



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**4<sup>th</sup> Session**

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## **HANSARD**

**Thursday, February 14, 2013**

Pages 1859 – 1898

**The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

**Hon. Jackie Jacobson**

(Nunakput)

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(Great Slave)

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*Minister of Human Resources*

*Minister of Public Works and Services*

*Minister responsible for the*

*Public Utilities Board*

**Hon. Tom Beaulieu**

(Tu Nedhe)

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**Mr. Bob Bromley**

(Weledeh)

**Mr. Daryl Dolynny**

(Range Lake)

**Mrs. Jane Groenewegen**

(Hay River South)

**Mr. Robert Hawkins**

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**Hon. J. Michael Miltenberger**

(Thebacha)

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**Mr. Alfred Moses**

(Inuvik Boot Lake)

**Mr. Michael Nadli**

(Deh Cho)

**Hon. David Ramsay**

(Kam Lake)

*Minister of Industry, Tourism*

*and Investment*

*Minister of Transportation*

**Mr. Norman Yakeleya**

(Sahtu)

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Thursday, February 14, 2013****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Hon. Tom Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Blake, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Dolynny, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Hon. Jackie Jacobson, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Moses, Mr. Nadli, Hon. David Ramsay, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:31 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson):** Good afternoon, colleagues.

Members, before we begin today – in addition to wishing you all a happy Valentine's Day...

...I am going to beat Norman to the punch this year. I would like to send a special Valentine's Day wish to my wife, Jenny, mother of my children, my best friend, my life partner. Thank you for your love and care, your patience – she's got a lot of patience with me doing my job – and also for being an amazing mother to our children. I am only able to do the work because I have my wife's support, Mr. Speaker. I know she cares. Happy Valentine's Day to my wife, Jenny.

Back home up in Tuk, John and Mabel Noksana, John and Mabel, it's their anniversary today. So happy anniversary to John and Mabel, and happy Valentine's Day.

---Applause

I would like to draw your attention to the Canadian flags that are on your desks. Tomorrow, February 15<sup>th</sup>, is National Flag of Canada Day.

It was on February 15, 1965, that the first red and white Canadian flag, with its distinctive maple leaf, flew proudly over Parliament Hill.

Our Canadian flag is recognized all over the world as the flag of a people who cherish the ideals of democracy, freedom and respect.

I know we don't see any maple trees in this part of Canada, but we proudly fly our Canadian flag all across the Northwest Territories as a symbol of our unity with all Canadians.

Please join me, colleagues, celebrating Flag Day for the great country we live in.

Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Ramsay.

**Ministers' Statements**

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 10-17(4):  
MINERAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY  
UPDATE**

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories has long been recognized as a land rich in resource potential. One of the priorities of this Assembly is to strengthen and diversify the economy, and as part of that priority, we identified the need to have a comprehensive, environmentally sustainable Mineral Development Strategy in place.

Mr. Speaker, as with the Economic Opportunities Strategy I spoke about yesterday, the Mineral Development Strategy is part of a bigger picture. It complements other initiatives the GNWT is undertaking, such as the Economic Opportunities Strategy, and other linked initiatives such as the Land Use and Sustainability Framework and a Northwest Territories Anti-Poverty Strategy.

It will also be closely integrated with the NWT Energy Plan. Both energy development and mineral development share the same key challenge: a lack of infrastructure across the territory. Affordable energy provision and mineral development needs infrastructure.

I am pleased to report that the Mineral Development Strategy is well underway and will play a key role in helping our communities to be sustainable, vibrant and free from poverty.

It was officially launched just a couple of weeks ago at the 2013 Mineral Exploration Roundup in Vancouver. This is the world's leading technical mineral exploration conference and gave us the opportunity to signal to thousands of potential investors that we are ready to do business.

While the NWT has vast potential as an untapped source of diamonds, gold, rare earths and other minerals, attracting investment to the territory has sometimes been a challenge. We are aware that the complex regulatory process has often meant potential investors think twice before heading north.

But even so, mineral development is the backbone of the NWT economy.

Our four producing mines contribute \$770 million in spending every year and employ more than 3,000

people. We want to ensure mineral development continues to play an important role in our economy and ensure the industry remains one of the largest employers of NWT residents. Our strategy will provide a framework to ensure our mineral resources continue to be developed in a sustainable way that benefits NWT residents and upholds our commitment to protect the environment.

By taking steps to develop a clear policy and direction for mineral development in the NWT, the GNWT is making a solid commitment to strengthening and diversifying our economy.

To advance the strategy, we produced a discussion paper to encourage a public conversation about our mineral development industry. This was distributed at the launch event and has already been sent to people and businesses throughout the territory that have a stake in the industry. It is also available on the ITI website and we are looking for responses from the public.

To encourage this conversation, I have appointed a three-person expert advisory panel to travel throughout the territory and to consult with other stakeholders around Canada. They are gathering feedback and will provide recommendations on drafting the final strategy. We expect to have the strategy completed by June.

Meetings took place in Yellowknife all last week, and Norman Wells and Inuvik this week. The panel is meeting with representatives and executives from diamond mining and mineral exploration companies, industry, training and educational institutions, Aboriginal organizations, local governments and local community organizations, as well as local chambers of commerce.

We have already received valuable input and recommendations about what a final Mineral Development Strategy should contain, and expect to receive even more as these meetings continue.

Our most important stakeholders are those that work in the mineral development sector on an everyday basis. They are the ones who make those initial investments that eventually benefit us all. We have entered into a partnership with the NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines to make sure that the strategy is comprehensive and that all key stakeholders have the opportunity to provide their input. I look forward to continuing this discussion in the months ahead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Abernethy.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 11-17(4):  
SUCCESS OF THE  
ABORIGINAL COURT WORK PROGRAM

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the success of legal aid's

Aboriginal Court Work Program. This program has existed for over 30 years, and the court workers were brought into the public service over a decade ago. Our nine court workers are present in the visitors gallery today.

This program ensures that Aboriginal people charged with criminal offences receive timely and accurate information at the earliest possible stage of the criminal justice process. Our court workers also help residents with family law and other legal matters, and help residents navigate the legal aid system. They are also the point people for legal aid's Community Outreach Program.

We are fortunate to have a group of dedicated and talented court workers, all of whom have made a long-term commitment to the people of the North. Our court workers are located in Behchoko, Fort Good Hope, Fort Simpson, Fort Smith, Hay River, Inuvik and Yellowknife. They travel into all the communities regularly with the court circuit.

Mr. Speaker, I am not the only one to note the success of this program. Justice Canada recently released the result of the 2011 Northwest Territories Client Survey. This surveyed the program's clients and found that all of them were either satisfied or very satisfied with the information they received from the court worker.

The survey also showed that 84 percent of the clients were referred to legal services, and that 95 percent of those clients in court had legal representation. These numbers reflect the breadth of coverage available through our Legal Aid Program, and that those in the criminal justice system are being represented.

Finally, I would note that our court workers play an important education role, with more than half of the clients reporting that the information they received from their court workers helped them understand the lawyers, judges and court personnel.

Mr. Speaker, our talented and dedicated court workers are making a difference for those residents who come into contact with the justice system. I will be pleased to officially welcome them to the House at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 12-17(4):  
AURORA COLLEGE REVIEW

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment is committed to strategic communications, coordinated program planning and delivery, and strong working relationships with its partners.

Aurora College is a key part of our educational system and plays a critical role in building a strong,

sustainable future for our territory. The college recently reorganized its operational structure and we are reviewing the improvements, analyzing the functional structure and identifying any gaps. We are working with the college to examine, inspect and report on current operations and clarify roles and responsibilities.

Our review includes working with staff to ensure an understanding of roles and responsibilities, operational processes, decision-making, and clear roles and protocols.

The department will use existing resources to fund this review, to cover the years 2009 to 2012, with the completed report and recommendations by March 31, 2013.

Mr. Speaker, as we work together to improve our processes and services, I would like to acknowledge that this is Aurora College Week. All three campuses and 23 community learning centres are hosting activities, including presentations, fundraisers, contests and games. This is an annual celebration of college spirit that brings together students and staff outside the classroom. The college is a strong advocate of community-based learning, and works to foster strong ties with communities. This celebratory week also encourages the public to learn about Aurora College's many programs and opportunities for upgrading and training. The department proudly supports Aurora College and takes part in celebrating Aurora College Week.

Mr. Speaker, our people are our territory's greatest resource. We must make sure they have tools and opportunities to realize their potential. Having effective and efficient operations in place will not only strengthen our partnership with Aurora College, it will contribute to this Assembly's goal of a strong and independent North. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

### Members' Statements

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PREVIOUS DAY'S MOTION ON HOT WATER HEATER REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every morning in committee we discuss the previous day's business, so I'd like to talk a little bit about yesterday's business in this House. We'll call it previous day's business.

I'm disappointed that when the Members of this House passed a motion suggesting that we could possibly look at some money to put into the conversion of electric hot water heaters to diesel hot water heaters as a means of some energy

efficiency on this side of the House, that it was met with such disdain by the Minister of ENR.

I carefully read over Hansard, and actually you cannot read in the actual words the tone of what we felt over here after we passed that motion. Of course, we know we've been through six months of business plans, of course we know this wasn't brought up before, but as Members on this side of the House, we do have the right to bring forth what we consider to be, collectively, a good idea at any time that we want to.

The Minister was clearly... Well, I don't know what the word is; I have to be careful here. It appeared that the Minister was annoyed by our suggestion, and I do not appreciate that. Yes, there is possibility of LNG in the future. Yes, there may be already many good initiatives going on, but this was a little idea that we came up with up on this side of the House and I felt like the response from the government, vis-a-vis the Minister of ENR, was very dismissive, I felt like the answer was condescending in the sense that we know we can't pull out the power subsidy from our constituents right now, suggesting that that that's the only place where we could get a little bit of money to change over electric hot water heaters to diesel hot water heaters.

Oh, well, let's go back to the PUB then and let's cut the subsidy for all the power rates in the Northwest Territories. That's not an alternative. There's lots of money being spent other places in this government other than with the power subsidy, where, if we wanted to find a little bit of money to do this, we could do so. But to throw that out there was almost like, oh, my gosh, no, we can't do that, I mean, it struck fear in the heart of people to think that we as a group would possibly support such a pullback on that power subsidy. You couldn't do that on short notice and in a rash kind of a way.

All I'm saying is we do have the odd idea over here, we like to put it forward. Thanks for the respect. If you could just give us the time of day. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolyunny.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS STUDENT VIDEO CONTEST

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, wish to rise here today and wish my wife of 21 years, Cindy, a happy Valentine's Day.

Today I want to let all NWT First Nation students know from grade school to high school about an exciting national video contest that is being hosted by the Assembly of First Nations. AFN wants students to talk about their school and education. What do they like about their school? How is their school making a difference in their life? How would

they like to change it to make it even better? If they could change things, what change would they make and what would their education be if it was to be better? These are just some of the topics that students can choose from.

All students participating in this contest will have the opportunity to win a school visit by National Chief Shawn Atleo. A lottery will be held for all participants and a name will be chosen at random. The cool thing is that National Chief Atleo will visit the winner's school before the end of the 2013 school year.

The students don't have much time. This contest closes on February 28, 2013. So if you're listening in, you can go to the Assembly of First Nations website at [www.afn.com](http://www.afn.com) or e-mail to [video@afn.ca](mailto:video@afn.ca).

I strongly encourage all NWT First Nation students to pick up a video camera or, for most of them, just to use their trusty old smartphone and get creative. Let's see if we can have a winner here from the Northwest Territories. Good luck. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
ONE BILLION RISING,  
V-DAY 2013 CAMPAIGN

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is not only Valentine's Day, as evidenced by my colleague Mr. Dolynny, but it is also the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of V-Day.

V-Day is an organized response against violence towards women. Today is also the launch of a new campaign, the One Billion Rising Campaign. One Billion Rising invites one billion people, representing the number of women on the planet who have been raped or beaten, to walk out of their jobs, schools, homes, and dance. I won't be dancing today, but maybe next year we'll all be dancing.

The One Billion Rising Campaign can be a catalyst. It can unify and strengthen existing anti-violence efforts, and it can lay the groundwork for new educational, protective and legislative endeavours throughout the world.

Here in the NWT, family violence is a huge issue and work is being done to address the issue of family violence in the NWT. The Coalition Against Family Violence, in existence for some time now, is a territorial interagency group that brings together individuals, non-government and government agencies to share information and put in place projects in keeping with their mandate. As a collaborative, they have a strong voice and bring a vast amount of expertise and experience to the table. Some of the initiatives that have developed include Family Violence Awareness Week, Take

Back the Night, White Ribbon Campaign and the healing program for men who use violence, as mentioned by Minister Abernethy.

Over the years, the coalition has developed an action plan to combat family violence. We are now on phase 3 of that plan. The action plan phase 3, was released last year with 19 recommendations. Many of those recommendations need funding for the coalition to accomplish them and to keep the coalition's momentum going. The coalition has accomplished a lot, but the work is far from finished.

A recent recommendation from the NWT chief coroner, following the death of Alice Black in 2009, calls for a long-term public education campaign similar to an anti-smoking campaign, to curb the culture of acceptance of domestic and family violence. These are the sorts of things the coalition is working towards. On this day, V-Day 2013, we as legislators and policymakers must remember our role in helping the coalition achieve their goal of reducing family violence in the NWT. We in the NWT can join the one billion rising. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
IDLE NO MORE MOVEMENT

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to call Members' attention to the new social movement called Idle No More. Idle No More started last November at a teach-in in Saskatoon which was held to protest Bill C-45. There the founders pledged to be idle no more in defending the environment and indigenous sovereignty. Thanks to social media, Idle No More spread like wildfire across Canada and around the world. In Denendeh, events took place in Fort Smith, Fort Resolution, Hay River, Yellowknife, Behchoko and at the Deh Cho Bridge in my riding.

Idle No More supported the fast of Attawaspiskat Chief Theresa Spence which led to an important meeting between Aboriginal leaders and the Prime Minister on January 11<sup>th</sup>. Chief Spence helped broaden the movement's purpose to include concerns about living conditions in First Nations communities and especially about the broken relationship between Canada and its Aboriginal peoples.

The end of Chief Spence's fast was not the end of Idle No More. Idle No More is organizing national events on February 14<sup>th</sup>, today, in solidarity with the Women's Memorial March, which is a national campaign for missing and murdered Aboriginal women, and Have a Heart Day, an initiative to support indigenous children. Creative acts of awareness, resistance and solidarity are being encouraged. Idle No More has done much in a very



short time to educate both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians about indigenous rights and issues, and I commend them. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
MACKENZIE VALLEY ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT REVIEW BOARD FUNDING CUTS

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to follow your lead and acknowledge my wife, Sue, of almost 13 years. I want to say, when you add the wind chill to that some days...

---Laughter

... it's still 13 years happily married, Mr. Speaker.

A great deal has been said in the House and in the media this week about disturbing news that the Mackenzie Valley Review Board has fired, not laid off, fired six members of their staff. I am sure that every Member of this House would agree it is detrimental to the protection of our environment in the NWT, and our federal government Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada has failed to provide supplementary funding that is much needed and, as we all know, is necessary for this review board to do their work. This is not a case of doing more with less. This is clearly a case of doing less with less. I only wonder when industry is all of a sudden going to catch up and realize what is happening, because this will affect their critical work that they need done.

However, what seems to be left out of this discussion, and it was absolutely critical not to pass it by, is what will happen to the remaining people here today. Those are those six people, constituents of ours, those six residents of Yellowknife that received the shocking news last Friday that their jobs were terminated effective immediately. These are real people, not just statistics. They're people with mortgages, they have bills to pay, they have children to take care of. It's a crying shame what happened to them.

I'm told that two of them were let go before their maternity leave even began. Another, a constituent of mine, is a single parent who does not have enough time in the review board to qualify for EI. This affects real lives.

Yesterday my colleague from Weledeh asked the Premier if the GNWT was consulted about the reduction of these six MVEIRB positions. I can advise this House that not even the affected employees were consulted about this in advance. So, in fact, there was no prior warning, and that's a serious shame.

On Tuesday the Premier rightly observed that there was little the GNWT can do with respect to the MVEIRB board in ANSI's funding position.

However, like anything, there's always an opportunity. So later today I will be asking the Premier about what he can do with my suggestion, which will be about putting these people who've just been let go on a GNWT priority list because we have to show that we care. This is an interagency that does great work in the North and it's critical. Let's not abandon these people the way they were abandoned last week. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
HIGHWAY NO. 7 RECONSTRUCTION

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Love is in the House today.

---Laughter

I'll continue mine with love for Highway No. 7. The government is sending clear messages that the Northwest Territories is open for development like never before. The mineral development, the Economic Opportunities Strategy, NWT Days in Ottawa and increased funding for tourism all show Canada and the world that the Northwest Territories is the place to invest. Yet, anyone driving north on Highway No. 7 from BC would wonder, do we really mean it.

Highway No. 7 is a gateway to the North. It enters the BC border to Fort Liard and to Fort Simpson and it also services the community of Nahanni Butte. I don't need to remind government and the Department of Transportation on how the condition of that highway affects my constituents and travellers coming north. My constituents have always told me the highway makes our living and it brings work to us.

The community of Fort Liard is willing to partner with the GNWT this year to improve chipseal, but the millions of dollars budgeted for Highway No. 7 is like a band-aid on a broken leg.

The Deh Cho, one of the most spectacular regions of the Northwest Territories, and home to the Nahanni National Park Reserve, has seen less visitors every year. ITI recorded a total of 39 day-use visitors at the Deh Cho parks in 2011-12. Previous years saw 10 times that many.

The Prairie Creek Canadian Zinc Mine needs reliable transportation corridors to fulfill commitments in its socio-economic agreement and to its shareholders. Devolution is expected to bring new positions to our communities, and people relocating to the Deh Cho region will expect highway infrastructure that is reasonably comparable to other parts of Canada.

Already oil companies are travelling through my riding as they explore the central Mackenzie Valley shale play. We only need to look south to the boom

in northeastern BC and north to the Sahtu to see oil and gas potential to the Deh Cho region.

We cannot afford a treacherous highway. The tourism and benefits alone would pay for its reconstruction. If we take our communities and economic development in the Northwest Territories seriously, we need infrastructure that supports it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
CONGRATULATIONS ON THE BIRTH OF  
KALI ANN MARTHA WOOD

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a heads-up, this possibly could be the best Member's statement that I've given to date.

---Laughter

Now that I've got your attention on this day of love, I had the great opportunity of getting such great news today on the birth of Ms. Kali Ann Martha Wood, the healthy daughter of Bryan Wood and my beloved little sister, Heather Moses.

---Applause

Kali Ann Martha Wood was born at 11:00 p.m. last night with a healthy weight of 8 pounds 22 ounces. I want to wish both Bryan and Heather all the best in their journey together, and their journey and responsibility to be great parents and to ensure the healthy growth and development of little Kali Ann. They have made two families very proud and made one proud uncle in front of you today. They will be great parents.

I'd like to ask the Members to join me in welcoming Ms. Kali Ann Martha Wood into the world and to welcome our newest resident of the NWT.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Moses. Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
EXPANDING AURORA COLLEGE  
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I follow your lead and also wish happy Valentine's Day to my most lovely wife, Marianne.

Business administration students at Aurora College have appealed for the creation of a third-year degree-granting program. I support that request. The current two-year diploma-granting program is filled to capacity. Currently, diploma graduates seeking a baccalaureate degree must transfer to a southern institution to complete their studies, or take distance education. Students say 87 percent of them – Mr. Moses might take note – have children, and point out that the demands of moving away to continue in a degree, deal with SFA at a distance,

raise their families and work multiple jobs is, "not a task for the faint at heart."

Our students, obviously, have heart. But they say that a full degree program would encourage more current students to complete degrees and attract more students from NWT secondary schools to business administration programs, all of them ending up with higher credentials.

They've collected 36 signatures on a petition asking for the program expansion, which I will take later today. The petition says, "Courses and professional experiences found here are comparable to any other college in Canada," and that they are very enthusiastic for the opportunity to learn and develop here in the North.

The college president is quoted in the media as saying that some third-year courses offered through Athabasca would be discontinued last year due to some bumps in the road. But she's also quoted as saying the Athabasca courses could be reinstated as early as next year.

Our society and the economy need these graduates. As a provider of educational services, this government must respond to the students' enthusiasm for northern education and higher learning. We need to promote their opportunities and make every effort to keep these graduates and their families in the North. We can't risk losing their energy to southern employers.

This Assembly and our Minister of Education needs to make sure this happens. I will have questions for the Minister of Education about removing any bumps in the road and having this program ready to smoothly accept third-year enrolment in the fall. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
KEEPING JOBS IN THE NORTH  
AND NORTHERNERS IN JOBS

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to also send out my happy Valentine's Day to the people. Somebody sent me a note here and it says, "I love you." Whoever that is...(inaudible)...

---Laughter

...(inaudible)...also to my lovely wife, and I certainly send my love out to the people in the Sahtu, especially people from the Sahtu who are in the gallery and are friends. I want to say that.

I want to get on with my Member's statement now after all these heartfelt sentiments I've said.

Keeping jobs in the North is my concern today. Industry and the Government of the Northwest Territories signs economic agreements before the production phase of any mining projects. Industry

agrees to use their best efforts to define priorities and keeping employment targets. Sadly, these targets fail to be met. We hear many explanations: lack of skilled workers, people unwilling to relocate to the Northwest Territories, addictions limit workers' employability. However, only two mines include the Sahtu in worker points of pickup. People in the Sahtu have to travel to Deline or Norman Wells, if not Inuvik or Yellowknife, in order to work at one of the diamond mines. Oil and gas exploration is taking place in the Sahtu, but in the meantime, people have to work and need to work. They need to develop skills and experience so they can benefit from future opportunities closer to home.

Engagement with industry is, so far, the way we have chosen to hold mines accountable to the socio-economic agreements. Government makes an effort to work with industry that, in turn, has some expectations from this government. There are many areas where we can work as government with industry, to increase the presence of northern hire. We need to invest in a skilled workforce. If someone can't get hired because of addictions, that person needs assessable treatment options. We need to teach life skills and help people experience a better, cleaner way to live. We need to reduce the cost of living to make the Northwest Territories a more attractive place to live and work. We need good employment incentives. The Canol shale oil play can be an economic game changer.

How do we hold industry to account for the ways they work with people on our land? How do we ensure we get the most of the socio-economic agreements and negotiate in the future by making these agreements work today? We need to work for a common goal and find the best solution for people and industry. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF HAY RIVER RESIDENTS

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to wish everybody a happy Valentine's Day here today, as well out in the Northwest Territories. I think we all need to appreciate our family and friends out there. One of the things that's most difficult is when we have those families and friends who have passed away, and we've had a few people in Hay River the last while I'd like to mention.

Vern Tordoff, a long-term town councillor who passed away during Christmas. He will be missed.

Delphine McKay, a long-term resident of Hay River who helped out lots in the school. She will definitely be missed.

Mr. Bill Parker, who's in a race car in the big racetrack in the sky right now hopefully tuning up his engines, helping the good Lord up there.

I think this is the best time when we need to thank our families and friends, and think of those people who have gone by. I think back of Ed Barnhart, a friend of mine who worked for me and this was his birthday.

As we open up our hearts, I'd like to challenge my colleagues here. February is Heart and Stroke Month and I'd like to challenge them. I have made a \$100 donation and I'd like to challenge them to do the same.

I'd like to also give a big thanks to the Pages from Hay River North who were here this week: Grace Osted and Novie Bordey. I'd like to thank them for their hard work today and during this week. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FUNDING FOR BEAUFORT-DELTA EDUCATION COUNCIL

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to wish everyone in the Mackenzie Delta a happy Valentine's Day, and also to all my colleagues here, everybody who's gathered.

The 2013-14 budget anticipates reduced staff in the Beaufort-Delta Education Council. Right now funding to our education council is based on the number of students expected to enroll in school, not on the needs of children or the hardworking teachers and administrators.

My constituents in Aklavik and Fort McPherson tell me that they need more teachers. In Tsiigehtchic there is only one teacher for up to three grades.

There are serious gaps in the student achievement between small communities and regional centres. There's less structure for early childhood development that paves the way for learning at school. If anything, children in our communities need more one-on-one support with their teachers.

Even a child who grows up in a healthy, stimulating environment often needs extra help to succeed. School can be a positive, motivating experience for children when teachers have time and resources that they need. A manageable workload also helps attract talented professionals to our small communities, exactly where the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly wants to increase a number of positions.

The funding formula for education councils fails to recognize the teacher in Tsiigehtchic who's managing three grades. We really need to look at how we support the schools in our hamlets and villages. As a government, we may not be able to put state-of-the-art facilities in each of the 33

communities, but all the students in the Northwest Territories deserve an equal opportunity to succeed. We should staff our schools in a way that gives our future children a chance to succeed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Blake. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Colleagues, I'd like to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of Mr. Peter Kujawinski, Consul General of the United States of America for Alberta, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories. Peter is a career American diplomat who joined the state department in 1998. His previous assignments include postings to U.S. embassies in France and Israel. He also was posted to the U.S. delegation to the United Nations Security Council in New York. His most recent assignment was to the U.S. Embassy in Haiti. He has worked as a political counsellor and coordinator of U.S. Assistance, promoting governance and rule of law. Peter is doing his first official visit to the Northwest Territories, and we would like to welcome the Consul General of the United States of America, Mr. Peter Kujawinski.

---Applause

He is quite the dog musher. We were out dog mushing yesterday. We had a good time last night.

I would also like to welcome Sheila Nasogaluak from Inuvik. Welcome to the House, Sheila.

Mr. Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** I have a number of people I would like to recognize. First I would like to recognize Charlene Doolittle, who is the new executive director of legal aid. Charlene is the first Aboriginal woman to hold the position and lives here in Yellowknife.

I would also like to recognize our court workers who are really the heart and soul of the Aboriginal Court Worker Program. They are Val Watsyk from Yellowknife, Sally Card from Yellowknife, Daphne Lafferty from Fort Good Hope, Maureen Maurice from Hay River, Pat Waugh from Fort Simpson, Sheila Nasogaluak from Inuvik, Shari Olsen from Fort Smith and Rose Lamouelle from Behchoko. Through you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank each of these individuals for all that they do for the people of the Northwest Territories. Their hard work, commitment and dedication are truly appreciated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** [English translation not provided.]

I would just like to recognize Rose Lamouelle, who is here with us as well, one of the greatest court workers.

---Laughter

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** I, as well, would like to recognize one of the hardworking court workers and that would be Shari Olsen from Fort Smith. I welcome her to the Assembly. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I would like to welcome Sheila Nasogaluak, a constituent of Inuvik Twin Lakes, I believe. Welcome to the gallery. And to all the court workers up there, welcome.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a first for me on Valentine's Day to be able to recognize the lucky guy who has been married to me for 35 years. I would like to recognize my husband, Rick Groenewegen, in the gallery today and also recognize Maureen Maurice, our court worker from Hay River. Welcome.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize, through you, a person from Range Lake who spends some time in this House here and who works for the protocol office. That is the lovely Carmen Moore. Thank you very much. And also, Consul General, welcome to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to use the occasion, as well, to recognize both Val Watsyk and Shari Olsen. They are two friends of mine who have grown up in the South Slave for many years. As well, I would like to take the opportunity to recognize Pat Waugh, who I have known for a long time. As well, welcome to all the court workers. Thank you for your work.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to recognize... Firstly, I will go with the court workers, another one of the greatest and hardworking court workers is Mr. Pat Waugh from Fort Simpson, and also welcome Ms. Val Watsyk, a former resident of Fort Simpson. I see in the gallery, as well, Ms. Melaw Nakehk'o. It

gives me great pleasure to welcome Nahanni Butte students in the gallery here today. I would like to recognize the chaperones, Mr. Mike Matou, Ms. Tammy Matou and Joe Ekotla and the students individually, if you will bear with me colleagues, Kwinlin Matou, Riley Matou, Nathan Betsaka, Dianna Vital, Destiny Ekotla, Shawn Ekotla and welcome to Sydney Hope. Thank you very much for coming. I hope you enjoy the deliberations today. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Moses.

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take the opportunity to welcome Ms. Charlene Doolittle, who has been a really good friend and also a former participant on the Death Race Team that we did down in Grande Cache. Welcome, and I congratulate you on your new position. I also would like to recognize Sheila Nasogaluak, who I have done work with on the interagency committee in Inuvik. She does a really great job and is a great ambassador for Inuvik. I would also like to recognize Shari Olsen, who I have known over the years through the recreation fields; Ms. Melaw Nakehk'o, who is a preserver of our culture and our traditions and is doing a great job. I would also like to welcome the Aboriginal court workers that are here with us today and the Consul General. Welcome, and enjoy the afternoon. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Moses. Mr. Bouchard.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** I would like to welcome the court workers, as well, especially Maureen Maurice from Hay River, Shari Olsen from Fort Smith, and also I would like to recognize one of my constituents, Mr. Rick Groenewegen, in the House today. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to recognize the best court worker in the Northwest Territories, Daphne Lafferty from Fort Good Hope. I also would like to recognize some friends, Rose Lamouelle and Pat Waugh who are also court workers and Charlene Doolittle whose family is from the Sahtu. Also, the other court workers here. I also would like to recognize the students from Nahanni Butte. It is good to see you come down this way to see us in action, and the rest of the visitors I would like to welcome. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thanks you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize the two Pages from Fort McPherson, Lloyd Prodromidis and Trent Villebrun, and also their chaperone, Ms. Andrea Tetlich.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Blake. I would also like to welcome Mr. Rick Groenewegen in the House today. It is so cute to have them sitting up there together. I would like to welcome our students here. It is always so good to have youth and students in the House to see today's proceedings. Welcome to the House. I would like to welcome all visitors in the public gallery here today. Thank you for taking an interest in today's proceedings.

Item 7, acknowledgements. Item 8, oral questions. Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

### Oral Questions

#### QUESTION 68-17(4): EMPLOYING NORTHERN WORKERS

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Minister of ITI. When the government and the mining companies signed a socio-economic agreement, they made certain targets and priorities. Why aren't the mining companies reaching the target of hiring northern at 60 percent? They are only at 37 percent. What is the Minister doing to bring up those numbers so the government can hold to account the mining companies on the agreements they signed to operate in the Northwest Territories?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of ITI is responsible for the socio-economic agreements that are reached with the mining companies, but responsibility for training programs that the Member is speaking of are the responsibility of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. I work very closely with Minister Lafferty and also with Minister Beaulieu through the Department of Health and Social Services in working with industry to try to find a way to ensure that opportunities for jobs and training accrue to residents here in the Northwest Territories. We need to certainly do a better job at trying to find a way to get more people employed. It is only working with industry that we are going to be able to make some improvements on the numbers that are out there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, in the Sahtu, as I said, the mining companies don't really hire people outside the Yellowknife area. The Sahtu is very little. We have to go to Deline, Norman Wells, Inuvik or Yellowknife to get on to the workforce. In front of me I have a list of graduates from the Sahtu. There's 33 graduates, seven from post-secondary and 26 from the high school.

Can the Minister ask the mining industry if they could make up pick-up points in the Sahtu communities further than what they have right now

so that they can increase their mining workforce? We want to go to work. Let's ask the mining companies to pull up their socks and get going.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you. Those discussions have taken place with the mining companies and, certainly, just recently there's been a real change to the landscape when it comes to the diamond mines here in the Northwest Territories and perhaps even more change there. I think there's a real opportunity, given what's happened here, to ensure that pick-up points and people that want to be employed, that want to work at the mines here in the Northwest Territories have that opportunity. It's certainly advantageous for the mining companies themselves to have a workforce located here in the Northwest Territories and we're committed to, again, work with industry to see that happen. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you. I'd like to know from the Minister, where are the teeth in our socio-economic agreements. The mining companies have agreed to sign on to a target or a number that they're going to meet once they want to do business in the Northwest Territories. They'll say yes, we'll do this, and they sign on, and after three or four years they don't meet their targets, they're coming very close to it, but where are the teeth in the socio-economic agreements that would hold them accountable to say you violated your agreement.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you. I think it really is a two-way street. Industry certainly signs those agreements in good faith with the Government of the Northwest Territories, but we have to ensure that we have the training and education opportunities for people to get the jobs. There's also a personal responsibility factor that enters into this and people have to take responsibility for themselves, and I'm talking about the abuse of alcohol and drugs, and that is how we are going to see numbers improve when it comes to people being able to be employed here in the Northwest Territories by industry. Thank you.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's where we fall short of supporting our people in the Northwest Territories. If they're going to fall short and you know it, what programs and treatment opportunities do we have for our people so that we do not label them or blame them for the mining companies falling short?

We're making excuses for the mining companies. What is this government doing to help our people to increase the number, not only in the Yellowknife area but also looking at the whole Northwest Territories? We should be hiring a lot of people right across the North.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you. I'm not here to defend the industry, the mining companies. I think, again, they've signed these agreements in good faith. What I'm trying to say is it's a two-way street. We need to ensure that we have the training, the programs that are available for people and I applaud the work that the Norman Wells Land Corp has taken on themselves in training a workforce there in the Sahtu. But as I mentioned earlier, I work closely with Minister Beaulieu and Minister Lafferty. We understand the challenge. We're trying to meet that challenge. We meet with the mining presidents on a quarterly basis. These issues have been raised and I want to assure the Member and this House that we are going to continue to move forward to try to address the concerns that the Member has brought up today. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 69-17(4):  
NAHANNI BUTTE SCHOOL

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I've often spoken about schools in our small communities and I'd like to ask the Minister of Education, I had raised the issue about the school in Nahanni Butte, this being an older log structure. I'd like to ask the Minister, has he done any work in evaluating and seeing when they'd look at replacing that school in Nahanni Butte. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. This is an area that we are closely monitoring, especially with the small community schools. I did instruct my department to seriously look at those communities, whether it be a log structure and the space capacity and having a one class setting with three or four different grades. So those are areas that we are looking into right now to see what can be done. If there's going to be some changes, then it would be through the capital planning process the following year. So that's the area that we continue to push. Every year we go through the capital planning process, so that's an area that we will be looking at. Mahsi.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much. I guess when we're looking at replacing the school, there's lots to be considered. One of the things that can and should work is attaching a new school to the new community gymnasium. I think that would go a long ways towards supporting our education system and our youth, if we attached a new school to the gymnasium. Will the Minister consider that or involve that in the planning that's going to start this fall? Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi. That is the capital planning process that we need to discuss with the school board and also with the community and my department. Also, with Public Works and Services as we move forward. The capital planning process, there is a protocol that we have to follow and criteria that's laid out before us, part of the legislation. So, definitely, those are discussions that we need to have, along with other capital projects. Mahsi.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much. I know I've spoken on this issue a few times in this House. I'd just like to ask the Minister, once again, how much work has been done, or else do we have to start again and then start working with the community and the education authorities on the Nahanni Butte school. Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi. Since the flooding, there's been some work in play and we understand that the school was used for the community as well. We have to utilize the school for the students. So we'll do what we can to have the facility in the best shape we possibly can for the community. Those are the discussions that we need to have for the capital planning process. If we need to identify funding, then we'll be putting that forward as part of the process of capital planning and then the decision will be made, pending that time. Mahsi.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to invite the Minister over to the community of Nahanni Butte. I think we're targeting a June date and I'd like to ask the Minister to come over and look at the school himself, and even come and speak to the students at that time as well. Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi. I want to just highlight some of the work that has been earmarked as a scope of work is to look at the washroom fixtures, repairing and painting drywall and different work that has been highlighted. Yes, I've already indicated that I'll be visiting the Member's riding. There's an invitation out, so in June, by all means, we'll be visiting. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

QUESTION 70-17(4):  
TRANSBOUNDARY WATER AGREEMENT

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I commented or at least made the attempt to acknowledge that Idle No More did happen and it continues. I just wanted to highlight the shining example of some of the doable things that this government can do and that's the transboundary water agreement.

Part of the exercise of the Idle No More movement is that it drew upon the commonalities of bringing two people together: First Nations and the non-indigenous people of the North. The common interest is the environment. So my question is to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. In terms of the progress of the transboundary water agreement, where is it going and at what point should we expect the conclusion of those talks? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The discussions are focused and engaged mainly with Alberta. We had some preliminary meetings, as well, with BC and Saskatchewan, but the Alberta negotiations are the most critical. They are, we believe, within about two meetings away and the next meeting is scheduled for April. So sometime subsequent to that, before fall, we hope to have the negotiators prepared to initial an agreement that will lay out and meet the mandates that they were given from us and from the Alberta government.

Once that's done, we have to turn our attention to concluding the agreements with BC, Saskatchewan, and we have to look at a rewrite of the Yukon agreement. Mr. Speaker, these are very important. The Alberta agreement will be a bit of a template, we believe, so that the ones with Saskatchewan and BC should not take as long as the Yukon. So that work has been progressing.

Our investment in water is going to be required on an ongoing basis. Then we have to look at monitoring, implementation and doing all this through the hard work of the transboundary negotiating team, as well as we have an Aboriginal Steering Committee that has been intimately involved in this process right from the development of the water strategy, all the way forward to the work that's currently happening. Thank you.

**MR. NADLI:** My follow-up question is the Minister had indicated that more likely there will be a similar effort made in British Columbia. Can we expect a similar template agreement that could result from those discussions, because, of course, the rivers in BC flow into the Liard and into the Deh Cho or the Mackenzie. Is there a similar effort, perhaps in envisioning an end product that's similar to the transboundary agreement with Alberta? Perhaps we could expect that for BC as well. Mahsi.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** The Member is correct; the intent is to conclude Alberta, and then move to British Columbia and Saskatchewan, and then up with the Yukon to look at mainly the Peel watershed. So that would be our next step after this. We are doing it sequentially, mainly tied to

capacity and the way the agreed-to work plan that was laid out. It will involve a very similar process. We are going to continue to have full involvement of the Aboriginal Steering Committee and we are going to do all the necessary work, but a lot of the groundwork, the template will have been worked through with Alberta. Thank you.

**MR. NADLI:** I think this government has provided solid leadership in bringing to the forefront the water resources that flow from Alberta into the Northwest Territories. I think we have created a path, created leadership and a model, which is what can be done if governments and First Nations work together. Would there be a similar effort, at some point, in terms of offshore water and coming into a management model that could be considered that this government will entertain at some point in terms of the offshore water resources in the Beaufort Sea? Mahsi.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** All the related offshore issues tied to devolution will be negotiated and there will be a process triggered once negotiation is signed and implemented. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Final, short supplementary, Mr. Nadli. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

#### QUESTION 71-17(4):

##### REDUCTIONS TO THE MACKENZIE VALLEY LAND AND WATER BOARD

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to follow up on my Member's statement on the Mackenzie Valley Review Board employees, those six employees that were fired. Mr. Speaker, if I may, the review board is almost like an arm's length, a bit of a reach on some of the work we do here, but they were unceremoniously fired last week. My question to the Premier is, and I'm going to link towards a devolution type of relationship because they are an agency we depend on. Would the Premier be willing to look at assisting those employees, those six Yellowknifers that were fired, by putting them on our priority staffing list to ensure they at least have a fair opportunity to help bring forward some of their important expertise to service here in the Government of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Right now the Northwest Territories is the only jurisdiction in Canada that has seen a decrease in population. So, of course, we'd be interested in trying to find ways to have these six people find gainful employment. The MVEIRB is a creature from the federal government and we do have a process for the orderly transfer of employees that will be devolved from the federal government to the

Government of the Northwest Territories. I'd be very interested in contacting these six individuals and trying to find employment for them within the Government of the Northwest Territories. As a matter of fact, I recently checked and I think we have about 100-some vacant positions in Yellowknife right now, so I definitely think we can do something about it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. HAWKINS:** A perfect answer, Mr. Speaker, a perfect answer.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

#### QUESTION 72-17(4):

##### FUNDING FOR EDUCATION COUNCILS

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Can the Minister explain how the department determines the level of funding of the education councils? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. On an annual basis, it's all based on student enrolment, the formula funding we've had in place for quite some time now and we follow that process. The funding goes directly to the school boards and at their discretion, such as how many staff they want to hire, programming in the schools and so forth. So we work closely with the schools at that level. At the end of the day, we provide funding to them based on formula funding of the student enrolment. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BLAKE:** Can the Minister explain where we are going to be losing the seven positions in the Beaufort-Delta Education Council?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Again, Mr. Speaker, the Beaufort-Delta, the decision is made at the regional level in the communities. We, as a department, work closely with them as well. As you know, we are going through some changes. We are engaging the communities, stakeholders, on educational renewal and part of that is discussing accountability and the overall school system. So part of the discussion we are going to be having is capturing that line of discussion. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BLAKE:** That was actually my next question. Will the department review its funding formula to recognize the unique needs of the small communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** A really good question. This is an area that we are undertaking right now. Part of the criteria, the six pillars that we are discussing are small community schools. That would capture that and also the accountability when



it comes to funding. Those are the discussions that we are engaging in. We're hoping by this fall we're going to have a product to release to this House and also the general public about what we heard and we want to move forward on. So I'm glad the Member is raising the profile, because it is part of the discussions as we move forward. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. BLAKE:** The last question I was going to ask is what was the timeline in which you expect this report to be done. Can we expect these changes for the loss of those positions? Can we assure those teachers who have moved to the Northwest Territories that their positions won't be lost in the fall? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Teachers are our most valuable asset in the educational system. We'll do what we can. We also work closely with the NWTTA and BDEC with our department to try to retain those individuals in the communities. We are going through the engagement process now, so my department will be working closely with BDEC, and the NWTTA is also involved at that level. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

QUESTION 73-17(4):  
PREVENTION AND PROMOTION  
PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The other day I made a Member's statement on our seniors and prevention and promotion. When this side of the House asks for dollars to deal with chronic management, we're not asking for long-term facilities, we're not asking for beds, we're not asking for workers to fill those long-term facilities, we're asking for prevention and promotion program. Programs that are going to keep our elders living an independent lifestyle, promote our language, our culture, and keep those...(inaudible)...alive.

The other day we had the Minister of Human Resources mention that he moved some dollars into Education, Culture and Employment for training and development of our government staff. I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services today if he'd be willing to look at the same option and take some of the dollars in his budget and possibly move it into another department, possibly Municipal and Community Affairs, so that they can start supporting some of these great programs that do great work for our senior citizens, such as the Elders in Motion program, Nordic Walking Program, through the NWT Recreation and Parks Association. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Moses. Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Any of the budget moves from Health and Social Services or other departments are first vetted through the appropriate committees. We do have a lot of intergovernmental work that goes on right here in this area. Currently, we are trying to work with trying a program that's run federally, called Aging in Place. That is part of our continuing support for seniors, and that's just trying to do some health programs and other programs that are needed to keep the people in their homes and prevent them from going into long-term care. Thank you.

**MR. MOSES:** Over the years, some of these non-government organizations have been operating out of the same budget and they stretch the dollars as far as they can go. I'm asking the Minister, is he willing to commit, should it come from committee, to allocate some of those dollars to these NGOs so they can provide the programs. Like I said, obviously, when we talk chronic disease management, the department thinks of long-term care facilities. We want prevention and promotion programs, and we have a lot of great organizations out there that are running these programs. Is the Minister willing to commit those dollars, should he get a recommendation from committee? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** The department has money earmarked into prevention. I could do a presentation, have the department do a presentation to committee in the area that the committee may want to look at moving.

We have met with the NWT Parks and Recreation Association, as an example, and had good discussions, and we support a lot of their initiatives. However, at this point, we have been concentrating on the fact that 40 percent of all our hospitalizations are due to chronic disease, and we're trying to look at the prevention of the five main diseases that are causing 40 percent of our hospital admissions. So we're working as a department, but if there is an NGO that would be supportive and we could gain a lot of value from that, we would be pleased to work with them as well. Thank you.

**MR. MOSES:** Mr. Speaker, there's a reason why our hospital admissions are at 40 percent and there's a way we can stop that by investment into prevention and promotion programs now. We talked about investment this whole last two weeks, and the sooner we do it, the sooner we can drop those numbers down. We don't want it to rise at all.

In our hospitals we also have some elder day programs. I'm looking at all avenues to protect our senior citizens. Would the Minister look at these elders day programs, do an assessment and look at how we can provide more services, whether

financially or in a staffing situation, so that we can provide more programs, active, independent, traditional, cultural programs for these elders who are able to do these day programs in the hospitals? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Part of our overall objective is to create more of the elder day programs. I and the deputy minister have been to Inuvik to look at the Elder Day Program that's run out of the Beaufort-Delta hospital. We consider it to be very successful. There have been requests from some of the communities up there, and other communities, as well, to run a day program like that so that people who are preventing the elders from moving into long-term care and taking care of them at home, can go to work, and so on, while their elders are in a safe, secure day program. That's something that we see as a great benefits to government overall.

We are currently looking at that day program and other day programs in the hope of expanding the program and are working in that direction, to expand the program in other communities. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Moses.

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just one last quick question and it comes back to the views of our Beaufort-Delta Leadership Council, and that's intergovernmental work and how we can work together to be more efficient in the service delivery of our programs and our dollars.

Is the Minister willing to work with the Department of Justice, or even the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, to see how we can work in getting our elders into those departments to promote culture, to promote tradition, to promote values and teachings of on-the-land programs, language in the schools? Is he willing to do that and, if so, what's the timeline of getting these programs started? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, in my role as Minister responsible for Seniors, I would be very pleased to have a discussion with the Minister of Education and the Minister of Justice to see if we can increase the role or add some more responsibility for seniors to go into the schools or into any of the other facilities where there are our people, and see if the elders can assist them and assist the students in the schools, with the culture and whatnot. We'd be pleased to do that. We think that would be important and something that I think has been tried, and I think it's been proven that it's a positive thing. I would be pleased to work with the two Ministers to be able to do that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

QUESTION 74-17(4):  
LAND TAX ASSESSMENT

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've had Members say that answers are excellent. Perfect! We've had Ministers say that questions are excellent. Boy, this must be Valentine's Day.

My questions are for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. As I often start my paragraph, I have an idea. MACA is responsible for assessing the value of improvements and land in all of our communities. As part of that responsibility, they send out assessments to every landowner or leaser on an annual basis.

I would like to ask the Minister what would be involved in including a line on that assessment which would indicate what the previous year's assessment had been. For this reason: every five years there's a general reassessment in tax-based municipalities necessarily, then assessments change, they usually go up, unfortunately, sometimes they may go down. But there are opportunities for landowners to appeal assessments, either through a territorial appeal board or a municipal appeal board, but it isn't something that people always keep right at their fingertips, their previous year's tax assessment.

If there was one extra line added on a tax assessment indicating the previous year's, that would trigger to the person receiving the assessment whether or not they wanted to exercise the right to appeal. Could the Minister ask me if that would be possible? Or, ask me... Tell me whether that would be possible. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, that was the best Member's statement I've heard all day.

---Laughter

And I would like to ask the Member if that is possible.

No, the Member makes a good point. It is one that I will explore with the department to see. It is very simple. It is actually a good idea to have the number from the previous year. I will explore that and see if we can get that included on the assessments that go out to clients. Thank you.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent answer. I pay taxes in more than the Northwest Territories, so I can tell you that in other jurisdictions, this is a practice. I am sure it would require some change in the software that produces the tax assessments and so on.

Would it be possible for the Minister to perhaps have his department do a little inter-jurisdictional research to see how this is carried out, how this is accomplished in other jurisdictions? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, we will commit to the Members that we will do a bit of

research. If there is a slight upgrade we need to make, I think this is a good idea that would work for those out there. I do pay taxes, too, and I don't have an opportunity to see what I was assessed at last year. We will explore that, and do a little bit of research and see if we can implement it here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 75-17(4):  
DEGREE-GRANTING PROGRAM  
IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. My statement today dealt with the appeal from the Aurora College second year business administration students for the reintroduction of a degree-granting program. What action has the Minister taken to investigate and respond to this very positive suggestion? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. When we first heard of and also received information from the students, we passed it on to the college immediately because the programming falls on the college campuses. We encouraged them that they need to explore those areas, how we can best deliver this programming. It is not only business, there is also social work that grants a degree program that the students have asked me, I believe it was two or three years ago here in this building. From there, we have been working on that as well.

Those are just some of the areas that I need to work closely with the college and to potentially deliver a degree-granting program here in the Northwest Territories.

I do agree; we need to have those students here attend our own campuses. There are a lot of benefits involved in that. We will continue to make that dialogue with the college. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I appreciate the comments from the Minister. I appreciate his direction to college to get after this. The president of Aurora College was quoted in media, saying that the past three-year Aurora College programs were withdrawn because of some bumps in keeping them. I know that is the business of the college, but I am wondering if the Minister would know what those bumps are and what action is being taken to clear them away. Mahsi.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** With any program delivery through the colleges, there are always challenges, whether it be enrolment or the programming itself. There are all kinds of

challenges that we're faced with. We have to get through those barriers, those obstacles that may be in the way. That is what we are doing right now. We are discussing how to best get around that, to deliver those degree-granting programs here in the Northwest Territories. That is what we want to see. That is what I would like to see, as Minister responsible, and to have university-granting programming here in the Northwest Territories.

Our North is booming and we need to have those highly skilled people with the qualification as a professional in the Northwest Territories to be retained in the Northwest Territories. That is what we are pushing with the college and other sectors, as well, through our partners in southern institutions too. Mahsi.

**MR. BROMLEY:** The Minister and I are on the same page there. We really would like to keep these students here, and engaged, and up working here as opposed to getting jobs elsewhere by going to schools down south.

The level of student commitment is indicated by the fact that, although 87 percent of the students are parents, they are making education a priority and juggling their parenting jobs and studies to get ahead. Forcing these students to leave their home territory for these advanced studies would be yet another burden. We want them to stay here, as we have said.

Will the Minister commit to report to committee on options for reintroducing three-year programming – I assume he will work with the college on that – and, specifically, plans for creating a degree-granting business administration program this fall.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** As I have stated, those are the areas that we are currently exploring with the president, college staff and the Board of Governors. Like the Member, I do not want to see those parents going elsewhere, but here in the Northwest Territories to get educated. We will do what we can to deliver those programs.

Right now we have a diploma program. Obviously, third and fourth year are down in southern institutions with our partners. We will see what we can do to deliver that effectively and immediately in the Northwest Territories. The fall may not be an appropriate time, but definitely that is our target to push this forward and deliver that as soon as possible here in the Northwest Territories if it all works. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks again to the Minister. Yes, with 30-some students in second year, I think this fall would be a great target for the Minister.

The Minister announced the review of the implementation of the reorganization and so on with our Aurora College. It is just about to get off the ground. Will the Minister include consultation with students on their priorities and perspectives when he is doing a review of this reorganization? Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** The college review, we are talking about the clear roles and responsibilities of the staffing and so forth. With the programming, there are all of these opportunities for the students' input. I would like to hear their perspectives. I have met with the students here, the post-secondary students, and also those students that were in the diploma-granting and Social Work Program. Those are the key people that we need to listen to. In order to have this program delivered here, we need to gather all the facts and what the students' input is and so forth. Definitely, I will be passing on to the college, through the president and the board chair. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 76-17(4):

UPDATE ON GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO  
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT REVIEW

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Health and Social Services. I want to ask the Minister a few questions in and around the Child and Family Services Act review that was done by the Standing Committee on Social Programs in the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly. It was a great deal of work. The Minister is well aware because he was chair of the committee at the time that we did that work.

This is the report that was tabled in the House. It has many recommendations, 73 to be exact. It was tabled on October of 2010. I have to say that I feel, at this point, that we haven't made much progress on these recommendations. We haven't made much progress on getting ahead on many of the recommendations that are in the report.

One of the things that the report asks for at the very end, it is almost the last recommendation I think, is for Health and Social Services to develop a strategic plan to deal with the recommendations from this report.

I would like to ask the Minister to provide for me and for the House an update on what the department has been doing, what recommendations he can tell us in regard to the strategic plan, what recommendations have been acted on and where we're at with that plan. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A lot of the recommendations of the 73 recommendations involve revision to the act itself, the Child and Family Services Act. Our department is acting on some of the recommendations such as the incorporation of the child and family services committees in the communities which are not having much uptake. Also, expanding Healthy Families the quicker the better, it's directly involved with early childhood development. But the majority of the work that needs to be done would be done after there are amendments to the Child and Family Services Act, and we're on target to present a legislative proposal on the Child and Family Services Act in 2013. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister for that. I guess I'd have to disagree with the Minister, I don't think it's the majority that are legislative changes. Certainly, there are a lot of changes suggested to legislation and I'm really glad to hear that there will be an LP coming in 2013. That's this calendar year. So that's a good thing.

The Minister mentioned one of the actions the department has tried to put into place, and that's child and family service committees within our communities. I appreciate that there has been some difficulty in getting these committees organized, but I have heard from my colleagues, from Members on this side of the House, that there are communities who do want to establish a child and family service committee and they are not getting any uptake from the department. So I'd like to ask the Minister if he can explain why we can't get these child and family service committees established. Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you. I don't know the exact reason. Reasons vary, I do believe, from community to community on why the committees were unable to strike these committees. They vary from not wanting to be involved in the child welfare of other people, and sometimes communities are so small that all child protection and child welfare issues seem to be of a relative child and so on. For some, actually, the fact that the authority staff are not consistently meeting with the community and putting a consistent push into trying to get these child and family services committees struck and operational is largely due to the fact that we have lots of social worker vacancies. So some of it is that, but a lot of it is just the communities not being interested in doing this. Although we think it's an essential part of child protection, the communities see it as difficult work. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** I thank the Minister for the explanation, and I guess I would encourage Members who feel they have a community that wants a child and family service committee to get in touch with their community leadership and have them, with the Member perhaps, get in touch with

the Minister, because I know there are at least one or two communities where I have heard that Members want to get a child and family service committee started.

A lot of the recommendations that are in the report require money, and that was accepted in the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly by the committee, that there was a need to put money into budgets in order to get many of these recommendations done. However, I'd like to ask the Minister what money exists in the 2013-14 budget that is specifically addressed to Child and Family Services Act review recommendations. Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you. A lot of our work, our regular health and social services work does address a lot of these recommendations. Like I indicated earlier, there will be some that we can't do because we will be waiting for revisions.

We will continue to run about a half a million, \$500,000 in trying to create child and family services committees. Also, we're expanding the Healthy Families. Again, another key program that was requested through the recommendations of the review and we're expanding that. We are trying to, I think this coming year we're expanding into all communities in the Sahtu. That would be an expansion into all of the regions. In Deh Cho we've gone Simpson, Liard, Fort Providence, as an example, Inuvik, McPherson, and the Healthy Families there want to expand into Tuk and Aklavik. So as we expand the program and provide supports to the authority, it seems like that program is going to grow, and we're going to try to accommodate that, and we've put money in the budget now to expand into the Sahtu and then we'll continue to put money in the budget to expand that very important program. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister. I agree that the Healthy Families program is a good program, but I would suggest to the Minister that the lack of focused money in the '13-14 budget, apart from that one program, is not going to the recommendations from this report.

I want to ask the Minister, I have a special concern for a recommendation in this report that talks about a gap in services for youth aged 16 to 18. The act talks a lot about children, it does not talk about youth. What is the Minister and the department doing to address the gap in services for children aged 16 to 18? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you. Unfortunately, I do not have the latest detail on what we're doing to close that gap with 16 to 18 year olds in the NWT within the act. I'm almost positive that it's going to require revision to the act as per the legislative proposal, but I can't say 100 percent that we can do

more without a revision. So I will commit to the Member and to the Assembly to update the Members on that specific item within those recommendations. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolyunny.

QUESTION 77-17(4):  
TERRITORIAL FORMULA FINANCING  
ARRANGEMENT

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today will be for the Minister of Finance. Our fiscal relationship between Ottawa and the NWT will reach an imminent crossroad in less than one year when our current Territorial Formula Financing, or I'll refer to it later today as TFF, comes up for renewal.

I cannot stress enough, the very fabric of our territory's survival depends clearly on this funding. Yet, with less than one year from now we have not discussed the austerity effects should a major shift occur.

Could the Minister of Finance clearly indicate to this House what is the current landscape and ongoing discussion with the upcoming renewal date of the Territorial Formula Financing arrangement? Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Formula Financing Agreement as we know it is going to be continued until 2018. Thank you.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you. Ottawa expects a North of self-reliance, vital communities, the management of our own affairs, strong and responsible and accountable governments, but it appears that the subject of how to finance these healthy initiatives are being offered, as we heard, a status quo position. It is clear that we have inadequacy of federal financing for the North, so what is this Minister going to do to mitigate the situation? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you. This agreement we have with the federal government has stood us in good stead and will continue to do that. It recognizes the commitment from the federal government to provide certainty until 2018, especially with the health transfer and the social transfer. In fact, we're one of two jurisdictions that saw an actual benefit and increase on the health side because of this new arrangement.

We're doing the things that we've talked about as a government to control our expenditures, to put money aside for infrastructure to do all these types of good things. We have devolution coming which is

going to give us royalties, resource royalty sharing agreements, which is a very critical piece. This is real money coming from development that currently happens where the benefit to resources now goes to Ottawa. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Before we continue with oral questions, I'd like to welcome former Member Mr. Krutko back into the House today. Welcome, David. The Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you. I disagree with the Minister. I don't believe our territorial financing formula has served us well. In fact, our constitutional principle is that every northern Canadian should enjoy, "reasonably comparable levels of public services at reasonably comparable levels of taxation." This is coming from the Government of Canada Northern Strategy: Our Vision and Our Heritage, 2009. This clearly shows that the TFF falls short of this principle. So what is this Minister of Finance doing for all NWT residents to address our right to equality for a better deal with Ottawa? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are getting about \$1.1 billion. Over 70 percent of our income as a government comes from the Territorial Financing Formula for 43,000 people. If the Member does the math on a per capita basis, we have one of the best deals in the country.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I categorically disagree with the Minister on that comment. We have been told too many times in this House that devolution dollars will solve all our financial problems and I say, with caution, this is not so. I equally say that the TFF is also not the panacea for the territorial expenditures that we have. We have had long-standing deficiencies in infrastructure and socio-economic development in the territory. What is this Minister and what is this government going to do to balance the equation with Ottawa? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** We have one of the best deals on a per capita basis when you compare us to any other jurisdiction, with the possible exception of Nunavut, for how much we get from our relationship either through equalization or Territorial Formal Financing with any other jurisdiction in the country. We have a budget of \$1.6 billion for 43,000 people. So we have a budget of \$1.6 billion for 43,000 people.

I know we have a huge list of demands that outstrips the resources available. But we get well over \$20,000 per person in this territory. So what we're going to do is manage our finances.

We have one of the best run jurisdictions in the country. We are going to sign the Devolution Agreement. We are going to have resources flowing into the territory, both to us, the territorial government, and to the Aboriginal governments. We are going to take over the levers of control of resource development, land and water management and we're going to do a better job than the federal government has ever done for us once we do that. If we look at the business plans and the priorities of this Assembly, I think the answers to Mr. Dolynny's questions are clearly self-evident in the work and the direction this Assembly has set. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Colleagues, I'm going to call a 10-minute break.

---SHORT RECESS

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 78-17(4):  
REVIEW OF ENBRIDGE PIPELINE ROUTE

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of ENR. I want to ask the Minister with regard to the recent news about Enbridge contaminated soil along the Mackenzie pipeline. Is the Minister aware about the incident and whether there's further actions to check the integrity of the pipeline right from Norman Wells to the border of the Northwest Territories, if there are starting to be spots along the pipeline with contaminated soil. What is the Minister doing to ensure the whole line is being checked thoroughly?

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As with other similar instances, we are having our staff work with federal folks that are responsible and we're encouraging, of course, Enbridge to do a thorough review and all the repairs necessary and not just wait for things to happen. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Is the Minister also checking on the land that is affected around the pipeline route to ensure the integrity of the environment is in place and Enbridge Pipelines is going to assure the people of the Northwest Territories that there are no more cracks and leaks along this 30-year-old pipeline?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** We are working with all the appropriate authorities to ensure that those issues, as outlined by the Member, are being addressed. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** This recent discovery of contaminated soil on the Enbridge pipeline, I am not sure if it was done accidentally or because of

the work that Enbridge is doing. Can the Minister inform me and the people along the route of this pipeline that the integrity of this pipeline is safe and that Enbridge will do all it can to assure the people that there isn't going to be any more sudden surprises of contaminated soil or possible leaks in the line?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, Enbridge is a good corporate citizen. They've had their challenges with the aging pipeline. They are taking the steps necessary to protect the interest of Northerners and protect the pipeline route. Thank you.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Enbridge Pipelines Corporation is up for debate on the views of different people who deal with Enbridge. With regard to the contaminated soil that was found on the pipeline route, will the Enbridge Corporation come to this government to assure our people, through some type of meeting, that the line is safe and the integrity is there with the pipeline?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** I would like to thank the Member for the questions. This type of situation triggers a very comprehensive response. The Member is well aware of some of the other challenges we've had with leaks, not only in the Northwest Territories but just south of the border.

I believe that the regulatory process that is in place right now is adequate enough. We know, through history, that Enbridge wants to make sure that things run well, as well. It's bad for the corporate image, it's bad for the environment, it's bad in every sense of the word when we have circumstances that have happened, as the Member has been outlining. We have to be careful. We have to follow due process. We have to bring in the involved regulatory bodies. We have people on the ground as well. We're going to work with community people and we want to make sure we identify where the contaminated soil came from, how it came to be there, was it an accident and what kind of circumstances led to that. We're going to do all the steps in a careful, measured way to work with Enbridge, to work with Norman Wells and the folks along the pipeline route to ensure that the integrity of the pipeline is secure, and that in the days going forward that we're able to speak with considerable comfort and assurance. I don't need to reassure the Members of this House, but to make sure that we can have this and say the same things to the people of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 9, written questions.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek your consent to return to recognition of visitors in the gallery, item 6 on the Order Paper. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery (Revision)

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize my lovely wife, Marianne Bromley, who is in the gallery today sitting beside my very faithful constituency assistant, Craig Yeo. Both are residents of Weledeh. Also, sitting behind them is Amanda Mallon, a resident of Weledeh. I believe there are some folks from the Dene Nation here: Camilla Zoe-Chocolate and her niece Lisa were here earlier. I think they're still in the audience there. I can't see anybody else behind me, but thanks for that opportunity. I appreciate their presence.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 10, returns to written questions. Item 11, replies to opening address. Item 12, replies to the budget address, day six of seven. Item 13, petitions. Item 14, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 15, tabling of documents. Mr. Bromley.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 18-17(4):  
LETTER FROM AURORA COLLEGE BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION STUDENTS

TABLED DOCUMENT 19-17(4):  
LETTER FROM DENE NATIONAL OFFICE  
IN SUPPORT OF MLA MOTION ON FEDERAL  
CHANGES TO THE ENVIRONMENT

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table two documents today. The first one is from the students at Aurora College in the Business Administration Program, with a cover letter from Kari Williams, vice-president, Aurora College Business Administration Student Association, directed to Aurora College with an attached petition for extending the program to three years.

The second one is the Dene Nation support on federal changes to the environment motion that was issued on February 13<sup>th</sup>. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Lafferty.

TABLED DOCUMENT 20-17(4):  
WORKERS' SAFETY AND COMPENSATION  
2011 ANNUAL REPORT

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission 2011 Annual Report. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

TABLED DOCUMENT 21-17(4):  
NWT DAYS MEDIA ACTIVITY REPORT

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled NWT Days Media Activity Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 16, notices of motion. Item 17, notices of motion for first reading of bills.

**Notices of Motion  
for First Reading of Bills**

BILL 2:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE  
TERRITORIAL PARKS ACT

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, February 18, 2013, I will move that Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Territorial Parks Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay, Item 18, motions. Mr. Yakeleya.

**Motions**

MOTION 2-17(4):  
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE  
TO FEBRUARY 18, 2013,  
CARRIED

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on February 14, 2013, it shall be adjourned until Monday, February 18, 2013;

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to February 18, 2013, 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, Mr. Yakeleya. Motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Mr. Bromley.

MOTION 3-17(4):  
FEDERAL CHANGES TO  
ENVIRONMENTAL LAW,  
DEFEATED

**MR. BROMLEY:** WHEREAS the Government of Canada has enacted major revisions to a number of environmental protection laws, including the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, the Fisheries Act, the Navigable Waters Act and the Species at Risk Act, through its two omnibus budget implementation bills, Bill C-38 and Bill C-45;

AND WHEREAS a vigorous environmental management regime is essential for the protection of our vulnerable northern ecosystems, for citizens' participation in the management of our natural heritage, and for protection of Aboriginal rights and fulfillment of the constitutional duties to consult with Aboriginal peoples;

AND WHEREAS the impact of diminished federal environmental protections will be more acute in the Northwest Territories than in the provinces, owing to the continuing federal responsibility for management of natural resources;

AND WHEREAS many Canadians, including former federal fisheries Ministers, First Nations and environmental organizations, have expressed concern that Bills C-36 and C-45 substantially weaken the federal Fisheries Act protections for fish and fish habitat, will compromise the federal government's ability to adequately protect vital food fisheries and to ensure protection of waters, and will undermine the exercise of Aboriginal harvesting rights;

AND WHEREAS many Canadians have expressed concern that the introduction of deadlines for the completion of environmental assessments, of restrictions on the types of projects that may be referred to environmental assessment, and of new restrictions on citizen involvement in environmental assessments will limit the quality of or eliminate necessary public review of environmental impacts;

AND WHEREAS Bills C-38 and C-45 have removed the requirements of the Navigable Waters Act for reviews of pipeline and power line projects, and for reviews of projects, including dams, road crossings, mines and bridges, affecting all but two lakes and one river in the Northwest Territories, thus removing protection even from heritage rivers;

AND WHEREAS pipeline and oil and gas projects will no longer be referred to independent panels, but will be assessed in-house by the National Energy Board, and offshore projects will no longer be assessed unless designated for assessment by the federal Cabinet, thus limiting comprehensive public scrutiny of the potentially major environmental and socio-economic impacts;

AND WHEREAS changes to the federal Species at Risk Act have ended the application of the act to



pipeline projects, and will allow for the issuance of open-ended permits for projects that affect species at risk and/or their habitat;

AND WHEREAS the terms of the Devolution Agreement-in-Principle require that the GNWT take over this diminished federal environmental and resource management regime;

AND WHEREAS the only means for the GNWT to improve this diminished regime would be to allocate GNWT revenues over and above the federal funding provided for in the Devolution Agreement;

AND WHEREAS the GNWT was not consulted or even informed in advance of these changes to laws that are critically important to the citizens of the NWT and are a central issue in the ongoing devolution negotiations;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that the Government of the Northwest Territories inform the federal government of our dissatisfaction both with the dismantling of the federal environmental protection regime and with the federal government's failure to consult and inform this government on changes directly affecting our interests, the ensured integrity of our environment and the content of devolution negotiations that are currently underway;

AND FURTHER, that the Government of the Northwest Territories immediately begin to determine the cost of repairing and maintaining the environmental management regime post-devolution in order to restore it to the responsible standard expected by our public;

AND FURTHER, that the Government of the Northwest Territories begin to identify the means through which such costs could be funded, including rigorously seeking Government of Canada support;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide a comprehensive response to this motion within 120 days. Mahsi.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, Mr. Yakeleya, for helping to bring this motion forward. This motion is in response to the very deeply held concerns territory-wide about the loss of environmental review, oversight and public participation that changes to federal legislation is causing. As the motion lays out in detail, the impacts upon our environmental management regime of the measures concealed in the federal omnibus budget Bill C-38 and Bill C-45 are a major assault upon the land for all Canadians.

Because federal stewardship for our northern natural birthright is so dominant, these impacts are more strongly felt in the NWT. Still worse, they are

taking place just as we are negotiating the transfer of these management responsibilities to our control. Disturbingly, most have taken place without even our advance knowledge, much less our input. This motion asks our government to speak out on these impacts, consider how to fill the voids created and to tell us how the funds will be found to ensure responsible environmental management across the Northwest Territories while supporting sustainable economic development.

This is not a partisan motion. It does not judge those who brought in the changes. It does judge the destructive and retrogressive nature of the changes and finds them unacceptable. This motion is purely and simply about ensuring that clean air to breathe, clean water to drink and healthy food to eat are front and centre when we pursue economic or any other activity that can affect the land.

Everyone of whatever stripe understands these basics. There are some among us in every culture whose understanding of the environment goes beyond these basics. These are people who understand at a cellular level that humans are a part of the land and depend on its well-being. Such understanding is often realized through recognition of the esthetic and often spiritual importance of the land in its naturally healthy and fully thriving state.

First, and most importantly, these are the very people excluded from full participation in the environmental review process that new federal legislation enabled through these bills last June. Why on earth would any government exclude people wanting to speak up on behalf of clean air, food and water, and who have nothing to gain in doing so other than clean air, water and food for the benefit of everyone, your family and mine?

Every culture that has survived over eons has learned the critical role of our land in supporting us as a society. Every culture has learned that we ignore this fact at our peril. In the past, stakes were high, but nowhere near what they are today when we have already stressed the integrated system of ecosystems across the globe to near breaking point. Canada helped lead this understanding in today's modern sense, and many of our Aboriginal governments are playing key roles and reminding us of this ancient understanding, yet how are we showing that understanding today?

Fundamentally, this motion suggests that we, in the NWT, recognize our leadership responsibility in protecting the land and whether we are stepping up to the plate or not. The federal legislative changes have weakened the Fisheries Act to the point where we no longer have the ability to sufficiently protect food fisheries and water quality and protect Aboriginal harvesting rights. The amended act only applies where there is "serious harm and where the fish harmed contribute to a commercial, recreational or Aboriginal fishery." Former federal

fisheries Ministers Sidden, Anderson, Fraser and Dhaliwal have expressed strong concerns with this reduction in scope of protection for fish and fish habitats.

Before C-38, the Fisheries Act allowed the Minister to grant authorizations to destroy fish and/or harm habitat. The C-38 amendments allow for regulations which can exempt whole categories of activities or projects like pipelines. It also allows for regulations to exempt some waters from prohibitions against serious harm to fisheries.

Finally, the changes to the Fisheries Act provide the opportunities to suspend the federal act in favour of provincial legislation. Are we seeking authority for fisheries in devolution negotiations? Are we including fish in our definition of wildlife in the new Wildlife Act so we can have some authority in addressing these gaps?

Without any consultation, information or input, the Government of Canada has rewritten the Environmental Assessment Act. The new authority of the federal Minister to defer a project to provincial processes now also offloads much of this work on provincial governments.

Many people are concerned that the process is now politicized because an opening has been provided for industry to now lobby the Minister to keep a project off the list of those to be reviewed. The definition of environmental effects has been restricted in the new Environmental Assessment Act. Those who know the challenges in cleanup limitations for Arctic offshore drilling must be shuddering at our vulnerability here, let alone the failed opportunity for public accountability and mitigation of environmental socio-economic impacts.

Public participation will now be restricted to "interested parties" defined as persons "directly affected" by the project or having, "relevant information or expertise" in the opinion of the responsible authority. Obviously, this could block the participation of Aboriginal people or organizations and individuals from contributing their important perspectives and knowledge according to the will of the Minister. That's not how we understand democracy in the Northwest Territories.

Finally, the federal Cabinet may now be involved in decision-making declaring effects justified in the circumstances, deciding whether to approve or reject pipeline recommendations and requiring the NEB to reconsider its recommendation on a pipeline. This seems to be the epitome of politicizing a previously objective process.

Changes to the Species at Risk Act have ended the application of the active pipeline projects and lifted provisions for periodic permanent reviews with reasonable timelines of three to five years to now open-ended permits. Once again, the Minister can

extend any time limit or decide that it simply doesn't apply. Also, requirements for minimizing pipeline impacts on critical habitat of species at risk are henceforth exempted, and the important work of the National Roundtable on the Economy and the Environment will be no more, this institution, having been eliminated, as has the requirement for report on the greenhouse gas emission reductions.

Bill C-45, renamed the Navigable Waters Act and the Navigation Protection Act, reduced federally protected water to a list that currently includes only three water bodies in the NWT, Great Bear and Great Slave Lakes and the Mackenzie River. Protection of water quality in Canada has resulted from important clauses in our Environmental Assessment Act, our Fisheries Act and the Navigable Waters Act working in an integrated fashion. This last amendment, given all those legislative changes to other acts described above, throws to the wind the protection of most waters in Canada.

If this sounds like an industry wish list for the disassembly of the environmental protection, carefully put in place through extensive and long democratic debate, it in fact is. A letter obtained last year through access to information laws reveals the oil and gas industry was granted its request, and the federal government changed just this exact series of environmental laws. In a December 2011, to the Environment ministry and others, industry gave its list for changes in the National Energy Board Act, Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, Fisheries Act, Navigable Waters Protection Act, Species at Risk Act, Migratory Birds and Migratory Birds Convention Act. Within 10 months of the request, they had almost everything they asked for. Compare this to the treatment given this government which was never asked and never told.

More than half of our citizens are Aboriginal people who have constitutionally entrenched rights, including the right to be consulted and accommodated on matters affecting those rights. Apparently, they weren't asked to send their wish list to the federal Environmental Minister. When the changes came out, they were forced into the streets to protest through the Idle No More movement. Idle No More condemns the changes to federal environmental law enacted under Bills C-38 and C-45.

I believe everyone is interested in improved efficiencies and environmental review, and enhancing opportunity for environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable development. However, the legislative changes I have described here briefly go far beyond such a tune-up and, unfortunately, leave us in the NWT with the consequences. Incredibly, they do not address the regime changes that federal review of the regulatory regime explicitly identify.

Through this motion, the House is asking that this government inform the Government of Canada of our concerns and register our protests at not having information provided, nor the opportunity to be consulted. Our government has recognized the need to become familiar with the impacts of the changes to federal law, an exercise necessary to begin to estimate the cost to reach thorough environmental management regime. I recognize the challenges given that regulations and full implementation are still to come. Yet, the sweeping legislative changes are clear, and demand recognition and response.

Finally, we are asking for this government to determine how and where we will find the dollars necessary to implement reconstitution of this policy. Some might say, but what about the consequences to our discussions with the Government of Canada about devolution or other major partnership discussions underway. We are a small player on the national scene, but I have to ask what does this question say about the relationship we have with the federal government, our supposedly closest partner. What is the medal of this relationship?

I appreciate this opportunity to bring this motion forward again today with my colleague Mr. Yakeleya. I also appreciate the discussions I've had with my colleagues on the merits of this proposal and I seek their thoughtful response today as we prepare to vote. I am sure that regardless of Cabinet action today, most if not all of the regulatory concerns expressed in this motion are also held by this Cabinet. Here's a quotation from the draft vision of this government's Land is Life, the words of the GNWT Land Use and Sustainability Framework issued this June. "Land is life. It sustains and nourishes us spiritually, culturally, physically, economically and socially. Working together, Northerners will responsibly and sustainably manage the lands, waters and resources of the Northwest Territories for the benefit of current and future generations."

Once again, I think it's a great vision. I also think that today is the day to start implementing it, hopefully. Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Yakeleya and I have received significant support, as I've said, and I look forward to the comments of all representatives here today and hope the Premier will give Cabinet the okay for a free vote. Mahsi.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Member Bromley for raising this motion and bringing it to the floor, and colleagues for allowing us to again speak on this motion.

I have 10 things that Aboriginal people should know about the federal omnibus budget implementation legislation. As I read the legislation, looked over the two bills, I see that there is a tsunami wave of changes coming to the North and there's some big question marks for the Northwest Territories, because we have not yet seen Canada's changes to the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act and the Northwest Territories Waters Act, but we keep hearing they're coming. Changes to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, which is an act that applies to the Inuvialuit Settlement Region and to the national parks and to other federal laws, such as the National Energy Board Act, gives us an idea where Canada may be going and where our path may be carved out for us to follow.

Environmental assessments, point two. Public participation in the pipeline hearings and some environmental processes will be restricted to "interested parties." "Interested parties" is defined as a person "directly affected by the project or having relevant information or expertise in the opinion of responsible authority or review panels." As people from this land, our belief has always been that we are connected just as the Mackenzie River, which flows throughout the Northwest Territories.

Point three. There are new timelines for the project review. The National Energy Board pipeline reviews must be completed within 15 months. The environmental assessment conducted by independent panels must be completed within two years. These timelines will apply whether or not all concerns average people have in their say. Again, this process runs contrary to the beliefs of the Aboriginal people. When the time is right, the people are ready and we are set to go.

Point four, Fisheries Act. The Fisheries Act used to prohibit any work or undertaking that resulted in harmful alteration or disruption of fish habitat. With the Bill C-38 changes, the act now only applies as to where there is serious harm and where the fish harmed contributes to commercial, recreation or Aboriginal fisheries. Serious harm is defined as the death of a fish or any permanent alteration to or destruction of a fish habitat. This is a very high standard to meet. It essentially says most harm to fish and fish habitat is okay now, even if we're not sure of the consequences. Are we prepared to lead our people knowing this?

Point five, the changes to the Fisheries Act also meet gaps in the system in the Northwest Territories. Unlike the provinces, we do not have our own fisheries regulations. We also do not have the financial resources to start up our own monitoring program. How will we fill these gaps?

Point six, there are new definitions of Aboriginal fisheries that are not very clear. Although our rights

are protected under the Constitution Act, the act creates a lot of confusion for fisheries, for fishery officers and Aboriginal people.

Point seven, Species at Risk Act. Canada's Species at Risk Act says the federal regulatory authorities have to consider to try to minimize impacts on species at risk critical habitat before granting permits and licences for activities. With Bill C-38, the National Energy Board is now exempted from considering species at risk critical habitat when it reviews pipeline applications. Yet we know the pipeline can certainly affect the critical habitat or species like the caribou.

Point eight, the Species at Risk Act used to have time limits on permits for projects that affect species at risk and their habitat. This was a way of making sure that there was a check every few years at least. With the new legislation, those permits can now be open-ended.

Point nine, Navigable Waters Act. The Navigable Waters Act used to protect all of our lakes and rivers. With Bill C-45 there is now only federal protection for navigation on the Mackenzie River, Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake.

Point 10, the most important thing that people should know is that the federal government made these changes without consulting with the Aboriginal people. Did they get our consent?

In conclusion for this very important motion, I think it's to gather people from each region, come together and strategically talk about the changes that happened in the past and the changes that are happening now, and come back and come to a full-blown conference for the people of the Northwest Territories, and look at some of the changes that are going to impact the people of the Northwest Territories.

I thank Mr. Bromley again for bringing this motion forward and our colleagues for allowing us to speak on it today. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Bouchard.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the mover and seconder for this motion. I think this is a large issue. It's been debated throughout the country and it's sitting in front of our Legislative Assembly here now as a federal political issue.

Over the last few months, I've been asked several times where I stand on the issue, often being asked what my colour is, what party do I support in this issue. It is a federal issue, I do believe. The politics are difficult in the Northwest Territories when we are dependent on the federal government for our funding, for our infrastructure money, our borrowing limit and any discussions we have concerning money. So the keepers of our coffers are the ones

that are controlling this initiative, and I understand this motion is weighing us against some of our values, some of our issues about the land, the water and the uses of that. So I'm feeling a little bit torn about whether to support this motion.

Do I feel this would be an effective way to get to the federal government? Is this going to be an effective way to get our message out that we have concerns with the land? My concerns are the fact that these bills are passed. They are done with the federal government, and us making noise at the territorial level here will only make ripples to our people, our areas of concern, our funding, our infrastructure dollars.

A few months ago, when we were discussing this issue, I was definitely against it, discussing federal issues in the territorial Legislative Assembly here. I have lots of difficulty with the federal government implementing ombudsman's bills and bills that don't allow the public into the issues, for them to use their majority government to do what they will without public consultation, without Aboriginal group participation. I understand Idle No More. I attended some of their events and I appreciate some of the comments those people have been working on.

I also have an issue with this week's discussion in the news about the cutting of the Mackenzie Valley Review Board in half. I am a pro-development guy with responsible development, Mr. Speaker. My concern with that is, we have projects in the South Slave going forward right now, being reviewed right now. How is that to be done with half the manpower, half the workforce that the Mackenzie Valley has?

I have questions about the federal government. My concerns are pro and con on this issue. For that reason, I'm going to abstain from voting on this motion. I understand the mover's and seconder's passion for this and I understand there is a lot of passion out in our territory about this, but I think there are also some issues that we have politically. Aligning ourselves with the federal government, obviously they are the keepers of our funds, so I feel that this type of motion could be apprehensive for us, could be difficult for us in the future.

I recognize the mover's and seconder's valiant efforts, but I do recognize the need for regulation and reform. I also know that we're being torn here. Those are my feelings on the issue, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to vote, I will be abstaining.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. To the motion. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the mover and seconder of the motion with regard to their dissatisfaction with regulatory reform, Bill C-38 and Bill C-45. They would make some change to our regulatory regime that affects us here in the Northwest Territories.

I just want to advise the public, I know that huge Idle No More movement throughout the Northwest Territories, we're really proud that people are taking this initiative, being more aware of politics federally and territorially. But, as well, I just want to advise them that these bills have already been passed, so these changes are coming. The recommendations in the motion are to assess what impacts they will have on our northern territory. So I think that's where we're going. I'm not really comfortable with the tone of the motion, where we were saying the federal government is bad, kind of thing.

But at the same time, yes, they have a majority government, but I think it's an awareness thing. Even though they are a majority government, they still have to pursue more and fuller consultation than they have. I've spoken with my Cabinet colleagues and the federal government has spoken to some of our Ministers, but with our consensus-style government, we often do lots of consultations with the communities, in the smaller communities, showing them the bills we are changing, bills we want to enact. We have a very strong consultation process with our consensus-style government, but federally we don't see that. I have issues with that and I hope some of their parliamentary practices can change. Just because they are a majority government doesn't mean they don't have to consult people. But they do some types of consultation, but based on our standards, we feel it's not enough and I feel it's not enough as well.

I just want to commend constituents in my riding who got active in the Idle No More movement, especially the youth who got organized in my community of Fort Simpson. They are concerned about land and water, and the future as well.

I had spoken to them and I had said these bills have already passed, but we have to use momentum. The Idle No More movement, I believe, if it continues is when there's a vote on it in 2015 when there's a federal election and also our own GNWT elections then. That's the time the movement can really make an impact. Right now, it's kind of dealing on past bills that have been passed. We may have some say, hopefully, as we do the regulations and guidelines for some of the bills that have changed or been deleted. In that sense, we can move forward in working with the federal government.

Once again, I support the frustration of my constituents and the youth who have shown and had their own protest to express their concern. At the same time, I always felt that the Idle No More was kind of one-sided in the media. I really don't believe it's sweeping away all regulatory guidelines. There's still other legislation that protects the small streams, the small rivers, industry developing on our land. Gone are the days of rape and pillage of our land, Mr. Speaker. There's lots of legislation out

there. Some of the legislation was about getting rid of an act that's over 120 years old. I can see the value in that, but nobody is speaking about the current legislation that's there protecting our lands and resources, and there's lots of strong ones. Our own government has lots of good, strong legislation that protects against that.

However, I do believe the spirit and intent of the motion there. Just with that alone, like I said, I disagree with some of the strong statements like the big bad federal government, but I am with the intent of the motion that Northerners should have a voice with any changes that impact our North, so with that, I will be voting in favour of the motion. Thank you very much.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the motion. Mr. Moses.

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You heard my colleagues today. This is a very timely motion to be bringing into the House, especially when we've got so many other strong business topics we are dealing with going through the budget process. It's a very stressful time and you feel that you are almost backed into a corner with federal government legislation and the bills that are coming through. As well, some Members here are coming and talking about wanting to bring this motion through without having really strong discussions.

Over the last few weeks that we've been here, we've literally been running from meeting to meeting without giving these very strong concrete discussions on the item and working on what we have to do within government for our own people, our health, our education, our justice.

Today it was a very hard decision to make, but in the short time I've been here in the Legislature – about 16 months – I've learned a lot. I've come here on the concept that I am here to represent the people of my community, but also the people of the Northwest Territories. I've always stood behind that. There are a lot of people who do a lot of good work out there in terms of environment, in terms of health, but there are a lot of other people who do a lot of good work in terms of creating jobs, business opportunities, and creating infrastructure in our region and for the Northwest Territories.

Just a little history. When we talk about protecting land and waters, all waters flow down to our region, the Beaufort-Delta, through the Mackenzie River down to the Arctic Ocean, so we would be the ones who would be impacted if there should be some type of disaster happening. We want to protect that. But also in the Beaufort-Delta communities, all you have to see in the past year and a half are all the houses being boarded up, all the jobs, all the people going on income support, and the dire straits that my people are in looking for jobs. They're looking for a way to put food on the table and to pay the bills.

I respect Mr. Bromley for bringing this motion forward. I respect his expertise, his research, all the work that he does when he brings stuff into the House and the comments that he makes in the House. We don't always agree on everything, but he does do his homework and he does consult with his constituents.

I also respect Mr. Yakeleya. In the last 16 months that I've been here, Mr. Yakeleya has always gone back to his roots, his knowledge, his culture, his traditions, his people. He's been a big speaker of land and water, and I respect him staying with his traditional values and preaching about them.

I've listened to the constituents over the last little while. I've heard a lot from people back home, people throughout the Northwest Territories. This is land that our parents grew up on, before there was industry. Our ancestors grew up on this land. It provides food; it provides connection to the land and our traditions and culture.

Last year I was able to attend the 10-day NEB meeting, and listen to the constituents and the people in the Beaufort-Delta region talking about development, talking about stewardship, and making sure we hold our industry accountable, but also hold our governments accountable. It didn't fall on deaf ears, Mr. Speaker. One strong comment that I did take out of that meeting is the North can be one of the leaders in the world in where we can develop industry in a very responsible and efficient manner.

I know one of the concerns was the timeline and the deadlines on some of these regulations as they happen. I didn't work in the government, but living in Inuvik, you sat through the whole regulatory process for the Mackenzie Gas Project and that dragged on a very long time. My community and the communities right down the Mackenzie Valley missed out on a great opportunity that would have brought a lot of resource revenues to this territory, and also created a lot of jobs in the Northwest Territories.

We're here to make tough decisions. As you've heard, some of my colleagues have mentioned that the bills have been passed, they are going to work. As I said, it's very timely that this government is starting to build a strong relationship with the federal government. It just goes to show that with our NWT Days I got to witness it and I got to see our Cabinet Ministers meeting with other federal Ministers and doing a good job for the people of the Northwest Territories, and I respect them for that, for going long days and making the commitment to meet with our federal Ministers.

As I said, this is a very tough one for me. I respect all the work that Mr. Bromley and Mr. Yakeleya have done. I've consulted with some constituents and other groups and have listened to what people had to say. As much as I want to support the

concept of this motion, there is wording in the motion that I don't agree with. I do strongly agree our government is doing the work that it needs to do, and when it comes to those discussions they'll continue to work and they work in the best interests of our residents, and look at protecting and making sure that our lands and waters that are getting developed are being developed in a very safe manner. We elected them there for that reason.

Today I'm very torn, but when it comes down to the vote on this motion I am going to have to abstain from the vote as in my community I find both sides in terms of the situation we're going through economically. The sooner we can get work in our region, the less impact it will have on this government in terms of dollars being put into that community and getting our people eating and putting food on the table. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Moses. To the motion. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I love that we live in a democracy and we live in a country where we have freedom to express our opinions, whether that be by way of protest or of prodding the government.

The bills have already been passed in Ottawa that bring about these effects. We could protest that here by way of motion in this Legislature. However, given the fact that we have our eye on a bigger prize, which is devolution, I do not think that is expedient at this time.

I cannot support the motion for that reason. It is a way of sending a message, but to me, devolution is the prize. I've been around not only this Legislature but around this question for many, many years. To me, to get control of resource management into the hands of Northerners is what the ultimate goal is here. I know that devolution may not go as far as some people would like to see it go, but it is a first step and I believe that there will be more autonomy, and more decision-making, and more powers that will come to the Northwest Territories. So whatever the final Devolution Agreement ends up looking like, it may not be everything we want, but it is a step in the right direction.

Although I said in a committee meeting that everything is permissible, not everything is constructive, that's a virtual lie, in case you didn't know. The point being, at this juncture, what could be constructive about when the legislation has already been passed in Ottawa, when we are on a track to strike a deal that is in our best interest. I'm not saying that the federal government is going to punish us if we pass a motion in this House, but you know what it does? It sends a mixed message. I would like the majority of the legislators in this House to send a message to the federal government at this time.

On any day of the week we have the ability to stand up and criticize other types of legislation which will remain in place. We are not going to be taking over all control, all legislation. There will be much legislation that the federal government will retain in their control. We have that opportunity to negotiate, to critique, to have a say with the federal government.

But at this juncture, after the passage, these two bills are already a fait accompli. I do not see the sense of the timing of the federal government registering a motion of this House now that we don't approve of what has been going on.

In respect to the preservation and conservation of the environment and that whole issue, I also respect my colleagues in this House who have brought forward this motion. But to be honest with you, the pendulum has swung a way too far the other way for a long time. It was very difficult to conduct business in the Northwest Territories. I believe there is middle ground, I believe there's fair ground, and we need to find where that is. I don't think that we should let it go so far the other way that we become reckless or careless with our natural environment.

There are good things and bad things in the omnibus. I guess that's why it's called an omnibus and that's why we can't really break it out. And that's another whole topic about whether the federal government should use the majority to pass legislation through omnibus bills. That's another topic for another day.

To suffice it for today, to say that we need to keep our eye on the prize, which is devolution, autonomy, control of northern resources in the hands of Northerners. This is the first step of it in devolution, and I would like to support our Cabinet and continue to pursue that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. To the motion. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to rise in front of my colleagues here today and thank the mover of the motion, Mr. Bromley. He has definitely shown great stewardship in environmental concerns and causes for most of his political life, and I do applaud his actions.

Again to Mr. Yakeleya, the seconder of the motion. His wisdom reaches far beyond the walls here of the Legislature, so I thank you for your always kind words and thoughts.

You've heard from some of my colleagues for a second time, concerns over two federal bills. We were here to talk about the impacts and what they may have on our lands, our water and our wildlife.

Bill C-38 did receive Royal Assent on June 29, 2012. As has been said before in this House by

many Members, we really did not receive enough information from all NWT stakeholders to really position ourselves in addressing all the potential impacts and effects of this bill, and I want to make sure that is clearly said. That is also for Bill C-45 which was recently passed. That bill replaced a very old legislation, an 1882 legislation which deals primarily with the continued protection of our Canadian waterways via the building of critical infrastructure such as bridges and balancing this with safe navigation. Again, this Assembly still has not received all the NWT stakeholder information to truly understand all the territorial ramifications of such a federal bill.

It has been said we talked about the fact that only a couple of lakes and waterways have been mentioned, such as the Great Slave Lake, Great Bear Lake and the Mackenzie River. What we don't see is how they came up with those. Those were due to a comprehensive quantitative analysis, and these bodies of water were chosen on a point system using Canadian hydrographic services, freight scores and navigation work score. These were not just pulled out of a hat. There has been a lot of science and math that has gone into this. Some have expressed why only these three bodies of water, but we have also informed that there is a process in place for adding other bodies of water to this list over time on a standardized point system. So those are promising points.

It is also further understood that this new bill will not diminish the safety oversights of the current NWT waterways. We should also note that there is also nine other acts of federal Parliament that govern on marine safety, and with extensive safety via the Canadian Shipping Act. Again, it is not just one act that is going to have a direct impact on our waterways. We have other acts to help protect us.

My interpretation of Bill C-45 with our environment in mind, and I'd have to say, I have a hard time finding evidence that suggests that there would be a reduction in the environmental protection of our NWT waters. That, I needed to go on record. It is, through research, that the current Canada legislation governing the environmental protection of waterways, in my humble opinion, is not affected by the proposed amendments to Bill C-45. These changes suggested in no way will diminish our federal government's commitment to protecting our environment in the future.

These are federal bills. The people of NWT have elected a federal representative to represent our concerns. Yes, we serve the same people, but again, I said before, for using this House as a means of partisan tone, I am gravely concerned that the potential posturing as we heard from some Members will jeopardize and could jeopardize the many critical projects that we have before us such as the Inuvik-Tuk highway. We have heard

devolution. I am going to say regulatory improvement. We have another big project on the ground soon with the fibre optic project. Those are just to name a few, and there are going to be more.

As much as I do not want to diminish our ability to spearhead good solid debate in the House for all Northerners, I believe we need to do so in a more productive, positive and respectful tone, and to always govern ourselves in a non-partisan manner, especially with our federal partners.

I want to say that I do support the spirit and the intent of those Members bringing their thoughts or views to the floor of the House. We as MLAs have received many e-mails. But passing judgment on complex federal legislation with a motion in itself, which is indeed almost omnibus in nature, in my humble opinion, does not represent all the interest of Northerners.

Although today's motion, I have to say, is much softer in tone in content than the original motion that we saw back in the fall, I saw some issues with some of the items mentioned and some of the thoughts that were brought forward. You and I know there is a lot of emphasis that has gone into that motion.

Even though it speaks more about open debate and dialogue with respect to self and public governments, I do support those in that motion, so I'm polarized, Mr. Speaker. There is still, in my mind, too much flaw in the motion itself, and it is for those reasons that I find myself torn and trying to do what I think is right not only for the constituents of Range Lake, and the constituents of Yellowknife or the constituents of Northwest Territories, I will and must abstain from the support. Thank you very much.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. To the motion. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to thank Mr. Bromley and Mr. Yakeleya, the mover and the seconder of the motion, for bringing this motion forward for a second time.

We had great debate at committee about this last fall, and we have had debate about it, not quite so much debate in the last week or so. Members have received evidence of considerable public support for this motion since the motion was given notice of on Tuesday.

I rise in support of this motion again, as I did in the fall. I support the motion because I am still – my views have not changed – gravely concerned with the changes in the federal environmental legislation that have taken place as a result of Bills C-38 and C-45. I speak for myself, but I also speak on behalf of my constituents, as I imagine all Members here are, but I am also speaking on behalf of other concerned NWT residents and organizations who have expressed their concern with the actions of

our federal government by passing these two large bills.

Many of our residents are concerned, concerned for our environment and they are concerned for our environment because of the ramifications of Bills C-38 and C-45. I think we have probably – I know I haven't checked my e-mail lately – up to the time I went to the House, received 20 e-mails in the last 24 hours urging us to pass this motion.

I feel, as a Member of the Assembly, that it is my duty to give voice to constituent concerns, to hear what the public is saying and to give it some exposure. We know that both Bill C-38 and C-45 are very large and all-encompassing. Everybody has spoken to that, but one of the concerns that I have been hearing from constituents – and it is a concern of my own and it has been mentioned by many people – is the lack of consultation on both of these two bills with the people, with the government, with the organizations who are going to be impacted by the effects of the bill. There are a number of organizations, Aboriginal governments, we have environmental-minded organizations, we have municipal governments, we have individual constituents who are concerned about the effects these bills are going to have. Nobody, including this government, had any opportunity to provide any input into these bills.

The bills have passed. I agree with that. We cannot disagree. That is a fact. However, the regulations that are going to actually kind of govern what is going to fall out of these bills have not yet been written. They have not yet been passed. We as a government should be demanding some input into the regulations that the federal government is going to write that will have an impact on us. I feel very strongly that the lack of consultation is a major factor in our relationship with the federal government.

I have to agree with some of my colleagues who said that there are parts of these bills that are positive. I agree that our regulatory regime is probably more onerous than it needs to be. There are some changes in these bills that will reduce the regulatory system that we have. I can't disagree with that. Many people across the country have seen, particularly in business, that to reduce our regulatory system is a good thing. I think it is mining and exploration for us up here that have said yes, this is good, let's make sure that we carry on with it.

I do agree that the system needs to be simpler and more streamlined. Where I am really concerned about the impacts of these two bills is that it is going to be a large negative impact on the NWT environment, on our people, on our land, on our waters. One of the particularly large acts which is going to have a big impact on us is the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, and it governs the referral of projects for environmental assessments.



This is effected in Bill C-38 and it puts restrictions on the public participation in environmental assessments. It narrows the definition of environmental effects and it reduces the funding for participants in environmental assessments. The thing that I think concerns me a lot, and I have heard it a lot from constituents as well, is it increases the involvement of Cabinet in making decisions around environmental assessments. So there will be situations where, as residents of Canada, as constituents of Canada, we will have absolutely no input into whether or not a certain project should go to an environmental assessment. We will then have no opportunity to provide input into what effect a development would have on us here in the NWT.

There are financial implications, as well, as the result of the passage of these bills. I think that's referenced in some of the information that we have received from the government in their analysis of the impacts these bills are going to have on us.

I believe in streamlining, I believe in being more efficient, but I don't believe in doing it at any cost, and I don't believe in doing it at the cost of our fisheries or of our environment. Mr. Yakeleya spoke some time ago, I think he spoke in the fall about the effect that these bills were going to have on our fisheries and some of it may be minor, it may just be that I can no longer go and fish in a particular lake because it's now not designated a fishery, but it's entirely possible that Aboriginal communities may no longer be able to fish on a certain lake because it's now been designated not a fishery and, therefore, they're not going to be able to use it.

One of the things that I see as a potential, a possible effect of the changes that have come through in these omnibus bills, is, for instance, the use of a lake by a mining company. Right now they have to go through an environmental assessment. There is a fair bit of consideration that's given to the use of that lake. That's no longer going to happen. A mining company will be able to drain a lake for use as a mine and nobody will be able to have an opportunity to try and stop that.

As I understand it, most of our lakes in the NWT have been deemed to be non-important fisheries. So anybody can do anything they want with them. I believe it's the responsibility of our government, the NWT government, to consider the effects of federal legislation on our territory, and I thank the government for the work that they have done to date, but I also believe that it's the responsibility of our government to protect the NWT and to protect its residents from the effects of that legislation, to communicate territorial concerns to the federal government.

I believe that's what this motion asks for. It has the same operative clauses as the motion that was presented to us in the fall. There has been no

change in what we are asking for in this motion. That's been suggested by some of the speakers. The motion asks that the GNWT look after NWT interests with the federal government on behalf of NWT residents, and I think that's something that our government should be doing and I think it's something that we as MLAs ought to be asking our Cabinet to be doing.

I know that some Members have stated that they don't believe this is business that we should be dealing with here in this House because it's federal. I know that some Members think that this is a partisan motion. I cannot agree to that at all. I think it's totally non-partisan. There's no reference to party at all. The only partisan part of it is that some of us believe more strongly, perhaps, in the environment than others, and I leave the public to decide who falls where. I believe this is territorial business and the effects of these two bills are going to be felt on us in the NWT.

I want to just mention a bit of the support that we've received in the last couple of days. We have received, there has been a press release from the Dene Nation who have indicated their support for this motion. I want to quote two statements from some of the e-mails that we've received. One of them says, "your silence on this issue implies agreement," and by that they meant agreement with the federal government's position and agreement to all the changes that come with these two bills. The second one is, "any citizen who cares for this and the next generation must, in conscience, oppose these publicized and outrageous changes."

So I want to again thank the mover and the seconder of the motion for bringing it to the floor, for providing us with the opportunity for this dialogue and for expressing our views. I hope that my colleagues, many of them have already indicated their support or their lack of or their non-support, and I would hope that they would reconsider. I would like to also thank Mr. Bromley and Mr. Yakeleya for providing us with a huge amount of information on the effects of these bills, on the impact that the changes in these bills will have on us. I think Mr. Bromley laid that out extremely well and Mr. Yakeleya did as well. I thank them for the work they've done on that.

So I would encourage my colleagues to think twice. Those that are going to abstain, think twice. Those that are against this motion, think three times and I hope this motion will succeed. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Nadli.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to congratulate my colleagues for leading the charge on this, Mr. Bromley and Mr. Yakeleya. Simply, I rise in favour and support of this motion and I will be voting in favour of this motion. In being here as a Regular MLA, you have to try to represent the views of people that you represent,

and being a representative, you need to ensure that you work with your people; and this principle, that's very, very paramount for me, is the principle of protecting the land.

The land is my culture and my life, and it's relative to the land. So in that respect, we need to ensure that the integrity of the environment is maintained, but I realize that as we enter this time in the North here, we need to ensure that there's a balance between conservation and development and there has been some efforts in some regions that have tried to advance their land use plans and their land claims, and in that respect I support them to try to advance progress so that certainty can be achieved.

For the most part I will be voting in favour and some comments that were made today in the House I would like to support. I will be voting in favour. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to use my time here today to focus in on the pluses and minuses of this motion. First, on the plus side of the ledger, I want to thank Mr. Bromley for bringing forward this motion. This is the second time it's been around. The first time, I'll have to tell you, the tone brought forward to the Members was less than receptive I have to admit. But that said, I wish to acknowledge Mr. Bromley's relentless pursuit of environmental initiatives. There are times that we think that that's the only focus he's got, but I have to admit he is a good colleague to work with and I do thank him for the stuff he does bring to the table. Without his point of view, sometimes I think that perspective would be lost. Of course, in the context of balancing perspective, it's very fundamental that that perspective is brought to the table for consideration.

At the same time, I wanted to thank Member Yakeleya. We've been good friends for many years and I want to say that Member Yakeleya's unwavering passion continues to shine through for the people and the land, and today is no less of an example of his passion for the land, and how important it is to him, and how he sees the future and the role he needs to play for it.

To the motion specifically now, I'd like to say that I wonder if this motion is almost a year late. A year ago I think it might have been better timing for it. A lot of these revisions have already come and they've gone in, as we've heard repeatedly without me needing to go at length of it, but Bills C-38 and C-45 have already passed. They've already passed with a majority government that pays little attention to us other than to keep an eye on us from time to time to wonder what type of mess are we stirring up over here, and trying to decide on when they're going to transfer authority.

I can't argue with their philosophy in the sense that they needed major revisions. I would define the old laws archaic and I would define them, respectfully, that they were so outdated I understand why they have to do revisions. As we all know, to do good business, everything needs to be revised from time to time.

The issue of environmental protection, acute here more in the Northwest Territories, does cause concern, because the way the motion paints this right now is if you vote in favour of it, you care for the environment and if you vote against it the way the motion tries to paint you in a position, you don't care for the environment. That is very troublesome and I would say many of my colleagues have spoken to that already, that they feel that the motion is divisive in its own way.

Northern voices have been strong, regardless of what party politics you share behind the scenes or even upfront, whether what side of the continuum you're on. I think all Northerners care about environmental protection. I don't think it's one or the other. I think that's one of the great things about being a Northerner here. I believe people care passionately about environment and it doesn't have to come at the cost of opportunity.

Speaking of opportunity, I should also acknowledge the flurry of e-mails we've received from the public the last couple of days and, of course, the forum or standard e-mail that's being pushed forward repeatedly; the same e-mail, that's what I'm getting at.

The fact is, the citizens are taking an opportunity to engage their Legislature and their elected officials. That is exactly what a democracy is about. I'm grateful for that. We live in such a wonderful place. If we were MLAs in Edmonton or Toronto or those types of places, we wouldn't even know some of these people and it's so exciting to see that people send us notes on their perspective on how this affects them, and it's very meaningful because we do know a lot of these people. At the same time, we actually know their passion of why they are sending these e-mails and we can relate to them at the same time.

As I said earlier about Bill C-38 and 45, they've already passed, June and December of last year. Is this motion more of a rear-view perspective going forward, saying can we change something in the past that's already been long gone? I think it's more of a context in time where we have a situation where people want to express their views about how important the environment is, and I support that. I don't think we need to let up on any perspective where we should compromise the environment on the sake of success for the benefits of performing, or pursuit, sorry, in that regard for development jobs and opportunities. We know we have many regions that are struggling and they

need opportunities. But by the same token, I think Northerners are very acute to the needs of the land, the needs of the water, the needs of the people, and I don't think that comes as a compromise, Mr. Speaker.

You know, it's funny. I do agree with Member Bisaro on this point about commenting on federal legislation. Ironically, I think it's part of our job to comment and criticize and we live in such a wonderful time. We shouldn't be afraid to say to that institution, the Government of Canada, here are our voices. I feel comfortable in today's day and age that reprisal will not come. We've heard repeatedly about the undertones of the partisan relationship that this motion has. I agree with Member Bisaro's comment that it's not written in that tone where it references one over another, but at the same time you can feel it and you can sense it and you can smell it. Anybody in politics can read it. They would say it clearly is against the stripes the federal government is.

That said, I acknowledge the pressure our Cabinet must be under. Our Cabinet cannot and should not be necessarily fighting the federal government based on their simple stripes and what colour they wear and what jersey they wear this year, because, as a partisan government, we must find ways always, regardless of the issue, to work with our federal counterparts. So I recognize the tough job that they must do in balancing these terms, because when we go from one government to the next – and they do have different visions – it's a difficult balancing act, and I wish to tip my hat to them on the challenge that they carry forward.

I think that in time our devolution will bring forward our opportunity to manage the environmental wants and needs of our citizens. I can appreciate the constructiveness of why this motion is important. At the same time, I also feel there are misleading statements in this whereas our government has not been consulted. I don't think that's actually been the case. I think there have been cases where they have had consultation, and I've even spoken to Minister Miltenberger and he has, himself, revealed that to me, the comment of saying there has been some type of discussion. Has it been done in isolation? I am going to say I believe, no, it has not. Has it been done heavy handed with a majority government? I am going to say probably in the sense that they are doing what they want to do because they believe they have the mandate in focus to do as such. It doesn't mean we have to agree with them, but we have to realize what's going on. I'm a pragmatic person, Mr. Speaker. If this is the ground that's laid before us, how do we find a way to do this?

I want to thank MLA Bromley once again, by saying that I had asked him to put the statement in about rigorously seeking Government of Canada's

support. I think right now, if we should be asking for anything, we should be asking for the support to continue on the ideals of what we want. Someone is going to say, what exactly does that mean. If we feel our environmental system isn't being supported in a manner where we can do these proper reviews, not only the issues I was raising today earlier in my Member's statement and question period, then we should be asking them to assist us. Because our ideals are slightly different, in some ways I think they are a lot better, our northern ideals and values. We should be asking them for their support to continue on until the day we can manage our own environmental management boards. In that sense, the people of the Northwest Territories manage their own.

Right now, on a deviation from the point, the people are doing a good job of their boards, and their land claimant groups and their own rights, and they are doing a job and it's a shame that it's being constructed in the way it is. But that's another discussion for another time.

I'm going to close by saying a few things. I acknowledge the spirit and intent of this and, of course, this puts me in a very difficult position. On one hand I'm not sure I completely agree with this motion, on the other hand I know what he's trying to say. Or I believe, in some regards, I know what Mr. Bromley is saying. I started off by saying that Mr. Bromley has been a tremendous advocate for environmental issues that will go down in history for many years. He'll be a trivia answer one day when someone says, who championed the environment in a way like no other in the Northwest Territories. They'll say, a) David Suzuki, or b) Bob Bromley. They may seem somewhat of the same guy some days it seems like, but Mr. Bromley will be that trivia contest, I'm sure, on environmental issues.

In the same token, as I said earlier, the motion is written in a manner like it almost feels like if you vote yes, you care about the environment; if you vote no, you don't care about the environment. So I find it sort of needles MLAs to make a choice, and it's challenging to make a choice that's fair, balanced and reasonable. I feel, as an MLA, I was elected to make a choice one way or the other.

So principally I'm going to end with this: It's always been my belief that if a motion is not necessarily one I fully support, I will not obstruct if I feel that its message is true. I believe the message is about support for the environment.

I don't feel voting for this motion does irreparable harm to our territorial system, irreparable harm to the people of the Northwest Territories, I think it speaks to the spirit and intent and the passion people have for the land.

I think that standing against it, in some measures can be a principle by saying, well, I don't like the motion and I'm going to vote against it. I don't think

it's helpful in this case. I think we did send a message in the past where there are certain things I can't support, but I think in this particular one, as I said, I feel that the principle sometimes outweighs the mechanics of the message, so I will be supporting the motion as it's been written. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank Mr. Bromley and Mr. Yakeleya for bringing this motion forward. I do strongly believe in protecting our environment but, as Mr. Hawkins has stated, I believe that this motion has come forward a little too late. Also, I do not support this motion because I feel that this will jeopardize the priorities that this government has set on building a partnership with the federal government. I strongly believe that this territory needs to adapt to those changes. One way we could do that is to get our Devolution Agreement in place. I believe that is where we can ensure we work with the federal government to protect our territory, through sustainable development.

With that, I'm not going to support this motion. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Blake. To the motion. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, the government will be voting against this motion. This motion takes issue with decisions made by the government that they had every right to make. It then calls upon the Government of the Northwest Territories to take action in areas of federal jurisdiction. We cannot do that, Mr. Speaker. Allowing this motion to pass would create false expectations in the public about our government's legitimate role and responsibilities in the areas noted in the motion. Rather than let that impression take hold, we think it is important that Cabinet vote on this motion instead of abstaining.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is focused on managing the business of the territory. That has to be our primary objective here, not telling the Government of Canada how it should do business.

We aren't the federal opposition. We are a government in our own right and we need to concentrate on managing our own affairs. While federal decisions often have impacts on provinces and territories, it is important that we respect the distinct roles and responsibilities Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories has. These changes are the law of the land. It is better for us to decide how to manage the impacts than to rail against the process. Respecting the jurisdiction of Parliament doesn't mean we have to agree with its decisions. We aren't here to defend federal

legislation, and we aren't going to say that we support the changes that have been made. But respecting the jurisdiction of the federal government doesn't mean that our government will stop advocating for the interests of our residents.

We will continue to work with the federal government and raise issues that matter to Northerners. Where we have differences of opinion, we need to respect those differences, find ways to rise above them and keep working together.

This motion suggests our government has not been diligent in managing the affairs of the territory. That's simply not true. Many of the issues that have been raised publicly in conjunction with C-38 and C-45 have been identified and raised by the Government of the Northwest Territories before. Our government is committed to sustainable development that balances economic development with concern for the environment. We identified the need for regulatory improvement in the last government and have been working on it since 2008.

Devolution is another part of our ongoing efforts in this area and it will enhance our ability to manage land and resources according to northern priorities and principles.

I also have to take issue, Mr. Speaker, with the suggestions in this motion that the responsibilities the Government of the Northwest Territories is pursuing through devolution will be compromised by Bill C-38 and C-45. This is not correct. Indeed, nothing in the proposed legislation referenced in the motion diminishes the regime we will be inheriting through devolution. The MVRMA reflects a system promised and constitutionally protected agreements, as do screening and review processes under the Inuvialuit Final Agreement. We need to be clear that these are not being addressed in Bill C-38 and C-45 and will not be diminished through devolution.

Environmental assessment in the Mackenzie Valley is governed by the Gwich'in, Sahtu and Tlicho land claims. This will not be affected by the federal changes proposed in Canada's Bills C-38 or C-45. The system of environmental regulation in the Mackenzie Valley will continue after devolution.

In the Inuvialuit Settlement Region there are also environmental protection measures guaranteed in a land claim. The Inuvialuit Final Agreement establishes an environmental screening committee and an environmental impact review board that has been designed with and takes into account the views of the Inuvialuit. Nothing in the proposed federal legislation will lessen those roles and responsibilities, and we look forward to working with the Inuvialuit after devolution to develop complementary territorial practices.

Devolution will give this Legislative Assembly greater ability to manage lands and resources. We have to be clear, though, that not all federal responsibilities in this area are going to be devolved. Canada will continue to be responsible for environmental assessment in the Mackenzie Valley, as Members already know.

We must also be clear that Canada's jurisdiction over fisheries will continue after devolution, just as that jurisdiction applies in the provinces. Canada's jurisdiction over navigable waters will continue after devolution, just as it applies in the provinces, and Canada's concurrent jurisdiction over the environment will continue after devolution as well.

Suggesting that Canada will simply download responsibility for a broken regulatory system on our government is wrong and misleading, as our suggestions that our government will somehow bear the costs for this. Canada will continue to have responsibilities in the Northwest Territories after devolution, and we expect they will continue to fulfil their ongoing responsibilities. It doesn't make sense for this Legislative Assembly to appropriate resources for something Canada will be responsible for. We must accept that Canada has the authority to make changes to its own legislation and will continue to be able to do so after devolution.

When this government has questions or concerns about federal decisions or legislation, we prefer to raise them in a mature dialogue with Canada. The rules of engagement between governments are informed by traditions of diplomacy and respect for each other's areas of jurisdiction, and mature governments communicate with each other professionally and with respect, particularly in areas of disagreement.

NWT Days was a great example of how our government can constructively and proactively engage with the Government of Canada. I think all Members who were in Ottawa will agree with me that we made a positive impression that will help us advance our priorities and strengthen our relationship with Canada and other stakeholders in the capital. I was very proud of how all members of our delegation, both Cabinet and Regular Members, conducted themselves in the best traditions of statesmanship and collegiality. That should be our model for engagement with another government, Mr. Speaker.

The principles of courtesy and respect in our relationships with other governments are very much in line with traditional Aboriginal values and the principles of consensus government. Ill-informed and misleading motions about the actions of another government, the parliamentary equivalent of stamping our foot and hold our breath are not the way we want to do business.

We have much better ways of communicating our concerns to the federal government. We had

concerns about Bill C-10 and we raised them through respectful dialogue with Canada. We are doing the same with Bills C-38 and C-45.

Members and the people of the Northwest Territories can rest assured that we will always raise our voices on behalf of our territory as required and whenever indicated. We have done it before and we are well engaged in doing so now on Bills C-38 and C-45. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. To the motion. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to add a few words, as well, to this debate.

For 46 years and 17 Assemblies we have been working together on a foundation of very, very fundamental principles, the protection in accordance to the land, the water and the animals. We need to work together, Aboriginal governments and public government. Our common desire to control our own fate is to eventually achieve self-government.

Every Legislative Assembly has built off the work of the previous Assembly, and this 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly is no different. We stand on the work of 16 previous Assemblies, and I would say, without any hesitation or equivocation, there should be no doubt, in this Assembly or in the public that are listening to this debate, that any one of us MLAs cares any less about the land, the water, the animals, sustainable development or the question of Northerners to finally control their own destiny. That's not the debate here today.

I would suggest to you that what we should be talking about and what the focus is, is this motion, as it is worded, appropriate at this particular time. I would suggest to you that it's not. We have many other issues at play and the motion itself tries to address a whole host of issues. It is clear from the debate and those who are supporting this bill that there is strong unhappiness with the federal government in the bills they've passed. Be that as it may, our job as a government, as the Premier has said, is to manage our way through this. The recommendation and the therefore that speak to the territorial government are not clear and they are not especially helpful. Tell them we are unhappy and, oh, yes, we want more money.

We are within a hair's breadth of devolution, resource revenue sharing, \$65 million; A-based transfers, another \$65 million – the culmination of a dream to control the levers of our destiny. We have to focus on those things. The work we do in the environment in this territory, I would hold up for comparison to any other jurisdiction in this country. In fact, I would submit to you, that in spite of the burdens of some of the regulatory millstones we have to carry that are not ours and that we are soon

going to be rid of, is the fact that we have done enormously good work. We are going to negotiate an orderly transfer with the federal government. We are doing work on water, wildlife. We have been preparing ourselves for decades for this time and we are just about there.

This motion, as it is worded, is not particularly helpful. It gives voice to the unhappiness with what the federal government has done, but we are legislators. We have to take the broad view. We know that we can balance resource development and the environment. We know that we can do a better job as Northerners and has ever been done before. We will do that and we will demonstrate that. We have demonstrated it in a whole host of other areas.

We know that in our small communities, there are enormous employment challenges, challenges with cost of living. Those are things that are driving MLAs every day. Let us not lose track of that.

Forty-six years, we are just about there. We have to manage our way through this. This is similar to global warming and climate change. There are things happening to us that we didn't necessarily initiate or that we don't control. But as we have done time after time as a government and as a territory, we will manage our way through this. As we sign those agreements, we will be better off tomorrow than we ever were today or in the past.

There should be no concern about people's commitment to the environment here. All we are talking about is this motion is not the time and there hasn't been the time for the discussion to have it thoughtfully fully worded out address the concerns of all the Members and be put forward in a more constructive way. That is not how we do business in a consensus government.

I, as well as Cabinet, as the Premier indicated, will be voting against this motion. Let us not lose track of all the things that we have in common and there should be nobody leaving here today thinking that somehow those that voted against or for or abstained are any less concerned about the North, the land, the water, the animals, how do we have a productive life for our people. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I will go back to the mover of the motion for final comments.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks for all of the representatives in the House today that spoke and shared their perspectives. I kind of disagree with the recent comment that this is not the way things should be done. I think this is the way things should be done. We should be bringing these things into the House and debating them and casting our votes. I very much appreciate this democratic approach.

Many have raised the point that this is a democracy. A fundamental issue that, of course, causes these sorts of dilemmas is when we don't follow a democratic process.

All of the changes addressed in this motion have been perpetrated by the Government of Canada through omnibus bills in which these are hundreds and hundreds of pages, thousands of pages over two. C-38, hundreds of pages, many, many pieces of legislation, not one amendment, Mr. Speaker. No debate. There was not one Canadian idea that was worthy of consideration in that omnibus bill with all of these regulatory changes.

We heard from the Premier today that this will jeopardize our relationship, and we heard that concern from several people. I would say that the Premier's comments today will certainly solidify our relationship with the federal government, but I am asking the question, is that the kind of relationship we want when we cannot speak our piece, when we cannot raise concerns.

We have seen dramatic changes, the undermining of legislation developed over decades, with good debate and consultation with Canadians throughout the country, completely removed without debate and not expressing our concerns, not being able to have our Premier step out publicly and say, we disagree with this.

Not only that, but we know you're only half done. My colleague, Mr. Yakeleya, has mentioned the MVRMA which the Premier says can't be changed, but we know there are changes coming. He mentioned the NWT Act. He mentioned a number of other pieces of legislation, all of which we know there are changes coming, and we have a record of not being consulted here. Are we still not going to speak out? Are we going to continue to let our voices be repressed rather than knowing there is more coming, that we're not being approached? Let's get our perspectives out there now. Let's talk to them. Let's assure our citizens that we hear their voices. My e-mail box is full. They are not negative things; they are supporting the direction this motion takes.

The Premier has assured us we have, in fact, not given up on taking over authority for the MVRMA. It may happen sooner, it may happen later, but that is the authority that we are looking for. Fisheries is a federal authority. I haven't said it is not and I haven't said it shouldn't be, but all provinces have jurisdiction on fisheries. How do they do that? They put fish in their Wildlife Act and they have authority over fisheries. So there can be shared participation.

We don't have authority. We know that there are major gaps and, in fact, I know that Cabinet is aware that there are major gaps in the Northwest Territories created by the changes to the Fisheries Act. I hope we are speaking out on that to the federal government behind closed doors

apparently, but one way or the other, I hope we are speaking out as the Premier says we are in some areas. Here we are left with these gaps, not speaking out on it and with no recourse to fill those gaps as most of the provinces have.

The Premier says we must accept the authority of the federal government, but again, what kind of relationship is it when we can't comment on their actions, especially when they affect us and largely us and often only us? It is affecting legislation that governs the people of the Northwest Territories.

The Premier talks about a respectful approach. Again, what is a respectful approach? To me it's a democratic approach where full debate is heard, Canadians' voices are heard and points that they raise are considered.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and Members in the House have raised many issues. Again, there is much other legislation that will undoubtedly be changed, and not necessarily favourably to our situation. We need to be putting our voices out there now so that we can start to try and minimize that.

I know that the recent effects on the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board have been mentioned. I haven't dwelled on that because that's a funding issue rather than a legislative issue, but certainly it's an indication of the sorts of things that I don't think Cabinet wants to see happen. Not having our voices out on this is not helping the situation.

The lack of consultation has been raised by a number of people and certainly there are special considerations with regard to Aboriginal rights there.

Many people have said they are torn and I can completely understand that. I speak out so strongly for the environment because there are so few others that do. It's always being trumped by economic development, so we are left with these huge global, stale problems that are getting worse and affecting people everywhere, but I understand being torn. I appreciate this process in that it's an opportunity to focus our considerations, and experience the dilemma, and trying to bring our best deals and our best information on resolving that dilemma.

Something else that was recognized was the leadership opportunity we have here. I'd say that's largely been usurped, but the vote is still to be had and I hope the Premier does recognize the opportunity that we do have to provide leadership here and will, in fact, let his Cabinet Members have a free voice.

Some have said this is looking back, this is focused on looking back. That's not the case. I think the motion does say let's comment on the current situation, but mostly let's assess where the damage

has been done, figure out how to fix that damage when we have the authority to do that, find out what the costs are and figure out how to come up with funding those costs. That's a pretty straightforward-looking aspect to this motion.

Again, we frequently heard that it might endanger the prize of devolution. To me, that's sort of a sad comment and certainly does comment on the maturity of our relationship – speaking of maturity – with the federal government.

The omnibus nature of the bill certainly does have that aspect to it and it is simply a reflection of the approach that the federal government is taking in perpetrating these changes to environmental protection.

There were a couple of quotes from some letters, the outrageous changes and the future, and people care greatly about how we treat our land. I don't doubt that we all care, but there are people who are willing to speak up, at some risk apparently, politically, but they are judging that that's a fair risk. People want to have their voices heard. They want to see their governments speaking out, because they care very deeply and they see these changes in legislation as outrageous and impacting the future of them and their children.

So, Mr. Speaker, the bottom line was the debate was not had in coming up with these regulations. Many have said they're torn and so on, but thoughtful engagement and debate can be uncomfortable, it's a necessary step and, once again, I appreciate this House being willing to engage in that debate and bring their very point forward.

Once again, I don't know about my colleagues, but my e-mail box is full. It's clear that our people are clearly concerned about the situation addressed by this motion. I've seen widely distributed expressions of these concerns about a broad range of individuals, groups and governments. This is democracy and the democratic debate being held today is appreciated. I am listening to the people myself and I look forward to the support of my colleagues in the motion before us. Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote. Mahsi.

#### RECORDED VOTE

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The Member is seeking a recorded vote. All those in favour, please rise.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Mr. Bromley, Mr. Yakeleya, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those opposed to the motion, please rise.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Mr. Blake, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr.

McLeod – Yellowknife South, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. McLeod – Inuvik Twin Lakes.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those abstaining, please rise.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Mr. Dolynny, Mr. Moses.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those in favour, 6; all opposed, 8; all abstentions, two. The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

Item 19, first reading of bills. Item 20, second reading of bills. Item 21, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 9-17 (4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-2014, and Bill 1, Tlicho Statutes Amendment Act, with Mr. Dolynny in the chair.

### Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Welcome, colleagues. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee wishes to deliberate Tabled Document 9-17(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-2014, with the continuation of ENR.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Does everyone agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Good. Minister Miltenberger, do you wish to bring witnesses into the House?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please bring the witnesses into the House.

Minister Miltenberger, if you could introduce your witnesses to the House.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me Ernie Daniels, deputy minister of Environment and Natural Resources; and Nancy Magrum, director of shared services of ITI and ENR. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Campbell, Ms. Magrum, welcome to the House. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, apparently I said Ernie Daniels, I meant to say Ernie Campbell. Sorry.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** It's been a long day, Minister Miltenberger. That's okay. Mr. Campbell. Committee, we are on page 13-18, Environment

and Natural Resources, activity summary, environment, grants and contributions, contributions, \$3.199 million. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you. Page 13-19, Environment and Natural Resources, information item, environment, active positions. Any questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you. Pages 13-20 and 13-21, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, forest management, operations expenditure summary, \$32.067. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to make just a few comments here. I think we're still continuing to miss an opportunity in the forest management area and that's the area of wild crafting and particularly mushroom harvesting. I don't know where we're at on that. I know there has been work to look into that, but it's an industry that is proving to have some potential but it needs some management to really benefit the people of the Northwest Territories, otherwise the benefits go to people that come in from outside and take away the resources. So one question is what are we doing about that.

I'm wondering also, do we have the capacity to ensure that we have surplus forest yields for our biomass projects to meet the demand of our biomass projects and still maintain the integrity of the forest ecosystem. This is something that constituents are hopeful that we do have but want to be assured, and I know Boreal caribou have come up from time to time as sort of the major indicator as being the most sensitive indicator of how well our forests are doing. So maybe I'll start with that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. For that answer I'll go to Mr. Campbell.

**MR. CAMPBELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. On the issue of mushrooms, we've been waiting for a response from the federal government. We've talked to them on numerous occasions and written them on two occasions to amend the Forest Resource Transfer Agreement that was done in 1987. There are two areas here. One is the mushroom industry and the other one is the incidental use of forests that we want to have the ability to manage those two areas as well.

We've worked with our lawyers, with the federal lawyers, and have drafted a document that will address it. So we're just waiting now for word from the federal government on approval to proceed in that area.

On the question of inventory and capacity, we've undertaken around close to a quarter of the territory in the NWT with our inventory work and some of the



proposed projects for biomass, we absolutely do have the capacity for sustainable harvest levels in the Northwest Territories. At this point what's being put forward is well below the sustainable numbers that we have with our current inventory. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Campbell. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's very good to know that work is proceeding in the area of the fungi, and I appreciate that and I appreciate the update.

In terms of the sustainable yield aspects, I think it's well known how we do our harvesting of biomass can affect the structure of the forest and the ecology of the forest and what stage the forest is at; an earlier pioneering stage or a mature stage. Boreal caribou are known to have pretty sensitive habitat requirements. I'm wondering, are we looking into or are we ensuring, Boreal caribou being a threatened species in the Northwest Territories, are we looking into how we're proposing biomass or guidelines to ensure that we're not impacting the most sensitive of those sorts of indicators? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. For that we'll go to Mr. Campbell.

**MR. CAMPBELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Part of our work that we're undertaking right now to establish a larger forest industry and a sustainable forest industry in the Northwest Territories is looking at the Boreal caribou issue and other species. Again, other areas such as water as well. We're undertaking an exercise right now where we're calling it an ecological assessment tool that we're going to use, which takes into account the issue with Boreal caribou. So that's being done now and, again, we're hoping in a very short future here we'll have that work done, definitely before any of the larger harvesting occurs.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Campbell. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate those comments from the deputy minister. I hope that we will be public with that information because I know there are concerns in the public amongst both our Aboriginal governments and other people that aren't just from reading the newspaper and opinion pieces and so on. It's clear that people want to move in the area of sustainability and where we derive our energy, but they also want to know it's being done properly and with all due care. So I appreciate that.

The last question I have here is the climate change and the Greenhouse Gas Strategy and so on. Both are obvious components of forest management considerations and I'm wondering, in the recent work that's been done to review our forestry practices and so on, what are the considerations

being given to those aspects, both the Greenhouse Gas Strategy support and the climate change aspect. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. For that answer we'll go to Mr. Campbell.

**MR. CAMPBELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. On those two items, absolutely we're looking at both the Greenhouse Gas Strategy and, of course, overall climate change. Part of our work here is working with CanNor and we received that federal funding and, again, the initiatives under the Biomass Strategy for an example is going to be to look carefully at what this industry is going to entail. That work is going on right now and part of it is, or a big part of it is, of course, implementing those areas under the Biomass Strategy, which link to, of course, the Greenhouse Gas Strategy and so that work is being done. On sharing that work on the previous comment, absolutely we're open to share that information.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Campbell. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you for that, Mr. Chair. I know people used to rely on biomass for many of their energy needs. Biomass and good high-quality food, that was our energy sources way back. Today, obviously, when we're proposing to use it to heat much larger facilities and so on, it's a different scale of demand on our forests, so I appreciate that this work is being done and I appreciate the commitment to make sure that the word is getting back out to people who want to know that we're on top of those sorts of questions. So I appreciate that and that's all I had on this page. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I'll take that as a comment. Moving on with questions I have Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a couple of questions here with regard to two things. Two questions, two things. The first one has to do with forest resource inventories and with the development of a potential wood pellet business in the South Slave. I know the department has done some work, I believe, on forest resources and doing inventories of our forest resources. I gather that it was done in the South Slave. But I believe there was also plans for the department to try and do forest resource inventories throughout the NWT.

Could I get an update on what percentage of the territory we've managed to do and what the plans are going forward? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that we'll go to Mr. Campbell.

**MR. CAMPBELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I mentioned, we are closely to a quarter of the NWT land mass that has been done on the inventory side. Again, the majority is in the South Slave.

We've done a bit of work on the southern end of the Territories – South Slave, Deh Cho – and we're undertaking a major project right now in the Tlicho Deh Cho area. Further north in the Sahtu area, some work has been done, as well, in the Gwich'in area, but a lot of work still has to be done in those areas.

With the existing information that we have, at this point the information tells us that a sustainable harvest for our existing inventory is around one million cubic metres. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Campbell, we'll go back to you for the completion of the last comment.

**MR. CAMPBELL:** Sorry. The existing inventory that we've done, the information we have is a sustainable harvest of around a million cubic metres per year.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Campbell. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm sorry if I missed the question earlier. If you've already covered that, my apologies.

My next question would be, there is some interest, I believe, in the Sahtu of potentially developing a wood pellet industry there. If the inventory hasn't been completed in an area where somebody wants to develop a pellet industry, is that something that the department has the resources to do within a short period of time, to try and encourage a business to get established? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Given the way these projects seem to evolve, we believe we would be in a position to be responsive and be able to have that information by the time it's required to make a business decision. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister for that information. That's good to hear.

My other question has to do with communities and what I think the department calls wild land fire risks. My recollection is that there were assessments of wild land fire risks around communities that were being done. I guess I would like to know two things. Have all the communities been assessed in terms of wildlife fire risk? I'll start with that.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that we'll go to Mr. Campbell.

**MR. CAMPBELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All NWT communities in the forested area have wild land risk management plans completed at this time.

**MS. BISARO:** My brain automatically said, so why not all communities? But I totally understand why we're not doing them all.

I guess my next question would be, in relation to the plans, if the assessments have been done, presumably the department is assisting communities to develop a plan to reduce risk if there is any. Are plans being implemented in the communities where these wildfire risk assessments have been done?

**MR. CAMPBELL:** The answer is yes. In many of the communities we are working with MACA and the community governments there, with existing resources to implement these plans. Again, it's a struggle to do everything in the plans but, again, we're doing what we can to minimize the risk to these communities from wild land fire.

**MS. BISARO:** I appreciate the work that you're doing and I think it's really valuable work. I'm sure the communities appreciate it as well.

If there is a community that feels that they need to get some assistance from ENR, if they feel that they aren't quite sure what they need to do, or they have a particular plan that they want to put in place, is it conceivable that they can go to ENR and ask for that assistance and presumably get it in fairly short order? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that we'll go to Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is a modest pot of money available to work with communities for risk management plans implementation. I would point out, as well, this is another area where personal responsibility is a big one and we, as well, encourage homeowners to make sure that their underbrush is clear, the trees are limbed, their house has as few flammable exterior products as possible, in addition to reliance on governments to come in and make sure the communities are fire smart.

We're also doing a number of creative things, working, for example, in Fort Smith. They're working with Transportation and they've opened up all the area around the airport for wood lots, as part of that FireSmart Program, which is a great boon to the wood burners in the community and it helps thin out the brush that otherwise Transportation wouldn't be able to afford to do. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Moving on with questions I have Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, I have a few questions in this area here. I want to start with the climate change and the impacts that we're seeing in the Sahtu region. I've talked to a few of the trappers who use the land consistently, and what they have talked to me about is the erosion of the banks along some of the rivers that they go up to hunt and trap in, go up to live during the summer months, and the rivers that they use during the fall time for their fall

hunts. They're noticing the erosion of the landscape, of the banks and of the hills, and they were asking if there is any possible way that the department is working with the local hunters and trappers on that river, because some of these rivers for the natural erosion that's happened due to the thawing of the permafrost in that area.

Is the Minister conducting a territorial-wide assessment or a survey on which rivers in the Mackenzie area or just in the whole Northwest Territories on the amount of erosion that's happening on the smaller rivers that the trappers use for hunting and trapping?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. For that we'll go to Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are some resources. Interestingly enough, ITI has a permafrost individual. We know and we've seen, and I've had discussions with and work with, to a certain degree, the university is doing work as well. In fact, some individuals have spent good parts of their professional lives in the North looking at the permafrost issues, the very issues that the Member is talking about. As we see what's happening and try to adapt to the impacts of the warming and the melting of the permafrost, the slumping of the banks, the impediment, it can cause rivers and creek flows and adjustments of bodies of water.

So we are looking at that but we don't have a broad territory-wide initiative at this juncture. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Minister. I am wondering if there is anywhere in your corporate planning, or planning for the department, to start looking at this. It's very preliminary right now. I am asking for some consideration.

The Minister, over the past eight or nine years, is aware of myself taking a hiking trip once a year on the Canol. Over the years, I want to let you know, the Minister flew out there one year with me. We saw some natural slides of the mountains. Last year or the year before, when you walked past one of the trails, there was a huge mudslide there. It wasn't there before. We started to notice it more and more.

I want to ask the Minister if he would give some serious consideration, with his colleagues, to look at the impacts of these landslides along the rivers that we use – and basically the whole Northwest Territories, if that is a possibility – that he would come forward to say that this is something we could look at in the Northwest Territories.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** We are making note of the Member's request. We will have discussions in the department to talk about how we move forward on the request and the concern. We will be able to come back. By the time we're back here next year, we will hopefully see some

reflection of the results of that work and discussion. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, I would appreciate that and people that have spoken to me about this would also appreciate that the government is starting to look at this issue.

I also want to ask the Minister in regard to what Ms. Bisaro was talking about, the opportunities that could be looked at in the Sahtu. I understand, from Mr. Campbell's replies to our question, that the Sahtu and further north could be looked at as a biomass industry opportunity for us in that region, if we are to embark on that journey through the government's energy initiatives on reducing the cost of living and carbon emissions from the fossil fuel usage of our communities' use. The Sahtu would be very interested in looking at something that we could do ourselves, as some of my friends down in the southern part have that opportunity. We would very much like to look at that.

Would the Minister commit to look at a study that would say, within the life of this government we can initiate something in the Sahtu and further north up into the Gwich'in area?

**MR. CAMPBELL:** Mr. Chair, regarding a biomass industry in the South Slave, at this point we are starting some work with developing that industry on the southern end of the Northwest Territories. If we can get the pellet plant that is being proposed just around the Enterprise area and some of your forest management agreements completed with the communities, I think that sets the stage for expansion in the future to other areas in the Northwest Territories. We are hoping, again, that there will be opportunities for the other regions in the Northwest Territories.

At this point, we do have a private business coming forward with a project. We feel that here is our opportunity to seize on this and start from there and, again, work to other areas in the future.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I do look forward to a time when this opportunity also will be available in the Sahtu region. We will continue on with the progression to that place and time in history where we can also have that type of industry with our region to support the biomass initiative, because that would be very helpful to us. So a wait and see approach, I guess.

I want to ask one more question to the Minister in regard to the forest management for the sustainable management of our forest resources. Trappers are saying that where there are good areas to trap, sometimes those areas get burnt out because sometimes they are too far out for the firefighters to fight them, because they watch the fires burn. Sometimes the trappers say that is a good trapping area. Sometimes they can't go, so next year they have to go to another area, knowing that, because of the forest fire there, that will renew

the forest and vegetation, and there are other animals that will come. The trappers want to know that dialogue will continue strongly with the forest officers, that some areas just need to be monitored a little more, and consideration is given to the trappers when an area is getting close to being burned out or the area is being close to being burned by an out-of-control forest fire. They are quite concerned. I am not too sure what type of compensation is in place to help the trappers go to another area or help them with their loss of revenue for that season. That is my only question. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** This is an area that we cover under what is called values at risk, and priority area is focusing first on human life, personal property, public safety, and working our way out.

As the Member will recollect from the amount of times we've come back for supplementary appropriations, the fire seasons are getting longer and hotter and our costs are going up just to try to manage those key areas. We do, though, recognize that there are times when trappers are affected and we do have a fund to help compensate individuals. I think the maximum payout out of that is \$37,000.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Next on my list I have Mr. Hawkins.

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

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. I would like to thank Mr. Campbell and Ms. Magrum. Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please escort our witnesses out of the Chamber. I will now rise and report progress.

### Report of Committee of the Whole

**MR. SPEAKER:** Can I have the report of the Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Chair?

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 9-17(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-2014, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. A motion is on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The seconder will be Mr. Beaulieu.

---Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 23, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Orders of the day for Monday, February 18, 2013, 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. Replies to Budget Address
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
14. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
15. Tabling of Documents
16. Notices of Motion
17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
18. Motions
19. First Reading of Bills
  - Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Territorial Parks Act
20. Second Reading of Bills
21. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Tabled Document 9-17(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-2014
  - Bill 1, Tlcho Statutes Amendment Act
22. Report of Committee of the Whole
23. Third Reading of Bills
24. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Monday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:59 p.m.