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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, March 4, 2010****Members Present**

Mr. Abernethy, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bromley, Hon. Paul Delorey, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Krutko, 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 1:37 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 11-16(5):
ARCTIC WINTER GAMES – TEAM NWT
CONGRATULATIONS

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to extend best wishes to the 350 athletes, coaches and managers of Team NWT as well as the officials that will participate in the 2010 Arctic Winter Games taking place in Grande Prairie, Alberta, this March.

Young people from across the Northwest Territories have been preparing themselves physically and mentally for this biannual multisport games event. They have been spending many extra hours on the ice, in the gym, and on the trails readying themselves to compete against young athletes from around the circumpolar world and to display their talents to the many thousands of spectators.

While only some will come home with medals, all will return with new friendships and an experience that will last a lifetime. I wish to commend our young athletes who have set a goal to challenge themselves by being the very best that they can be at the games.

Mr. Speaker, as these athletes and cultural performers complete final preparations, I feel it is important that we acknowledge the monumental contributions that volunteers and parents make to support our youth.

Without the coaches, managers, referees, scorekeepers and the thousands of others who give freely of their time, there would be no Team NWT. These volunteers are the backbone of Team NWT and are deserving of a heartfelt thank you.

I would also like to thank community governments, who support their youth in so many ways by hosting selection and training events, and our sport and recreation partners who contribute tirelessly to the success of this event. These partners provide guidance and support, and organize the many selection events across the NWT that results in the final selection of Team NWT.

Mr. Speaker, as Team NWT completes final preparations before the opening ceremonies on March 6th, I wish to encourage our young athletes to continue to work hard to achieve their dreams. Congratulations to all and good luck. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Status of Women, Ms. Lee.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 12-16(5):
WISE WOMEN AWARDS 2010

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the Status of Women Council has named the recipients of the 2010 Wise Women Awards.

This is a prestigious award. The Status of Women Council of the NWT has been honouring northern women since 1992 for their wisdom, strength and accomplishments and particularly in working to make our communities better and stronger for all.

Mr. Speaker, these women are all known for their ability to stand with dignity no matter what hardships life has handed them.

They are known for fighting for the disadvantaged and downtrodden. They are known for thinking of others and offering a helping hand. They don't take no for an answer, as many of my colleagues here can attest to. And, most importantly, they know how to laugh.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to announce the recipients of the Wise Women Awards of the NWT for 2010:

- Sister Faye Tremblay for the Beaufort-Delta region. Sister Tremblay arrived in Tuktoyaktuk in October 2005 and took the community by storm with her wisdom, energy and commitment to people of all ages and abilities.

---Applause

- Gina Dolphus of Deline from the Sahtu region. Gina is known as a counsellor, community advocate, and her work to enhance the place of traditional arts and crafts. She is often sought out for her input and wisdom.

---Applause

- Lyda Fuller of Yellowknife for the North Slave region. Lyda has expanded the understanding of the cost of family violence to our society, expanded shelter services and developed transition housing for families starting over.

---Applause

- Elaine Lamalice of the Hay River Reserve for the Deh Cho region. Elaine offers counselling and teachings on healthy living and encouraging young people to move away from making bad choices.

---Applause

- Rosa Lafferty of Fort Resolution for the South Slave region. Rosa is admired for her kindness, that she lives by example and encourages young women to keep their tradition and culture and for her world-renowned sewing. She shows young women that you can do it all.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, the ceremony presentation will be taking place at noon in the Great Hall on Monday, March 8, 2010. I would ask the Members of this House to join us in congratulating the recipients of the 2010 Wise Women Awards at this celebration on Monday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SUPPORT FOR NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS IN THE SAHTU REGION

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the last couple of decades many programs that were once provided by the NWT have been turned over to non-government organizations to deliver, known as NGOs. NGOs would also offer additional programs. These programs are vital as they improve the quality of life for people in the North. Many are programs that provide social services. For example, in the NWT our family assistance and counselling, emergency and transitional housing for homeless families, shelters for women and children, services for adults with disabilities and mental health issues and quite a few other programs.

Mr. Speaker, about \$20 million is provided to NGOs. A recent government list indicates there are

472 NGOs in the Northwest Territories. Yellowknife alone has 291 NGOs, Mr. Speaker. Yellowknife has as many NGOs as Colville Lake has people. To put it in perspective, that means every YK NGO can advocate for every member of Colville Lake and then some. Not only do these NGOs deliver programs, they have goals and objectives to help people in need and to advocate for people.

Saying this indicates that there are no NGOs in the Sahtu, Mr. Speaker. None. Zero. Nothing. Why doesn't the Sahtu have its own NGOs? It's because our people aren't used to the concept of NGOs or that NGOs aren't treated the same as government programs. More specifically, our communities are too small that there aren't enough people set up as registered societies let alone prepare proposals, maintain financial records and complete all the other related tasks.

NGOs choose to locate in larger centres where there's enough people to sit on the boards, do administrative work and to deliver the programs, plus create a service that helps all people in the Northwest Territories.

The Sahtu may get some services through the NWT-based NGOs, but it's always that my constituents are losing out on a lot of social support and assistance, because no money enters into the Sahtu through the local NGOs. I believe it's unfair, Mr. Speaker, and that the Sahtu residents should receive a share of funding that goes to these programs and services. We don't have an NGO to help with the homeless or to support families in crisis or in shelters. This has to change and the change must happen now, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Monday coming, March 8th, is International Women's Day. The Canadian theme for 2010 International Women's Day is Strong Women, Strong Canada, Strong World; an apt phrase, I think. This Territory, this country, this world has been shaped by strong women and I would like to highlight a few.

First off, as we are hard on the heels of the 2010 Winter Olympics I have to mention the very strong women athletes of Team Canada who garnered so many medals for us in our record-setting total.

Canada has had, and still has, many strong, political women. I want to mention a few:

- Agnes McPhail was a pioneer on the federal political scene. The first elected woman to the House of Commons. That was in 1921, only two years after women gained the right to vote federally. She was not joined by another

woman in the House of Commons until Martha Black in 1935.

- Ellen Fairclough was the first woman appointed to sit in a federal Cabinet in 1957.
- Jeanne Sauve was elected as the first female Speaker of the House of Commons in 1980 and then appointed as the first female Governor General in 1984.
- Hazel "Hurricane" McCallion, the current long-serving female mayor of Mississauga, Ontario, first elected to her post in 1978.

The NWT has many strong women of our own:

- Lena Pedersen, first woman elected to the NWT Legislature in 1970.
- Nellie Cournoyea, the first woman Premier of the NWT in 1991.
- Ethel Blondin-Andrew, NWT's long-serving first female Member of Parliament.

There are many, many more strong women in our Territory who are little known and who don't ask to be known. They are the backbone of our families and our communities. They are our grandmothers and our mothers. They are the volunteers at our schools and community events. They are the caregivers for our residents and our children, the organizers of fundraisers to help a needy family, the leaders of our councils and our boards, and the elders that we look to for advice and wisdom. We don't acknowledge them because they go about doing normal things and they don't ask for recognition, but without their contributions our society would be sadly lacking in strength and character.

On Monday, as you've heard, the NWT Status of Women Council will honour five strong women at the 2010 Wise Women Awards. I wish to extend my congratulations to Frame Lake resident Lyda Fuller, this year's recipient of the North Slave award.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MACKENZIE GAS PROJECT

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to talk about the Mackenzie Gas Project and to be on the record again to say that I support it. The Mackenzie Gas Project has been called the economic lifeline for many of our communities in the NWT.

This project is important for the people of my riding of Nunakput. It will bring jobs, business opportunities, ownership of the pipeline. Just as important, exploration will start up and the gas will have to make its way down to market. The good thing about that is the offshore holds amazing

potential. We just needed the industry to come back and get started exploring in our region.

Exploration is important. It provides jobs and gives our businesses opportunities that are scarce now. My people have been a part of the oil and gas exploration business for generations.

Right now the people need hope. My people are facing high levels of unemployment and suffering from poverty. My people hope the future gets them out of this cycle. The future includes their children getting training and taking advantage of employment opportunities from the Mackenzie Gas Project. It's a key part of making this hope move into reality.

Another thing I wanted to mention is the natural gas is a clean fuel. The Mackenzie Gas Pipeline will bring a clean, natural gas to the South, which will allow people to burn natural gas in their homes instead of dirty fuels like coal. That keeps electricity plants going.

We see the impacts of climate change here in the North every day. One of the solutions is getting southern Canada and the United States off their dependence on coal and getting them turned on to natural gas.

I fear that these are critical times. I urge the federal government and the proponents to come to a solution when it comes to the pipeline. A pipeline is a good thing for Canada. We have heard many times in the House of the pipeline that will bring Ontario and Alberta economic benefits. The federal government should see this pipeline as Canada's pipeline and not just ours.

I'm worried that the pipeline is taking as long as it is to get to where we are today. I urge all parties to work together and to get things moving. My people are relying on them. Quyanainni.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Members we are often busy lobbying for more programs and services and certainly more facilities for our constituents and ridings. As we all have become well aware that our job, number one, is to make sure that our constituents' issues are brought forward, and our roles as MLAs make this very important as we try to demonstrate the needs in our ridings.

Every community, I believe, needs to be treated fairly. Therefore, I want to use my Member's statement today to talk about the importance of community and regional standards. By that I mean standards that provide direction regarding decisions

that make certain facility levels and service levels provided in any community and certainly regions. For instance, the NWT school capital standards and criteria offers direction that when a new school needs to be built in a community, it provides standards that help people understand and certainly follow the transparency of what that means. If there's a school that needs to be built, whether the school is unsafe or a community is larger than 100 people, that tells everyone there needs to be a school. We also know that the challenge of providing renovations to a school is usually balanced by the cost of repairs versus the new school, and certainly the future demands of that school as perhaps a learning facility needs to definitely be taken into consideration. There are many considerations, as I'm trying to stress, but the fact is we need a formula that helps improve the way our services are provided to our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on about could we provide every service to every community or region, but we all know that's certainly impossible. But we always have to ask ourselves is it cheaper to offer them in a regional centre or is it more reasonable to offer them in a regional centre than it is to always pull them into Yellowknife, and vice versa. Sometimes it's just more reasonable to bring them here.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of standards we need to weigh and balance: the human standard, what it does to the family, and certainly the cost standard, what it does to our books. Mr. Speaker, I'm calling for a provision that the government will demonstrate fairness and clarity of services to the people of the Northwest Territories and have a policy that makes sure that these factors are always clearly considered. I'd like the government to demonstrate this in a transparent and measurable way so all standards are understood so every region understands that maybe the next community centre, next pool, next arena or health centre, when it comes around, it could be their turn and certainly when they deserve it. It won't take the politics out of the system, Mr. Speaker, but it will certainly maybe even help the fight that many Members here fight for when they demand services to be provided in the communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REFLECTIONS ON CONSENSUS GOVERNMENT

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to talk a little bit about consensus government. I'm not going to do justice to this very, very big topic in two and a half minutes, Mr. Speaker, but coming up on 15 years working in consensus government, Mr. Speaker, I am starting to not think that this is the best way to govern our

Territory. I don't want to be particularly critical of anybody or anything, it is the system in which we work, but, Mr. Speaker, there are some downfalls.

Mr. Speaker, the consensus government purports to have significant cooperation between all Members. We come here as 19 Members all independently elected to serve in this House, and then consensus government dictates that we should all get along and work together. In a perfect world maybe that would happen. But, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that we all come from diverse backgrounds, we have different ideas about what the priorities of the government should be, and then we get into the system and we choose our Cabinet and our Premier.

Mr. Speaker, in that system there's a significant gap between that leadership we put in place for four years and the public and the electorate, the people who put us here. I think that is one of the downfalls of consensus government and it's one of the advantages of party politics.

Mr. Speaker, party politics they say is too adversarial. Well, I think anybody that's been watching the 16th Assembly would say that perhaps consensus government is not the most congenial way of getting business done either. So that's one of the arguments against party politics.

Mr. Speaker, people who really purport to support consensus government say, "but it's a great system because we get to see everything in advance. They tell us all the details behind closed doors in advance, in secret." Well, what good does that do us if we can't go out and talk to our constituents about it?

Me, personally, I want to tell you, the valuable debate that goes on on that stuff goes on behind closed doors, and by the time it ever makes it onto the floor of this House, everybody's kind of worn out of talking about it. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm not so sure that getting information in advance is a great thing. I'd rather see something, put it on the table, and then let's have a meaningful discussion, dialogue and debate and then let's take a vote on it.

Mr. Speaker, I have often said this, I don't like going over things two or three times. It's a waste of time. Like I said -- I only have a few seconds left here, but, Mr. Speaker -- I think that there are other opportunities for governing this Territory that should and could be, and need to be looked at at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm going to again discuss the Deh Cho Bridge Project.

I'd like to thank the government for providing the technical briefing to the media yesterday, although I still don't understand why it had to be held downtown in a boardroom when we have a dedicated meeting room here at the Legislature, and it should have been held with the Minister of Transportation and the Minister of Finance there to answer questions.

Mr. Speaker, this was a technical briefing introducing some new members of the project management team to the media. The briefing lacked any clear and concise financial details for the media and, ultimately, the public to see.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is that a contract was signed with Ruskin yesterday to complete the project. Why, then, can't the government come clean to the public about the current financial disposition of this project and the impact this project has had and will continue to have on the finances of this Territory, not just today, Mr. Speaker, but well into the future? This is a very key issue, Mr. Speaker. Germane to all of this is whether or not the entire \$165.5 million borrowed against the project will be entirely on the Government of the Northwest Territories' books. If this happens, Mr. Speaker, it is a nightmare scenario for this government. Beginning next year we'll need to cut expenditures, reduce infrastructure spending and our ability to look at new or strategic initiatives will be greatly curtailed.

Mr. Speaker, I will not and cannot divulge the contents of briefings Regular Members have had on this project and I appreciate the confidential nature of these efforts, but I'm having a difficult time understanding why some of the information presented was not given to Regular Members in hard copy. What happened to open and transparent government, Mr. Speaker, and when will the public know about the financial status of this project?

Mr. Speaker, it is best practice and an industry standard that when a general contractor is removed, as well as a project management team, a full audit is done of the project. How can you move forward with any financial certainty when you don't know where you've been?

Our Department of Transportation and the new management team have inherited a project that has been mired with problems from the onset. This audit should have been conducted. The Deh Cho Bridge Corporation's records and books should be audited. This before any contract is signed or entered into. But, Mr. Speaker, as we know, it's too late to do that right now. We are pressing forward, we have negotiated a one-sided deal with one company.

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

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. RAMSAY: We're pressing forward, we have negotiated a one-sided deal with one company. Again, the public purse is not being protected here. Mark my words, we have set ourselves up for further cost overruns on this project by not tying off all of the loose ends. Taxpayers will again be taken for another ride on the second half of this project. We have set the stage, Mr. Speaker, for it to be a very expensive ride.

Mr. Speaker, I've said it before, and I'll say it again today, that this project has the possibility of crippling the Territory's finances. Mr. Speaker, this is the sad reality we are faced with and I'll have questions for the Minister of Finance at the appropriate time. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON 2010 ARCTIC WINTER GAMES

MR. MENICOCHE: Mr. Speaker...[English translation not provided.]

Following up on the MACA Minister, I, too, will talk about the Arctic Winter Games.

Watching the Vancouver Winter Olympics, Canadians had the pleasure of cheering their athletes on to glory. Next week many of our young NWT athletes will be participating in the 21st Arctic Winter Games in Grande Prairie, Alberta. They will be competing with eight other teams, four Canadian and four northern international teams. Given the Canadian success at the Olympics, I think all athletes will be pumped, I predict lots of fun, lots of personal bests and lots of medals.

I want to recognize the athletes from Nahendeh who will be attending the Arctic Winter Games. Not only am I pleased to see what a bumper crop of athletes we have going from Nahendeh, but they are participating in a wide range of events. Twelve youth will be attending representing nine different sports:

- Carson Mantla, junior male category, Dene Games;
- Charlene Deneyoua, Junior Female Snowshoeing;
- Michael Gast, Midget Male Cross-Country Skiing;
- Blair Kotchea, Junior Female Biathlon Snowshoe event;
- Madison Pilling, Juvenile Female Speedskating;
- Thomas Roche, Junior Male Basketball;
- Napem Moses, Junior Male Snowboarding;
- Sydney Rowe, Junior Female Hockey.

The team with the most representation from Nahendeh is the Intermediate Female Soccer Team. There are three members: Amanda Bradbury, Jacqueline Thompson and, last but not least, Nicole Cholette-Antoine.

I don't know if Arctic Winter Games mittens will be a best seller or not, but I would like to take this opportunity to wish the very best of luck to these young people from Nahendeh and to all NWT athletes in their sports. Also, a special greeting to the coaches, parents and volunteers who will be there. Don't forget to take in the entertainment and cultural events.

Once again, good luck and have fun. Cheer each other on. Previous cheers at Arctic Winter Games have always been NWT, NWT, NWT! Mahsi cho.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ACCURACY OF TAG INFORMATION
PROVIDED TO CARIBOU OUTFITTERS

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As politicians we all must be impeccable with our words. Our residents listen closely to what we say and make personal and professional decisions based on what they hear in this House and statements quoted in the press. This is especially true for Ministers. When a Minister or one of his or her staff makes a statement to people of the Northwest Territories, those people take those statements at face value. As a result, there is significant value in thinking about the statement and understanding the ramifications of the words before making them public.

Unfortunately, from time to time incorrect statements are made by Ministers and/or their representatives, statements which only residents rely on in good faith and make decisions which ultimately hurt them, decisions they wouldn't have made had they not received incorrect information from the GNWT. When people rely on incorrect statements from Ministers or their staff to their detriment, that Minister and department have a responsibility to work with that resident to mitigate the damage as much as possible.

Precedent has already been set. There was a significant flood in Hay River during the 2007-2008 fiscal year. After the flood a representative from MACA met with affected residents and provided them with some incorrect information indicating that many of them would be covered for flood repairs. These individuals relied on this incorrect information and made the repairs believing they would be reimbursed. Afterward they were told by MACA that they would not, in compliance with their

policies and procedures, be reimbursed as originally promised.

Fortunately, the new appointed Minister of MACA, R.C. McLeod, recognized that these individuals relied on this information to their detriment, showed some common sense and compassion, and arranged for the promised reimbursements. This was the right thing to do and I imagine that MACA will be very clear on policy direction to residents in this area in the future.

Recently a similar situation has occurred. During a barren-ground caribou meeting on December 18, 2008, a senior ENR official informed attendees that their access to tags -- 750 in total -- would not change for the 2009 or the 2010 hunting seasons. These outfitters relied on this information and proceeded to book hunts for the 2010 season. Then the Minister put in the emergency measures cutting them off completely. As a result, outfitters who relied on the department's information and commitments are facing significant financial challenges as a result of returning deposits which had already been spent as part of doing normal business. They would not have booked these hunts had ENR not indicated...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Abernethy, your time for your Member's statement has expired.

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

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. ABERNETHY: This situation was made worse by the fact that in November 2009 another senior ENR official was quoted in Above and Beyond indicating that caribou numbers for the NWT are going up. In addition, in October 2009 the Minister of ITI made several tourism-related statements indicating the value of outfitting in the NWT. These statements lent credibility to ENR's earlier statements and increased the outfitters' confidence that their tags would not be affected in 2010.

Given that these long-time, committed Northerners relied on this information in good faith, I believe that the Minister of ENR should show the same level of integrity as the Minister of MACA and come to some sort of financial agreement with these outfitters to mitigate the damage caused by the department's bad information. It's alright to admit making mistakes; it's also good to do the right thing. I would like to see the Minister demonstrate that he values long-term Northerners and is willing to assist them when provided incorrect information from his department. At the appropriate time I will be asking some questions of the Minister.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
PRIORITIES FLOWING FROM THE
ASSEMBLY'S WINTER SESSION

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's the end of our longest annual session and we've debated many critical issues facing our citizens today. Now it's time for action. I want to briefly restate my priorities on how we need to act.

The Mackenzie Gas Project can only be supported if it is made to provide sustainable social and economic benefits to NWT residents and mitigation of its social and environmental impacts. We need the input of all MLAs in developing a response to the JRP report and I am calling on the government to honour the principles of consensus government by obtaining full Assembly and committee input to a response. We want a full debate in the May session.

By next session we must be well along in developing cooperative management partnerships with First Nations for the preservation of the Bathurst caribou herd. It is essential that the Yellowknives Dene be fully involved in this work and their and other interests equally respected. Members must be kept fully informed as this work progresses.

We've asked the government for an integrated, resourced, government-wide strategy for reduction of poverty. We must make progress in reducing the suffering of our citizens most in need. I'll be looking for reports on how this is moving ahead.

Our greenhouse gas outputs are going up, not down, while our climate changes ever more quickly. Biomass makes sense in every way: on cost, employment, business and investment opportunities, protection from oil price spikes and the environment. We must move as soon and as effectively as possible. Mandatory targets must be set for the reduction of greenhouse gas production throughout the NWT.

The Finance Minister released a discussion paper on the creation of a Heritage Fund. We need a higher revenue return on our resources as they flow out of our Territory. We have that authority now and we need to start saving some of that revenue for the future. Let's get it done.

We must never find ourselves caught in the vice of another major construction project disaster again. I will be investigating what legislation can be put in place to prevent this government from locking the taxpayers into endless cost overruns from future projects like the Taltson project.

In my opinion, this government has been disastrous to date. It has seriously curtailed our immediate and long-term potential to meet residents' needs and expectations. We are in a deep morass.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. BROMLEY: Our executive must make a much greater commitment to the principles and practice of consensus government. I spend too much time calling this government to task for its habits of unilateral action, as we all do, and then trying to clean up the mess later. Work with us and we will work with you. It can't, it obviously doesn't, work any other way.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
DELIVERY OF ESSENTIAL HEALTH SERVICES

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Programs and services are essential services for all our communities in the Northwest Territories. Throughout the NWT, from education programs to health care services and health centres to hospitals, we all depend on the programs and services that assist our residents to improve the quality of life, the well-being of our communities, and the health of our residents. From mental health positions in our communities to alcohol and drug programs to social workers, they do make a difference in our communities.

The goal of this Assembly is healthy, vibrant communities. The real commitment that we made making that statement is not real. When we have communities without programs and services and the lack of essential services such as nursing services, social services, income support, that lack of services brings a barrier to the community's health and well-being.

Yes, there are challenges we face in our communities regarding the high cost of living. The high cost of energy and isolation plays one of the reasons that we don't have all services in communities. That is no reason this government should not be ensuring that adequate programs and services are being developed in our communities. These communities need attention that other communities take for granted, because they have all the programs and services being delivered and access to health centres and clinics to see a doctor. In a large number of our smaller communities, that is not the case. Why is it that in 2010 we still have have and have-not communities?

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. KRUTKO: If programs and services are essential services, why is it we have some communities with programs and services and a

large number of smaller communities that don't? All residents of the Northwest Territories deserve a fair break. Regardless if you live in Colville Lake, Tsiigehtchic, Sachs Harbour or Nahanni Butte, we have a responsibility to provide programs and services to our residents. At the appropriate time I will be asking the Minister of Health and Social Services what she is doing to ensure essential services are being provided to our communities.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
HAY RIVER RESERVE KAMBA CARNIVAL 2010

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to bring the attention of the Legislative Assembly to the inevitable and always well-received Hay River Reserve Kamba Carnival.

This year marks the 27th anniversary of the Kamba Carnival and, as promised every year, it will be sure to deliver plenty of interesting activities and family fun for folks of all ages. Whether their preferences are for indoor or outdoor activities, Hay River Reserve Kamba Carnival is sure to test your wit during traditional Dene games, hand games, or inspire you to jig at the dances or talent shows. Kamba Carnival is sure to chase away those winter blues. Of course, for those winter warriors and those who aren't ready yet to see Old Man Winter leave on vacation, Kamba Carnival on the reserve is sure to deliver one last hurrah with exciting snowmobile races and adventurous dog-mushing events.

This annual event is organized by many dedicated and committed volunteers who donate a lot of their time and energy to showcase one of the community's biggest events of the year, and in the past it has drawn visitors and fun seekers from communities such as Yellowknife and Fort Smith and communities all around the Great Slave Lake and Deh Cho and Akaitcho regions. A lot of people even come from southern Alberta as the event seems to draw more and more people in attendance from further and further away each year.

I'd like to invite everyone to come out and join the fun this weekend on the K'atlodeeche First Nations Hay River Reserve. On behalf of the Deh Cho constituency and to all of the competitors, I wish all the best. Play hard, play safe, and to all those who are attending as non-competitors, good luck at bingo.

---Laughter

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert McLeod.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF
COLIN AND RITA ALLEN

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Fifty years seems like a very long time and yesterday, as some of you know, I had a birthday and I happened to turn 50.

---Applause

I'm now considered an Inuvialuit elder, so I have to start sounding wise from this point on.

I use this to illustrate the fact that we have folks who have been married for a long time. I think recently we acknowledged some folks up in the gallery that were married for 65 years.

I have two constituents at home that on April 19th will be celebrating their 50th anniversary. I want to use this as an opportunity to pass on my congratulations to Colin and Rita Allen, a couple of good folks from Inuvik who were married on April 19, 1960. I look forward to an old-time dance, Colin and Rita, and I'll be shining up my shoes ready to go.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have a group of strong, wise and hardworking women in the gallery today, and I'd like to introduce them: Lyda Fuller is the most recent recipient of the Wise Woman Award, and also the executive director of the YWCA; Lorraine Phaneuf, who is the executive director of the Status of Women Council of the NWT; Annemieke Mulders, program manager for the Status of Women Council; Irene Savoy, office manager of the Status of Women Council; and Marilyn Hardisty, project officer for Northern Women in Mining, Oil and Gas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to recognize the hardworking women from the Status of Women Council, and I'd particularly like to recognize Frame Lake resident Lyda Fuller, who is the 2010 recipient of the Strong and Wise Woman Award for the North Slave. Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to recognize two Pages from the Deh Cho

constituency who have as of today successfully completed their duties through the NWT Legislative Page Program. I'd like to recognize Leona Fabian from the Hay River Reserve, Chief Sunrise School. She's 15 years old, enjoys travelling, spending time with her family and working with computers. She tells me her goal is to complete high school. Also, we have Judith Fabian of the Hay River Reserve, Chief Sunrise School also. She's 17 years old and she enjoys volunteering, spending time with family and friends, and she's also got a goal of completing high school. I'd like to say thank you to them and ask all the Members in saying that. Thank you.

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

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize a resident of the Great Slave riding, Ms. Margaret Peterson. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize two hardworking Pages from Yellowknife South: Braden Redshaw and Alyx McLean. I'd also like to thank all of the Pages who have served here in the Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize and thank one of our Pages, Paige Elkin. She's been a stalwart Page of this Assembly on many occasions. For the information of all Members of this Assembly, she's also on our NWT curling team, and she's also my son's favourite babysitter. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Marilyn Hardisty, who has her roots in Jean Marie River in my constituency. Thank you very much. Welcome.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as well, I'd like to recognize the two Pages down from Inuvik: Ms. Caroline Kaufman and, I hope I get this name right, Evodia Mutua, as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Welcome to everyone in the gallery today. I hope you're enjoying the proceedings. It's always nice to have an audience in here. Item 7, acknowledgements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Acknowledgements

1-16(5):

95TH BIRTHDAY OF MARY KENDI

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a well-known and respected, Mary Kendi, turns 95 years old today. Born at the Pokiak Channel, across from Aklavik, at a time when there was only a trading post in the area, married in 1932 in an arranged marriage, she lived in the bush, hunted, trapped and fished. Mary raised nine children and took care of many of her grandchildren. In 1992, Mary Kendi was the first woman in the Northwest Territories to receive the Wise Woman Award. Mary's celebration will take place in Aklavik on Saturday. I wish Mary a very happy birthday and wish her well. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 8, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 37-16(5):

DELIVERY OF ESSENTIAL HEALTH SERVICES

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services. It's in regard to the words "essential services," and I think, more importantly, what are we doing to fill the gap between the have and have-not communities when it comes to programs and services such as health care, education and, more importantly, those positions that we depend on such as the nurses, the social workers and also looking at the clientele such as mental health workers to assist the communities with alcohol and drug programs, because those services make a difference to our communities. So I'd like to ask the Minister exactly what is the government doing to ensure that we do have these programs and services in all the communities in the Northwest Territories to make sure that these essential services are being delivered.

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

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the Member's concerns about some of the gaps in services. We have worked to bring back some of the mental health worker positions in Fort McPherson. We're doing a pilot project in Fort McPherson, but we are also engaged in looking at the overall system to make sure that we have strengthened services available in the communities. In the coming weeks I will be working with the Member to close some of the

gaps, especially in the Beaufort-Delta region where we are seeing some harder challenges. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, we have a very vast Territory, but we also have 33 communities. I think, as a government, we have to find unique ways to deal with the rural and remote communities. This has been an issue since as long as I've been here for 15 years. I believe that we have to find mechanisms that may not be able to fit all communities, especially with the challenges we face. So I'd like to ask the Minister if she's more than willing to consider looking at ensuring that we have dedicated nurses or dedicated social workers to ensure that they do spend the time in our communities, and it's not simply a rotation system, so that the residents can take the time to basically familiarize themselves with the service providers but also having them dedicated to those communities. Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, the Foundation for Change Action Plan is designed to look at our system to see how we can make structural changes in order that we can enhance our level of care and services in small communities. That work is not complete. We have just introduced that. We are working to bring back to the Members across to see what kind of changes we need to make so that we can strengthen the services in areas that the Member is talking about.

The Member is right; we face a number of challenges demographically, in terms of location, in terms of shortage of health professionals, but I agree with the Member that our people expect to have a certain level of services, and we need to work together to make sure that that can happen. I will be coming forward with a plan to review with the Members on the other side. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I believe that we can study this thing but I don't think the communities want to wait that long. I think, in the meantime, there are workable solutions here and one of them I mentioned earlier is that we have dedicated staff either from the regional centres, the adjacent communities, and dedicate them to those communities that don't have a full slate of service providers such as nurses, social workers or even people in regard to mental health and alcohol and drug workers. So I'd just like to ask the Minister, can she direct the health authorities that they have dedicated nursing professionals or people in that profession, dedicated to those communities so that they can have people that will be obligated to work with those communities to provide those essential services and, more importantly, do it immediately. Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, I am willing to work on a plan to bring to the Members to consider that. Mr. Speaker, in order for us to have dedicated essential services in the communities, I believe we

need to look at changing the way our health delivery system is set up and look at whether we need to change the administrative system we have, which is by boards and they get block funding and, as it is set up right now, the boards decide how those resources are going to be allocated. In order for us to do it differently, we need to look at changing that and that's part of consideration that we are engaged in in the department. I will move on that as quickly as possible and I will work with the Members to see how we move that forward. Thank you.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that we do have a situation with the health boards. I think we've given them too much authority and yet as a Minister you don't have much authority. So I think in order to get by that, can you give a ministerial directive to those health authorities that they find the essential and professional staff, dedicate them to those communities that require them or should be in those communities so that we can resolve this situation by ministerial directive?

HON. SANDY LEE: Right now the authorities are set up as a board of management and they do have independent power and authority to use the money from within. So the Member knows that in terms of the mental health worker, I did issue a directive and we were able to correct that. With the health and social services staffing, under the current system it's not as easily done. That's why I'm committing with the Member that we will look at how we could change the way we are delivering the service so that we could work at looking at what each community has in terms of essential services. If we're willing to come up with a formula for essential services, we need to discuss that as a part of the next business plan. I will commit to the Members that I will bring forward a plan that we can discuss so that we could have a debate on this in a detailed fashion with something solid in front of us. We are working on that, but we are not done yet, but we will do that. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 38-16(5):
PROPOSED ROUTES FOR TALTSON HYDRO
EXPANSION TRANSMISSION LINES

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to follow up on my statement and questions to the Premier through you yesterday on the Taltson Hydro routing and east side versus west side. Yesterday the Premier noted that we needed a client to sell power to and that's why we went the east side. This sounds odd to me, because does the Premier not think that Avalon secondary processing at Avalon Mine, Tyhee Mine, Nico Mine,

Yellowknife, Behchoko and expanded growth from a connected Taltson and Snare Hydro grids are not much better long-term and permanent clients for that power? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the process that the Taltson expansion has been built on is built on a customer that has approvals, that is on the ground, that is benefiting the North through GDP development as we speak. The other projects that are there, yes, have promise for the future and we'll need to try to incorporate that as we look forward, but they're still years away from actually establishing if there's a secondary industry, which, as we talked with Minister McLeod and questions were answered in this House, that that is one of the avenues we will have to engage in.

Right now the existing plan has been to deliver power to an existing client base. If that doesn't go through, we're going to have to look for a new client base and the expanse it would have to grow if we were to increase potential new projects that could come on-line. Right now the way the process is, it's expanding the grid up into the North Slave Geological Province. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. Last week we read that the Power Corporation chair dismissed this government's aspirations to attract Avalon Minerals secondary processing with a competitive NWT electricity source, such as the Taltson. The Premier promised that the corporation would eat those words, but it's clear to see this corporation thinks it's a law unto itself. Will this Minister direct that the Energy Corporation's chair appear before standing committee to report on his strategic plan? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you. It's an interesting and timely question as we discuss the Power Corporation and this process going forward. In fact, at one time in the history of the Legislative Assembly the Power Corp, I'm not sure if it was just the chair or the board chair and representatives of the board and potentially a senior manager or so would appear before the Assembly or through a standing committee. I will look, in fact, at initiating that process be re-engaged as we go forward. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. Another bit of misconfusion or misinformation that the Premier said yesterday I'd like to get cleared up, and according to unedited Hansard he said the thinking on this is "the thinking about building capacity with our aboriginal partners across the Northwest Territories. Unfortunately, the Member doesn't put more weight and bearing on that piece of it." I want to assure the Premier that's not the case. In fact, Deze Energy could just as easily partner in a west-

side grid project. The fact is that Deze Energy and this government will develop nothing if this project degenerates in another Deh Cho Bridge calamity. So how does this Premier propose to ensure that this is the best project for Deze's dollars and the public interests through strategic development of a project set up to actually succeed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: It's exactly the business case we're working on, is to be able to sell the power to companies in the Northwest Territories that can't do it for more, or can do it for less, to put it that way. Running the line, other than the scenario that's been proposed, adds substantial dollars to the project, which would have to go towards the cost of a kilowatt hour, which would make it unaffordable, which means that we don't have a customer base and that's what's driven this at this point. We would have to, as a government, decide if we wanted to do that and look at a different alternative routing that we would have to look at establishing that grid on our own, separate from the actual sale of power and we'd have to discuss if we were prepared to do that as a Government of the Northwest Territories. Right now, as I stated earlier, the business case is what's driving this to the route and the client base that's existing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the comments of the Premier. Premier, and I crystallize what I hope I made clear yesterday, it's the frontend thinking that hasn't been done. We've jumped right into this project instead of thinking about what we really need to do in the long term. The GNWT is a majority shareholder of the NWT hydro and Energy corporations and yet based on the response to earlier questions from last fall, the GNWT has never issued specific direction to guide NWT hydro corporation operations and hasn't given specific direction to the NTPC since 2002. Can the Premier explain how it has directed the hydro corporation and the Energy Corporation to carry out the Taltson project and provide copies of any written detailed direction provided to the corporation boards? Mahsi.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: First and foremost the relationship is through the responsible Minister; in this case at this point in time, myself to the chair of the board, meeting with the board to go over the plan that the board has put in place. Other factors that direct the board and its operation are through the legislation that exists and that is the NTPC Act itself, our Hydro Corporation Act, as well as the PUB and its decisions that have been made over the years that dictates the structure of how it would deal with the customer base. Outside of that, we set the direction in the Assembly. In fact, this

government has set the direction when it comes to alternative energies, the \$60 million that's been committed through the Government of the Northwest Territories to look at alternative forms of energy versus the Power Corporation itself doing it. In fact, the report that we tabled in this Assembly highlights some of those areas of what should the focus be of the Power Corporation.

As for direction, it is Cabinet; the Minister, on Cabinet direction, can issue direction to the board in how it does its business. I would have to review what is able to be released in that sense, but the other areas, for example, on the Taltson have been many briefings on the Taltson process through the Energy Coordinating Committee and through standing committees on that side of it.

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

QUESTION 39-16(5):

ACCURACY OF TAG INFORMATION
PROVIDED TO CARIBOU OUTFITTERS

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for ENR and are a follow-up to my Member's statement.

On December 18, 2008, senior representatives of ENR met with some barren-ground caribou outfitters. At that time they told the barren-ground outfitters that for the 2009 hunting season and the 2010 hunting season their tags would not be affected and that 750 tags would be available. As a result, the outfitters went ahead and started booking hunts and collected deposits and whatnot. Then, obviously, the numbers were cut back and there were no tags.

These individuals are in a real financial position having to return the money they have already spent as part of their normal business. I'm curious if the Minister would consider working with these individuals and possibly showing some common sense and respect in this area and work with these individuals to recoup or return some of the money that they're losing so that they don't go bankrupt.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a complex issue. ITI looks after the business side of the caribou issue. There are funds available in ITI. I'd be happy to sit down with the Minister of ITI to make sure that we're putting the funds to the best use possible and to see if there are any avenues that haven't yet been explored.

MR. ABERNETHY: I know ITI is doing an awful lot. They're trying. I have some questions that I'll ask

the Minister on that later. What I'm talking about is the fact that ENR gave bad information, bad advice to residents who relied on that information to their detriment and are now in a negative financial position which might drive them into bankruptcy. They relied on what the government said and they are hurting as a result, because the government changed their mind. I want ENR, who is the department who gave the advice, to work with these individuals and find some common ground, possibly reimbursing them some of the money they've lost because of what ENR said, not what ITI said.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We are departments of the same government. We sit at the same Cabinet table. I will follow up on the commitment that I have made to make sure that... I'll talk to the Minister of ITI, we'll bring in our staff to make sure that we are doing all the appropriate things possible and if there are any avenues left to explore.

MR. ABERNETHY: Once again, going to ITI, I'm talking to ENR. I'd like to see ENR live up to the same high standard that the Minister of MACA set when he responded to poor information given out by his department. They turned around and they made it right. I need ENR to make it right in this situation. There is not even an attempt here. I would like the ENR Minister to meet with the outfitters and work with them to come up with a resolution so that these individuals can get some money back as a result of the bad information that the Minister's staff gave. They are his employees and they were speaking on his behalf.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The Member has made a lot of assertions here, which is his prerogative. I have responded to his request that ENR will take a course of action. I will follow through on that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 40-16(5):

MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS AND
MAINTENANCE FUNDING REDUCTIONS

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister of MACA a question on O and M funding for communities. I met with Mayor Sean Whelley of Fort Simpson and Deputy Mayor Tom Wilson earlier this week. They have advised me that O and M funding for the 2010 fiscal year has been reduced. They showed me a chart that they are actually one of two communities that will be reduced. I'd like to ask the Minister why there is a reduction. What is the rationale for the reductions of O and M for the community of Fort Simpson?

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The formula funding for O and M funding takes into account population and the community's ability to raise some of their own revenue. They are assessed land value and the Member is correct that the community has seen a slight decrease in the amount of O and M funding that they had because of a slight decrease in population. I'd like to point out to the Member, though, that both communities' O and M funding actually increased. So there is not really a net loss to the communities.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: The Minister references two communities. Actually, the second community that did receive a reduction in O and M is in my riding as well. That's the community of Wrigley. Those are the only two out of 33. That leaves me to question why only those two communities. Why did everyone else get an increase in funding? Once again, I don't understand the rationale. Other communities experience population declines as well.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: There is one other community that received a slight decrease in the O and M funding. Oh, not the O and M; the water and sewer funding. There was a slight population decrease in both communities and that affects their formula funding. The numbers that we're considering are very minor, but with the increase in the O and M funding to the one community they've actually made quite a substantial net gain.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Perhaps if the Minister could explain where that net increase is, because I only see a reduction in the figures there.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I'm provided with a chart from the department that I would be willing to sit down with the Member and show him the numbers. With all the different formulas or funding that we have, the community, both communities have seen a net gain. It takes into account all the others. But I do have the documentation. I'd be willing to sit down with the Member and we can have a look at the documentation, and if he has any questions, I would be pleased to get him some answers.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'll be pleased to take the Minister's offer on reviewing those documents. If he could commit to get them to me as soon as possible.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I'd be willing to sit down with the Member as soon as we're done today and that way he can have some comfort in knowing that the overall funding has increased. I can explain the rationale of the formula funding. I

would be pleased to sit down with the Member and discuss that.

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

QUESTION 41-16(5):
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've had many questions over the past six years related to the Deh Cho Bridge Project. Today I want to direct my questions to the Minister of Finance. I mentioned it previously, and I mentioned it again today, that this project certainly has the ability to cripple our government's finances not just in the immediate future but well into the future. I would like to ask the Minister how exactly the Department of Finance is working with the Minister of Transportation and the Department of Transportation on trying to get a handle on what the real impact of this project is going to mean to our finances.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've been working very closely with myself and the Minister of Transportation and Cabinet. By my rough estimation, I think I've spent about 10 hours this session before committee on various aspects of the bridge where we're engaged fully with committee on a plan coming forward that we believe will help in due course and allow us to get this project on the final footing that needs to get completed, recognizing that it is going to be a self-liquidating investment. It will be paid back through the tolls that are raised. This is a huge priority, as the Member has pointed out, and we are working together to come to a process that we can finally focus on the construction and get the bridge completed.

MR. RAMSAY: I'd like to ask the Minister of Finance what would an additional \$165.5 million do to our debt wall and our ability to borrow for other projects.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Keeping in mind once again that the \$165 million is for the most part self-liquidating, but, as the Member well knows, if we add that number to the debt that's already available, it would put us past our borrowing limit if that was a worst-case scenario.

MR. RAMSAY: It wouldn't be the first time that I ask questions in this House for the benefit of the public. I do already certainly have an understanding of what's at play, but again I think the public has the right to know. I'd like to ask the Minister of Finance what the status is of our relationship with the lenders on this project.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: First let me say that we as well are in the accountability business that the public has a right to know. The discussion in the House has always been in terms of the information that is available at what time to allow and the appropriate time, so that the government in fact is able to complete the work on whatever the issue may be and not be in a situation where the confidential information is discussed in the House. Our relationship with the lenders is one where we're continuing to work with them within the terms of the agreement to make sure that this bridge gets built.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned in my statement, the contract with Ruskin was signed off I believe just yesterday. Considering that contract has been signed off, I'm wondering why the government is reluctant to let the public know the details behind their relationship with the lenders and the disposition financially of this project.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The Member is aware of the process that we have before us that we've agreed to. We will be coming forward once we finish the necessary work and take all the steps that are necessary for a full debate and discussion and disclosure. Until that time we need the time to be able to conclude that process in due course and in a manner that befits the complex nature of the process. We are fully intending to have that discussion. There is no hesitation. We just want to make sure it's done appropriately when we have all the pieces in place that we can stand up and lay it all out.

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

QUESTION 42-16(5):

CONSENSUS GOVERNMENT PROTOCOLS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today I talked about some of the downside of consensus government. Maybe it isn't that consensus government is all bad, but maybe the Territory has evolved and maybe a change from consensus government would be a natural stepping stone, a natural evolution in the way that we govern ourselves here in the Territory.

I am not sure where changes to the way we govern ourselves would actually begin. I'm hoping that the Premier could help me out with this, because all of our systems and committee structures and rules of the House and everything are currently premised on a style of government called consensus government. If we wanted to transition to party politics in the Northwest Territories, certainly it

would take a great deal of public consultation. It would take a signal from the public that this would be a more effective way to govern. But I would like to ask the Premier where the starting point would be on that kind of discussion and transition.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess the very beginnings can start just as they have with a Member raising the issue of consensus government and our processes. We have touted much about our consensus style of government when we go to other jurisdictions and meet around the issue of consensus government. Many Members from other governments from the opposition parties are very impressed, let's say, with the ability to gain information from the governing body or Cabinet, so to speak, and share that up front. That also places restrictions on Members when you get that information to hold that in confidence until decisions are made and we can bring them to this level of debate in this House. I, as well, starting as a Regular Member, was rather pleased with my ability to get information up front. That also hampered my ability to speak to issues at certain times.

But we fully recognize that the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Northwest Territories itself is evolving when you talk about self-governments, you talk about the evolving governance structures. One of the areas I've engaged in is a political development forum with aboriginal leaders leading towards the possibility of a constitution. I would say debate would be good to have on consensus government, because there are times when we really need to move and make decisions on subjects that are time sensitive, that need to move ahead, and we find our processes do slow that down when it comes to decision-making.

So I would say the start of it would be a debate at this House. We could carry it out to a referendum to the public of the Territories to end in a vote and give direction, for example, to the next Assembly. It could be as straightforward as that. But one of the avenues I've initiated with regional leaders is a political development forum to begin to look at how we set a common vision for the North. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, we have a wonderful Territory full of amazing opportunities. Mr. Speaker, the Premier has alluded to going to other jurisdictions, and I've been in that same situation where they're almost in awe, you know, that we get together and we make it sound like we hammer everything out until everybody agrees when, in fact, that's not exactly the way it is. Maybe it sounds a little more rosy than it is.

From the government's side, normally the government is a governing party and they have party discipline and they have party protection, they

have a party platform going into an election campaign, but, Mr. Speaker, from the governing side, even of this consensus government it's been alluded here today in discussions about the Deh Cho Bridge, the government, it's an untenable situation to have to be caught between sharing information with trying to accomplish a goal at the same time knowing full well that that information that you share could be used as a stick to beat you with. I mean, that's basically what it boils down to. It creates an untenable situation for this side and that side. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to know what means does the Premier have at his disposal, or this government has at its disposal to begin this dialogue and debate. He talks about the Northern Leaders' Forum, but in the general public what means do we have to begin a debate on the pros and cons of consensus government? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Let me first recognize and appreciate the Member's recognition of the times and challenges we face when we share information on initiatives that we're thinking about going down and initiating and sharing that information and at times being held to account for information in its earliest days of forming and coming to setting direction as a government. We've got examples of that during this government itself, the 16th Assembly, which leads to huge challenges. When other governments in a party system want a direction set, a platform is set at a general election and the governing party can come in and then begin to make changes as it progresses and does its time. I would say the tools that we have before us, one, I've initiated a process with the regional leaders on political development forum, but we could, as well, at this forum put a motion on the floor for open debate for the public to hear and have it recorded about the discussion around consensus government or political structures. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I do apologize. This is a big topic and maybe it was the wrong time to start it on the last day of session, but, Mr. Speaker, the idea of party politics, unfortunately, we have little snippets of party politics mingled, hybridized with this consensus government. For example, Cabinet solidarity; you know the Cabinet is always going to stick together. When you come over to this side, we're not allowed to be called the opposition, just the accountability side of the House, Mr. Speaker. It's an awkward situation, because that solidarity does not exist on this side of the House. And the balance of power with the number of Members we have. Mr. Speaker, 19 Members to represent the Northwest Territories, I'm sorry, may not be enough of a critical mass of people to really have the kind of balance of power that you need to have effective government. What kind of discussions would the Premier have with other leaders in the Territory

about the idea of perhaps expanding the number of Members who sit in this House? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The size of our House, we go through the general election and there's the 25 plus/minus seat structure that's in place. Again, it's a standard across this country that we follow. There are a lot of similarities we have with other jurisdictions that have party politics. In fact, the Member has talked about Cabinet solidarity and though there's is no official opposition, it's always understood there's an unofficial opposition, which has worked rather well, I'd say, during the 16th Assembly and other Assemblies in the past. But at the same time, we do need to have a look at how we go forward.

Again, the regional process of political development is one approach that we have before us that we can initiate that, and probably more to this Assembly, to this arena, is a motion for debate that could begin that discussion publicly. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 43-16(5): SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement today I talked about programs and services and the need to make sure that they're fairly distributed throughout the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, it does bother me when I hear about a community, whether it's in Wrigley or it's Tsiigehtchic, that they don't have fair services, because the first thing they do is look to Yellowknife and assume that we have everything, and I don't think that's necessarily the truth. But I also feel for the communities and want to support them when they need their services. That's why my Member's statement was sort of crafted in its way, because I'm concerned about fair distribution in a transparent way. So, Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier today is: what transparent Cabinet policy drives the measures of equal and fair distribution of programs, services and capital investment in the NWT?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of factors that come into view as we talk about distribution of services throughout the Northwest Territories and evaluation of those programs and services. For example, there's the capital standards process the Member alluded to in his Member's statement of what type of construction that is permissible. In the past, the government also had, under that capital planning process, the size of the community. For example, what type of a water treatment plant fell

into a community of 100 versus 500 versus 10,000. Those were in place as well, and there are remnants of that in the system.

One of the other things we are looking at, for example in Health and Social Services, is the Foundation for Change and looking at how we distribute our services and program delivery across the North. So that's one of the other tools we do as an evaluation of that as we go forward.

We can't always hold the same standard, for example, if we stuck to a dollar figure per person, then we probably couldn't afford... Well, we know we couldn't afford our smallest communities across the North. But our goal is to come up with a best level of services and programs, and that's why, for example, there are territorial facilities, regional facilities and then community facilities, for example. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the answer from the Premier, but I'm not hearing a guiding principle or a Cabinet policy that guides this. I hear factors, but the issue, really, I'm talking about is building a framework so then it's transparent. It's transparent amongst Members so then we can help advocate, so if you are a community and needed a particular issue or one Member's particular riding needed a particular focus and we were able to hold it up against the planning process that's fair, transparent and equally understood.

Now, I know the Premier is going to respond only to this next point, but the fact is sometimes it does feel like the only people that get anything done in this House is either the people who whine and complain the most or, furthermore, you're in Cabinet. But the reality is I'm trying to play those factors down and say that what framework could the Premier develop as a Cabinet policy that we could use as a formula for fair and reasonable distribution of services amongst regions. Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, this whole Assembly decides, whenever we pass our budget, just how we deliver services in our communities. One of the things that we heard for many years was that communities needed to make their own decisions more often, much like tax-based municipalities do. So the New Deal that was established that is now into, I believe, its third or fourth year of delivery, that allows communities to make decisions. When you look at base-plus funding, that was incorporated in that so that it helped the smaller communities be able to deal with some of the higher cost issues and you look at our health care services, again that's another initiative. Members have that information before them as we go forward.

I think that I'd be concerned if we were to come up with one policy fits all. We say that we're unique when it comes to the Canadian institution and that

needs to be recognized; well, we need to recognize that too. I'm sure there's a way of coming forward with a process much like we did in our capital planning process that lays out the issue of need, of population, of safety and affordability as ways of gauging just what we could afford to do in all of our communities. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Respectfully, the Premier talks about a budget as the framework, but ultimately once that budget is presented to us in the private context of consensus government when we do our review and then it comes to the House, there's extremely very little that ever gets changed and we know that. So the reality of changing or approving, I mean, really we're just here to sort of echo off the ideas of what Cabinet's already made the decision on. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm talking about guiding principles and framework, because if a community like Wrigley doesn't have a nurse, that seems completely unfair and I think it's important for all of us to play a role to make sure that they do get one.

So, Mr. Speaker, my point continues to be: would the Premier be willing to look at developing guiding principles and frameworks so we can make sure that all regions have fair services and programs delivered where it makes sense? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The Member uses an example of Wrigley, for example, of having no nurse located in that community, but there are medical services provided to residents within that community, not the same as Yellowknife residents, not the same as residents from Inuvik, but on a level that we can provide those services with an aim to improve them. For example, that's why the Foundation for Change comes into mind. It is through the business planning cycle -- and that's a four-year cycle that we've initiated in this government -- to look at the way we deliver programs and services across the North and how we would engage residents in that delivery and trying to enhance that.

Ultimately, it comes back down to sustainability. That's one of the factors we have to take into consideration. There are far more requests on the table than we have resources to be able to implement, so we have to come up with that right balance.

Is there a policy that could be developed? Well, Mr. Speaker, there is potential for that, but I would not say it should be a Cabinet coming up with that. That needs the direction of a government commitment overall in our consensus style. That means Members need to also put on the table and we know, for example, when we set our vision and goals to try to compromise to all the needs of 19 Members as we come forward, it's very difficult to come up then with specific measures that we can all be held to account on. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm trying to understand the Premier's apprehension to coming up with a guiding principle and working with this side of the House to help formulate it into a long-term policy and a strategy. Mr. Speaker, would the Premier be willing to draft a policy that helps to develop this type of framework I'm raising here today and bring it to all Members to have some type of discussion to ensure that there's a fair, equal distribution of resources and services, as well as programs throughout the Northwest Territories that help serve all our people? Not just here in Yellowknife, but throughout the Territory as a whole, because I really feel strongly that services throughout the Territory are good for everyone no matter where we live. Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you. We need to be careful what we ask for. For example, communities have been telling us up and down the Northwest Territories, north, south, east and west, they want more authority in making those decisions for what they feel are priorities in their community. We can set the standards and tell them what they can have and can't have. That's the way it used to be. Members calling for those days to come back I think will have the NWT Association of Communities making some calls rather quickly as to how we're starting to pull it back to the centre, as some would say.

So I'm prepared to sit down with Members. If there are Members across the floor and we sit down and we want to actually do this and there's support for that, then we can put the energy into it and discuss how we would do that, but right now I would say let's be careful what we ask for. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 44-16(5):
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are addressed to the Minister of Finance and I would like to ask some questions in regard to the Deh Cho Bridge. Over the last month the government has made a number of announcements with regard to the bridge. They seem to indicate, or at least they do to me, that in terms of management changes and responsibilities within the project changing they indicate that the government is taking over this project. I'd like to ask the Minister what the financial implications are for this change in management of the project and responsibility for the project. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's all within the budget figures that have been shared with the Members. I believe it's \$182 million for the total project costs. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thank you. To the Minister, yes, I am aware of those costs, thank you very much. I'm trying to perhaps provide some information to the public on what kind of an impact this change in project management is going to have on this government, because I think it affects our residents. So this \$181 million, to the Finance Minister, could he advise me what kind of an impact that's going to have on our budget as we go forward? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. The Member is aware, fully aware of the steps we are taking in terms of making sure that the bridge project goes ahead and on solid footing to get the project complete. We are currently underway with some of those steps and we're going to continue to work on those, and in due course we'll be coming forward with a full plan and opportunity for a full public review and be made aware of all the steps that have been taken to make sure that this project succeeds. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thank you. To the Minister, I can understand the reticence to discuss specific finances at this time, but I did hear him say that they would come forward and I don't want to ask the Minister for a response of in the fullness of time, but I'd like to ask the Minister when might it be that the public could become aware of the financial implications that this bridge project will have on our GNWT finances. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. We're collectively working to a time that hopefully by the end of this month we'll be in a position to bring clarity to all. Thank you.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister for that answer and I appreciate that timeline of a month or so. Could the Minister advise how he intends to "publicize" this information? Will it be a news release? Will it be another media briefing or what? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. First, of course, we're going to continue to work fully with all the Members and then as the days move forward here through this month we'll be mapping out the full communication plan as we nail down the issues and steps that have to be addressed prior to the end of the timeline. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 45-16(5):
FUNDING FOR NON-GOVERNMENT
ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS)
IN THE SAHTU REGION

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I talked about the NGOs in the Northwest Territories. According to my information, there are 472 in the Northwest Territories. We spend about \$20 million on NGOs and certainly these NGOs do a lot of hard work and there's a number of NGOs around the Northwest Territories. As a matter of fact, I mentioned that there are 219 in Yellowknife and there's nothing in the Sahtu. I wanted to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services how she can help the Sahtu communities, the health boards, the communities or the bands to establish NGO programs and how can we get those kind of programs such as family support or emergency shelters for women or children.

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

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NGOs are just one form of organizing a group of people together with like-minded philosophies and goals and desires to advance the causes that they work for, whether they be environment or women's issues or family violence issues or a whole number of areas that NGOs are involved in.

In terms of being able to access program funding or tap into government programs, this government considers applications from groups other than NGOs, because we are very well aware of the fact that small communities don't necessarily have these NGOs. So we often work with local societies or band councils or municipal governments or regional corporations. In that regard we give as much consideration to groups that are not NGOs from communities.

MR. YAKELEYA: The Minister indicated there are other sources that can be tapped into of NGO-type of funding by the band councils or regional corporations. I want to ask, I know there was a request by the band council of Tulita for emergency shelters to the Minister, but we just couldn't get \$10,000 for the community and now we have to wait again for another fiscal year. These type of situations that we run into we have to get our foot into the door with NGOs. I asked the Minister about working with the health boards in the communities to establish strong NGO support in our communities where we can get the type of services that we get in other regions to help our people.

HON. SANDY LEE: That is a good example. I need to state clearly that the reason that application was not able to be approved was not because it was not coming from an NGO but because the funding for that specific fiscal year had been fully

subscribed. We are considering that application for the next fiscal year, which is coming up on April 1st.

I can also advise the Member that we have had applications from other communities like Fort Resolution and we worked with people interested in accessing that funding to find a sponsor in that community who could apply for funding. We are totally able and we will work with the community to make sure they can find a suitable body. The band council is fine, and municipal governments as well, to have that application considered. We will be considering that for the next fiscal year.

MR. YAKELEYA: I ask the Minister to also consider the complexities of NGOs when they have to request for funding, administer the funding and report the funding. One instance in the Sahtu where the band was running the drug and alcohol programs, there was so many complexities and the band did not have much support so they gave the money over to the GNWT and things changed in the funding and support and benefits. Would the Minister look at how to work with the small communities to have simpler programs to report and administer while staying within the guidelines to abide by the funding criteria for NGOs?

HON. SANDY LEE: Yes, absolutely, and we do that already. I believe when we were in Tulita, the Member and myself, the grand chief in fact recognized us for having streamlined the funding proposal process and they were able to access funding. On a daily basis our staff does work with band councils or municipal governments to help them with the application process so they can access the funding that we offer.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do thank the Member for the reference of my home community of Tulita. I also represent four other communities in the Sahtu where there is certainly much need for these types of programs. For example, the family support centre in Hay River receives \$430,000 to reduce the incidence of family violence. The Alison McAteer House receives \$600,000 for their programs. The NWT Council for the Disabled receives \$300,000. We want to look at those types of dollars for the Sahtu in order to coordinate these types of dollars for families in the communities to help with the goals and the safety of our communities. How do we do this type of work? That's what I'm asking for all the communities in the Sahtu.

HON. SANDY LEE: On that specific file the government has recognized that there are only a few shelters that are funded in a specific way. We recognize there are other communities without shelters that need outreach and support. Not everybody wants to be able to or wishes to take advantage of a shelter, but we have people in the

communities who need the support on family violence issues. We have put in money to do the outreach work. I'm not sure where we are with that money for the Sahtu region, but I will make a commitment to get back to the Member as to how we are reaching the communities on that.

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

QUESTION 46-16(5):

FLY-IN INCOME SUPPORT WORKERS IN PUBLIC HOUSING RENTAL SUBSIDY PROGRAM

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are directed to the Minister of the Housing Corporation. In light of the switchover from the rent supp from the Department of Education to the Housing Corporation, we're still getting calls from our communities that depend on a fly-in income support worker who goes into the community to do the assessment and then flies back out. What we're finding is people are still being charged economic rent. In some cases the whole community is charged economic rent until the income support worker arrives. I think that through this transfer back to the Housing Corporation I was hoping we could avoid this.

I'd like to ask the Minister of the Housing Corporation if there is a possibility for those fly-in communities that the income support worker has to fly in or drive in to, if the local housing authority could receive the rent supp so that they can administer it in the local housing authorities.

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That has been a concern raised by tenants from a lot of the communities where they only have access to fly-in/fly-out workers. The whole transfer should, the local housing authorities should be doing the rental assessments by June. That's our goal right now. However, if there's an opportunity for some leeway given to those that are getting charged full economic rent, the LHOs are usually pretty good at adjusting the rents once they get the proper documentation. It is something that we have about three or four months now until the actual assessments go back to Housing. I can commit to the Member that I will follow up on it and see if there's anything we can do in the interim until the rental assessment transfer takes place.

MR. KRUTKO: This problem seems to be occurring mostly in the Mackenzie Delta region where we have isolated communities, that income support workers are brought in because there is no local income support worker. I'd like to ask the Minister if there is a possibility that we can transfer

the authority of the paperwork to the local housing authorities and then have the cheque cut directly from the regional office to those communities.

We already know how many clients we have. We already know who is on income support. We already know who gets the supp. I'd like to know if there's a way that we could speed this up by transferring dollars from one department to the Housing Corporation from ECE to hopefully resolve this problem before the date the Minister mentioned of June.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We do have LHOs right now that are quite capable of taking over the assessments. However, we were hoping to wait until the June date to make sure we had everything set to go before we implemented. But if there is an opportunity for some of the LHOs to maybe take this on a little earlier, I can follow up on that and see if the LHOs are ready. I know most of them are, but we'll see if the opportunity is there for us to do this. I will follow up on that.

MR. KRUTKO: I would also ask the Minister if he could inform the communities that this is going to take place. I believe the community of Sachs Harbour does not have an income support worker now. They used to have an income support worker but do not have one now and they have to bring someone in from Inuvik. Same thing for Tsiigehtchic, they have to bring someone in either from Fort McPherson or Inuvik. If they can find a way to work with these communities that are facing this challenge where the people are being charged economic rent and the problem is that hopefully we won't have to evict anybody because this transfer has taken place. I'd like to get a commitment from the Minister to inform the communities and maybe have something posted so the people can realize that even if they are being charged economic rent, they won't have to pay the whole thing unless the assessment has taken place.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: That has been a concern raised by folks across the Territories, because Housing, according to their policies, are obliged to charge economic rent if the assessments aren't done. There's been an issue getting some of the assessments over from the income support workers quick enough. The LHOs have been charging full economic rent. However, they're understanding the situation and they do make adjustments to the tenants' assessments once they get the proper documentation.

I will commit to the Member that we will try to get the message out there that there is an opportunity for those that have been charged full economic rent waiting for the assessment from ECE. I'll make the commitment that we'll try to get the message out there that once the proper documentation is in place, then it will be adjusted.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The time for question period has expired. I will allow the Member a short supplementary question. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also believe that we have to work with a lot of the housing authorities. From the information I saw, the majority of the housing authorities are in a deficit situation and a lot of it is because of the time that they get paid from ECE for the rent supp. I think, if anything, we can hopefully work with the local housing authorities and the tenants and get them out of the arrears they are in to keep the residents from being evicted from their units because of technicalities due to transfer of paper from one department to another.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: There have been a lot of challenges with the transfer over. However, we're quite confident that once the assessments are transferred back to Housing, then I think we're going to see an improvement in a lot of the services we deliver; especially the arrears. There are a lot of people who have been accumulating arrears because the assessments are not being done quickly enough. So we're working with tenants and we will continue to work with the LHOs, because this has affected their overall financial position and we're quite confident once we move the assessment back to the LHOs, that will continue to improve.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 9, written questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 4-16(5): PHYSIOTHERAPY AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

With respect to the service levels of therapy provided to clients:

1. How many hours of patient service are provided in each respective therapy area by the client's community in the NWT and out of Territory for the 2008-2009 fiscal year?
2. How many therapy service requests are outstanding as of January 1, 2010, by community in and out of Territory?
3. Please provide details of the established service limitations and/or caps for therapy services such as injuries, speech therapy, stroke recovery, slip and falls, et cetera, and whether those limitations are established by

the department, third-party insurers or Government of Nunavut.

4. Please provide the status of any agreements with Nunavut for these services, the amount of billing undertaken for the last three fiscal years and the amount of outstanding receivables related to that billing.

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

WRITTEN QUESTION 5-16(5): WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

1. Would the Minister provide a list with descriptions of emergency funds that are available from each and every GNWT department for residents of the NWT, to assist them with costs related to an extensive infrastructure failure?
2. Would the Minister provide a document showing the redistribution of GNWT water and sewer funding to NWT communities which includes funds for the City of Yellowknife for future fiscal years 2011-2012 through 2014-2015?

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

WRITTEN QUESTION 6-16(5): IMPLEMENTATION OF A RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL AFTERMATH ADVISOR

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Premier of the Northwest Territories.

1. Can the Premier please explain why the government has not yet implemented a residential school aftermath advisor in the GNWT?
2. Can the Premier provide me with an analysis of what such a full-time position, similar to the special advisor to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women position would cost?

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 8 on the Order Paper.

---Unanimous consent granted.

Oral Questions (Reversion)

QUESTION 47-16(5): NAHANNI BUTTE GYMNASIUM STRUCTURAL DEFICIENCIES

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I would be remiss if I didn't at least mention one of my most passionate items that I've raised in this House, which is the Nahanni Butte gymnasium. We had some deficiencies, we had a plan to address them, and I'd like to ask the Minister of Public Works and Services at what stage is the repairs of the Nahanni Butte gymnasium to the deficiencies. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for Public Works and Services, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that has been of great concern to the community and to the Member. We have taken a number of measures to come up with a plan to rectify the situation where the moisture in the cement flooring has caused some swelling of the covering that was placed on the floor. We have now gone back into the community and have come up with a plan with the contractor. Several tests were done and it was found that some of the vents were closed to allow the slab to dry and get some of the moisture out of the floor. We have ordered most of the material, most of it's on site, and as soon as the floor is ready, we will come up and have the contractor in the community to rectify the situation. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Will the contractor do the same type of material replacement or is there an alternate solution to have a floor that adheres to the cement? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we had the contractor do an analysis. It was determined that there had to be a change in the methodology of applying the product that was going to be the finished surface. There has to be now a buffer in between it. There also has to be some allowance for airflow so that the system can be rid of the moisture that builds up. So it's a different product completely from what we were initially trying to use for this flooring. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: What is the exact expected date of completion of the new floor, Mr. Speaker? Thank you very much.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I've been assured by officials that we'll have the floor in place as soon as possible. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister if he can come

with me to Nahanni Butte to look at the project and, hopefully, if he does find an appropriate date, that the floor is complete. Thank you very much.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I appreciate the invitation and certainly will commit to travel to the Member's communities in the next little while. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 48-16(5): EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT TRAINING STANDARDS IN COMMUNITY ARENAS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the question on safety standards for community arenas. I'm not too sure who I should be asking, which Minister. I want to ask the Ministers, in terms of the safety standards, in terms of the defibrillators in the arenas. I know of some instances in my region where there was some medical attention and there were no defibrillators. I want to ask the Minister if there are defibrillators in the community arenas.

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

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am aware that there are defibrillators in every community and there are staff allocated and trained to use that piece of equipment. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, are there other people who work in the arenas who have advanced First Aid or basic First Aid other than the staff at the health centres?

HON. SANDY LEE: My understanding is that this equipment is very advanced but simple to use and that there are people allocated in each community to use that machine, but I will undertake to get more details on where these defibrillators are located in each community and who are authorized to use them and how they are trained to do so. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, when the Minister does do the checking, in terms of the defibrillators in the community arenas for community functions, can she also check to see if people other than her staff under the Department of Health and Social Services are trained, such as recreation facilitators or people, also, who just recently got hired on from the hamlet, if they can get trained if they haven't yet been trained in terms of First Aid or on how to use these defibrillators?

HON. SANDY LEE: Yes, I will undertake to get that information to the Member.

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

QUESTION 49-16(5):

DIAMOND MINE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've got a few questions for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. I wanted to ask him a little bit about mine training in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, the concern has been brought to me by constituents about the lack of available mine training for P2s. Now, we certainly have the Mine Training Society and opportunities for P1s to get access to training for jobs that are producing diamond mines, but, Mr. Speaker, there seems to be a lack of any available training for P2s, long-term residents of the Northwest Territories. I'd like to ask the Minister how his department and the government are working towards shoring up that hole in our services that we provide our residents. Thank you.

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. Training of Northerners for meaningful employment in the Northwest Territories is a huge priority for our government and we've been working very closely with the diamond mines in this region in order to not only increase the number of trained Northerners that are employed, but also to fulfill the objective that people that work in the North should live in the North. So we've signed an MOU with the three diamond mines and we're also working with the Mine Training Society and through Aurora College and the NWT school system through the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, it only makes sense to me that if there are any residents here in the Northwest Territories that require training, the requisite training to be employed at a producing diamond mine, that they get the training here in the Northwest Territories and are employed here in the Northwest Territories. There's much more likelihood that they would continue to live in the Northwest Territories while working at the mine. I'm just wondering if the Minister could just elaborate a little bit on how exactly the government is going to work, his department and other government departments and agencies are going to work, again, to correct this and to provide opportunities for all residents of the Northwest Territories when it comes to mine training. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Through the MOU on mining that the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment and myself have signed with the three diamond mine companies, we've been focusing on three areas, one of them has been training. So through that process we are examining ways to train more people, more Northerners to go through programs that are designed specifically for

employment in the three mines and other mines as they become open and processing. One of the things that we're doing is identifying barriers that prevent any sector from being able to access training. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you. I'm wondering if the Minister could let potential residents of the Northwest Territories, those that are P2 -- they're not aboriginal -- long-term residents of the Northwest Territories that want to have access to mine training today, where do they go and who do they look to for the training that's required to get a job at one of our mines. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. Most of the training that is provided for mining is through the Mine Training Society, and the funding for that comes through the federal department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the training money is for what we call P1s or aboriginal Northerners. For those that are classified as P2, we are working with Aurora College. There are training programs, but it becomes a question of access to funding. There are student financial assistance programs that are available for P2s to access. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From discussions I've had with constituents, there's no training currently for P2s in the Northwest Territories when it comes to mine training. They have to leave the Territory and go to Ontario or other jurisdictions to receive the training. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister, would the government be looking at creating a mine training school or something to that effect here in the Northwest Territories in the near future? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. We are in fact having those discussions between Aurora College and the diamond mine management through our MOU process, and this is an area that we have identified as a barrier and this is something that we'll be working very hard to resolve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 50-16(5):

CONTRACTOR ISSUES WITH WATER
TREATMENT PLANT IN AKLAVIK

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Municipal and Community affairs and it's in regard to the new water treatment plant that's being installed in Aklavik. There is a problem with the contracting and contractors in regard to payments that have been outstanding to subcontractors and also even the

community Hamlet of Aklavik who has provided a lot of gravel to this source, yet there seems to be a problem with payment. I'd like to ask the Minister in regard to what, if any, holdbacks have been in place and does he know if the contractors and the Hamlet of Aklavik have been paid out in full in regard to the outstanding balances for the water treatment plant in Aklavik.

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have withheld some funds from the general contractor because there was an issue with the subs. We had an opportunity to speak to the subs a little while ago. We haven't heard from them for a while, so I can follow up and then find out if the issue was resolved. But as a department, we did withhold some funds from the general contractor until this issue was resolved. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you. Also, I believe the Hamlet of Aklavik has used up a lot of their gravel sources in which they were committed to do a bunch of drainage work again this summer, which is out of the Building Canada Fund, but they need those dollars to replenish their gravel source. Without that they won't be able to do the work this summer. So I think there has to be some urgency to this. So I'd like to ask the Minister, also, can he check to ensure that the hamlet is able to get the resource in time so that they can do a gravel haul this spring to get the gravel into the community.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you. I will commit to the Member that I'll follow up with the hamlet and see if they've received payment, and I've also committed to following up to see the status of this contract, because my understanding is there were a few issues that needed to be worked out and there were a few people that needed to be paid and that's why we withheld the money until that got resolved. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you. I'd like to ask the Minister if he can tell me exactly when is the new water treatment plant going to be up and operational so the people in Aklavik can get some safe drinking water from the new water treatment plant.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you. I know that the construction is ongoing and they're very close to completing. I don't have the exact date, but I'll find the exact date and I'll share it with the Member. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 51-16(5):
PROPOSED NWT HERITAGE FUND

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Finance and are in relation to the recently released public consultation paper on an NWT Heritage Fund. I want to start by saying it's really great to see this out. It's something Members of this House have been pushing for and I'm happy to see it finally happening.

One of the things we're dealing with is with exceptionally low royalty rates in the Northwest Territories. Our resources are tending to leave faster and faster and our diamond mines are a good example of that. So how can we collect revenue to fill up a Heritage Fund? The Minister in his paper has identified that a resource tax is a possibility, but he goes on to state that this would be considered double taxation of resource development and that's a bit of a barrier. I wonder if I could get him to explain that to me. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The concern would be that they're already paying taxes and that if we, in addition to the federal government who controls all the royalty taxation, in addition to that put on another tax, it would possibly be seen to be as the Member characterized. We also have to look at the current economic circumstances.

I think the key goal for us first is to decide the structure and shape and the criteria for a fund, what it's going to look like, how it's going to be set up, how tight is it going to be, is it going to be like the Norway model, and then the discussion about what kind of funds we'll put in there will be the secondary discussion. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. I appreciate the comments from the Minister. I'm simply responding to what's in here and I'm also of the opinion that those are parallel processes. We could, you know, wait until the cows come home and do things one after the other and take forever to get this going, but I think there's a desire to get it going quickly and effectively. So I hope we can have that discussion in parallel.

Would the Minister agree that certainly there are corporations that are typically taxed in a number of ways and that in fact a resource tax could be designed to tax the excess profit? So in other words, after all of the expenses, normal taxes and so on, royalties have been paid -- and this is when there are exceptional profits -- my understanding is that resource tax could be applied to excess profits. Would the Minister agree that that's a possibility for consideration here? Mahsi.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. I would agree that this is a consultation process and we are open to listen to and engage in discussion on any or all options, the same as we indicated at the revenue round table that we had in the fall. The focus then was to look at tax shifting. As we set up the Heritage Fund, looking forward into the future, a wide-ranging discussion would definitely be helpful as we decide on both the structure and what final decisions would be agreed to in terms of putting money into a Heritage Fund. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you again to the Minister for those comments. I think there has been interest, as the Minister has reflected, and my interest here is really how can we start to fill this fund up. So I appreciate his discussion.

The Minister goes on in the report to suggest that there's possible consideration for the introduction of other taxes. To me, I can think of a capital tax as a possibility there. I'm just wondering if the Minister had any other things in mind or his advisors had provided ideas on what those other taxes might be. Mahsi.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We're engaged in a number of initiatives that have tax implications. Firstly, coming out of the last October round table we agreed to look at what's possible in terms of tax shifting. Since then, within existing tax structure, given the fact that we're still struggling through a recession, to see what may be possible in terms of tax shifting within the existing tax structure. We've also since then announced that we're going to be renewing and coming forward with a plan to have a full discussion on the Greenhouse Gas Strategy, which is going to lead us into the discussion tied into carbon, carbon taxes, standards, targets, all which possibly have tax implications. We also have the Heritage Fund proposal out there for discussion. We recognize as well that there's going to be a number of suggestions about how we would possibly put money into that that also has tax implications.

We have to look at all those. The Member is aware of some of the issues we were talking about with the Greenhouse Gas Strategy, for example, so we have to be mindful of these processes, parallel processes as the Member referred to them, to make sure that we're as organized on this and clear as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that response. I didn't have anything specific in mind. It was a wide open question.

Finally, I know there is a lot of interest in this and I assume that the Minister will have some sort of consultation strategy laid out. Is the Minister meeting with groups or is that an open invitation to

meet with groups and what is the best way the public can participate in this discussion?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We've distributed the proposal far and wide. It's on our website. We're looking for feedback that people may wish to give us. If there are specific requests, then we'll definitely entertain those. We're encouraging people to send us e-mails, to write, to talk to your MLA, talk to your mayor, talk to your Association of Communities, whoever they would like to carry the message for them. We're not planning a major dog and pony show across the North. We will look at responding to specific requests. The timeline is April 30th. We're looking forward to getting some very valuable feedback.

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

QUESTION 52-16(5):
DIAMOND MINES EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES AND
RECRUITMENT PRACTICES

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I was listening, with some interest, to Mr. Ramsay's question. I want to ask the Minister of ITI, I have been privileged to attend two briefings with the mining sectors here in the Northwest Territories and I want to ask the Minister about the training for people in the Northwest Territories, specifically P1 candidates in my region and outside of the affected areas around Yellowknife. What is the government doing with the NWT mining society in terms of encouraging the mining society to go into the regions such as the Sahtu, Beaufort-Delta and Mackenzie Delta to entice new workers to come out to the mining workforce as per the NWT mining society's mandate?

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One thing we're trying to do to increase the employment of Northerners in the diamond mines or other mines of the Northwest Territories is to increase the catchment area for workers. By that I mean we are looking at increasing the number of hiring points in the Northwest Territories and also to look at training more Northerners for specific jobs in the mines. So to do that, as I said, we have an MOU with the diamond mines and we're working very closely with the Mine Training Society and Aurora College.

MR. YAKELEYA: I certainly support the Minister in increasing the workforce in the North. I want to ask the Minister what his department is doing with the NWT mining society to get into communities such as the Sahtu to encourage workers in the Sahtu to come to the workplace here and to set up training

programs with the NWT society. I don't think I've seen them in the Sahtu. I only hear of them in the Yellowknife area. What is the Minister doing to encourage the NWT mining society to get out of the Yellowknife area and into the Sahtu to set up training programs there for the people in my region?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The Mine Training Society doesn't have an unlimited amount of funds; they have a limited amount. So generally we work to provide training in the areas of greatest interest and most of the training has focused around the North Slave region. Although, recently there was a training program in Fort Simpson. Generally where there is identified interest, as the Member knows, as part of the MOU initiative we've been working through our career counselling offices at Education, Culture and Employment to make sure that all the communities that are serviced by the career centres have information as to the type and number of jobs that are available. In order to set up a training program, we would work through the Mine Training Society and Aurora College.

MR. YAKELEYA: That's what I was looking for, was to see if there was more creativity possible. They have a bunch of learning centres in the Sahtu communities that could be available. It takes one or two people from the mines. I'm not sure how it works. They can certainly work with the communities in the smaller centres outside of Yellowknife. I know the funds are limited. It's funny how working with the diamond mines there's lots of dollars in diamonds. If this government can get that, they can work with the learning centres to bring the NWT mining society into the regions and I think you'll generate interest. I think that's a plus. I'm just looking for some way how we can get them into our communities other than just having residents come to Yellowknife to take the training.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: If all the diamond mines money doesn't go into the Heritage Fund we should be able to have money for training. One of the priorities for our government working with the diamond mines is to make sure the people of the Northwest Territories know what is available to them and what the mines will do if they hire people in the Northwest Territories to work for them, so that they know what kind of benefits are there and whether the travel will be covered and so on. I think that the best thing for us to do, and the diamond mines management have gone and made tours to all the regions and I think we just have to work closely together to identify where there is interest in working in the mines. Through that process we can identify training opportunities.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do want to say to the mines that I appreciate them

choosing Norman Wells as a pickup point for the workers coming out of the Sahtu. I want to ask the Minister about new development going forward on diamond mine training. Could he look at one community in the Sahtu bringing in new training programs in the next couple of months to develop a program that would have the NWT mining society work with the Aurora College to look at programs they could have in the Sahtu region?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I would communicate that to our people involved on the training side. I'm sure we can find an opportunity to do so.

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

QUESTION 53-16(5): RADIOLOGISTS CONTRACT STATUS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've recently been informed that the radiologist contract has ended in some type of dispute. I'm not precisely sure if it was about money or technical expertise but, if I understood it correctly, people were brought up to provide that service. I'm certainly concerned that this may be putting Northerners at risk. It does cause quite a bit of worry, because anybody who goes to a radiologist, this is not an elective type of treatment, this is obviously for very serious concerns.

I'm wondering what the Minister of Health and Social Services can do to update this House as to what accommodative services have been made since this has happened and if a new contractor has been found to provide these services so we don't have people at risk. If the Minister could inform us of that.

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

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Any position like that, if there were any vacancies for any reason, the authority would be using locums to make sure that those duties are fulfilled. I'm not aware of details of what the Member is raising. That's the first time I've heard of it, so I'll take the question on notice and get back to the Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 11, replies to opening address. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to go back to item 8.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 8, oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Oral Questions (Reversion)

QUESTION 54-16(5): CONSULTATION ON CARIBOU MANAGEMENT MEASURES

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to ask the Minister of ENR about the issue with the Yellowknives Dene and the news he had yesterday. I want to follow up, this being the last day of the House. I want to ask where the deal is with the Yellowknives Dene. Are they closed or still ongoing?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is correct; there were arrangements made for a sit-down between some senior staff and Chief Sangris. I haven't been informed whether they were successful, but I know that contact has been made.

MR. YAKELEYA: Would the Minister then inform the House and myself as soon as there is a deal that's going to be satisfactory to both sides on this issue?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Happily. Happily.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya? Item 11, replies to opening address. Sorry. I think I missed item 10, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

Returns to Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 2-16(5): PSYCHIATRIC ASSESSMENTS AT NORTH SLAVE CORRECTIONAL CENTRE

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, I have a return to Written Question 2-16(5) asked by Mr. Ramsay on March 1, 2010, regarding psychiatric assessments at the North Slave Correctional Centre.

From time to time the courts in the Northwest Territories may order that a psychiatric assessment be conducted to assist the court in determining whether an accused person can be held fully accountable for a crime. These assessments must be conducted by a psychiatrist. No psychiatrist in the Northwest Territories does these type of assessments so offenders are typically sent to a specialized forensic psychiatric unit at Alberta Hospital.

As of March 1, 2010, there were no remanded offenders at the North Slave Correctional Centre awaiting a court ordered psychiatric assessment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Item 11, replies to opening address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 7-16(5): SUMMARY OF MEMBERS' ABSENCES FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 27, 2010 TO FEBRUARY 28, 2010

Pursuant to Section 5 of the Legislative Assembly Executive Council Act, I wish to table the Summary of Members' Absences for the Period of January 27, 2010, to February 28, 2010.

Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 5-16(5): REQUEST FOR SPECIAL AUDIT BY THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA ON THE DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, March 8, 2010, I'll move the following motion: now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that this Legislative Assembly requests that the Auditor General of Canada undertake a special audit of the Deh Cho Bridge Project and report thereon to the Legislative Assembly; and further, that this audit investigate the long-term financial implications of the partnership arrangement, compliance with the Financial Administration Act, Deh Cho Bridge Corporation Act and the financial policies of the Government of the Northwest Territories, value for money considerations, control, appropriation authority, reporting and adherence to standard public procurement practices; and furthermore, that the Auditor General investigate and consider any other factors that, in her opinion, she feels are relevant; and furthermore, that all employees and officials actively cooperate with the Auditor General in providing all appropriate documents, papers and information; and furthermore, that the government inform the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation and all relevant contractors of the nature and purpose of this special audit; and furthermore, that the Auditor General is requested to complete the special audit as soon as practicable and provide a report to the Legislative Assembly; and furthermore, that the Speaker formally transmit this motion and content of our proceedings today to the Auditor General of Canada for her consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Motions

MOTION 3-16(5):
REFERRAL OF TABLED DOCUMENT 4-16(5),
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE REPORT OF
THE JOINT REVIEW PANEL FOR THE
MACKENZIE GAS PROJECT
TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,
CARRIED

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS Tabled Document 4-16(5) has been tabled in this House;

AND WHEREAS the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project requires detailed consideration;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, that Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project, be referred to Committee of the Whole for consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called.

---Carried

Tabled Document 4-16(5) will be moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MOTION 4-16(5):
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE
TO MAY 11, 2010,
CARRIED

MS. BISARO: I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on Thursday, March 4, 2010, it shall be adjourned until Tuesday, May 11, 2010; and further, that any time prior to May 11, 2010, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called.

---Carried

Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 1:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
VETERINARY PROFESSION ACT

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Veterinary Profession Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Veterinary Profession Act to provide that an applicant for registration in the Veterinary Register who is not already registered as a veterinarian in a province or territory must have been granted a certificate of qualification upon successful completion of examinations set by the National Examining Board of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association. Provisions pertaining to registration fees are adjusted to ensure consistency, terminology relating to the veterinary profession is updated to reflect contemporary usage, and several provisions are amended to conform with prevailing drafting practices. In addition, consequential amendments are made to the Herd and Fencing Act, the Pharmacy Act and the new Medical Profession Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 1 has had second reading and is referred to a standing committee.

---Carried

The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

BILL 2:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
DENTAL AUXILIARIES ACT

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Dental Auxiliaries Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Dental Auxiliaries Act to provide that an applicant for registration in the Dental Hygienists Register who is not already registered as a dental hygienist in a province or territory must have both graduated from a program in dental hygiene accredited by the Commission on

Dental Accreditation of Canada and have successfully completed the National Dental Hygiene Certification Examination set by the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board. Provisions pertaining to fees are adjusted to ensure consistency and several provisions are amended to conform with prevailing drafting practices. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 2 has had second reading and is referred to a standing committee.

---Carried

The honourable Government House Leader, Mr. Miltenberger.

**BILL 3:
MISCELLANEOUS STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT, 2010**

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 3, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill corrects inconsistencies and errors in the Statutes of the Northwest Territories. The bill deals with other matters of a minor, non-controversial and uncomplicated nature in the Statutes, and repeals provisions that have ceased to have effect. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 3 has had second reading and is referred to a standing committee.

---Carried

The honourable Government House Leader, Mr. Miltenberger.

**BILL 4:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
SOCIAL ASSISTANCE ACT**

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill includes amendments that would:

- replace social assistance appeal committees with an administrative review group that will hear appeals of decisions made by social welfare officers or the director;
- limit the jurisdiction of social welfare officers, the administrative review group and the appeal board in respect of issues pertaining to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;
- make other minor changes.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 4 has had second reading.

---Carried

The honourable Government House Leader, Mr. Miltenberger.

**BILL 5:
APPRENTICESHIP, TRADE AND OCCUPATIONS
CERTIFICATION ACT**

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Bill 5, Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill repeals and replaces the Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification Act. It provides a framework for the certification of apprentices in designated trades and trainees in designated occupations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 5 has had second reading.

---Carried

Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

**Consideration in Committee of the Whole
of Bills and other Matters**

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We have one item in Committee of the Whole: Tabled Document 4-16(5). What is the wish of committee? Mr. Hawkins.

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

---Carried

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

Report of Committee of the Whole

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

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, your committee would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. A motion is on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills.

Speaker's Closing Comments

Colleagues, before we close, this has been a busy and lengthy session. In the past six weeks, you have considered and passed into law one appropriation act, five supplementary appropriation acts and seven other separate pieces of legislation. This work has involved all of you at many levels: Ministers and their departments, the standing committees who received and considered the legislation, the public who have participated in various ways, and the final review conducted by all Members in this Chamber.

I understand that the next few weeks will allow some of you time to return to your families and friends, to connect with constituents and community leaders, to continue with the work of government and the work of committees. I am already seeing signs of spring and I encourage you all to make some time to enjoy the passing of the long, dark winter and embrace these warmer and brighter days.

I also wish to draw our attention to another sign of spring in the Northwest Territories, the 2010 Arctic Winter Games will kick off with opening ceremonies on Sunday, March 7th in Grande Prairie, Alberta. These games provide our young people with the opportunity to celebrate sport, share their cultural values with other Northerners from around the world and making lasting friendships. Please join me, colleagues, in congratulating and cheering on our northern participants.

---Applause

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of our Pages who have helped us out during this long session.

---Applause

My colleagues and I thank you all for your attention you gave to your duties and the enthusiasm you have displayed. With that, Members, I wish you safe travels as you leave here today and look forward to seeing you again in this Chamber.

Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Tuesday, May 11, 2010, 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
 - Motion 5-16(5), Request for Special Audit by the Auditor General of Canada on the Deh Cho Bridge Project
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Tuesday, May 11, 2010, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 4:13 p.m.

