

Votes and Proceedings

SECOND SESSION OF THE NINETEENTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

March 30, 2023

The Assembly commenced sitting at 1:31 pm, with the Honourable Frederick Blake Jr., Speaker, presiding.

Members' Attendance

Present: Member for Deh Cho, Member for Great Slave, Honourable Member for Hay River North, Member for Hay River South, Honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Member for Kam Lake, Member for Monfwi, Honourable Member for Nahendeh, Honourable Member for Range Lake, Honourable Member for Sahtu, Member for Thebacha, Member for Tu Nedhé-Willideh, Honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Member for Yellowknife North, Honourable Member for Yellowknife South.

Absent: Member for Frame Lake, Member for Nunakput.

Ministers' Statements

- 347-19(2) The Premier made a statement regarding a draft homelessness strategy.
- 348-19(2) The Minister of Health and Social Services made a statement regarding a combined Mental Wellness and Addictions Fund.
- 349-19(2) The Minister of Lands made a statement regarding the Government of the Northwest Territories review of the Land Lease-Only Policy.
- 350-19(2) The Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment made a statement regarding the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

Members' Statements

- 1500-19(2) The Member for Hay River South made a statement regarding the impacts of carbon taxation on the Northwest Territories.
- 1501-19(2) The Member for Yellowknife North made a statement regarding unauthorized occupancy and Indigenous rights.
- 1502-19(2) The Member for Great Slave made a statement of reflection on the return of Spring.
- 1503-19(2) The Member for Monfwi made a statement regarding Regional Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Funding.
- 1504-19(2) The Member for Thebacha made a statement regarding the pace of government business and intention to seek re-election.
- 1505-19(2) The Member for Deh Cho made a statement regarding the Fort Providence Bison Jamboree.
- 1506-19(2) The Member for Tu Nedhé-Willideh made a statement regarding the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.
- 1507-19(2) The Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes made a statement regarding the 65th Inuvik Muskrat Jamboree.
- 1508-19(2) The Member for Kam Lake made a statement of appreciation for youth of the Northwest Territories who have engaged with the Standing Committee on Social Development.
- 1509-19(2) The Member for Nahendeh made a statement recognizing Order of the Northwest Territories recipient JoAnne Deneron.

Following Item 7 on the Orders of the Day, Oral Questions, the Honourable Member for Range Lake sought and received consent to return to Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery.

Replies to the Commissioner's Address

- 3-19(2) The Member for Yellowknife North delivered a reply to the Commissioner's Address.

Tabling of Documents

- 917-19(2) Plain Language Summary for Bill 81: *An Act to Amend the Education Act, No. 2*. Tabled by the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.
- 918-19(2) Plain Language Summary for Bill 82: *Legal Profession Act*. Tabled by the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.
- 919-19(2) Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 1402-19(2): Cooperation Between Income Support and Child and Family Services. Tabled by the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.
- 920-19(2) Plain Language Summary for Bill 83: *Liquor Act*. Tabled by the Minister of Finance.
- 921-19(2) Plain Language Summary for Bill 84: *An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation Act*. Tabled by the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.
- 922-19(2) 2022 Socio-Economic Agreement: Social Data Report. Tabled by the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.
- 923-19(2) Let's Talk Agriculture: Have Your Say Online Survey Results. Tabled by the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.
- 924-19(2) Plain Language Summary for Bill 85: *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act*. Tabled by the Premier.
- 925-19(2) A Way Home: A Comprehensive Strategy to Address Homelessness in the Northwest Territories. Tabled by the Premier.
- 926-19(2) Summary of Members' Absences for the period October 13, 2022 - February 6, 2023. Tabled by the Speaker.

Motions

- 78-19(2) Extended Adjournment of the House to May 25, 2023

Moved by the Member for Hay River South.

I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Hay River North, that when this House adjourns on Thursday, March 30, 2023, it shall be adjourned until Thursday, May 25, 2023;

AND FURTHER, that at any time prior May 25, 2023, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, or at a time later than the scheduled resumption of the House, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as if it had been duly adjourned to that time.

The motion was CARRIED.

79-19(2) Expression of Gratitude to Clerk, Tim Mercer, for Dedicated and Exemplary Service

Moved by the Member for Thebacha.

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Hay River North, that the Legislative Assembly expresses its sincere gratitude to Mr. Tim Mercer for his dedicated and exemplary service to this House;

AND FURTHER, that the Legislative Assembly designate Mr. Tim Mercer as an Honourary Officer of this Legislative Assembly with an entrée to the Chamber and a seat at the Table.

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

Members for: Inuvik Twin Lakes, Deh Cho, Hay River South, Thebacha, Kam Lake, Yellowknife North, Tu Nedhé-Wiilideh, Monfwi, Great Slave, Nahendeh, Yellowknife South, Sahtu, Range Lake, Inuvik Boot Lake, Yellowknife Centre, Hay River North. (16)

Members against: None. (0)

Members abstaining: None. (0)

The motion was CARRIED.

Second Reading of Bills

Bill 80 *Dental Hygienists Profession Statute Amendment Act*

The Member for Kam Lake, seconded by the Honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, moved that Bill 80, *Dental Hygienists Profession Statute Amendment Act*, be read for the second time.

The motion was CARRIED.

Bill 80 was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Development.

Bill 81 *An Act to Amend the Education Act, No. 2*

The Honourable Member for Hay River North, seconded by the Honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, moved that Bill 81, *An Act to Amend the Education Act, No. 2*, be read for the second time.

The motion was CARRIED.

Bill 81 was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Development.

Bill 82 *Legal Profession Act*

The Honourable Member for Hay River North, seconded by the Honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, moved that Bill 82, *Legal Profession Act*, be read for the second time.

The motion was CARRIED.

Bill 82 was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Development.

Bill 83 *Liquor Act*

The Honourable Member for Yellowknife South, seconded by the Honourable Member for Nahendeh, moved that Bill 83, *Liquor Act*, be read for the second time.

The motion was CARRIED.

Bill 83 was referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations.

Bill 84 *An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation Act*

The Honourable Member for Yellowknife South, seconded by the Honourable Member for Sahtu, moved that Bill 84, *An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation Act*, be read for the second time.

The motion was CARRIED.

Bill 84 was referred to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment.

Bill 85: *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act*

The Honourable Member for Range Lake, seconded by the Honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, moved that Bill 85, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act*, be read for the second time.

The motion was CARRIED.

Bill 85 was referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

The Chair, the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, reported that the Committee of the Whole considered Committee Report 49-19(2): Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the 2021-22 Review of the *Official Languages Act*; and Committee Report 51-19(2): Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on Indigenous Representation in the Northwest Territories Public Service, and reported progress with 25 motions carried and that Committee Report 49-19(2) and Committee Report 51-19(2) are concluded.

Committee Motion 438-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories double funding for Indigenous-language education, services, and revitalization.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 439-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories reimburse use of an Indigenous official language as an eligible expense for all programs, grants, and contributions;

AND FURTHER, these funding agreements should be multi-year to reduce administrative burden and improve sustainability.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 440-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment set up a creative commons for Indigenous-language resource materials;

AND FURTHER, the creative commons should build on the 'Our Languages NWT' platform and offer an accessible digital space;

AND FURTHERMORE, it should allow creators and users to share and collaborate on educational materials, language-learning apps, curricula, grant applications, and other resources.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 441-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that each department and agency be required to have an annual official languages action plan to improve and revitalize the language skills of its Indigenous employees.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 442-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that each department and agency be required to create an individual language training account for each person;

AND FURTHER, the account should guarantee each Indigenous employee a minimum number of hours of language training, in any Indigenous official language, as a first or second language.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 443-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Department of Finance set up an Indigenous languages revitalization fund to support Indigenous employees in the effort to reclaim, revitalize, maintain and strengthen their languages.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 444-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) restore Indigenous language terms and spellings to refer to languages and communities;

AND FURTHER, the GNWT should update all legislation, regulations, policies, guidelines, standards, and communications within the life of the 20th Assembly;

AND FURTHERMORE, the GNWT should also consult Indigenous communities on the changes.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 445-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment help ensure Indigenous-language early childhood education is available in each community;

AND FURTHER, to achieve this vision, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment should provide additional and sufficient funding to program operators that use Indigenous languages.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 446-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories recognize the right of each resident to receive services in the official language of their choice;

AND FURTHER, this right should go beyond the concepts of “significant demand” and “nature of the office,” and follow the principle of substantive equality;

AND FURTHERMORE, as such, the Government of the Northwest Territories should consider quantitative and qualitative characteristics when determining service levels to each official language community;

AND FURTHERMORE, this right should also be remedial in nature, designed to counter the gradual decline of Indigenous official language speakers.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 447-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories set up a policy and a plan to display more Indigenous-language signs before the 19th Assembly ends;

AND FURTHER, the policy should require all new signs at all territorial public bodies and community governments to prominently feature the local Indigenous official language(s);

AND FURTHERMORE, the plan should set targets and offer funding for new Indigenous-language signs.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 448-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment commission a study on the state of Michif in the Northwest Territories and options to recognize Michif in the *Official Languages Act*;

AND FURTHER, the study should be tabled in the House within the first 18 months of the 20th Assembly.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 449-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment implement an exercisable right for northerners to full K-12 immersion in each local Indigenous official language;

AND FURTHER, to achieve this vision, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment should prioritize Indigenous-language revitalization in the on-going Education Act modernization.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 450-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories respond to this report within 120 days.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 451-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Affirmative Action Policy reflect its objective and intent and mitigate the disadvantage and underrepresentation of Indigenous persons in the Northwest Territories public sector by implementing a priority 1-only competition.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 452-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories identify which headquarters positions can be located to the regions, which jobs could be tagged as flexible and moved among a number of locations, and those that could be classified as remote working arrangements, aiming to allow priority 1 employees to work in the community of residence.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 453-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories establish one uniform, clear and accessible appeal process for public service positions that:

- Establishes a mechanism empowering priority 1 candidates with the ability and enough time to appeal a hiring decision before a job is offered to a non-priority 1 candidate;
- Operates independently and at arm's-length from the Government;
- That has an appeal body that is representative of the Indigenous population with a minimum Indigenous membership of fifty percent;
- Clearly outlines how appeals can be requested and considered;
- Contains clear terms of reference for a fair and consistent appeal process; and
- Ensures availability and accessibility of support by Indigenous staff of the Diversity and Inclusion Unit to the Indigenous candidate.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 454-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories:

- For the purpose of capacity building, makes it standard policy to ensure that an Indigenous person consistently occupies at least one assistant deputy minister position within all departments;
- Consistently staffs all regional supervisor positions with Indigenous employees;
- Promotes and requires, where possible, that all public boards and agencies have a minimum level of Indigenous representation within the overall makeup of their board of directors;
- Requires, where possible, for agencies to invest in hiring Indigenous employees and follow the Affirmative Action Policy.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 455-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories attract Indigenous professionals with roots and relations in the Northwest Territories to take public service positions with the GNWT by:

- Creating an outreach campaign targeting Northwest Territories residents studying outside of the Northwest Territories;
- Offering incentives to returning students; and
- Requiring that hiring managers are aware of the campaign.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 456-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories and all departments:

- Update the job descriptions of all public service positions to ensure the inclusion of value statements which affirms the importance of Indigenous knowledge and community experience;
- Update the "job information" section of all job descriptions to ensure that only plain language is used;
- Ensure that each "job information" section provides an equivalency formula that is publicly accessible and demonstrates concrete examples of what education equivalencies will be accepted in place of university education;
- Create a mechanism that requires offering qualifying priority 1 candidates who participated in a competition a training path into the position before submitting the job to a non-priority candidate.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 457-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories commit to transparent retention practices by requiring all departments to:

- develop and follow succession planning guidelines;

- maintain and share internal position tracking;
- track and share information about transfer assignments and/or promotions;
- ensure that departmental succession planning is informed by employees' goals and expectations by connecting with development goals expressed by employees in the annual performance appraisals;
- ensure that all Indigenous employees in senior management positions are well supported by their supervisors and are given training opportunities that are suited to the employees' interests and career goals;
- create a mechanism to ensure Indigenous employees/applicants receive preferred and priority hiring when replacing outgoing employees leaving the public service.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 458-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories:

- requires all departments to conduct exit interviews with all Indigenous employees, including interns and summer students;
- ensures exit interviews with Indigenous employees leaving a department are conducted by Indigenous staff of the Diversity and Inclusion Unit; and
- requires that all public service annual reports include a section with an analysis of why priority 1 employees are leaving the public service.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 459-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories work toward increasing the participation of Indigenous students in all programs, grants, and contributions focused on youth, by:

- advertising the availability for youth development and making it known in small communities;

- creating recruitment campaigns in small communities so youth can participate in existing programs and apply for positions;
- having an advocate for youth and students in each department;
- creating and tracking hiring targets in all communities for Indigenous youth seeking public service employment under programs such as SNAP, summer students, and internships;

AND FURTHER, that the Department of Finance re-structure the summer student employment program to:

- allow a more extended period for students to apply; and
- require managers to hire priority 1 summer students and deplete the priority 1 candidate list before considering non-priority 1 students, ensuring not to leave one priority 1 student candidate without summer employment.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 460-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends to the Government of the Northwest Territories that all departments have in place support for Indigenous employees, and:

- look to the Indigenous Patient Advocates positions implemented by the Department of Health and Social Services as a model of how to provide support;
- work with the Indigenous Employee Advisory Committee and the Diversity and Inclusion Unit to provide support;
- offer pathways and leave to access counselling and addictions services; and
- apply trauma-informed language and practices as a norm.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 461-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories includes in the Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework:

- support in finding housing at the new job site for Indigenous employees relocating to take a government position or move within government;
- provide a moving allowance for Indigenous employees relocating to other communities;
- offer education leave to help Indigenous employees to finish any education that was not completed before employment, with the guarantee to remain in the public service and at a minimum return to the same job level;
- offer education leave to Indigenous employees to support their career goals and interests and help expand their opportunities.

The motion was CARRIED.

Committee Motion 462-19(2)

The Member for Yellowknife North moved the following motion:

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories responds to this report within 120 days.

The motion was CARRIED.

The Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, seconded by the Honourable Member for Sahtu, moved concurrence of the report of the Committee of the Whole. The motion was CARRIED.

Third Reading of Bills

Bill 68 *An Act to Amend the Child Day Care Act*

The Honourable Member for Hay River North, seconded by the Honourable Member for Range Lake, moved that Bill 68, *An Act to Amend the Child Day Care Act*, be read for the third time.

Motion 80-19(2) The Honourable Member for Hay River North, seconded by the Honourable Member for Range Lake, moved the following motion:

I MOVE that clause 13 of Bill 68 be amended by deleting proposed subclause 19.2(2) and substituting the following:

- (2) An operator shall not
 - (a) Retaliate against a complainant under section 19.1; or
 - (b) Disclose the identity of a complainant under section 19.1.

(3) Notwithstanding paragraph (2)(b), an operator may

disclose the identity of a complainant

- (a) To a lawyer retained by the operator to provide legal services in respect of the complaint;
- (b) To a trusted advisor; or
- (c) As authorized by the Director.

The motion was CARRIED.

The Member for Hay River North requested a Recorded Vote. The results of the recorded vote were:

Members for: Inuvik Twin Lakes, Deh Cho, Hay River South, Thebacha, Kam Lake, Yellowknife North, Tu Nedhé-Wiilideh, Monfwi, Nahendeh, Yellowknife South, Sahtu, Range Lake, Inuvik Boot Lake, Hay River North. (14)

Members against: None. (0)

Members abstaining: Great Slave. (1)

The motion was CARRIED.

Assent

The Commissioner of the Northwest Territories assented to the following Bills:

Bill 56	<i>An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Act</i>
Bill 57	<i>Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2022</i>
Bill 60	<i>An Act to Amend the Petroleum Products and Carbon Tax Act</i>
Bill 61	<i>An Act to Amend the Ombud Act</i>
Bill 62	<i>An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2</i>
Bill 63	<i>An Act to Amend the Official Languages Act</i>
Bill 66	<i>An Act to Amend the Property Assessment and Taxation Act</i>
Bill 67	<i>An Act to Amend the Fire Prevention Act</i>
Bill 68	<i>An Act to Amend the Child Day Care Act</i>
Bill 73	<i>An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 4</i>
Bill 76	<i>An Act to Amend the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act</i>
Bill 86	<i>Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2022-2023</i>
Bill 87	<i>Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2022-2023</i>
Bill 88	<i>Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 1, 2023-2024</i>
Bill 89	<i>Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures) 2023-2024</i>

The Speaker adjourned the House at 6:24 pm.



Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly



Tim Mercer
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly