

Votes and Proceedings

SECOND SESSION OF THE NINETEENTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

June 11, 2020

The Assembly commenced sitting at 1:34 pm with the Honourable Frederick Blake Jr., Speaker, presiding.

Ministers' Statements

- 55-19(2) The Minister of Justice made a statement regarding justice during and beyond COVID-19.
- 56-19(2) The Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment made a statement regarding Mining Week 2020.
- 57-19(2) The Minister of Education, Culture and Employment made a statement regarding immigration and the Northwest Territories nominee program.
- 58-19(2) The Minister responsible for Seniors made a statement regarding June, Senior Citizens Month.

Members' Statements

- 296-19(2) The Member for Hay River South made a statement regarding World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.
- 297-19(2) The Member for Yellowknife Centre made a statement regarding elder abuse.
- 298-19(2) The Member for Nunakput made a statement regarding on-going COVID-19 pandemic precautions.
- 299-19(2) The Member for Thebacha made a statement regarding National AccessAbility Week and accessibility for seniors.
- 300-19(2) The Member for Deh Cho made a statement regarding elder abuse.

- 301-19(2) The Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh made a statement regarding aging in place and accessibility for seniors.
- 302-19(2) The Member for Kam Lake made a statement regarding aging in place.
- 303-19(2) The Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes made a statement regarding impacts of COVID-19 on seniors.
- 304-19(2) The Member for Yellowknife North made a statement regarding aging in place.
- 305-19(2) The Member for Frame Lake made a statement regarding northern benefits from the Slave Geological Province Road.
- 306-19(2) The Member for Monfwi made a statement regarding Elders' Month.
- 307-19(2) The Member for Nahendeh made a statement regarding the response to COVID-19 in Nahendeh.

Written Questions

- 15-19(2) The Member for Frame Lake asked a question of the Minister of Infrastructure regarding financial obligations of and subsidies to the Dominion Diamond Group of Companies.
- 16-19(2) The Member for Nunakput asked a question of the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment regarding Income Assistance Regulations [R-010-2007, S.2.].

Tabling of Documents

- 142-19(2) Grants and Contributions Results Report 2018-2019. Tabled by the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.
- 143-19(2) Annual Report 2019-2020 NWT Office of the Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations. Tabled by the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.
- 144-19(2) Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 52-19(2): Grants and Contributions to Commercial Fishers. Tabled by the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.
- 145-19(2) Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 75-19(2): Impact of Coronavirus on Northwest Territories Tourism. Tabled by the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

146-19(2) Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 112-19(2): NWT Commercial Fishing Industry. Tabled by the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

147-19(2) Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 249-19(2): Small Business Grants. Tabled by the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

Motions

11-19(2) Creation of a Northwest Territories Elders' Strategy

Moved by the Member for Yellowknife Centre.

NOW THEREFORE, I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that the Government of the Northwest Territories develop a strategy by engaging Northwest Territories elders that provides a whole of government approach to enhance and coordinate programs and services to elders going forward;

AND FURTHER, that the Government respond to this motion within 120 days.

N/A Amendment to Motion 11-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Yellowknife Centre.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Motion 11-19(2): be amended by changing each reference of the word "elders" to the words "seniors and elders", except where it is the title of a document.

The motion to amend Motion 11-19(2) was CARRIED.

The Member for Yellowknife Centre requested a recorded vote. The results of the recorded vote were:

Members for: Ms. Green, Mr. O'Reilly, Ms. Cleveland, Mr. Bonnetrouge, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Lafferty, Mrs. Semmler, Mr. Simpson, Mrs. Martselos, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Norn. (11)

Members against: (0)

Members abstaining: Honourable S. Thompson, Honourable P. Chinna, Honourable D. Thom, Honourable R. J. Simpson, Honourable C. Wawzonek, Honourable C. Cochrane, Honourable K. Nogleby. (7)

Motion 11-19(2) was CARRIED AS AMENDED.

Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

Bill 10: *Temporary Variation of Statutory Time Periods (COVID-19 Pandemic Measures) Act*

Notice given by Minister of Justice.

First Reading of Bills

Bill 8: *Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2020-2021*

Introduced by Minister of Finance.

Bill 9: *Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2020-2021*

Introduced by Minister of Finance.

Bill 10: *Temporary Variation of Statutory Time Periods (COVID-19 Pandemic Measures) Act*

Introduced by Minister of Justice.

Unanimous consent granted to proceed with First Reading.

Second Reading of Bills

Bill 8: *Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2020-2021*

Bill 9: *Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2020-2021*

Bill 10: *Temporary Variation of Statutory Time Periods (COVID-19 Pandemic Measures) Act*

Unanimous consent granted to waive Rule 73(2) and have Bill 10 moved directly into Committee of the Whole for consideration on June 11, 2020.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Mrs. Semmler reported that the Committee of the Whole considered Bill 10: *Temporary Variation of Statutory Time Periods (COVID-19 Pandemic Measures) Act*; Committee Report 1-19(2): Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment Report on Long-Term Recovery: Recommendations to the GNWT; Committee Report

2-19(2): Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on Long-Term Recovery: Recommendations to the GNWT; and Committee Report 3-19(2): Standing Committee on Social Development Report on Long-Term Recovery: Recommendations to the GNWT and reported progress with 18 motions carried, that Committee Report 1-19(2), 2-19(2) and 3-19(2) are concluded and that Bill 10: *Temporary Variation of Statutory Time Periods (COVID-19 Pandemic Measures) Act* is ready for third reading.

Committee Motion 17-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Nunakput.

I MOVE that this Committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories, through amendment of Business Development and Investment Corporation programs, increase business relief efforts through measures not limited to extending loan payment remission and providing loan forgiveness options;

AND FURTHER, that the Business Development and Investment Corporation expand investment programs to stimulate economic development;

AND FURTHERMORE, that amendments to the loan program, and a plan to expand the investment program, be completed and reported back to the Committee.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 18-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Nunakput.

I MOVE that this Committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories review and revise the Business Incentive Policy in collaboration with the business community as well as Members of the Legislative Assembly;

AND FURTHER, that this work commence immediately and the status of work be reported to the Committee by September 1, 2020, including a comprehensive work plan and a projected implementation date for the updated Business Incentive Policy.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 19-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Nunakput.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories work with Indigenous stakeholders and define the Indigenous ownership of the Taltson hydro expansion;

AND FURTHER, that the Government of the Northwest Territories lead interdepartmental efforts with project stakeholders to develop a plan that builds capacity among northern businesses to maximize benefits from the construction of this project.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 20-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Nunakput.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories complete a costed plan to provide broadband internet connectivity across the territory comparable to the rest of Canada;

AND FURTHER, in addition to the financial costs of extending broadband distribution into all communities, the plan should identify ownership model options (such as public, private or partnership) for the delivery of broadband services;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the costed plan be provided to the Committee by September 1, 2020.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 21-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Nunakput.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide a response to the recommendations contained in this report within 120 days.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 22-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Kam Lake.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment make permanent the policy changes made to support clients in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- to continue to reduce the amount of verification information required to apply for income assistance, to ensure clients are registered as quickly as possible, and automatically assessed for both basic needs and enhanced benefits;
- to continue with the allowable income exemptions and to increase the annual income limit for unearned income per year, on top of the money received from impact benefit agreements, treaty or land claim agreements;
- to continue to allow for clients to select self-care as a productive choice option, and reduce the requirement for face-to-face monthly reporting; and
- to continue to payroll long-term, vulnerable income assistance clients, to increase consistent payments to a three-month reporting.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 23-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Kam Lake.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Department of Health and Social Services continue to work with national partners to increase testing supplies, materials and personal protective equipment (PPE) to maintain a robust inventory for the anticipated second wave of COVID-19.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 24-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Kam Lake.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation retain the policy changes made to the Transitional Rent Supplement Program during the pandemic to continue to improve access and affordability within private market housing until such a time that the Canadian Housing Benefit (CHB) is operational.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 25-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Kam Lake.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories advance universal childcare by maintaining the additional funding provided during the pandemic to support operational, cleaning costs, employee wage subsidies and food insecurity issues anticipated to be more severe post-COVID.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 26-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Kam Lake.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment direct the district education councils to keep technology to support student home-based learning during the COVID-19 pandemic;

AND FURTHER, that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment focus on positive interventions and outreach to improve relationships between families of 'high risk' or vulnerable students.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 27-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Kam Lake.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories continue to offer the wage top-up as a permanent program to businesses, providing financial assistance to Northwest Territories workers aged 15 or over and earning less than 18 dollars per hour.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 28-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Kam Lake.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide a response to the recommendations contained in this report within 120 days.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 29-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Thebacha.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories undertake a review of the legislative framework supporting the Government of the Northwest Territories' emergency response, with a view to determining what amendments are necessary to ensure that the Premier has overall administrative control whenever a public health emergency and a territorial state of emergency are declared under their respective acts at the same time;

AND FURTHER, that the Government of the Northwest Territories bring forward a legislative proposal to make the necessary amendments to the Government of the Northwest Territories' emergency response legislative framework during the life of the 19th Legislative Assembly.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 30-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Thebacha.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories develop an emergency response communications protocol that ensures regularly scheduled updates to the public, by the Premier and the appropriate emergency authorities, whenever an emergency is declared under either or both the *Public Health Act* and the *Emergency Measures Act*;

AND FURTHER, this protocol should ensure that the Government of the Northwest Territories' public response via electronic means is supplemented by non-electronic communications mechanisms.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 31-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Thebacha.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories undertake steps now to address public concerns about gaps in enforcement, so that remedies are put in place before the possibility of a second wave of COVID-19 this autumn;

AND FURTHER, that necessary planning be undertaken to ensure that an enforcement task force can be mobilized within 48 hours of a future declaration of emergency;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Government of the Northwest Territories undertake a dialogue with municipal and Indigenous governments to obtain their input on enforcement measures, and use this information to guide the development of a policy framework for the future enforcement of orders issued during a public health or territorial emergency.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 32-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Thebacha.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories develop a digital communications plan for the Northwest Territories, that:

- assesses the state of telecommunications infrastructure serving each Northwest Territories community;
- identifies the costs and timelines associated with ensuring that all NWT communities have access to high-speed, digital telecommunications;
- and identifies who will be responsible for the work and how it will be achieved.

AND FURTHER, that the Government of the Northwest Territories long-term pandemic response must also include provisions ensuring that vulnerable populations have access to the internet during a pandemic lockdown, by developing plans, on a community-by-community basis, for ensuring internet access for individuals, when libraries and community centres are ordered closed during a lockdown.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 33-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Thebacha.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories prepare a “lessons learned” report, based on employee input, which can be used to inform the development of a “working from home policy” designed to identify the circumstances under which employees will be authorized or directed to work from home, what supports are available to employees, and what expectations the Government of the Northwest Territories

as with respect to the accountability of staff members who are working from home;

AND FURTHER, that this work be completed by August 31, 2020, and shared with the Standing Committee for input, consistent with the 19th Legislative Assembly's Process Convention on the Standing Committee review of proposed policy initiatives and implementation plans.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 34-19(2)

Moved by the Member for Thebacha.

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide a response to the recommendations contained in this report within 120 days.

The motion was CARRIED.

Third Reading of Bills

Bill 8: *Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2020-2021*

The Minister of Finance requested a recorded vote. The results of the recorded vote were:

Members for: Ms. Green, Mr. O'Reilly, Ms. Cleveland, Mr. Bonnetrouge, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Lafferty, Mrs. Semmler, Honourable S. Thompson, Honourable P. Chinna, Honourable D. Thom, Honourable R. J. Simpson, Mr. Simpson, Mrs. Martselos, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Norn, Honourable C. Wawzonek, Honourable K. Nokleby. (18)

Members against: (0)

Members abstaining: (0)

The motion was CARRIED.

Bill 9: *Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2020-2021*

The Minister of Finance requested a recorded vote. The results of the recorded vote were:

Members for: Ms. Green, Mr. O'Reilly, Ms. Cleveland, Mr. Bonnetrouge, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Lafferty, Mrs. Semmler, Honourable S. Thompson, Honourable P. Chinna, Honourable D. Thom, Honourable R. J. Simpson, Mr. Simpson, Mrs. Martselos, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Norn, Honourable C. Wawzonek, Honourable K. Nokleby. (18)

Members against: (0)

Members abstaining: (0)

The Speaker adjourned the House at 6:05 pm.



Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly



Tim Mercer
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly