



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

3rd Session

Day 24

16th Assembly

HANSARD

Friday, March 6, 2009

Pages 2867 - 2892

The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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Published under the authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	2867
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	2867
54-16(3) - Update on the Corporate Human Resources Strategic Plan (B. McLeod)	2867
55-16(3) - Northern Sustainable Housing Project and 2010 Northern Housing Forum (M. McLeod)	2868
56-16(3) - Helping Northerners Live Healthy Lives (Lafferty).....	2869
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	2870
Relocation of Water Treatment Plant in Deline (Yakeleya)	2870
Medical Travel Escorts Policy (Krutko)	2870
Premier's Claim Under Ministerial Benefits Housing Policy (Groenewegen)	2871
International Women's Day, March 8, 2009 (Bisaro)	2872
Recognition of Winners of Arctic Energy Alliance Action Awards (Bromley).....	2873
GNWT Diamond Policy and Location of Canadian Diamond Bourse (Ramsay)	2873
Construction of Gravel Access Road in Tuktoyaktuk (Jacobson)	2874
Recognition of Centre for Northern Families' Contributions (Abernethy)	2874
Access to Public Pay Phones (Hawkins)	2875
Student Exchange Between Fort Liard, NWT, and Bella Bella, B.C. (Menicoche).....	2875
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	2876
ORAL QUESTIONS.....	2877
NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS	2885
Bill 10 - Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures) 2009-2010.....	2885
Bill 11 - An Act to Amend the Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures) 2009-2010	2885
Bill 12 - Securities Transfer Act.....	2885
Bill 13 - An Act to Amend the Commissioner's Land Act	2885
Bill 14 - An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act	2886
Bill 15 - Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2009.....	2886
FIRST READING OF BILLS.....	2886
Bill 9 - Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Protection Act	2886
SECOND READING OF BILLS.....	2886
Bill 9 - Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Protection Act	2886

CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS.....	2887
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	2891
ORDERS OF THE DAY	2891

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Friday, March 6, 2009****Members Present**

Mr. Abernethy, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bromley, Hon. Paul Delorey, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Krutko, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Sandy Lee, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Michael McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Hon. Floyd Roland, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 10:05 a.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good morning, colleagues. Welcome back to the House. Orders of the day. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

POINT OF PRIVILEGE

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on a point of personal privilege under Rule 20(1) to insert some truth into an inflammatory news story reported by CBC Television yesterday evening.

The report misinformed viewers as to my eligibility to receive a ministerial housing allowance in Yellowknife. Let me state the facts for the record. And these are the facts given to the reporter in discussion with myself and the deputy minister of the Executive, but left out of the story.

My statutory declaration signed in the fall of 2007 confirms that I maintain a principal residence in my constituency. That remains true and accurate. I still own property in Inuvik. I pay the mortgage, I pay the gas, the power and the water bills on that property in Inuvik and I live in that residence when I am in Inuvik.

Following my election in 2007, I moved my family to Yellowknife and I am entitled to reimbursement of housing costs in the capital. I entered a lease for accommodation in the city and remain the tenant of record on that lease. I have repeated confirmation from the appropriate deputy minister that as long as that remains to be true, I am entitled to this benefit. Let me be clear that I am not receiving any additional benefit or allowance over and above that to which I am entitled.

I have updated the Conflict of Interest Commissioner regarding the recent changes in my personal life and I will continue to make necessary representations to reflect this reality as required. Our attention at the Legislative Assembly should be focused on moving forward and improving the lives

of Northerners, not on inflammatory and misleading reports that rob those not in a public arena of their right to privacy.

Mr. Speaker, the CBC's journalistic standards and practices states the media must be socially responsible. In my opinion, the CBC failed to live up to its obligation last night and fell short of its duty to provide consistent, high quality, socially responsible information. I trust that these facts I have provided, for the record, will allow NWT residents to make their own informed decision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Bob McLeod.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 54-16(3):
UPDATE ON THE CORPORATE HUMAN
RESOURCES STRATEGIC PLAN**

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last fall I advised this Assembly that the Department of Human Resources was proceeding with a Corporate Human Resources Strategic Plan for the Northwest Territories public service. Today I am pleased to provide an update on that important work.

Over the past several months, our consultants led a consultation process with key stakeholders including Government of the Northwest Territories employees and managers, members of this Legislative Assembly and bargaining agents. Eight focus groups with government employees were held in four communities to ensure that a cross-section of staff would be represented. One focus group was held with aboriginal employees and another with self-declared persons with disabilities. These focus groups will ensure that their unique experiences and challenges will be reflected in the recommendations.

Individual interviews were conducted with some Members of this Assembly, with the Union of Northern Workers and the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that more than 1,100 government employees responded to a survey which was available on-line and in hard copy. I believe that this high response rate is indicative of the importance our staff put on this exercise.

I have written to community government leaders and aboriginal governments. We want to invite them to share their views on this important process. The key building block of an effective strategy will be to build successful partnerships with other levels of government to maximize our investment in training and staff development and ensure quality public service for all residents.

Mr. Speaker, we expect that final recommendations for action will be based on this important stakeholder input. The work of reviewing all the responses is still ongoing, but our consultants have shared some initial findings with the department and I would like to touch on a few of these highlights today.

The consultation results indicate that the majority of our staff are concerned about the need for training, mentoring, and coaching opportunities. Of the staff surveyed, 60 percent see an opportunity for the government to provide improved support in this area.

Another common concern was the need for improved efforts to recruit staff and to find ways to keep them within the public service. This is especially important as it relates to affirmative action candidates and the need for targeted training and support programs was mentioned by many respondents.

Our staff are concerned about maintaining work/life balance and finding ways in which the government as an employer can support them to do so. Also raised was the need to do good succession planning to ensure that staff can take advantage of promotional opportunities and that we can ensure continuity of service as longer-term staff prepare to retire.

We also heard that we need to do a better job of communicating with our staff.

And finally, an underlying theme that was heard throughout the consultation was the need for stability and the delivery of human resources. Staff want to know that their pay and benefits will be handled promptly and efficiently, and managers want to know that they can rely on the support and advice of the Department of Human Resources.

These results are no surprise. They reflect the concerns that have been raised by Members of the Assembly and that have been articulated within departments. This feedback provides us with a

sound basis for completing the strategic plan secure in the knowledge that it will reflect what our employees and other partners consider to be priorities for action.

Once we hear back from our various stakeholders over the next few weeks we will work with our consultants to finalize the strategic plan that will identify our vision and goals for the next 10 years. Going from that vision and goals will be a three-year action plan which will provide a roadmap for action, objectives, time frames, and performance results to be achieved over the life of the 16th Legislative Assembly.

I look forward to sharing the completed strategic plan and action plan with Members of this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 55-16(3):
NORTHERN SUSTAINABLE HOUSING PROJECT
AND 2010 NORTHERN HOUSING FORUM

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to provide the House with information on the NWT Housing Corporation's plans with respect to two of its upcoming initiatives: the Northern Sustainable Housing Project and the 2010 Northern Housing Forum.

Energy efficiency is an important cornerstone to the sustainability and longevity of our northern housing. Due to the rising cost of energy and utilities experienced over the last couple of years, affordability has become a major concern to the NWT Housing Corporation, homeowners, and home occupants.

The Housing Corporation is pleased to announce that one of the ways it's addressing the issue is through its Northern Sustainable Housing Project. Under this initiative the Housing Corporation is partnering with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, CMHC, on design and construction of a northern sustainable housing duplex. As I previously stated in the House, the Housing Corporation is currently making improvements to the design and specifications of new homes to ensure that they meet an efficient standard that will reduce emissions and associated utility costs.

At the minimum, the Housing Corporation is striving to meet a rating of EnerGuide 80 in accordance with the Natural Resources Canada EnerGuide for Houses EnerGuide System for rating the energy efficiency of homes. However, the goal of the Housing Corporation and CMHC is building the northern sustainable housing duplex to try and

design this home to an EnerGuide 85 rating of efficiency. Criteria for this project also specify that the home will be economical to operate, can be maintained by the local housing organizations, and can be constructed in any community in the NWT with only minor modifications.

The first northern sustainable housing duplex is scheduled to be constructed in Inuvik by 2010. Once constructed, this unit will be monitored by the Housing Corporation and CMHC, and the data will be collected on the building and systems to determine if expected energy savings targets will be achieved.

Design and review teams will be developing alternate construction and insulation plans and completing energy modeling to evaluate the design performance. The NWT Housing Corporation also expects that this concept may be used in future housing design as it will be a building that was designed specifically for use in the NWT, taking into consideration things like climate, logistical challenges, energy conservation, cultural needs, and maintenance considerations, and will be reflective of the unique environment and lifestyle of the North.

The Housing Corporation is also pleased to announce another initiative that addresses housing issues specific to the North. The Housing Corporation will be hosting a Circumpolar Northern Housing Forum in Inuvik in March of 2010 that will be a venue for other northern jurisdictions around the globe to generate discussions and share information regarding northern housing issues, challenges, and solutions to building housing in the North.

The forum will highlight northern housing research, design, and construction while fostering relationships with others involved in the circumpolar housing industry. It will provide an opportunity for stakeholders across the Arctic circumpolar region to showcase their designs and technologies that have worked in the NWT and other countries in the Arctic circumpolar region. For example, the Northern Sustainable Housing Project will be featured at the forum. As well, as I have already noted, the Housing Corporation is in the process of implementing a high efficiency standard for its housing units in accordance with the Natural Resources Canada EnerGuide for Houses minimum 80 rating for high efficient homes. We'll also be in a position to display these new designs at this forum.

The forum is expected to attract a high range of people in the housing sector, including designers, architects, planners, researchers, contractors, trades people, goods and services suppliers, policy advisors, and other housing professionals and

representatives from across northern Canada and from other Arctic nations. The last northern housing forum took place in Alaska in 2007 and attracted over 150 delegates. It is expected that attendance at the forum planned for Inuvik will be similar and as well attended.

Our partners in this forum include CMHC, the Cold Climate Research Council, the National Research Council of Canada, the Yukon and Nunavut Housing Corporations, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The GNWT Department of Public Works and Services has also had involvement in planning this forum.

I look forward to updating this House on our progress as we move forward with these initiatives.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 56-16(3):
HELPING NORTHERNERS LIVE HEALTHY LIVES

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to build on Minister Lee's important message about Nutrition Month by speaking to the importance of ensuring Northerners of all ages have the nutrition and health required so that they are ready to succeed.

Education, Culture and Employment and Health and Social Services, the district education councils and authorities, and non-government organizations such as the Food First Foundation, engaged in an array of activities to help students and families in this area. I have already spoken to the Drop the Pop during this session. Now I would like to share an example of activities that schools are engaged in.

At Kalemi Dene School in Ndilo last month students participated in the Moose Head Lunch. Students cooked fish stew and bannock while elder Muriel Betsina prepared moose head from a moose that had been shot by a teacher, Todd Hamilton. All the students had the opportunity to try this traditional and nutritious delicacy and I am told that many young students came back for seconds or even thirds. This kind of activity, which helps students to understand the negative impact of highly processed foods and the value of traditional foods, is what Drop the Pop is about.

In April, on completion of Kalemi Dene's unit on trapping and pending success on the trap line, another traditional food lunch is planned. This one will hopefully feature beaver or muskrat, at the suggestion of Ms. Betsina. This is all part of the school's commitment to traditional nutritious foods.

This year three NWT district education councils, the South Slave District Education Council, the Deh Cho District Education Council, and Yellowknife Education District No. 1 have joined together to access Health Canada funding to establish a school nutrition coordinator position that supports the needs of schools in the area of nutrition. A working name for this partnership is Together for Healthy Learning. Among the projects under development in the "eat smart" category are nutrition lesson plans developed within the Dene Kede framework, resources to support schools in traditional food preparation, and a family fun night to encourage families and community members to enjoy an evening at the school learning about nutrition in a fun and supportive atmosphere. This is a very exciting partnership and we are anticipating a pilot on these programs in the very near future, Mr. Speaker.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment has also taken steps to ensure northern families have access to healthy foods through our Income Assistance Program. We are the first region in Canada to use a nutritious food basket measured for each community to determine the food benefits available through this program.

The Government of the Northwest Territories also funds homeless shelters that provide hot nutritious meals and a warm, safe shelter for those Northerners who are in greatest need. The Healthy Children Initiative provides funding to community-based organizations to support healthy child development in young children and their families. Providing healthy foods to young children supports their growth and development and begins building healthy eating habits that remain with them throughout their lives.

Mr. Speaker, in the last year, the Food First Foundation of the Northwest Territories has helped fund 18 breakfasts, lunches, and snack programs, feeding 1,627 students across the Northwest Territories. These programs take place in communities across the North, across the NWT from up in Ulukhaktok down to Fort Smith in the south and from Fort McPherson across to Lutselk'e. In addition to breakfast, lunch and snack programs, fruit and vegetable grants have been provided to most NWT communities and cooking programs for kids have been funded in nine communities. The foundation is led by a volunteer council that includes nutrition, health, education professionals as well as First Nation, student, teacher, and Parent Advisory Committee representatives. Food First is doing great work for NWT students. I look forward to further collaboration with them on nutrition awareness in the future.

Mr. Speaker, good nutrition helps students to concentrate better and helps to improve the overall

quality of life for people of all ages. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RELOCATION OF WATER TREATMENT PLANT IN DELINE

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been said over and over in this House that communities in the Northwest Territories require new water treatment plants, even to upgrade them or to build new ones. Mr. Speaker, the community of Deline needs a new water treatment plant. The water treatment plant is situated on the shore of Great Bear Lake right adjacent to the community landing dock. Now, Mr. Speaker, in the past, there were several incidents that put the water treatment plant in jeopardy with the water delivery in Deline. Thank God nothing serious had happened.

Mr. Speaker, over the past years, the community of Deline and MACA officials have been working very closely to work out ways to build a new treatment plant there, but it has been said on numerous occasions with MACA officials that the leaders in Deline would like to relocate the water treatment plant.

Mr. Speaker, due to limitations of funding requirements, the community reluctantly agreed to keep the water plant in its present location by not risking to lose its funding or to pay for it themselves in the future. Recently, as of last December, I received a call from Deline stating that the federal government was conducting an environmental assessment and there was progress in the vicinity of the old water treatment plant. I have been advised that the area where the water treatment plant is presently located is contaminated and the community would like to ask MACA to work with them to relocate a new water treatment plant elsewhere, away from the contaminated area. I will have questions to the Minister at the appropriate opportunity. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MEDICAL TRAVEL ESCORTS POLICY

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Medical travel is something that all our communities have to

deal with in most cases. People are referred from more communities to either regional centres, Yellowknife and also to Edmonton for surgery by way of cancer treatment, back surgery, dental care and other services that are needed in our communities. Mr. Speaker, this last week I received two calls from two constituents who were very upset in regards to their treatment by the Inuvik Regional Health Board in regards to their medical travel.

Mr. Speaker, one patient had to come here to Yellowknife for cancer treatment and surgery and was told you cannot get an escort; travel light, don't carry anything heavy and you'll be okay. Mr. Speaker, these patients have to travel long distances and then also be in a hospital for a period of time. Mr. Speaker, I received a phone call this morning from another constituent who has been approved to go to Edmonton for back surgery and being told by his doctor that he cannot have this surgery unless he has an escort. But yet, Mr. Speaker, after going to the health centre yesterday, he was told, sorry, you cannot have an escort and that they will not pay for it.

Mr. Speaker, we are the ones that are referring patients out of our community to get that care. They should have the escort with them when the doctor refers them, saying that the only way that you will get this medical surgery...Then being told, well, after your surgery, you are going to be in a wheelchair. For me, that is a shock enough as it is, but then being told by the health centre that you cannot have an escort because we don't think you need one. I think that is not appropriate for this government or the Department of Health and Social Services, especially the Inuvik health board telling our patients that we will have to travel to Edmonton for either cancer treatment, back surgery or any type of surgery that they should be accommodated by an escort when they are referred by a doctor. I think when we are undermining a doctor's decision in order for those patients to have an escort, I should think it should be automatic. Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister of Health and Social Services on this question later. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
PREMIER'S CLAIM UNDER MINISTERIAL
BENEFITS HOUSING POLICY

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't going to make a statement today, but since the Premier raises the issue of the Northbeat report last night on CBC, I feel I need to respond to that.

Mr. Speaker, this is what I heard in the report last night. I heard that the Premier's statutory declaration of residency indicates a different address than where he lives and a different address than that indicated on a recently filed conflict of interest disclosure, and that is according to his comments. I get from the story that, although the Premier indicates that he remains the tenant of record on a lease for a home on School Draw, he says he no longer lives there.

I get that, although the Premier and his new partner have a combined household income that exceeds \$250,000 per year, he asks if we would have him turn his wife and children out. Have they not already been through enough? Mr. Speaker, I think that is a question the Premier needs to answer, not ask us and not ask the public.

Although the Premier declares this to be a personal and private matter, why does he insist on dragging us, the public, and the public interest into this by wanting us to pay the cost of housing for his estranged wife and his children? Why does he ask if we, I assume the public, would have him turn his wife and children out? That is a question he should be asking himself. Of course not, Mr. Speaker. His personal choices have nothing to do with us, unless he expects us to become involved in footing the bill that he should be rightly responsible for.

The Premier says that he has been repeatedly assured that he complies with the Ministerial Benefits Housing Policy, but we all know that the eligibility for the reimbursement of accommodation expense turns on the stated sworn address of where the Member normally resides. The Premier knows this and the opinion that he seeks and this assurance that he seeks comes from hardly an arm's-length opinion, Mr. Speaker, considering that we know is the deputy minister's opinion and interpretation and that all deputy ministers are at-pleasure appointments by the same Premier. For that reason, an impartial ruling will soon be hopefully responded to by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Roland, what is your point of order?

POINT OF ORDER

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, under rules of debate 23(i) and (k), Member Groenewegen has now on a number of occasions continues, but especially this morning in her Member's statement, to impute false or hidden motives to myself and uses abusive and insulting language under (k) of a nature likely to create disorder. She is putting her

own opinion on a story last night. I spoke to the facts that needed to be addressed and the facts that do stand and are clearly represented, and she has put her opinion and her own debate brought to this House, once again, on a situation that she's fully aware of, has all the information, and is fully aware of all of the benefits Ministers and Members are entitled to. She can't claim not being aware because she's benefited from that herself in her past life as a Minister. She has the information but yet raises it in this House and continues to add allegations or her own opinion and interpretation as to what has happened in my life or the benefits or policies that apply to me as a Minister of this government. She's aware of the situation. In fact, I've had a discussion with her personally after our meeting in Caucus back in December about my situation and living conditions. She's aware of all the information, but instead stands up in this House and again tries to add to the story and build on something that's there or not there and add to the level of discussion, or the lower level of discussion, that this Member continues to do.

Mr. Speaker, under these sections I am saying that the Member again has raised on a couple of points that brings further disorder to this Assembly and creates dissent, as well as puts out her own opinion on what the facts are or not there and continues to try to draw this down in this Assembly although we've already had debate on this area.

Mr. Speaker, the fact that the Member continues to lower the level of debate with her own opinion on things and not go with the facts that she's fully aware of is creating, as I see it, Mr. Speaker, a point of order on, minimum, 23(k). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland, for your point of order. I would normally allow debate on a point of order; however, I am not going to allow debate on this point of order. I will take it under advisement. The Member for Hay River South has indicated that this matter has been referred to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, therefore, I am not going to allow debate because of the fact that it is being looked at from another source.

The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY,
MARCH 8, 2009

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Two days from now, on Sunday, is International Women's Day. The first National Women's Day was observed in the United States in 1909. Then in 1977 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution calling on member states to proclaim a

day for women's rights and international peace. After that, Canada declared March 8th as International Women's Day in Canada.

It's a day that connects women around the world and celebrates the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future. It is a day to celebrate the women in our lives and our communities, to honour the advances women have made, but at the same time remember the need for continued action to ensure that the equality fought for and gained by the women who have passed before us is maintained in all aspects of our society.

To quote an old advertising slogan: We've come a long way, baby. But in many ways and in many places in the world and the NWT we still have a long way to go. We only have to look to the recent death of a Gameti woman to see that.

Canada's theme for International Women's Day this year is "Strong Leadership. Strong Women. Strong World: Equality." The same reflects the belief that increasing women's participation and access to leadership roles and opportunities will help women and girls thrive, reach their full potential and fulfill their dreams. In doing so, they will change our world for the better.

I'd like to mention a few facts. Women make up the majority of full-time students in most university departments. The House of Commons currently has 69 women, the highest number ever elected; not nearly enough, however. Forty-seven percent of self-employed Canadians are women and one in 10 women are self-employed. For the NWT our theme is Women Lead the Future, and NWT women are strong leaders, Mr. Speaker, and we find women leaders everywhere. They're the women in our aboriginal and community governments and in our businesses. They're the girls in our school councils. They are the women and the girls who volunteer selflessly to help others.

Five strong, very special women leaders will be recognized on Monday at noon here in the Great Hall. The Status of Women Council of the NWT will present the 2009 Wise Women Awards. I'm proud to say that Lynn Brooks, a very deserving Frame Lake resident, is the council's North Slave region Wise Woman Award winner. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Lynn Brooks is the recipient for the North Slave region Wise Women Award winner for 2009. Lynn has worked tirelessly for the protection of women and for women's rights for many years. I offer my congratulations to Lynn and to all of the 2009 Wise Women Award winners. They will lead us to be a

strong, equal world in spite of all obstacles. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
RECOGNITION OF WINNERS OF ARCTIC
ENERGY ALLIANCE ACTION AWARDS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize and honour the 2008 winners of the Arctic Energy Alliance Energy Action Awards which were presented last night. The awards highlight Northerners who are taking action to increase their energy efficiency and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

There are four categories in which nominations could be made: youth and schools, individual, business, and community. The winners for youth schools were industrious students from the Aurora College Trades Access II Class who ran a pilot winterization class in Inuvik. The students received hands-on training while helping to winterize the homes of five elders and eight others, reducing heating bills and helping to reduce carbon emissions. Word has already spread about this project and I hear that residents of Tuktoyaktuk are already asking for a similar project in their community.

The winner for the individual category was Kaad Mukhtaar who was the first taxi driver in the NWT to switch to a hybrid vehicle. Kaad helped the Arctic Energy Alliance do a case study on hybrid vehicles in the North. By switching to a hybrid, Kaad has saved himself \$5,000 a year by reducing his carbon emissions by 9,000 kilograms.

The business winner this year was NPR Commercial Property who had performed efficiency upgrades in four of their buildings, reducing their energy consumption by 23 percent, which translates to 502 tonnes of CO₂, the equivalent of removing 100 cars from the road every year. The company also has the added benefit of reducing their energy costs by \$370,000.

The community category honoured our own City of Yellowknife this year for taking real steps to implement a community energy plan. Some actions the city has taken to reduce energy consumption are one of the most efficient building codes in Canada, installing a wood pellet boiler at the Yellowknife Community Arena, the Yellowknife Curling Club and Ruth Inch Memorial Pool, and thereby putting it well on its way to meeting its greenhouse gas targets years ahead of schedule, conducting a geothermal study concluding energy audits on all facilities and developing a smart growth plan.

Mr. Speaker, the Arctic Energy Alliance must also be given recognition. Under the exceptional leadership of Mr. Andrew Robinson, the hardworking staff have far surpassed their goals of this year. Opportunities for our residents to save and benefit the environment exist and the Arctic Energy Alliance is helping residents to realize that. All kudos to our energy warriors. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
GNWT DIAMOND POLICY AND LOCATION
OF CANADIAN DIAMOND BOURSE

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to speak today about diamonds and the Government of the Northwest Territories Diamond Policy.

I was very disappointed earlier this week when I found out that Toronto, Ontario, will be home to a Canadian diamond bourse. I suppose I shouldn't be too shocked given our government's lack of focus and solid policy in the area of diamonds. The last government decided to gut ITI's diamond division and today we have very limited staff resources on the development of our new Diamond Policy.

Last fall I questioned the government on its involvement in a feasibility study on the establishment of a Canadian diamond bourse. The work was being carried out by the Province of Ontario and it is no big surprise that Toronto has gotten the diamond bourse. We even gave them \$20,000 to help them decide on Toronto. The work was being done by the Province of Ontario and I doubt that Yellowknife was even given a chance.

I'd like to know exactly what our government did to get us involved in these discussions. I'd also like to know if they even visited Yellowknife before a decision was made.

The City of Yellowknife has worked long and hard at establishing the city as the Diamond Capital of North America. How do we, as a government, just stand by and let the Province of Ontario get out in front of us?

A diamond bourse in Yellowknife would have certainly cemented the Northwest Territories presence as a diamond centre on a global scale. The sad thing is, we were actually involved in allowing Ontario to scoop our opportunity and we just let it happen.

I'd like to know when the government is going to wake up and realize the full potential and opportunities that exist with diamonds. The Minister of ITI said in a media interview earlier this week that the Diamond Policy review would be coming in the

fall. Can we not get this process advanced any sooner than this fall? We've had diamond mining activity in our Territory for well over 10 years and a review is long, long overdue.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CONSTRUCTION OF GRAVEL
ACCESS ROAD IN TUKTOYAKTUK

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the community of Tuktoyaktuk we have recently embarked on a very important project: the construction of the access road to Tuktoyaktuk Gravel Source 177. This 22-kilometre road, this three-year project, evolves through a local contractor and now employs 80 people, 53 are Inuvialuit. This project will continue to be strong and economic generating in the community, especially during these difficult times. This road will not only provide access to the badly needed gravel source for other construction projects, and will open up additional land for possible future development.

This access road to 177 is a truly monumental project. Opportunities such as this may not come along for quite some time. This Government of the Northwest Territories and the Aurora College and the community need to take advantage of this and coordinate as many training opportunities as possible, such as Class 1 operators, heavy equipment operators, land monitors, and surveyors.

The training costs are high, but when training is coordinated in conjunction with a project such as this it spreads the cost. It's a win-win for everyone. Badly needed training is provided to companies that need additional staff to work with.

The speed of this project and, once again, the momentum was truly remarkable, coordinated between organizations such as the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Tuk Community Corp, and the hamlet. The people that really pushed it through is the Government of the Northwest Territories. And the environmental, and the federal government, and the environmental screening must all be commended, especially all my colleagues and all the support in this House, again, thank you very much.

Lastly, the government needs to continue the momentum through the various industry partners of all levels of government to acquire the funding to complete the plan to the road from Inuvik to Tuk. Only with the completion of this highway can the federal government and the territorial government say that it's truly linked us coast to coast to coast. This infrastructure is needed for the Mackenzie

Valley Pipeline. The economic returns to the Territory will pay back tenfold.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
RECOGNITION OF CENTRE FOR
NORTHERN FAMILIES' CONTRIBUTIONS

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As my colleague from Frame Lake mentioned, March 8th is International Women's Day. So today I'd like to highlight the contribution that the Centre for Northern Families makes to the lives of women and their families in the Northwest Territories. Sponsored by the Yellowknife Women's Society, the Centre for Northern Families offers important programs and services to an increasingly diverse group of Northerners.

The Yellowknife Women's Society began in 1988 when a core group of northern women from a wide range of backgrounds saw a need for a drop-in centre where women could gather for support, share ideas, and to work on projects of mutual interest. The Yellowknife Women's Society opened its doors in 1990 in a small house in Yellowknife's downtown and quickly became a place women turned to in crisis situations.

For the first five years the society operated on the efforts of volunteers and with no core funding. In 1995 contributions from the GNWT and the federal government allowed the Centre for Northern Families to hire a coordinator and continue to build on the existing programs and services. The growing centre moved to two different sites in 1997 and then to its present larger location later due to increasing need for emergency shelter.

Although membership in the society is limited to women, their partners and children may access any of the services offered by the Centre for Northern Families. The shelter's name is inclusive and recognizes that healthy families in which both women and men are equally important are a foundational building block for the functional community.

Some of the programming the centre provides does not exist anywhere else in the community. It is deeply involved in health, parenting, employment, housing, and education concerns for northern women. It currently offers an advocacy program, an Inuit sewing circle, a new Canadian and multicultural program, healthy baby and toddler clubs, respite childcare, a teen girls club, a walk-in medical clinic. The programs and services strive to meet the basic needs of marginalized women and their families.

For the last 20 years the goal of the Yellowknife Women's Society and the Centre for Northern Families has been to empower women so that they can develop their goals, achieve wellness, enjoy equality, and be recognized for the contributions they make to our community. They are governed by principles of tolerance and inclusiveness and try to respond to the needs of people first, instead of a specific programs or philosophies.

The Centre for Northern Families reaches out to a widening circle of people who have come to Yellowknife from across the Northwest Territories, Canada, and around the world. They deserve our continued support, encouragement, and recognition.

I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage Members of this Legislative Assembly...

MR. SPEAKER: Your time for Member's statement is expired, Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. ABERNETHY: I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage Members of this Legislative Assembly and the public-at-large to applaud the staff and volunteers of the Centre of Northern Families for their hard work and dedication. They make a difference in Yellowknife and the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ACCESS TO PUBLIC PAY PHONES

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue I want to talk to today is the issue about access to public pay phones. Years ago there were pay phones almost everywhere you looked, whether they were on the street corners, at the arenas, our theatres, or even our grocery stores and shopping malls. These days there are less and less and you'd be lucky to find any. In my riding of Yellowknife Centre alone I've only been able to track down one and that's at the Explorer Hotel. We've reached a point where it's hard to believe that pay phones are even less common than public washrooms.

For some of you who may not know, pay phones got their start back in 1878 as pay stations. People paid the station attendant after making a call. Coin operated pay phones were only introduced 11

years later in 1889. These phones were extremely important, of course, because it wasn't until World War II when house phones, private phone lines, became publicly available. Nowadays it seems even the term "pay phone" belongs in a different time and perhaps maybe even a different generation. I wonder even today if I'll have to take my son to the museum to see what a pay phone might have looked like. Or I certainly hope that our education Minister will start rolling it into history classes right in line with stories about the passenger pigeon and, yes, the dodo bird, and soon it will be the pay phone.

Even considering some of us come from a different time, as well, there will be a few here who will remember that Superman had to run into a pay phone to change into his costume to do public good. Many people out there wouldn't even know that and wonder what the pay phone was.

Some of the people here in Yellowknife need a pay phone for their access as a lifeline. People on low income don't necessarily have a phone. People from the communities don't necessarily carry a cell phone, so when they visit Yellowknife they're in a difficult position. The assumption out there is that everyone has a cell phone and certainly that's not the situation that exists.

The CRTC is now getting away from its public responsibility about providing public access to pay phones. They may complain about the maintenance costs, the vandalism, the lack of user fees, and about other trouble. I hate to say it, but that's not my problem. Public access to communication is a right. The reality is here that we need pay phones.

I'm going to close by saying that I'll be raising questions with the Minister of Public Works later today to talk about what he is doing as our intervener in this public communications issue. I'll have questions then.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON STUDENT EXCHANGE BETWEEN FORT LIARD, NWT, AND BELLA BELLA, B.C.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Recently I received a letter from a group of students at the Acho Dene School in Fort Liard. They wrote to tell me that their school had been selected to participate in a student exchange trip and they were very excited about it.

---Applause

These students will be visiting the Heiltsuk First Nation community of Bella Bella. Bella Bella has

about 2,200 residents and is on Campbell Island in the central coast area of British Columbia.

I think that exchange trips give students a wider view of the world, so this should be quite an experience for them. This exchange is sponsored by the Society for Educational Visits and Exchanges in Canada, and also, I believe, by contributions from our government.

The Society for Educational Visits has brought more than 300,000 young Canadians together in forums, visits, and exchanges. The Society for Educational Visits promotes safe and fun activities where youth can get to know each other, learn by doing, and gain confidence to be leaders.

The students from Bella Bella will be visiting Fort Liard the week of March 22nd to March 28th and the school is planning celebrations. I'm not too sure about the details, but they do plan to include a community feast and drum dance.

I'd like to thank Ms. Diane Nelson, the group coordinator, the Acho Dene School staff, and all the parents and community volunteers who will have made this exchange possible. I commend you all and good luck with the exchange.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert C. McLeod.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize in the gallery five youth who are in Yellowknife to volunteer their time and assistance during the Volunteer Summit sessions this coming weekend. The youth have been part of a previous Youth Ambassador Program and have shown excellent leadership qualities, and I would encourage Members, if given the opportunity, to ask them about their experience. The five youth are: Christina Esau from Sachs Harbour, Bhreagh Ingarfield from Nahanni Butte, Deborah Richards from Enterprise, Sidney Tutcho from Deline, and Trevor Betsina from Ndilo.

As well, we have with them from the MACA office in Fort Simpson Mr. Shane Thompson and also Ms. Dawn Moses, who was a part of Team NWT at the recent Scott Tournament of Hearts, who did very well. Welcome to the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I, too, would like to recognize Mr. Shane Thompson from Fort Simpson. Welcome

to the gallery. Also, Ms. Dawn Moses as well as Bhreagh Ingarfield, a student from Nahanni Butte. Also welcome to all participants of the Volunteer Summit. Enjoy your stay here this weekend. Good luck. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I'd like to recognize the grand chief of the Dene Nation, Mr. Bill Erasmus. Welcome here.

I'd also like to welcome a number of youth that I've had the opportunity to work with over the last many years and probably familiar faces to many of the Members here. We've seen a lot of these youth work as Arctic ambassadors, our youth ambassadors at Arctic Winter Games, Canada Games, at some of the economic development conferences, youth events, and sporting events. They are certainly role models for other youth in the North. I'd like to welcome Debra Richards, the lone representative from the Deh Cho. I welcome her here today. I also wanted to recognize Bhreagh, who has done a lot of work in Nahanni Butte with the moose/dogs issue. I also want to recognize Christina from Sachs, who has never been able to beat me at cards. Also, Sidney Tutcho and Trevor Betsina, and a lot of the work that's been done with the youth by Shane Thompson. I know Dawn Moses can't get up because she's got so many curling medals wrapped around her neck, but welcome. I want to thank them all for joining us here today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great pleasure to also welcome Bill Erasmus, chief of the Dene Nation and also a resident of Weledeh, as well as a Member of another well-known family in Yellowknife, Trevor Betsina, another resident of Weledeh.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: He's been recognized a couple of times already, but the Dene National Chief Bill Erasmus. Good to see you here.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Today I'd like to welcome Ms. Christina Esau from Sachs Harbour to the House. I recognize my mother from Tuktoyaktuk in the House today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: I, too, would like to welcome Mr. Jacobson's mother, Ms. Regina Jacobson, to the House. I also would like to recognize a young hiker on the CANOL Trail, Mr. Sidney Tutcho from Deline. One of the youth that hiked I think just over 60 or 70 miles on the trail.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: It gives me great pleasure to recognize a couple of Pages in the House who are here from Chief Paul Niditchie School in Tsiigehtchic. I'd like to recognize Ashley Kaye to my right and Chavaughn Blake at the back of the room. I hope that their time here was fun and enjoyable and also that it was educational. It gives them a better understanding of our style of government in regard to our consensus style of government. I wish them a safe trip home. Mahsi cho for your service here.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Although this gentleman's been recognized a few times I think it's very important to recognize Dene Nation Chief Bill Erasmus once again. The reason I do this is this chief has offered me good advice, which I have appreciated over the years. I respect him very much. I want to recognize him here.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I don't think we've missed anyone in the gallery today. If we have, welcome to the gallery. I hope you're enjoying the proceedings. It's always nice to have an audience in here.

Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 271-16(3): RELOCATION OF WATER TREATMENT PLANT IN DELINE

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today I talked about the problems that the Community of Deline is having with the construction of a new water treatment plant. The whole site is now contaminated with hydrocarbons and my people are afraid there may be long-term, negative health consequences to the proposed site that's going to be looked at for the

water treatment plant. What is the Minister doing to deal with the concerns of the people of Deline over the proposed site of the water treatment plant?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can advise the Member that MACA staff from the regional office have been in close contact with the council in Deline and have offered a range of solutions that would either remediate the site or have the treatment plant moved off the contaminated site.

MR. YAKELEYA: Certainly the people in Deline will be happy to hear the Minister's response to the first question here. The second question is, can the Minister outline some of the specific proposed solutions for this issue here?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I have a meeting lined up with the chief of Deline within the next week to discuss some of the proposed solutions. If it's relocated, the proposed plant would have the community constructing a 300-metre road to a new site east of the contaminated site. But these are issues that could be worked out.

MR. YAKELEYA: I'm very curious as to the comment as to what the Minister means in terms of working things out with the Community of Deline. Can the Minister elaborate a little bit more on what he means by working things out?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Some of the major issues involves the selection of the final site and then the agreement by the Deline Land Corporation to access the land. The costs related to the construction of the road and the implications related to the long-range operational costs of a new location as chosen.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In terms of the Community of Deline looking at the new location and alternative solutions to the new water treatment plant, can the Minister advise me and the people of Deline of the type of available funding that the community and his department can work in to seek a satisfactory solution to this issue here?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The community's preferred location would involve building a 2.5-kilometre road and this is not money that's part of the bundled water treatment plant. This is something we would have to discuss with the community as to other pots of money that could possibly be accessed. This is also going to have

implications on the long-term operation and maintenance of the road. If those costs are not covered, then the community may have to consider passing those costs on to the residents of the community. There are still some issues that need to be discussed and we will have that opportunity next week when we sit down with the chief of Deline and have that conversation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

QUESTION 272-16(3):
MEDICAL TRAVEL ESCORTS POLICY

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services. Medical escorts are an essential service that we provide to patients who are having to go for treatment by way of cancer treatment and are going to be in the hospital a long period of time, or they are going to have surgery in which they know that once the surgery is concluded, you have to have somebody there to take care of the patient and, in most cases, escort the patients back to their home communities. I think for me, when a medical doctor makes a clear diagnosis that you have to have an escort, and also in regard to the hospital that you're going to be referred to states right in it that in order for you to come here you have to have an escort, I'd like to ask the Minister why it is that when you get a doctor's referral, you talk to the medical establishment where you're going to go, they clearly stipulate that you have to have an escort, yet the nurse in charge of that original health centre can say you don't need an escort.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The policy is that if the medical professional states that the patient requires an escort, that that person is eligible. The Member brought this to my attention just before session started. We are in the process of looking into that and I hope to get answers back to him by the end of the day.

MR. KRUTKO: I was only made aware of this this morning too, but I'd like to thank the Minister for moving on this. I think again it's one of those things where the patients have enough stress, physical, emotional, and mental stress, that they're going to have to go through surgery and not really know what the outcomes are. I'd like to ask the Minister, in regard to the directive that we have and especially with the hospitals we deal with, especially in Alberta, in regard to Edmonton where they clearly stipulate as part of your...to be signed in and signed out, that you have to have an escort

there when you're signed out of that hospital. I'd like to ask the Minister if that is also taken into account on top of the doctor's suggestions and the hospital that you're being referred to stipulates, in regard to how they sign you in and how they sign you out, that you have to have an escort. Has that also been considered in regard to the policy of having escorts?

HON. SANDY LEE: Medical travel is an essential element of our health care delivery system. We understand that we are responsible for providing access to medical services to our residents. Not all services are available everywhere, even for Yellowknife. The only way to deliver these services is by medical travel. Now, I do not know exactly what happened in this situation. My understanding is that if a medical professional says someone needs a medical escort, then that should put them on top of the list to get that eligibility. I have to look at what happened in this situation and I will get back to the Member. But the general policy is that we do provide medical escorts or even non-medical escorts where necessary.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think when a patient is going to be going in for major surgery, such as back surgery, which is major, and also when you're going for cancer treatment where it will require surgery, those type of incidents should be on a priority list where they do get an escort, because there's no way that these people on their own can travel back to their home community in the condition that they're in. I'd like to ask the Minister if she could tell me exactly which types of surgery or medical attention is needed to be classified as essential for medical escorts.

HON. SANDY LEE: Our residents are eligible for medical escort for medical travel where it's deemed necessary for medical reasons. Our program also provides non-medical escorts where a patient needs assistance for physical support or even mental support for those who are in particular situations. Anyone over 65 is eligible for even non-medical escorts, and for interpretation. So we do have a generous Medical Escort Policy. We understand that sometimes we run into hiccups and I'd be happy to look into what happened in this particular situation. I am doing that right now.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Minister for that. I would put some urgency on this because I believe the appointment is next week and it is for major back surgery. I think this person has suffered long enough that they don't have to worry about how they're going to be taken care of once they end up in the hospital. I'd like to ask the Minister again, can she try to get

back to me as soon as possible today and try to have this resolved by the end of the day today?

HON. SANDY LEE: Yes, I am working on that and I know my staff are working on that. I hope to get back to him before the end of the day.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

QUESTION 273-16(3):
GNWT DIAMOND POLICY AND LOCATION
OF CANADIAN DIAMOND BOURSE

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of ITI, Mr. Bob McLeod. It gets back to my Member's statement where I was discussing the establishment of a diamond exchange -- or a bourse, as it's known -- in Toronto, Ontario. I'd like to get a better understanding of what our government's role in that was. I understand we even gave \$20,000 to the feasibility study to have this bourse located in Toronto. I'd like to ask the Minister how the decision was made to locate this diamond bourse or exchange in Toronto and not in Yellowknife or in the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Northwest Territories has played a leadership role in the development of the diamond industry within Canada. We feel that it's in the best interest of everybody in the diamond sector to have a strong diamond industry in Canada. As such, we participated in a study that was led by Ontario to look at the establishment of a diamond bourse. I should point out that the decision to establish a diamond bourse was made by industry and is not something that we can control.

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, I am wondering how exactly the Government of the Northwest Territories is going to benefit from having a diamond bourse located in Toronto, Ontario. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I share the Member's view that a diamond bourse would be helpful to be established here in the Northwest Territories. In past discussions, the Member had agreed that we would work together on reviewing the Diamond Policy. I think that the best way to establish a diamond bourse would be to review it as part of that Diamond Policy. Presently, for those diamond cutters or polishers that want to participate in that bourse, they would benefit by being able to take their product to the diamond bourse in Toronto. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, I would agree with the Minister 100 percent that we need to get on with the work in the area of reviewing our Diamond Policy but, recently, we just lost another senior staff member at ITI. Like I mentioned in my Member's statement, the last government decided to gut the diamond division at ITI. I just don't believe we have the manpower to get this done. What are the Minister's plans to get the Diamond Policy review completed prior to this fall? I think it is something that we have to move on rather quickly, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We will be moving quickly to get our Diamond Policy review back on track. We will be announcing the hiring of a senior diamond person to work within the department. We will benefit from all of the research that was done by Ontario. We will take that into consideration as we work towards looking at the establishment of our own bourse here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister McLeod. Your final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Does the Minister know whether this feasibility study or the folks involved in the feasibility study even came to Yellowknife to have a look at what is here on the ground in Yellowknife before they made their decision to locate the bourse in Toronto? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: My understanding is the group that is establishing the bourse is part of the diamond industry in Ontario. Their main focus was to work with the diamond producer in Ontario from the Victor Mine and work with their jewellers that are based in Toronto. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 274-16(3):
ACCESS TO PUBLIC PAY PHONES

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today, I talked about the issue of lack of public pay phones and the fact is the public interest isn't necessarily represented by the fact that they keep disappearing. The chances of them returning are zero to none, obviously. Mr. Speaker, I have questions for the Minister of Public Works, who represents the Territory's interest in intervening in public communications. I would like to hear from the Minister what he is doing to make sure that the public interest is represented in these types of situations by making sure that there is access to public pay phones for the public who can't afford a cell phone. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Public Works, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, our responsibility through Public Works is in the area of regulatory concerns, really not routine maintenance problems and disappearing of phones and a lack of a number of pay phones. We now have new technology that most people, especially in the Member's riding, are applying and that is a cell service, Mr. Speaker. The provision of pay phones is a private industry responsibility and the Member is concerned and would like us to bring that forward. Certainly we can bring it to the provider. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: One of the great jobs that we do here is that we don't just represent our community in the sense of our constituency. We also represent the Territory's good as a whole. I can tell you that I have spoken to people from the communities that do not have cell phones. When they come to Yellowknife to do their business, their shopping, they are visiting families and friends. The fact is that access to public pay phones does not exist and I don't want to say they are hard done by. That may be sort of overstating the problem, but the fact is that there is a real inconvenience. Mr. Speaker, if the Minister is interested, maybe he should take the approach of realizing that community people suffer as well as downtown Yellowknife Centre people. Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Public Works consider coming up with what really is his job to intervene in the public's interest? Would he be interested in coming up with a strategy to see if the CRTC will start implementing this need, recognizing that not all Northerners have access to cell phones? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: It is always very refreshing to see a Member intend to look after and raise concerns from people from all over the North. Mr. Speaker, I had, earlier in my response, indicated that I would raise the issue with the private company that provides pay phones and service in the Northwest Territories and look at the CRTC provisions to see if there is any way we can encourage more pay phones.

Mr. Speaker, I do represent smaller communities in the North. I have not had any complaints providing pay phone service, so that is something that we will have to look at. It is a new issue for us. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to make it clear, the Minister can go out and you could call NorthwesTel or whomever and ask them nicely and if they say no, they will say, what do you have to say? You will have no response if they say no, thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, the Minister has the authority under his position to take it straight to

the CRTC as the issue. That is really the issue. I appreciate his overture of saying he will make contact with NorthwesTel. I look forward to that official response, but I want to make sure it is clear that he has the right under his mandate to take a position on behalf of the government for the public interest. I just want to make sure that is distinguished very clearly here. It is great that he will make a phone call to them, but the fact is he also needs to be clear that in his position he has the authority to challenge the issue directly with the CRTC. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I always ask nicely. I want to thank the Member for telling me what my responsibilities are and what my authority is. Mr. Speaker, we do have fairly frequent discussions with the phone service provider. This is not an issue that has been raised prior to this. We certainly can have that discussion and see what the options are and see if we can encourage them to look at the issue in the Member's riding and maybe other jurisdictions across the Territories to enhance the phone service or availability of pay phones. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 275-16(3):
RENTAL INCREASES AND THE
RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES ACT

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Justice. I want to follow up on some questions that were asked by my colleague Mr. Hawkins and myself about a week and a half ago in regards to the authority of the rental officer. We were asking questions about rent increases and who has the authority to deal with rent increases. I want to quote from an unedited Hansard of February 20th. The Minister replied, "Whether it be an increase in rent on an annual basis, if they are not satisfied with that, then that is the avenue that they can certainly file a complaint and the rental officer will certainly look into that." I would like to ask the Minister, where in the Residential Tenancies Act does it indicate that the rental officer has authority to deal with rent increases, the quantity of rent increases? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. There are certain sections within the authority. Of course, section 47 of the Residential Tenancies Act deals with the rent increase. Also this section restricts rent increases on rental premises to once a year. Those are the areas that I

was referring to when I responded to the Member's question. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: I thank the Minister for that comment. I would like to quote again from the unedited Hansard on the 20th. The Minister said, "Certainly with the rental office it could just be a matter of spreading the word and he is the one that can deal with these issues and complaints." That was in reference to my question about a complaint about high rent. So the Minister just referenced that the act talks about a rental increase in any one year. I would like to ask him whether he could clarify, please, for me and for members of the public. Is there an opportunity for the rental officer to deal with complaints that have to do with high rent increases once that tenants believe are beyond what they should be? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, the rental officer does have certain responsibilities when it comes down to discussion of rent increase or on an annual basis there is supposed to be one increment of rent. So those are areas that the rental officer can certainly deal with clientele and if the clientele are not satisfied because they have already given notice. There is not going to be any changes to the rent increase. The client is given notice so they have ample opportunity to discuss that with rental officers. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: I am afraid I have to ask the same question again because I need to have the Minister clarify for the general public. If I have a tenant who is slapped with a 30 percent increase in their rent, albeit it is the only increase in rent they have in an annual year, can the rental officer deal with that complaint? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, the rental officer does have a certain responsibility to deal with clientele. If it happens to be on the rent increase, again, they have to be given notice. To deal with the specifics, I need to find out more of the regulation itself because we are going through some amendments to the regulations. I need to get more clarification on exactly what the Member is referring to. I can certainly get back to the Member on the specific item. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought I was pretty specific. Exactly what I am referring to is an exorbitant rent increase in any one year. A 30 percent rent increase has been seen by some tenants in my riding. So I need to know where the tenant can go. Can the rental officer handle a complaint about an exorbitant rent increase? That is my concern. The communication from the

Minister's office advised that this issue speaks to the broader issues of housing affordability and states that Justice, ECE and the Housing Corporation will look into this and determine how best to address the issue of housing affordability. Could the Minister advise me what that means, what steps are going to be taken to look into this? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, I did indicate in this House that this will be taken into consideration. There are going to be new amendments to the act itself. It has to be brought back to this Assembly. The amendments have gone through this House back in June. We are going through implementation stages. We are going through the regulations. If there are going to be changes, that will certainly take into affect during the business planning process. We will continue to improve our services that we provide to the general public. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 276-16(3):
AGREEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of ITI some questions on our business policy. I was just perusing the request for tenders and I noticed that there is a new addition to our government tenders. It speaks about chapter 5 of the Agreement on Internal Trade will apply to this procurement. I am not aware of what that means. I am not aware of an Agreement on Internal Trade. Can I ask the Minister to explain what that is? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Agreement on Internal Trade is an interprovincial agreement which has been signed by all of the provinces and territories. I think Nunavut is the most recent signatory to this agreement. This promotes the free movement of labour and capital across the provinces and territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: As well, I saw in another bid document that said the Agreement on International Trade. Is there a separate Agreement for International Trade or what is the explanation on that, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I am not familiar with a separate Agreement on International Trade other than the ones the Government of Canada has signed off on in which we would be participating in,

like agreements like NAFTA for example. With regards to the AIT chapter 5 that is referred to, I am glad that somebody is reading the fine print in the ads, because chapter 5 provides for an exception and here in the Northwest Territories it allows us to have preferential hiring and buying to recognize that we are in a depressed area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I have to concur that sometimes the Committee of the Whole meetings are long so we tend to read anything that is before us. That just happened to stand out. I think the Agreement on International Trade that I referenced may have been a typo in the ad. Can the Minister provide me with a copy of this document? If I had a question, Mr. Speaker, was there an assessment done on how it would impact local business, their ability to bid on contracts and is there an increase in competition? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I should point out that this is not a new wording in the ads. It is a boiler plate that has been around for some time. When the Agreement on Internal Trade was signed, I think it was about four or five Assemblies ago. We specifically requested that chapter 5 allowed us to carve out the fact that we do have a Business Incentive Policy and that we do have northern preferential contracting and tendering. Certainly I will make a copy of the agreement available to the Member and any other Members that would like to have a copy of it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Menicoché.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It actually sounds like an old agreement. I thought it was something new that we weren't aware of. Is there a reason why our government in the procurement policy now is putting this line item in the bid advertisements? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: My understanding is that it has been a boiler plate item for some time now. I will just reconfirm that it is not something new, because I have checked and there have been some discussions at the First Ministers. Those discussions have been mostly on labour mobility. I will confirm that this is not something new for the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

QUESTION 277-16(3):
VOLUNTEER SUMMIT IN YELLOWKNIFE

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my questions are for the Minister of MACA.

Today is the start of the Volunteer Summit. It is co-hosted by Finance and MACA. I am pretty optimistic that we are going to get some good information from the different voluntary organizations and the different NGOs. I am curious, what are the next steps once that information is gathered? What are the next steps as far as moving forward with the voluntary sector? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is right; the summit does start tonight at 6:00. They are opening up at the Explorer Hotel. I invite the Members to drop by. What we are hoping to get out of this is a plan of action for deciding how we are going to go about dealing with the volunteer groups across the Northwest Territories. We are hoping to put together a plan and look at all the different options there are out there. We all know that volunteers are important in the community and we need to come up with ways to recruit new volunteers, and we are hoping to put all of that into a plan and hopefully have the opportunity to implement it so we can strengthen the volunteer circuit across the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. ABERNETHY: I'd like to thank the Minister for that response. It might be a little bit early but I'll ask anyway, do we have any sort of timeline in how we're going to move forward with this information and recommendations that are gathered through this summit and at what point will the Minister be able to get back to standing committee with some of the findings so that we can move forward? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: As to the timelines of when we can come forward, we're hoping to do that as quickly as we can process all the information. Once we have that information processed, then I would make an invitation to sit down with EDI and discuss where we go from there and get their feedback on it. Then, hopefully, get out there and start presenting it to the public and see what kind of feedback we get from this initiative. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 278-16(3):
CONSUMER PROTECTION POLICY

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions for the Minister of MACA in terms of the consumer protection in the Northwest Territories. I understand, Mr. Speaker, that the department does have personnel that take care of

the consumer protection, but I also understand that there are a lot of scams that are happening in the Northwest Territories -- theft identity and fraudulent activities -- and we want to have some protection for the residents of the Northwest Territories. I want to ask the Minister what is this department doing in terms of protecting the consumers against these types of activities that may be happening or are happening in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we know, there are some scams that go on across the Northwest Territories sometimes and we do have someone that's located in the consumer office. Part of their duties would be to try and educate the public on recognizing potential scams and helping them to deal with it. As far as the consumer, the Better Business Bureau, we don't have a Better Business Bureau in the Northwest Territories. It's usually an organization that the businesses themselves pay into and we haven't had that here in the Northwest Territories yet. As a rule, they do not accept any government money; they prefer to run it in-house. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to advise the Minister that he does have a person within MACA and that person is doing a fairly good job in terms of working on this specific piece of legislation. I want to ask the Minister of MACA, in terms of educating the public, is there any type of plans going forward of how we educate the people in the smaller communities on these types of activities that potentially could be happening in their communities, such as the scams, the fraudulent identity theft? Is there a campaign there to educate the small communities in terms of how to protect the rights of consumers? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, as far as the scams go, the RCMP does issue sometimes a warning that there are potential scams out there. As far as the educational part of it goes, there is some information that's available on the MACA website and then materials are being distributed to the regional offices. We're consulting with the Department of Education to distribute some of these materials through the NWT school system. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, the Minister is correct that there is not a Better Business Bureau office here in the Northwest Territories. Most of the consumers who have to get this type of information have to go through the Edmonton bureau and it does take some effort from the residents to set up an office like this in the Northwest Territories. We now have only the municipal government to protect

us. I would ask the Minister if there is any type of workshops that he could do to really outline in a simple way that residents could use to file a complaint or register a complaint with the consumer, with the department. They need to understand. Can the Minister elaborate a little further on that?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure we can, and as I said, we distribute some educational materials and I'm sure we can probably put something together to distribute to the communities where we make it a little easier to access and navigate and give them some numbers as to where they can contact if they have some issues on consumers and things that are out. I would commit to the Member that we could probably work out something where we get the information out there and make it a little simpler to navigate through. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I would go so far as to ask the Minister if he would also consider using this type of application of educating material through the radio stations in terms of in the different languages so people could understand what the Minister is doing to protect the consumers.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I will commit to the Member that we will look at how we can get the information out there and how we can get it into languages that people are most comfortable with. I will make that commitment, if we're distributing materials we'll try to make them easily available and accessible by everyone. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 279-16(3):
BANNED INDIVIDUALS IN COMMUNITIES
AND POLICING ISSUES

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the fall of last year I raised the issue about banning individuals from communities that wished to do it in the smaller communities. I'd like to ask the Minister of Justice if he's done any work on that and what's the process to begin supporting community initiatives like that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was going through some documents here. Certainly that's an area that has been brought to my attention by the Member of that

region. My department is working closely with the communities on what our area of responsibility is through band council resolutions and also individuals' rights. We have to take all those into consideration and what kind of legislation we have in place within the Justice department area. We continue to work with the RCMP "G" Division as well on approaching, let's say, an incident or issue at hand. Certainly there are various parties involved, it's not just Justice, but we continue to work with the community on that matter. Mahsi.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Yes, it's about looking at our legislation and I'm just asking the Minister how much work has he done looking at the legislation and how can our legislation support band council resolutions or motions from the smaller communities that do want to ban individuals. Secondary to that, Mr. Speaker, it's also an issue of frequency of policing visits. This particular request comes from Trout Lake. Could the Minister also look at some kind of a public campaign for the RCMP to meet with the community to come up with a policing strategy that's acceptable to them as well? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, certainly that is one of the areas of interest from our department, working with the RCMP "G" Division. I did meet with the commanding officer and also sergeants or the district officers dealing with RCMP presence, that we need to increase our presence in the communities that do not have RCMP detachments. Trout Lake, as an example, will be part of our ongoing discussions that we will be having and the strategizing on how we can increase our presence into the community. One of the goals is to have, of course, a detachment in all communities, but that's a long-term goal. In the interim, we certainly need to improve our services that we do provide, protection services into the communities and the safety aspect. I'll certainly do my part as the Justice Minister to work with RCMP "G" Division to increase our presence into the communities that do not have an RCMP detachment. Mahsi.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I believe that will be part of the solution. Once again, it's just to begin that dialogue. Maybe there are some legislative proposal changes on how do you incorporate the needs of the community for the safety of their residents and safety of their elders. I would just like to ask the Minister again if there is any legislative proposal changes coming up in the next year or so that may address this concern. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, within the Justice department there is numerous legislation that...Every session we do propose different legislation within our Justice department. Of course, one of them pertaining to...I've indicated

in the House that there is consultation that needs to take place on the SCAN legislation, the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act, that could deal with this incident that the Member is alluding to, but that is just one piece of legislation. There is other legislation that is in place that we continue to work on. If there's room for improvement, certainly, we look at that as well.

With the legislation and the regulations that we have in place, there are amendments coming also before the Assembly as well. Every now and then we do make amendments. Certainly we take that into consideration; the Member's concerns and issues. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final, short supplementary. Mr. Menicoché.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Like I indicated, another strategy, of course, would be the frequency of policing visits. Is there a policy or guideline in place about how frequent community policing takes place in the smaller communities. Like, in my riding, I've got Nahanni Butte, Trout Lake, Jean Marie. Is there a minimum requirement of monthly visits or anything of that nature, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, we do have a protocol agreement with the RCMP on providing services into communities such as those communities that do not have detachments. It is at the discretion of the RCMP and depending on the manpower. We do stress that we need at least monthly visits to the communities, overnights if it's possible. Those are pressures that we continue to put on the RCMP "G" Division. We continue to work with them. It all depends on their scheduling, their manpower, the RCMP officers in the region. As you know, they are always on call. Those are the issues that we need to deal with and we continue to strive that. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 280-16(3):
ENERGY AUDIT OF SCHOOL IN
NORMAN WELLS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Minister of Public Works. Mr. Speaker, the Minister sent the information through a letter indicating the amount of activities that are happening in regard to energy efficiency activities happening in the Sahtu region. One of the things that caught my eye was the efficiency of the Norman Wells Mackenzie Mountain School and them assessing the school for the heat and efficiencies.

Can the Minister advise the House and the people of Norman Wells if that school is being considered and if there is a possibility, once the assessment is done, of upgrading that facility to meet the new standards set by the Northwest Territories in terms of energy efficiency in facilities?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, the goal of our government and our department is to set new energy standards with all our public buildings across the Northwest Territories. It's a goal that we'd like to follow through on. We have new dollars in our budget that we just passed to do a lot of work in this area. We're doing an assessment on many buildings and we will continue to do on many more over the years. It's the same policy that we are following to do the energy upgrades and improve the efficiency of our buildings in the housing area. The answer to the Member's question is yes, we intend to upgrade the facilities across the Territories. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, the Norman Wells school has been indicated as one of the schools that could be seriously looked at. I ask the Minister of Public Works if the school is one of the seriously considered facilities that need to be upgraded, would the Minister then forward his assessments to the appropriate departments to have it looked at to have that facility upgraded?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I can't point to the actual place on the schedule to do assessments on this particular building, but I would commit to providing the results of the assessment to the Member once it's done. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: I look forward to the assessment from the Minister. I would like to ask the Minister in terms of the timing on this and because of the amount of limitations we have on the funding and, of course, the design and all the other things that go into place to put an energy-efficient furnace or wood pellet burner in that type of building, can the Minister indicate on the timing in terms of whether it would be able to meet the funding deadline of projects in the Northwest Territories?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I don't have the specifics on the project. I would commit to the Member that the timing would be dependent on the results of the evaluation of the facility and the option to provide a viable alternate energy heating system in that facility. That, I don't have any actual time frames in terms of months or years, but it's something that we'll look at as a result of the Member's request and get back to him. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

BILL 10: APPROPRIATION ACT (OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES) 2009-2010

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, March 9, 2009, I will move that Bill 10, Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures) 2009-2010, be read for the first time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 11: AN ACT TO AMEND THE APPROPRIATION ACT (INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES) 2009-2010

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, March 9, 2009, I will move that Bill 11, An Act to Amend Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures) 2009-2010, be read for the first time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

BILL 12: SECURITIES TRANSFER ACT

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, March 9, 2009, I will move that Bill 12, Securities Transfer Act, be read for the first time. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

BILL 13: AN ACT TO AMEND THE COMMISSIONER'S LAND ACT

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, March 9, 2009, I will move that Bill 13, An Act to Amend the

Commissioner's Land Act, be read for the first time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

BILL 14:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
MOTOR VEHICLES ACT

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, March 9, 2009, I will move that Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

BILL 15:
MISCELLANEOUS STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT, 2009

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, March 9, 2009, I will move that Bill 15, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2009, be read for the first time. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request unanimous consent to go back to item 15.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to go back to item 15, notices of motion. Are there any nays?

AN HON. MEMBER: Nay.

MR. SPEAKER: I heard a nay. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 9:
NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES
PENSION PLAN PROTECTION ACT

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Monfwi, that Bill 9, Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Protection Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 9, Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Protection Act, has had first reading.

---Carried

Item 19, second reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek consent to proceed with second reading of Bill 9, Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Protect Act. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 9:
NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES
PENSION PLAN PROTECTION ACT

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Monfwi, that Bill 9, Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Protection Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill provides protection from creditors for the pension entitlements of Northwest Territories members of the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan and restricts the ability of members to pledge as security their pension entitlements under the plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 9, Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Protection Act, has had second reading.

---Carried

Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 9 moved into Committee of the Whole. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. SPEAKER: Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other Matters: Tabled Document 7-16(3), Ministerial Benefits Policy; Committee Report 2-16(3), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on Matters Referred to the Committee; Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Historical Resources Act; Bill 3, International Interest in Mobile Aircraft Equipment Act; Bill 4, Public Library Act; Bill 5, Professional Corporations Act; Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act; and Bill 9, Northern Employees Benefits Services Pension Plan Protection Act, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 7-16(3), Committee Report 2-16(3), Bills 1, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 9. What's the wish of the committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee today would like to deal with Committee Report 2-16(3) and Bills 1 and 3. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): With that, we will take a short break and begin with those matters.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I would like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. Before the break, we agreed to begin with Committee Report 2-16(3), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures. I would like at this time to call Mr. Hawkins as chair of the committee. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures tabled Committee Report 2-16(3) on October 24, 2008. The report was read into the record and a motion was passed that moved the report into Committee of the Whole. Members may recall that the report dealt with two matters both referred to the committee by Speaker Delorey.

The first matter concerned the former response by government to a motion in the House. After careful review, the committee is recommending that an amendment to Rule 49 be adopted requiring the government if a motion is adopted by the House requesting response, to table the response within 120 days.

The second matter was a request to clarify the form and content of a written question. The committee provided a recommendation to amend Rule 39 to have the Clerk ensure that written questions conform to the rules of the House, setting out the number of written questions a Member may have on the Order Paper any one time at five, and allowing a written question to contain one initial question and, if required clarification, up to four supplementary questions.

Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to make two motions amending the rules of the Legislative Assembly as recommended by the Standing Committee on Rules

and Procedures. I will wait just in case Members have any comments they want to provide or any questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I will ask if there are any general comments in regards to Committee Report 2-16(3). Mr. Hawkins.

COMMITTEE MOTION 13-16(3):
RULES AND PROCEDURES REPORT 2-16(3):
WRITTEN QUESTIONS
CARRIED

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that this committee recommends that Rule 39 of the rules of the Legislative Assembly be amended by adding the following:

- 39(3), the Clerk shall ensure that written questions conform to the rules and practices of the House;
- 39(4), a written question may only contain the one initial question and four supplementary questions;
- 39(5), a Member may only have five written questions on the Order Paper at any one time.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am a member of the Rules committee. I do support this change in the rules of the Assembly. I think it is important that, when a motion is moved, debated and then passed, it is important that we get some kind of a formal response from Cabinet or to whichever...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): ...(inaudible)...before us this motion. It is on the second page in regards to the handout. It is the motion in regards to Rule 39 of the rules of the Legislative Assembly. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So we are discussing written questions, are we? Okay. I guess my brain was turned off while Mr. Hawkins was reading the motion. My apologies. I still feel, however, that this is a good motion. I think it is important that, as Members, we have some guidelines that are clear when we provide written questions. There have been a couple of occasions where written questions have included rather more than one question. I think having the guidelines kind of keeps them down to a relevant amount. It makes it easier for certainly whichever Minister or department has to respond. It also avoids having to

have a 20-page report written and answered to what is presumably one written question. I support the suggestions of the amendments that are being proposed here. I think it gives good clarification and I think it also leaves ample opportunity for Members to ask the written questions that they need to. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. To the motion. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to make sure it is clear on the record that a fairly good debate went on to make sure that no Member's privileges would be infringed in any way to do their business. This is just to make sure, as stated by Ms. Bisaro, who is a member of the committee, that questions are essentially put in due and proper form and that they are organized for effectiveness and efficiency of the House as well as for the Member. That guidance is provided, of course, through the Clerk's office. Again, we want to make sure that the practice is a useful time in the House.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): With that, a motion is on the floor. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Hawkins.

COMMITTEE MOTION 14-16(3):
RULES AND PROCEDURES REPORT 2-16(3):
RESPONSE TO MOTIONS
CARRIED

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that this committee recommends that Rule 49 of the rules of the Legislative Assembly be amended by adding the following as section 49(3):

"A motion adopted by the House and requesting a response from the government will require the government to table such a response within 120 days or at the earliest opportunity subsequent to the passage of the 120 days."

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The motion is in order. To the motion. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What I said before, repeat.

---Laughter

I just want to add to it, I do feel that any formal motion of the House, if it's directed towards a Minister or to the Cabinet as a whole, deserves a formal response. We have been receiving responses from Ministers, but it has been to

individual Members. Very often, I have to admit, it is copied to other Members, but there's no formal response through this body. I think that's important that if there's a recommendation to the government, that the public has an opportunity to see that the response has been provided and for the public to hear it through this particular body and through what we do in the House. So I think this is again a good amendment. As Mr. Hawkins mentioned earlier with the other motion, this was debated at some length in committee and we did have the consensus of committee to bring this forward. With that, I will be supporting this motion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank Ms. Bisaro for sort of cornering the whole issue quite well. Just the one area I'd add, although she did say it, I'd just kind of like to underscore it a little differently. The public interest, I fear, is not represented by our process perfectly. That's no fault of anyone, it's just when a motion goes through the House it disappears and quite often people will ask in the public what happened. What did the government do? Where did the response go? It's difficult for them to follow.

In my five and a half years as an MLA in this Legislature, I've had the privilege of seeing not one single occasion that the government hasn't considered in some form of motion, and I'm grateful that they've always taken the time to respond. The problem is it tends to end up being directed to the committee or Members, as Ms. Bisaro has highlighted. What this would do is close the gap where the public itself would be able to follow the formal response of the government. This would also give them the sense of understanding on how the government is positioned on this. It by no means means they have to agree. It doesn't mean, of course, that they have to disagree either. I wouldn't want them to think that. But it at least closes that information loop. That way again when the issues get out on the table, the big question always seem to come the very next day of now what happens. This will now provide that understanding for the public. I thank Members for their time and work on this consideration and I think it's a good process.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Question is being called.

---Carried

Does the committee agree that Committee Report 2-16(3) has been dealt with and concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The next item for Committee of the Whole is Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Historical Resources Act. At this time I would like to ask Mr. Lafferty if he has any comments in regard to the bill.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. I'm pleased to introduce Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Historical Resources Act. The purpose of this legislation is to update the Historical Resources Act and make a number of minor, non-substantive amendments.

The Historical Resources Act was originally enacted prior to establishment of a government department or agency with the mandate to identify and protect the Northwest Territories' historical resources and heritage. The act was a means for the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories to fulfill this important role, in consultation with members of the Historical Advisory Board.

Since that time the Government of the Northwest Territories has established a program whose mandate is to identify and protect NWT historical resources and heritage. Professional staff in the Department of Education, Culture and Employment have assumed the role of the Historical Advisory Board, which has not operated for approximately 25 years.

This bill updates the Historical Resources Act to reflect the fact that the Historical Advisory Board is no longer necessary or functioning in administration of the act. This bill also makes amendments to update provisions of the Historical Resources Act that refers to the Commissioner's responsibilities in administering the legislation. The amendments will make the Minister, rather than the Commissioner, the public officer responsible for the administration of the act.

The bill will also make a number of minor, non-substantive amendments to the act that have been identified by legislative counsel. We trust that the members of the committee will agree that the amendments proposed in this bill are appropriate.

I will be pleased to answer any questions that the members of the committee may have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. At this time I would like to ask the deputy chair of the Standing Committee on Social Programs who received the bill if they have any comments. Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Social Programs conducted its public review of Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Historical Resources Act, on January 15th, 2009.

The committee thanks the Minister and his staff for presenting the bill.

The bill eliminates the Northwest Territories Historical Advisory Board, recognizing the establishment of a branch within the department to fulfill the board's function. The amended act also changes the public officer responsible for the legislation from the Commissioner to the Minister.

Following the committee's review, a motion was carried to report Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Historical Resources Act, to the Assembly as ready for Committee of the Whole. This concludes the committee's opening comments of Bill 1. Individual Members may have additional questions or comments as we proceed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. At this time I would like to ask the Minister responsible for the bill if he would like to bring in any witnesses.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that the Minister can bring in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses in.

For the record, Mr. Lafferty, can you introduce your witnesses, please?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. I have Dan Daniels, deputy minister of Education, Culture and Employment; Blair Barbour, legislative policy advisor for ECE; and also Ian Rennie, legislative counsel for Justice.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Welcome, witnesses. At this time I'd like to call general comments on Bill 1. Bill 1 is in the grey binder. Detail. Can we move to page 1, Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Historical Resources Act. Clause 1.

---Clauses 1 through 6 inclusive approved

Does the committee agree that Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Historical Resources Act, is now ready for third reading?

---Bill 1 approved for third reading

I'd like to thank the Minister and his witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, could you escort the witnesses out?

As we agreed, we'll move to Bill 3, International Interest in Mobile Aircraft Equipment Act. At this time I would like to ask the Minister responsible for

Bill 3, Mr. Lafferty, if he would like to introduce the bill.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. I'm pleased to speak today about Bill 3, International Interest in Mobile Aircraft Equipment Act. The purpose of this bill is to provide for the adoption in the Northwest Territories of the Convention on International Interest in Mobile Aircraft Equipment and protocol matters specific to aircraft equipment.

The convention is designed to facilitate financing for the purchasing or leasing of high value mobile equipment, something that is particularly important at this time. Because such equipment moves from country to country, creditors face higher than normal risk that increase the cost of obtaining credit.

The convention contains core provisions that are meant to be supplemented by protocols appropriate to specific industries, the first of which relates to aircraft. Together the convention aircraft protocol provides for the establishment of an international registry for securing interest in long-term leases in aircraft and airplane engines. The registry in Dublin, Ireland, will generally apply in the Northwest Territories in place of the personal property registry under the Personal Properties Securities Act.

It is important to note that Canadian representatives play a major role in the devolvement of the convention protocol, so it is no surprise that the convention protocol and registry operate on most of the same principles as our Personal Properties Security Act. Canada has both creditors and borrowers in the aircraft industry. The convention protocol would benefit both by increasing the availability of lower cost credit. Lower financing costs for the aviation industry would ultimately benefit the general public.

The aircraft protocol applies to planes that carry eight or more persons and to helicopters transporting five or more persons, including used aircraft. As such, even smaller NWT operators wishing to buy, lease, or sell internationally may have better access to credit and protection of their interests.

The convention protocol can only be ratified by Canada once a majority of the provinces and territories have passed implemental legislation. To date, the federal Parliament and six provinces have enacted implemental legislation. The model act upon which the bill is based was the product of ongoing stakeholder consultation led by Transport Canada. The Canadian aviation industry supports Canada's ratification of the convention protocol.

I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Social Programs for its review of Bill 3 and will be pleased to answer any questions that committee members may have regarding the bill.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. At this time I would like to ask the committee responsible for sponsoring the bill if they have any comments in regard to the review of the bill. Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Social Programs conducted its public review of Bill 3, International Interest in Mobile Aircraft Equipment Act, on January 16th, 2009. The committee thanks the Minister and his staff for presenting the bill.

The bill implements the 2001 Convention on International Interest in Mobile Equipment and the protocol to the Convention on International Interest in Mobile Equipment on matters specific to aircraft equipment that Canada signed in March of 2004.

Following the committee's review, a motion was carried to report Bill 3, International Interest in Mobile Aircraft Equipment Act, to the Assembly as ready for Committee of the Whole. This concludes the committee's opening comments on Bill 3. Individual Members may have additional questions or comments as we proceed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. At this time I would like to ask the Minister responsible for the bill if he will be bringing in any witnesses. Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Is the committee agreed that the Minister can bring in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses in.

For the record, Mr. Lafferty, could you introduce your witnesses?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Mark Aitken, director of legislation division, and Gary MacDougall, director of legal registries.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Welcome, witnesses. Any general comments regarding the bill? Clause by clause. Does the committee agree no general comments and we now go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We're dealing with Bill 3. At this time I'd like to defer the clause by clause and go to Schedule 1, which is on page 5. Does committee agree to Schedule 1?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): From there can we go to Schedule 2, which is on page 44. Any questions on this schedule? Is committee agreed on Schedule 2?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Now go back to page 2, Bill 3, International Interest in Mobile Aircraft Equipment Act, clause 1.

---Clauses 1 through 12 inclusive approved

To the bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does committee agree that Bill 3, International Interest in Mobile Aircraft Equipment Act, is ready for third reading?

---Bill 3 approved for third reading.

I'd like to thank the Minister and his witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, could you escort the witnesses out.

What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that we report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I will now rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Committee Report 2-16(3), Bills 1 and 3, and would like to report progress, and that Committee Report 2-16(3) is concluded and that Bills 1 and 3 are ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Motion is on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Madam Clerk, item 23, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan): Orders of the day for Monday, March 9, 2009, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns 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 Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 10, Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures) 2009-2010
 - Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures) 2009-2010
 - Bill 12, Securities Transfer Act
 - Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Commissioner's Land Act
 - Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act

- Bill 15, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2009

19. Second Reading of Bills

20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Tabled Document 7-16(3), Ministerial Benefits Policy
- Bill 4, Public Library Act
- Bill 5, Professional Corporations Act
- Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act
- Bill 9, Northern Employees Benefits Services Pension Plan Protection Act

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Historical Resources Act
- Bill 3, International Interest in Mobile Aircraft Equipment Act

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Monday, March 9, 2009, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 12:53 p.m.