that we're benefitting people who are paying in rural or remote areas for our high cost of fuel? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our residents were already receiving a much higher rebate than what many residents in other parts of the country were. What we did in our system was, and what we understood would not have been offered had we come under the federal modeling, was to zone the three types of rebates that were being received. And under the home heating oil tax situation, that meant that those living in zone C who were really in some of the communities that are the most remote, most rural, they would have been receiving a much higher benefit to account for the fact that the amount of carbon tax paid on their home heating was much higher. So that is how we adjusted our system to account for that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 10-20(1):  
EVACUATION TRAVEL SUPPORT  
PROGRAM

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just want to follow up a little further on the evacuation travel support program. And I suspect -- now, the Minister was saying I didn't expect the question but that said, to be all fair -- in all fairness, she is the Finance Minister of this government and the last government and oversaw the programs, so I expect her to know some elements of the program.

So that said, the evacuation support program paid out \$750 to people as a one-time sort of payment. How did they actually come up with that specific \$750 for the impacts of individuals obviously per vehicle? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member from Yellowknife Centre. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when I say I wasn't expecting the question, I don't necessarily have the policy documents in front of me. I certainly wouldn't want to mislead anyone with respect to what was the specifics of the policy.

As far as the \$750, again, firstly, these were efforts being made in response to emergencies and often by staff who themselves had been evacuated and were under somewhat difficult conditions. We were making an effort at the time, I believe with respect to the evacuation payment, to align with the income disruption payment that had been decided upon earlier in the season. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. But that actually didn't answer the question in any way. Like, how did they actually come up with the \$750 mark? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with respect to the income disruption support payment, that was the first one that was provided and that was really meant to be an opportunity, really, just to acknowledge the fact that individuals who had been evacuated at that time may be in situations where they didn't have anything to provide some of their day-to-day costs and to sort of mitigate some of those day-to-day costs. \$750 was -- we were looking at -- we certainly did do a jurisdictional scan of what was going offered elsewhere. It was very clear at that time that very few jurisdictions, indeed I think perhaps at that time initially only one, were providing any kind of direct payments to residents. As the summer wore on and other jurisdictions faced similar challenges of evacuations, there was at least one jurisdiction, if I'm not mistaken, that did ultimately provide a payment, and we tried to ensure that ours was not too far off of what was being offered, noting that, of course, there were some differences in how they were being allotted and who was eligible. And at that time, the evacuation travel support payment was introduced to try to further offset some of the costs that were being incurred for individuals knowing that accommodations and some fuel and food were available for those who were registered through the other evacuation programs that were available. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, let's use some easy numbers. The CERB payment was about \$2,000 a month. That's about \$500 a week. So the fire was about three weeks, and so if we use their \$750 mark, that's 250 a week. So there's quite a bit of a disparity. There's a standard, a considerable one. But CERB was during COVID and people stayed home, so they didn't have to worry about

driving out. That said, how can we justify and explain that \$750 was an impact payment worthy of the expense that many people paid considering they pulled -- the government ordered people out of the Northwest Territories. It wasn't like an encouragement saying hey, got nothing to do, go to Edmonton and Calgary. So how do we justify that? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, people were asked to evacuate in the face of wildfires that were threatening communities. So as far as being ordered to leave, it was not done lightly. It was done in the interests of safety to protect residents but also to protect first responders, to protect firefighters, to protect infrastructure. So just to draw a distinct line, there this is not the same as the situation under CERB. We are also not the federal government and don't have the deep pockets of the federal government and we're doing our best to try to make our programs such that they could be affordable for the GNWT, that if possible, we could still see reimbursement by the federal government. In the case of both of the support payments, it is unlikely that they're going to be supported back by the federal government's disaster assistance programs, and with respect -- so I gather that this is now with respect to the travel subsidy. Mr. Speaker, so the travel subsidy is really -- was meant to be for those folks who didn't have access to the flight evacuation option or who had -- didn't have access to, you know -- again, there was accommodations being offered, food being offered, and some fuel costs being offered. So it was really just meant to be if there were some additional costs being incurred that we weren't aware of or hadn't accounted for. That's what that was supposed to be. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Final supplementary. Member from Yellowknife Centre.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, would the Minister be willing to either give a ministerial statement or table some documents that demonstrate how many people actually applied and received this program, be it the numbers of people applied and the amount paid out? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Mr. Speaker, certainly I can provide those numbers. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 11-20(1):  
HOME HEATING SUBSIDY FOR ELDERS



**MRS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is for ECE Minister. Mr. Speaker, residents tell me in the -- especially in the small communities -- I went to Wekweeti about two weeks ago. So it's not just them, but there are others, elders, that have been saying this too, that residents -- the home heating subsidy is not enough support for many of them in the small communities. So I just wanted to ask the Minister, can the Minister commit to reevaluate the monthly home heating subsidy for elders to assess whether the subsidies is meeting their needs?

**MR. SPEAKER:** ECE.

**HON. CAITLIN CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And thank you very much to the Member for the question. There was an increase to the seniors home heating subsidy that was recently done, and that was able to ensure that seniors receive up to 80 percent of the estimated 2023 fuel costs associated with heating a home in the Northwest Territories. And so there was an increase that was recently done, and the intent of the policy is to cover up to 80 percent of the fuel costs on average of Northwest Territories seniors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MRS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the questions -- for the answer. Okay, well, then I've been hearing from a lot of residents out there, especially the elders. If there was an increase, I don't think they are -- I don't know when. Can the Minister tell us when this is going to take effect? When's this change is going to take place? Like, is it the next fiscal year, or did it already happen? Because the residents in small communities are saying the fuel subsidies that they are receiving right now is not enough. It's not enough. It's not going a long ways. It's -- some of them said the fuel that we get right now today will last me a week.

**HON. CAITLIN CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The fuel subsidy increase that I was referencing has already been implemented; however, the increase to the income assistance payments and the changes to the income assistance payments that the Member for Great Slave was asking about earlier are forthcoming and will also help with this. And those changes are expected to come this coming summer and so residents will see -- who are on income assistance as well will see increases to their bank accounts as well, and that will help as well with monthly costs as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MRS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister adjust the income threshold for seniors' fuel

subsidy program based on higher costs of living for elders in small or remote communities?

**HON. CAITLIN CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, how the thresholds are currently set up, they're divided into three separate zones, and these zones take into account the size of the communities and where the communities are located within the Northwest Territories. So, for example, zone 1, which is where Behchoko is located, has an income threshold of \$56,000 versus a community like Gameti, which is zone 2, which has a threshold of \$64,000, and zone 3, which, for example, has communities like Wekweeti, has a threshold of \$73,000. But I really welcome the conversations with the Member and learning more about how these subsidies and also access to income support are impacting her residents in her communities. So thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MRS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** I don't have any more questions, but from -- but I will sit and meet with the Minister on the fuel subsidy program for elders.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Written questions. Return to written questions. Replies to the Commissioner's address. Petitions. Tabling of documents. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 5-20(1):  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE  
ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE  
TERMS OF REFERENCE

**MR. RODGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly Standing Committee Terms of Reference. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Inuvik Boot Lake. Tabling of documents. Member for Yellowknife North.

TABLED DOCUMENT 6-20(1):  
OPEN LETTER FROM YELLOWKNIFE  
WOMEN'S SOCIETY BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS FOLLOWING THE  
YELLOWKNIFE EVACUATION EXPERIENCE

**MS. MORGAN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table an open letter dated September 2023 from the Yellowknife Women's Society board of directors following the Yellowknife evacuation experience. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

TABLED DOCUMENT 7-20(1):  
REPORT OF THE INTEGRITY  
COMMISSIONER OF THE INVESTIGATION  
INTO A COMPLAINT MADE BY NANCY VAIL  
THAT THEN-MLA KATRINA NOKLEBY  
BREACHED THE MEMBERS' CODE OF  
CONDUCT

TABLED DOCUMENT 8-20(1):  
REPORT OF THE INTEGRITY  
COMMISSIONER OF THE INVESTIGATION  
INTO A COMPLAINT MADE BY ARNOLD  
MANUEL ALLEGING THAT THEN-MLA  
PAULIE CHINNA BREACHED THE  
MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

TABLED DOCUMENT 9-20(1):  
ELECTIONS NWT TERRITORIAL GENERAL  
ELECTION 2023 OFFICIAL RESULTS  
REPORT

TABLED DOCUMENT 10-20(1):  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LANGUAGES  
COMMISSIONER ANNUAL REPORT 2022-  
2023

TABLED DOCUMENT 11-20(1):  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES OMBUD  
SPECIAL REPORT ON  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AMENDMENTS  
TO THE OMBUD ACT

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Tabling of documents. Colleagues, I wish to table the following five documents: The report of Integrity Commissioner on the Investigation into a complaint made by Nancy Vail that then-MLA Katrina Nokleby breached the Members' Code of Conduct; the Report of the Integrity Commissioner of the Investigation into a Complaint made by Arnold Manuel alleging that then-MLA and Minister Paulie Chinna breached the Members' Code of Conduct; Pursuant to section 265 of the Election and Plebiscite Act, the Elections NWT Territorial General Election 2023 Official Results; pursuant to section 23 of the Official Languages Act, the Northwest Territories Language Commissioner's Annual Report 2022-2023; and, Pursuant to Section 43 of the Ombud Act, the Northwest Territories ombud Special Report on Recommendations for Amendments to the Ombud Act. Minister of Finance.

TABLED DOCUMENT 12-20(1):  
2022-2023 PUBLIC ACCOUNTS, SECTIONS  
I, II, III, AND IV

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: 2022-2023 Public Accounts, sections I, II, III, and IV. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister of finance. Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

### Notices of Motion

MOTION 7-20(1):  
AMEND RULES OF THE NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY –  
STANDING COMMITTEE

**MR. RODGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, February 8, 2024, I will move the following motion:

Now therefore I move, seconded by the Member for Great Slave, that Rule 9.2(3) be amended to read: The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight shall report and recommend, with all convenient speed, Members to comprise the following Standing Committees of the Assembly:

- A. On Economic Development and Environment;
- B. On Government Operations;
- C. On Procedure and Privileges;
- D. On public accounts;
- E. On Social Development; and
- F. On any other Standing and Special Committees as directed by the Assembly.

And further, that Appendix C of the Rules of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly, Committee Terms of Reference, be replaced by Tabled Document 5-20(1).

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will seek unanimous consent to deal with this motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Inuvik Boot Lake. Notices of motion. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

MOTION 8-20(1):  
APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY SPEAKER

**MR. RODGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, February 8, 2024, I will move the following motion:

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Great Slave, that the Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh, Richard Edjericon, be appointed as Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with this motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Notices of motion. Member for Range Lake.

MOTION 9-20(1):  
ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO  
THE 2023 WILDFIRES

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, February 8th, I will move the following motion:

Now therefore I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Deh Cho, that this Legislative Assembly resolve that the Commissioner cause an inquiry to be made into the 2023 wildfires pursuant to the Public Inquiries Act;

And further, that this resolution include the Commissioner establishing a board composed of four persons appointed by the Commissioner to make the inquiry and to report on the inquiry to the Commissioner;

And furthermore, that the Commissioner receive recommendations from the Executive Council for two persons to be appointed to the board;

And furthermore, that the Commissioner receive recommendations from the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight for two persons to be appointed to the board;

And furthermore, that the Commissioner ensure the perspectives of all Northwest Territories residents are adequately captured in the public inquiry undertaken by the board;

And furthermore, that the Commissioner ask the public inquiry to make comprehensive recommendations into the future management of territorial emergencies by the Government of the Northwest Territories, Indigenous and community governments and individuals and families based on its findings;

And furthermore, that the inquiry establishment order is prepared jointly between the Executive Council and the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight;

And furthermore, that the inquiry establishment order be tabled on the first day of the May sitting of this House.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Range Lake. Notices of motion. Motions. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

## Motions

**MR. RODGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion I gave notice of earlier today regarding amendment of the Rules of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to consider the motion for which notice was given earlier today. Are there any nays? Not seeing any nays, you may proceed.

MOTION 7-20(1):  
AMEND RULES OF THE NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY –  
STANDING COMMITTEE,  
CARRIED

**MR. RODGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS standing committees are established by each committee and continue in existence until otherwise ordered by Rule 9.2(1);

AND WHEREAS the standing committees of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly are named in Rule 9.2(3) with their terms of reference established in Appendix C of the Rules of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly;

NOW THEREFORE I move, seconded by the Member for Great Slave that the text of the Rule 9.2(3) be deleted and the following text added in its place: The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight shall report and recommend, with all convenient speed, Members to comprise the following Standing Committees of the Assembly:

- A. On Economic Development and Environment;
- B. On Government Operations;
- C. On Procedure and Privileges;
- D. On public accounts;
- E. On Social Development; and
- F. On any other Standing and Special Committees as directed by the Assembly.

And further, that the text of Appendix C of the Rules of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly Committee Terms of Reference be replaced by the text in Tabled Document 5-20(1).

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. All in favour? Any opposed? Motion is passed.

---Carried.

Motions. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

**MR. RODGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion I gave notice of earlier today regarding appointment of Deputy Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to consider the motion for which notice was given earlier today. Are there any nays? Seeing no nays, the Member may proceed with the motion.

MOTION 8-20(1):  
APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY  
SPEAKER,  
CARRIED

**MR. RODGERS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Appointment of the Deputy Speaker.

WHEREAS section 46(1) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act requires that there shall be an elected Deputy Speaker;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly wishes to appoint a deputy speaker;

NOW THEREFORE I move, seconded by the Member for Great Slave, that the Member from Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh, Richard Edjericon, be appointed as Deputy Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. All right. The motion is in order. To the motion?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried.

Notices of motion for first reading of bills. First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Reports on Committee of the Whole. Third reading of bills. Orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

## Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Rutland):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Orders of the day for Wednesday, February 7th, 2024, 1:30 p.m.

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Return to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to the Commissioner's Address
11. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
15. Tabling of Documents
16. Notices of Motions
17. Motions
18. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
19. First Reading of Bills
20. Second Reading of Bills
21. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
22. Report of Committee of the Whole
23. Third Reading of Bills
24. Orders of the Day

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, February 7th, 2024, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 11:18 a.m.