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The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, February 20, 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 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Good afternoon, colleagues. Today I'd like to honour the memory of a woman who achieved some remarkable goals, while grounding her traditions through her family. She left them with lessons of strength, culture, tradition, work ethic and "to thine own self be true."

Nagooyoak Mabel Pokiak Lumsden was born on Banks Island, the westernmost point of the Arctic Archipelago. In her early years, she spent time between her family's summer camp in Tuktoyaktuk and their winter camp in Sachs Harbour. When she was five, she was taken to the residential school in Aklavik.

She remained there until she went to Sir John Franklin, where she not only graduated, she went on to do something unheard of at that time. She left the Northwest Territories to attend the Winnipeg School of Nursing, where she graduated in 1964.

This remarkable woman had a favourite saying: "Imagine that." Imagine that an Inuvialuit woman of her time went to university not once, but four times, completing four different courses of study in medicine. Imagine that this woman understood how important it was to share her traditional knowledge of hunting, trapping, dance and sewing with her family and younger generations. And imagine that this same woman could bridge two worlds and impress upon her family and friends the importance of culture and language while carving a life in mainstream medicine.

When we are privileged to have a snapshot of the life of a woman like Nagooyoak Mabel Pokiak Lumsden, we must honour her. Against all odds, she became the first Inuit nurse in Canada and had a strong and lasting effect on all she met.

Ms. Pokiak Lumsden was a role model for so many and her lessons live on through her family and everyone she touched.

Her achievements reflect a determined life lived on her own terms, understanding the value of education, never forgetting the importance of her family and culture, and sharing her experiences and

stories with as many people as she could. She was a true Northerner with a resilient character, determination and the drive to prove that circumstance does not always dictate direction.

Ms. Pokiak Lumsden passed away on August 6, 2012. We offer our deepest condolences to her family and friends.

Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. McLeod.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 16-17(4):
ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK
FOR COMMUNITY GOVERNMENTS**

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, since the implementation of the New Deal for NWT Community Governments in 2007, community governments have been in control of their own infrastructure priorities. MACA has worked closely with the Northwest Territories Association of Communities and the local government administrators of the NWT to develop an accountability framework that emphasizes and reinforces the goals of the New Deal initiative and supports the Legislative Assembly's goal of a strong North built on partnerships.

The framework is based on the five core areas of community government responsibility supported by MACA: good governance, financial management, sound administration, planning, and safe communities. It sets expectations for the monitoring, engagement and support the GNWT will provide to community governments as they go about meeting their responsibilities and it will help us to work in partnership to build sustainable, vibrant and safe communities.

The framework includes key indicators that measure the success and/or capacity of a community government. It provides information about why each indicator has been identified as important, a listing of potential outcomes that would be the result of successful community government performance in that area, and information about how MACA can engage with community governments to support their success.

The framework was identified in the department's 2010-2015 strategic plan as an important tool for creating standard rules of engagement between MACA and community governments. We consulted with community governments, who were a key resource in fine-tuning the framework to ensure it works for both MACA and community government stakeholders.

The new framework will help the department target areas for training and focus strategic planning to better support community governments to achieve success in their operations. Reports will be an important part of MACA's business planning and will allow for evidence-based decisions regarding community government's funding and capacity building needs. They will also be useful for community governments in communicating with residents to ensure transparency in their operations.

MACA began implementing the accountability framework in the 2012-2013 fiscal year. A draft was circulated to communities at the NWT Association of Communities annual general meeting and will be formally circulated to community governments in 2013. The funding agreements provided to communities in June 2012 included reporting requirements that enable MACA to gather information to support the implementation of the accountability framework.

Implementation of the framework is also being supported through ongoing communications intended to ensure that the dialogue between community governments and the department is open and clear. The department will also be updating the community toolkit, available on the MACA website, to include tools and checklists designed to support communities as implementation of the framework progresses.

This framework will guide our future work in developing sustainable, vibrant, safe communities across this territory. I look forward to presenting it to community government representatives at MACA's Good Governance Conference later this month. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister for Justice, Mr. Abernethy.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 17-17(4):
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
MAKES THE DIFFERENCE FOR RCMP

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, sustainable, vibrant and safe communities is one of the goals of this Assembly. To help achieve this goal, the Government of the Northwest Territories has made it a priority for all NWT communities to have a community policing plan in place. Last year was the first year all 33 communities had dedicated

plans in place based on their own needs, resources and priorities.

These formal plans and the reporting structure were put into place several years ago. The difference the plans are making is evident. We now have communities participating in a full consultation to outline their priorities upfront. The second part of the plan requires police to provide a written report to the community leadership of their monthly results. This interaction fosters a situation where police are building trust within the community through accountability. The result is trust and respect from all people involved. This trust makes community police relationships stronger.

I want to give you an example of how community-specific priorities have worked. Every NWT community built the need to reduce drug and alcohol activity into their policing plans.

In Hay River the RCMP seized over five and a half pounds of marijuana. In addition, thousands of dollars in cash and many ounces of cocaine and crack cocaine have been taken out of the drug network. Charges were laid against 11 different individuals. We know these drugs were being transported across our border, as the majority of people charged did not live in our territory.

These results come by having people in the community working with their RCMP members. Something as simple as telling the police when an underage drinking party is underway can make a significant change in the amount of illegal drugs available in a community.

Last October a search at a home in Behchoko revealed a large quantity of drugs, over \$7,000 in cash, and illegal liquor that was destined for smaller communities. This seizure is a step in the right direction to ensure public safety and reduce the negative effects of intoxication and addictions.

Check-stops by Tulita RCMP resulted in several seizures of liquor that would have been brought into the community, with total seizures for December amounting to a street value of over \$10,000. Winter road check-stops will be continuing to keep the community safe.

For two weeks in December, Mr. Speaker, the Fort Good Hope detachment conducted several check-stops on the winter road that serves several communities. Over 80 bottles of liquor, valued over \$7,000, were seized. The RCMP reported the community had a peaceful time with no calls to the RCMP for assistance for domestic violence, break and enters or other incidents, many of which we know are fueled by alcohol. We know continuing collaborative work between the RCMP and communities ensures the interception of illegal alcohol.

From these community leaders' reports I spoke of earlier, Mr. Speaker, there is a section on Notable

Occurrences for the Month. In the Colville Lake report for December, it was noted that the community advised RCMP a person wanted on a Canada-wide warrant was in Colville Lake for the holidays. This individual was subsequently arrested and returned to jail.

The department is working with the RCMP and prosecutors to strengthen prosecution of Liquor Act offences through continued training of officers. We are continuing our educational and awareness efforts through the Not Us! program. I would be remiss not to mention the support we provide to community justice committees and victims services workers to allow them to continue their critical work in each community and with the RCMP members.

Mr. Speaker, as well as communities becoming involved with the RCMP, the commanding officer instructs members coming into a community for the first time on the necessity of engaging with residents through a local orientation program. This will assist members in understanding the cultural differences in their new home. A key component includes members meeting with both elders and youth in social situations. Although we can teach cross-cultural awareness in classrooms, nothing is as effective as firsthand experience.

I know all Members here will support their communities in their efforts to make a difference. Encourage people to speak up and work with the police to ensure priorities and the laws of our land are upheld. The results show it works. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SAHTU TEACHER EDUCATION PROPOSAL

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know we can all agree that there are a number of benefits to having locally trained professionals work in our region that come from our communities. Students, schools and communities benefit from an increase in cultural sensitivity and gain knowledge of Aboriginal history, language, and connection to the culture. In the Sahtu we have some success getting residents into the Teacher Education Program and our efforts continue.

In 2009 the Sahtu Education Council brought forward a well thought out proposal to prepare students academically for entrance in the teaching profession. This access program, which can be delivered in the Sahtu, would be available to students and residents who are interested in furthering their education in this field, creating the

much needed resources in our region and, more importantly, role models.

I urge the Department of Education to invest in this model of training that will benefit our region and cut our costs to the education system. This initiative would involve the divisional education council, and ECE and Aurora College taking partnership in lowering the cost as well. That is one of our priorities: partnership. This model can be near a similar program that was held in the Tlicho region which, I might add, has been very successful.

From the proposal, I quote, "The Sahtu youth of this and future generations deserve to be in a learning environment where people of their culture are interacting with them in a professional, learning community." These words are from the people of the Sahtu region. It is my hope that the Minister and the Government of the Northwest Territories hears them and facilitates making the proposal a reality for the residents of the Sahtu region. We are looking at doing that in the Sahtu region where we can have young students who are graduating from high school to want to become teachers. That's something that we've been saying as leaders in this House, is to have our own people as lawyers, judges, teachers, doctors, and this is one proposal that will help them break that gap in ensuring our people have someone to look up to. We're not going to be here all our lives, and we need young people to fill those roles and start having role models in our communities.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RECOGNITION OF NWT TEACHERS

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since this week is Education Week I would like to speak about the education system. Obviously, one of the most vital things that I think is part of the education system is our educators. We have some 800 educators in the Northwest Territories, and I think we need to take our time this week to recognize them and the hard efforts they put into our communities.

Yesterday we had the opportunity to meet with the NWT Teachers' Association. They were able to provide us with information. It makes you think when you see the listing, in all 33 communities there's at least one teacher. Even the small communities like Kakisa and Jean Marie River. They're a vital part of our infrastructure in the Northwest Territories.

In preparation for making a statement on education, I was thinking, what do I want to say? I obviously wanted to talk about teachers. Personally, when we think of our lives growing up, we always have

teachers like Irma Miron for kindergarten, Jack Cooper for Grade 5, and then Mr. Gerry Goudreau for high school. He was a high school educator who gave me advice on where to go for university and stuff. Those are some of the people who influenced me in my life. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank the educators who are there right now working long, hard hours, grading papers and all this other stuff during their off hours.

In the process of this I was thinking, how do I thank them? Talking to the Teachers' Association, they have a program that has been running for 16 years. I knew nothing of it until yesterday. I'm not sure why I didn't know that, but it's Thank You for Making a Difference. It's a public awareness of the positive contributions NWT educators make to the lives of students. Every year they have students who put in notes about their teachers and the positive roles that they give them, then there's a draw for some people to come in from outside of the communities to come to Yellowknife and they get to meet with each other.

Again, the whole concept is for me to thank the educators out there who are doing the hard work in the education system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CHALLENGES FACING NWT TEACHERS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As mentioned, this is Education Week and I'd like to acknowledge the 800-plus teachers across the NWT working to make a difference in the lives of the students in their schools. I especially want to acknowledge the over 200 teachers and teacher aides working in our 14 Yellowknife-area schools.

Research has proven many times over that the single most important factor in a child's success in school is a teacher who cares, but there are challenging barriers that are outside an individual teacher's control, barriers that hinder and impede students' learning.

In a recent NWT Teachers' Association survey, two issues are identified by Yellowknife educators as the most challenging. The first one is that of class size and class composition. As a result of our Inclusive Schooling Policy and the wide array of special needs served by schools, the number of students in NWT classrooms has reached crisis proportions.

Special needs in today's schools include gifted students, students with many different physical disabilities, as well as the behaviourally challenged. As teachers work to address individual student needs, their job has become more daunting. Seventy percent of NWT teachers are impacted by increased student behaviour challenges, as well as

an increased number of students with special needs. In addition, 64 percent of our teachers state that they have inadequate classroom support and that the availability of trained or qualified classroom assistants is not keeping pace with need.

Hand in hand with the first issue comes an ever-increasing workload for teachers, a load that is not conducive to optimal learning conditions for students. The demands converge on teachers from a variety of sources: curriculum and program implementation; reporting requirements and administrative paperwork; breakfast programs; school-based program activities, extra-curricular options, and events; fund-raising; coordinating and organizing on-the-land programs; local, regional and territorial committee participation; in-service requirements; as well as an increasing commitment to community engagement and community efforts with the home and families. It's a long list, Mr. Speaker. While teachers' main goal is the success of their students, the ever-increasing demands on their time and energy cannot be sustained if we want an optimal learning environment for students.

Secondly, the NWT's policy of inclusive schooling must be backed up with adequate student support if we are to meet students' needs and help each child reach his or her full potential. Teachers cannot do it alone. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SOCIAL PASSING

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I, too, rise in recognition of Education Week and I'll gear my Member's statement towards that.

The Education Minister has recently mentioned his plan to review and renew our education system. I support this review and, I believe, it should be extensive. The practice of social passing should be one aspect of the review. It has long been a concern in the communities that I represent. The department has always denied that social passing is our policy, but it is a practice that some schools use.

Students are passed to the next grade, even though they are not ready academically. They move along in their age group, and quite often many of the rest are not ready to advance, either.

Poor attendance is part of the problem, as the Minister knows. He has spoken of it often, especially with respect to the Aboriginal Student Achievement Strategy. Some students miss so many days of school that it adds up to two years lost by the time they get to the end of high school. It is a rare genius who can skip two years of school and still graduate knowing all they were supposed

to learn. It is no wonder that many students finish school without truly being qualified.

I hope the Minister's review will get to the bottom of it, Mr. Speaker. Why do students miss so much school and what can we do about it? Every school should have an attendance strategy.

I cannot begin to list the damages done by promoting substandard students through our schools, students who fail when they go to secondary school or fail when they get to college or university. I know that a good education is the product of partnerships with parents, teachers, students and everyone in the community. I hope the Minister's review will produce concrete ways to strengthen these partnerships.

The traditional way of learning in most of my communities is to watch and hear how something is done, then keep practicing until you get it right. We have high standards and we'd like to see it throughout the whole Northwest Territories. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RECOGNITION OF NWT TEACHERS

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Eight regions, 33 communities, 49 schools, 800 educators, 8,350 students over 1.3 million square kilometres. This is, of course, the framework of our education landscape, and it is pretty impressive I must say.

Today we celebrate and give our heartfelt thanks to the profession that is the pillar of our education system, and I am referring to our teachers and our teachers' aides out there. To be a bit different this year, I thought it would be fun to spell the word teacher using a few of the over 2,700 thank you excerpts from students from across the North who were gathered for this year's Thank You for Making a Difference campaign sponsored by the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association.

T is for thank you for always being friendly to me.

E is for everything they do.

A is for always fun to play with.

C is for cares that I am safe.

H is for helps me keep going.

E is for eternally grateful.

R is for respects who I am.

No matter how you spell it, we are very thankful for the over 800 educators in our schools who contribute so strongly to our healthy communities. On behalf of the Members here today, we salute you, the educators, the teachers, the teachers' aides, and thank you as we strive to work together in the next couple of years in using new innovative learning approaches for our students and our

families across the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RECOGNITION OF EDUCATION SUPPORT STAFF AND TEACHERS

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That will be a tough act to follow there. I, too, would like to stand before the House and recognize and appreciate all the work that's been going on in the education area, specifically to the Department of Education on their new renewal strategy. We have some new staff in there that's doing some really good work and I think we'll see some good improvements in the rest of this Assembly as we move forward in the education system and deal with some of our challenges.

Specifically, I would like to thank all the hardworking staff at the Beaufort-Delta Education Authority as well as all the board members who make critical decisions into the education on how our dollars are being spent. I would also like to thank the District Education Authority for all of their support and hard work for families in the community of Inuvik, the Aboriginal student group that does a lot of work with the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative. They do a lot of work. It is all volunteer-based. They brought a lot of good recommendations forward and are trying to put those into action. We also have a youth council in Inuvik at the school that does a lot of really great work, and the Beaver Volunteer Program, these volunteers come from all over the world. In fact, some of them actually make the effort to stay behind and are very big volunteers in the community, not just at the school.

I'd like to obviously recognize the teachers and the educators who spend a lot of time with our students who help build them, help build their character, give them life skills so that they can succeed in the future. Specifically, we have four educators in the school system in Inuvik that two of them I know were there when I started kindergarten. I would like to recognize those educators, and teachers and role models who contributed to me being here today. They are Mr. Shane Brewster, who is a coach and role model in the community and the region; Ms. Bella Kay, who preserves all the traditions, cultures and language; Mr. Heath Israel, who was a really big supporter of mine in junior high and helped me get that extra level of education; and also Mr. Ross McCallum, who also has served a long time in the community. These four are prime examples of strong educators, role models and coaches who have committed their whole time to the community of Inuvik and the

people, the families and the students. I would like to thank them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ABORIGINAL EDUCATION AND CULTURE

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is Education Week and we all need to recognize the value of an education. Many people need to recognize the value of staying in school and attending classes every day that they can. Parents need to set an example by showing respect for teachers and getting as much education as they can themselves. For many people, education is an opportunity to rise above alcohol and drug abuse. Education is critical to both health and employment status.

We recently learned that the Northwest Territories are not meeting their northern employment quotas. Low levels of education are preventing unemployed residents from taking advantage of job openings. That is a sad reality, especially for the people in small communities who really need those jobs.

We must also recognize that for some of us, getting an education isn't very easy at all. The days of abuse and loss of culture in residential schools are, thankfully, over. I for one am glad to see the tragic history of residential schools recognized in the NWT curriculum. Students in Fort Providence and the K'atodeeche Reserve have benefited enormously from teachers who speak their language, like well-known elder Margaret Thom and also Dorothy Buckley of the K'atodeeche Reserve. But First Nations and Metis students are still challenged to get a western education while maintaining their own language and culture.

Later today I will have questions for the Minister on the subject. Thank you. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SUPPORT FOR INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In keeping with our theme day today on education, I'd like to talk about inclusive schooling a little bit. Our policy in the Department of Education is to provide inclusive schooling so that children all be taught in the same classroom regardless of any special needs they may have. They attend school and are taught in the same classroom.

I have spoken to this issue in the House before and that is a very noble goal, but if the funding and adequate funding is not available to fund inclusive schooling, the results can be quite dire. The way in which inclusive schooling is funded is through a

formula and I believe that that is wrong. I believe that students coming into the school system, either starting off or moving into our school system from another jurisdiction, need to be assessed if they have special needs. If they have special needs then the funding should follow the student through their school career and this will avoid the hit and miss approach we take now.

I hate to see teachers under stress and, unfortunately, what I am hearing from teachers is, when they have one or more special needs students in their classroom and do not have the adequate support from inclusive school funding, the result is unhappy, not only for the special needs student but for the other students in the classroom, as well, and puts an extra strain and stress on the teachers, and it discourages me greatly when I hear of these situations occurring. What it will take from our government is a change in the policy.

The inclusive schooling budget, sadly, was also recently cut, which, if anything, there should be more money going into inclusive schooling and it should be targeted, it should not be done on a formula basis.

There is more funding for inclusive schooling going into some schools that don't need it and less than what is needed in other schools. So it's not a good way we are doing it right now, and I will have questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment later today in question period on what we are going to do to address this, because I think this is an urgent issue.

I've talked to teachers who say that they are under such pressure to meet the varied needs within their classroom that they're reconsidering a career in teaching. That is not a good thing to hear. Teaching is not an easy career. I admire teachers greatly. I know it is something that I could not do day in and day out. It's a calling, it's not a profession, and we need to support our teachers in every way we can. Lack of funding for inclusive schooling is not acceptable. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON LESSONS LEARNED FROM FINNISH EDUCATIONAL REFORM

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During this Education Week the buzz on the street is about the possible move towards educational reform. I'd like to inform the discussion based on the experience of Finnish educator Dr. Pasi Sahlberg.

When the Finns began retooling their education system 30 years ago, they didn't set out to be the best, but today it's one of the most successful public education systems in the world. They just set

out to make schools the best possible place for children.

Finnish education is based on three principles: all education is paid by the state, from preschool to primary through to university; every school is a "basic school," similar and unified in programming through to Grade 10 so that everyone has the same equity of access. Laudably, the Finns insist that teachers be superbly trained, with everyone required to have a Master's degree. The teachers' education is rigorous. They also qualify as educational researchers. Although salaries are only average, teaching is a coveted job and highly respected.

Students don't start school until age seven. Before that, publicly funded child care and early childhood programming emphasizes play and activity. Finnish schools are standardized test-free zones, with their first tests administered as they leave school. Dr. Sahlberg notes: students achieve better when they're not fueled by fear of failure.

Student and teacher performance evaluations are done by sample testing and teacher assessments of pupils. Their government invests 30 times more in teachers' professional development than it spends on testing its students.

Homework is minimal in early years to maximize play time, gradually increasing to high school. The emphasis is on development of thinking skills and personal strengths.

Putting student well-being and happiness first creates a dramatic reduction in drop-out rates and world-class increase in success rates. Education helps students identify and develop their personal strengths. The philosophy is not to equip students to get a job, to produce credentialed workers, but to prepare people to meet the challenges of life, including employment.

Finland set out three decades ago to create a school system aimed at equity and built one of the most successful systems in the world. Will this government consider these clear lessons in any reform of our NWT school system?

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING FUNDING

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Many schools, including those in Yellowknife, are shortchanged when it comes to support in funding for inclusive schooling. This is the practice of including all students with special needs in regular classes and providing the extra support they certainly need and deserve.

Yellowknife schools are attracting special needs students from far and wide. Why? Because it's a clear demonstration of the good quality schools we have here. As well, sometimes the families need to come to Yellowknife for the other services, which include health care, respite and counselling.

Insufficient support for inclusive schooling is a real fallout for all students and teachers. Similar to Mrs. Groenewegen's statement, classrooms are disrupted and certainly learning is slowed down. No one is benefitting from this funding shortage because the workload for those teachers increases. It's not the students' fault, it's the department's fault for not supporting our teachers and our schools.

Poor support for inclusive schooling is probably a factor of overall student achievement. My thought is we all agreed that was one of our biggest priorities. There are several problems with funding for inclusive schooling. One is the funding formula and, as Mrs. Groenewegen highlighted, it's important that maybe we start attaching it to the student, not just throwing gobs of money to a school board and asking them to allocate, which doesn't spread fairly. There have been cuts to inclusive schooling and I think that's a real shame. It should be a black spot on our mark as a government going forward.

It's not too late. This government could wake up and get attention to this issue that needs special attention. As it turns out, the situation can be saved, but I think it's unfair to schools like here in Yellowknife and other regions that are attracting these students that need higher staff ratios for them to participate fairly. We're not talking about subtle differences here. We're talking about sometimes it's as high as 20 percent higher in student ratios, which is unfair to the school board that must try to cope and deal with these situations.

The system needs funding for inclusive schools to change. I can't repeat this enough. I, like other Members such as Mrs. Groenewegen, believe that inclusive schooling funding for students needs that extra oomph and it can only be done by attaching it to the student, as she said and I continue to repeat.

An exclusive education policy is absolutely meaningless if this Minister and this government doesn't step up to the plate and finally put the responsible resources behind them. If we want to support our educators and our board, this is when this government must finally heed the call of these teachers, these school boards, these trustees. By giving them the responsibility and respect that they deserve, fund them properly.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I'd like to thank my teachers, I guess, back home who had an influence in my life. Ms. Janie Jones back home in Tuk, still teaching there for the last 30 years. Ms. Anne-Marie Cameron, my Grade 5 teacher. She really did a lot of work with me that year, for the best. I'd like to thank my old principal, Mr. James

Anderson, and my old high school teacher, Mr. Grant Gowans. Thank you, colleagues.

Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Bromley.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome Weledeh resident Madeline Holloway, daughter of Chris and Claire, and also her aunt Amanda Mallon, all residents of Weledeh.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize two Pages: Jaida Edjericon and Walker Adjun, both from St. Patrick High School, here with us paging for the Legislative Assembly. I'd like to welcome them and recognize all the good, hard work that Pages put in to provide for the House. Also to the visitors that we have in the gallery, happy Education Week.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize a couple of local Yellowknife educators who are with us in the gallery. Bernie Giacobbo, who is the assistant superintendent for Yellowknife Education District No. 1, Gayla Meredith, who is president of the NWT Teachers' Association. Another educator who is now working in a different field, my constituency assistant, Amanda Mallon, and her niece Madeline Holloway. Welcome, all.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to acknowledge a constituent of mine, Bernie Giacobbo. As Ms. Bisaro pointed out, he is the YK1 assistant superintendent and he is doing a great job over there.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Shirley Firth, a long-time Olympic athlete and also a recipient of numerous awards, including the Aboriginal Achievement Award.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Colleagues, I'd like to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery of my executive assistant and good friend, Shirley Firth-Larsson.

Shirley was among the first Aboriginal women to compete in various international cross-country ski competitions, including four World Ski Championships in 1972 to 1984. Shirley represented Canada in four consecutive Winter Olympics, a streak only equalled by speed-skating legend Gaetan Boucher.

Her career was an outstanding testimony to the dedication displayed by her in achieving a level of excellence very rarely attained by any athlete in the country. Shirley was a member of Canada's National Cross-Country Ski Team for an unprecedented 17 consecutive years, competing at the top of the World Cup circuit.

Shirley competed in four World Ski Championships and four Olympics, won 42 Canadian National Championship medals: 29 Gold, 10 Silver and three Bronze.

Shirley was awarded with the Northwest Territories Commissioner's Award, the Order of Canada, the Queen's Golden Jubilee Award, the National Aboriginal Achievement Award and the Queen's Silver Jubilee Award. She was inducted into the Canadian Museum Ski Hall of Fame and inducted in the Banff Sports Hall of Fame.

Shirley, it is an honour to work with you. Please join me in welcoming my executive assistant, Ms. Shirley Firth-Larsson, into the House today.

---Applause

Thank you, colleagues. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 101-17(4): SUPPORT FOR INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Recently, there was a reduction in the funding allocation for inclusive schooling. I would like to ask the Minister what his department plans to do to ensure adequate funding with a proper targeting and resourcing of assistance for children with special needs in our classroom.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Part of the plan, as we move forward, is to re-evaluate our interest in schooling, the funding that's been distributed to all school boards. Part of the planning is to develop a comprehensive engagement plan. We'd like to hear from the stakeholders and professions, educators, the people that are involved, the resources. Based on the outcome of the report, the recommendation, we'll more than likely come back here to standing committee to make a presentation. If we're going to make some changes, then, of course, there's also a cost factor. I will be tabling that document in the House and sharing that with the standing committee.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Not only are there inadequate resources for inclusive schooling, but the way that the inclusive schooling funding is distributed, I believe, is premised on a wrong approach. I would like to ask the Minister if he's aware of how other jurisdictions fund inclusive schooling if they have inclusive schooling policies, and do we have examples where the inclusive schooling funding follows a student and is not provided through a formula.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We've done some of the research throughout the other jurisdictions. It varies. There is different programming in other jurisdictions. Some sponsor students through various grades one on one, individual assessments. They do a student assessment. In the Northwest Territories we use a different approach. The whole comprehensive, I want to listen to the people. Especially the educators, the parents are involved, how we can upgrade or enhance our existing programming. Those are some of the fundamental changes we can foresee. We are doing a lot of research with other jurisdictions. We have contacts with other educators throughout Canada. Even my colleagues across the country here in Canada. We want to have the best practices, follow that lead. That is the information we will be sharing with the standing committee.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: When the Minister says that he wants to hear from educators, we have a rather strange policy that doesn't apply to anyone else in the public service but to educators. We seem to have some kind of a commitment that's made to not speak to the challenges and issues that they face, outside of maybe speaking to their superiors within the school system. It is not often that you formally ever hear of a teacher complain about anything, because there is some other rule, which I've never really been able to understand or get to the bottom of, that they are not to discuss this. How would the Minister, I want him to hear from educators. I want him to not just hear from administration, not just the heads of schools, I want him to hear from front-line educators on this issue of inclusive schooling. How does the Minister propose to achieve that?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I agree with the Member that we need to hear from those individuals that are front-line teachers, because they are the ones who are exposed to the special needs children in our school system. I'm sure they have ideas and suggestions that we can work with. My department will be reaching out to those individual teachers that are front-line workers, not only administrators. I agree; we need to reach out to beyond administrators, similar to what we have done in the past with various initiatives that we have undertaken re-evaluating programs.

Since I've taken on the role as Minister of ECE five years ago, we've been undertaking various initiatives, re-evaluating and reaching out to the grassroots people. I think those are the individuals who are heavily impacted and we want to listen to them. That's the area we are pursuing.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although I disagree with the premise on which inclusive schooling funding dollars are distributed, we've had a cut, a loss of \$1 million in the inclusive schooling budgeting.

Can the Minister tell me if there is any way the Department of Education, from within, could find the \$1 million to reinstate that until such time as this survey, study, consultation process that he's talking about has taken place? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, we have to go through the process. We're re-evaluating a program, inclusive schooling. Based on that, there's going to be a business planning process. In the meantime, we're continuing to work with what we have in our budget, but rest assured that these are some of the changes that we'll probably foresee within inclusive schooling, based on what we've heard from the general public, the professionals and the educators, and then we'll come back to the standing committee to update them on the status. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 102-17(4):
SOCIAL PASSING

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today I spoke about social passing that's happening in our schools. As I travel in my constituency, many parents raise concern about that. I know that there is a practice out there and I'd like to ask the Minister of Education, why is our education system allowing social passing. Thank you.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Peer passing is part of the school system within our education system, where individuals are passed through grades to be with their peers. There has been a lot of research done in this area. We've done a lot of consultation and engagement with the various stakeholders not only in the Northwest Territories but outside. We have individual experts in that field who gave us presentations that said that there are stats out there and that peer passing is one of those fundamental ways of dealing with children, whereas frustration kicks in and so forth.

We're doing what we can with additional support to the parents and to the students as well. Those are just some of the areas where we are currently working with. Mahsi.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I know that this might have been a passing fad 10 or 15 years ago when they introduced it, but it's not working.

I'd like to ask the Minister, does he have any statistics or can he show any productive results that show that peer passing is working in our system. I know that the parents who approach me say it's not. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I certainly will share the stats and information that we've received from the experts over the years. They are telling us that peer passing is the best way to approach these students. Not only that, research that we've done, stats address those areas as well.

The peer passing, when we talk to parents or parents talk to us, there are some mixed messages. Some are in favour; some are not in favour. Based on that, we've done some additional research throughout Canada and even throughout the States. I will be sharing that information with the Members. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I know that we have a huge opportunity to review social passing or peer passing strategy. How extensive will the review of the education system be when the department undertakes the additional review? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, we're currently doing an educational review. It is complex. When we talk about the overall review of the NWT education system, that means we have to amend the Education Act. There's going to be engagement with the general public, as well, and then also the MLAs to provide their input where the changes should be occurring.

With inclusive schooling, there's a comprehensive study that's going to be happening, engagement, and also education renewal. That's going to be slated for this fall. I'm hoping to complete it by this fall so I can present it to the standing committee and before this House as well.

It does cover all areas. There are six pillars within education renewal and I can certainly share that detailed information with the Members as well. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just in terms of the review, I know that there are some successes from the Aboriginal Student Achievement Strategy, and if the Minister will review that, as well, and take some of the best practices. I know my colleague Mr. Bromley brought up an excellent program out of Finland. I just want

to know how extensive this review will be. Will it be just internal? Will it be looking at other jurisdictions in Canada? Will it be looking at other jurisdictions throughout the world? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, it will be extended out to other jurisdictions as well. We're doing research in this area from our counterparts across the country, and not only that but with ASA what we've heard from the general public, and through addictions there's the forum that's happening. There are all these different forums that are currently occurring in the Northwest Territories. We're hearing the same common thing. Based on the six pillars I addressed earlier, system accountability; professional capacity, that deals with the teachers and educators; assessment practices, so based on the various assessments within the school system; small community schools and most isolated communities as well; and early childhood development research. Those are the key factors I will be taking into consideration within the renewal. I'm really looking forward to the outcome from the stakeholders' input. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 103-17(4): ADULT LITERACY AND BASIC EDUCATION

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to focus my questions to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Last year CanNor announced \$6.8 million in support of adult literacy and basic education programs by Aurora College, with \$2.5 million earmarked for this fiscal year. Promised programs included hiring of adult learning basic education instructors, trades access program funding, community basic education learning opportunities and a focus on short courses towards essential skills.

Can the Education Minister give a summary of programs delivered this year and whether all the federal funds will be productively expended as budgeted? Thank you.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, any funding that we get is very much appreciated. CanNor funding has been allocated to the Northwest Territories through the Aurora College campus. We are going to utilize all of it to the best of our ability. Any funding that we receive, we need to exhaust all avenues.

We've been working closely with the college to identify what they're planning to deliver, when it's going to be delivered, how much it is going to cost, how ECE can get involved in that, how the community can get involved. It all takes partnership.

It's not only the college that will be delivering, but with the assistance of ECE and the assistance of the community. The community has to come on board as well. They are the true partners. They have the facilities in the communities. They have the resources in the communities and the people.

I can say at this point that we're going to be exhausting the funding that's available to us through those venues, through the various partnerships. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for the Minister's comments there. I hope the Minister will report to committee on what was achieved with the \$2.5 million expenditure this year.

Funding is aimed at upgrading people who lack basic skills to get them to the point where they can enter regular courses or get entry-level jobs. These are often people who didn't complete school but could get back on the road with a little help.

Unfortunately, ALBE and upgrading students are not eligible for student financial assistance. SFA, as it's called, recognizes that people going to college and university need room and board, but apparently ALBE students don't have these needs. With all this programming being funded to get people back to school, why is student financial assistance not available to adult learning basic education students? Mahsi.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, this is one of the recommendations brought to our attention during the SFA review. We are currently reviewing it, how we can best fit it into our programming. As you know, there have been several recommendations that were brought to our attention from the general public. We have initiated three or four of them already as a priority set by our government and also the general public, which is the most pressing need. It is before us and we are evaluating that.

You can rest assured that there are other fundings available, whether it be Labour Market Agreement. Individuals who do not qualify for EI can get trained. If those individuals want to upgrade, they go through various upgrade training programs and get ready for the workforce. There is also the ASETS program in the community. All of these different programs in the communities, as I stated, we need to work with them, the college, ourselves, ECE and also the communities. The more, the merrier; the bigger pot it is to train more manpower for the workforce. Those are areas we are continuing to work on with the communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Speaker, thanks to the Minister once again. We have indeed had several reviews that have recommended that this funding be extended to adult learning and basic education students. We've received \$8.6 million new funding

to concentrate on upgrading and adult learning. Obviously, we want the intake of these students. It is also obvious that they need shelter and food as much as college and university students. The Minister recognizes these recommendations and mentions that there are many other programs.

Will the Minister act on the recommendations of the SFA and the ALBE program reviews, taking into consideration what else is available to make sure and bring forward a program for supporting ALBE students as these recommendations suggest? Mahsi.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, as I stated, there are other programs that can support these ALBE students. We've done that in the past. Some students can qualify for three or four different programs. SFA may not qualify for that, but at the same time, the Labour Market Agreement and other agreements are out there that can qualify. Those individuals can qualify. We also work with the Mine Training Society that delivers, whether it be underground training or surface training and various training initiatives, HEO and so forth. Those individuals qualify for training funds through my department and other various departments, as well, even at the community level. I can share the list of potential sponsorship that may be available to those individuals that want to get trained. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Final, short supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister. This government talks fiscal restraint in the first two years of the mandate, before program expansions in the third and fourth years. We will have \$4 million more in our federal ALBE funds to coincide with our return to funding, apparently, in response to human needs.

Again, will the Minister advance his case to provide the essential complementary support to make sure there are no gaps in these various programs of support for ALBE students? Mahsi.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, a short answer will be that we are going to address all of those gaps that may be available in between various funding. We need to identify those. Again, I will be sharing that information with the Members. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 104-17(4):

FUNDING FOR THE NOT US! PROGRAM

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Justice. I want to commend him and the work that his community have been doing in terms of making all of these drug busts and bootlegging busts in the

communities; actually, more involved with the Not Us! campaign and empowering our residents to speak up in the communities and get justice where it needs to be. I commend the hard work that the department is doing with this program. Specifically to the Not Us! program, I believe it is probably in its third year now of running.

I just want to ask the Minister, with the success of this program, is the Minister going to be allocating any new dollars in the future for this program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Not Us! program is actually quite a successful program. We have it in 20 out of the 33 communities. It starts with a \$10,000 start-up and a \$5,000 ongoing fee or ongoing allowance to help maintain the program. Right now we have enough money in the budget to cover the communities and there is no plan to increase the allocation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MOSES: Mr. Speaker, I was going to ask how many communities are receiving funding and the Minister answered that. We have 13 other communities that can potentially have alcohol and drug-related problems. I want to know – and the Minister did state that he has enough funding to cover the communities that we have now – what about these 13 communities that continue to have these issues. How is he going to address those issues if he's not committing any other funding?

Can the Minister let me know, and let the government know, and people in these other 13 communities, how is he going to address empowering the residents to speak up specifically for the Not Us! program in these 13 communities? Does he have a plan to address them? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the program starts off with a \$10,000 initial payout and then \$5,000 in subsequent years. Because we haven't had all 33 communities come on at one time, they have been coming at a staggered approach, the budget that we had is, actually, we are able to use that to cover the \$10,000 where a few communities start in a year and then the rest are \$5,000. So we actually have enough money to maintain them. Right now, as of January 13th, we have three more communities who have indicated a desire to start a Not Us! campaign. That is Fort Simpson, Norman Wells and Tuktoyaktuk. Currently, they don't have programs, but they've expressed an interest and we're going to move forward with them to get them started up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MOSES: Mr. Speaker, I look forward to seeing reports on how successful this program is. Is the

Minister going to be doing a report on this Not Us! program? If so, when will the standing committee see the report on the Not Us! program and the effectiveness of this program, as I am sure did help in a lot of the statements that the Minister said earlier? Will we be seeing a report? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, the department is actually currently developing an evaluation framework to assess the success of the campaign and to inform future direction on the program. I don't have a timeline for it, but I will commit to getting you some additional information during this sitting so that we can have an idea when that evaluation framework will be in place and when we can actually expect to see results. Of course, I am happy to share any results that we come forward with, with committee and with the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Being one of the volunteers that helped start up the Not Us! campaign in Inuvik and get the funding for it, I know how successful this program can be in empowering our residents, our students, our teachers, everybody that works with children and works in the community. Specifically, there is a very successful program called the Lights On Program that happens that we do in Inuvik but we don't have the funding to keep it on or provide a safe environment for students in the school.

Would the Minister look at specific funding for the Lights On Program outside of the Not Us! funding? A lot of the committees are using the Not Us! funding for that specific program which is very successful as well. Can the Minister let me know if he would be looking at allocating specific funding for the Lights On Program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I'm not familiar with that particular program, but I would love to sit down with the Member and have him educate me on the program. As far as funding goes, it's hard to commit funding when I have no idea what the program is. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

QUESTION 105-17(4):
ABORIGINAL CULTURE IN
EDUCATION SYSTEM

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand we're doing all we can to advance the educational goals in the NWT. Current core values of the education system work to ensure that we have educated and well-trained professionals in the Northwest Territories. Recently, advances have

been made in terms of trying to be inclusive in respecting First Nations' culture and values and principles in the educational system.

My question to the Minister is: What is the department doing to promote the philosophy of strong like two people in addressing educational needs of the Northwest Territories residents? Mahsi.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. There are two parts to this within our educational system. First and foremost is the students-on-the-land program. I've given directive to the school boards to conduct on-the-land programs specifically. We provide money for that and it's been very successful to date. So elders take students on the land, it's all in their language and on the land, and in a classroom as well.

The other side of the coin is that educators themselves, through the access program, the TEP program, we've incorporated the cultural base, spirituality, as well, through the Behchoko Access TEP program and we've conducted one in the Beaufort-Delta, now on the Hay River Reserve and others are coming into the regions as well. So we are incorporating those important elements to this programming, whether it be for the students or whether it be for the teachers. Everybody should be fully aware of that. Mahsi.

MR. NADLI: Thank you. What plans does the department have for increasing the number of Aboriginal northern teachers, especially in the Deh Cho and South Slave regions? Mahsi.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. Part of our goal is to produce as many language speakers becoming qualified teachers, whether it be in the Northwest Territories or from outside the Northwest Territories, because we have a lot of our people for the North attend southern post-secondary. We want them to come back. A lot of them do speak their language as well.

So those are some of the priorities that we have in Education, Culture and Employment, to produce those qualified people that can come back and teach the children in our school system the language. As you know, the various languages we're losing, Gwich'in is a prime example. So we're doing what we can to produce those teachers. That's why we started this access program, the TIPP program into our communities, into our regions and we're going to spread it out to all regions as best as we can. Mahsi.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, I'd like to thank the Minister for that. What plans does the department have for engaging parents, especially Aboriginal parents, in the education of our youth? Mahsi.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. That's an excellent question. That's the same theme, a common theme that we've heard through the elders' gathering, part of the Early Childhood Development Framework and through the stakeholders, as well, also through the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative. How can we involve the parents, the grandparents? So now we're developing plans towards that. Even through the Early Childhood Development Framework I work closely with Mr. Beaulieu, Health and Social Services, how can we engage those parents. So that's a key factor in our discussions and the parents will be involved. In what capacity? Working probably with the teachers, working with the elders, working with the students and helping out, maybe tutoring, or any roles and responsibilities that are available. So we're doing what we can as a department and we are working closely with the school boards to make that more of a priority for them as well. Mahsi.

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

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I like the Minister's response on some of the initiatives. Of course, the major initiatives are very progressive. My final question is: When will the department recognize that the NWT needs a university? Mahsi.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. I kind of knew that was coming. This is an area that we've explored and we have extended our NUP lease agreement. Currently, we are discussing, between my department, PWS and also the Executive, how we can look at options at this level. We want to see a stand-alone campus. That's part of our long-term goal, that is our objective and we need to work towards that. So the discussion is happening and we're asking for our outside options, as well, how the private sector can play a key role. So those are discussions that we're currently having. We can provide some of the updates to the Members as to where we're at with our discussions. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 106-17(4): INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment and my question is simple. Does he support inclusive education and can he explain it? How and why?

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I think there were three questions there. I can

answer one of them. I do believe that we need to support our students in our school system. Mahsi.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you. Maybe the Minister can enlighten us on his master plan why he reduced inclusive education money and how that's benefitted the school boards and the students.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. During the last budget debate we went through some challenges and had to work closely with the standing committee to make some changes. It wasn't just my decision. The early childhood development was the forefront of our discussion. So we had to allocate money from within and we had to find the funds.

But I must remind the House that there is a comprehensive review that has been undertaken for inclusive schooling. So I'm looking forward to the input from engagements and the stakeholders. If we're going to make changes, I need to stand before the standing committee, make a presentation and then, more than likely, it will be in the House here as well. So there will be more debates on that particular topic. Mahsi.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you. If the Minister responsible for Education doesn't want to be responsible for the inclusive education, maybe we should be asking him today who should be responsible for this and how has it improved the lives and education of students who need inclusive education money. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. Through our engagement and also visiting communities we've been hearing about inclusive schooling, how can we best address the special needs in our schools, how can we have a speech therapist and other professions in our schools, how can we provide support. So based on that, and we're doing a comprehensive review, and that will address what the Member is alluding to. So I am looking forward to the outcome of the project itself, and it is comprehensive, it will take some time, but it will make some changes to our educational system. Mahsi.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister hasn't explained how he's improved education by reducing money rather than just saying there's a review. It's not normal to delete money just before a review. So maybe the Minister can explain his master plan as to how he plans to improve inclusive education by reducing their funds that are required. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. With any review, evaluation, comprehensive review, there are expected changes that will be coming. If there's going to be an increase in cost, then that will be before standing committee. So I will be addressing

through standing committee when the time comes. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

QUESTION 107-17(4):
CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to thank MLA Groenewegen for bringing up the recent awareness of carbon monoxide detectors. In fact, this is now the third time that I rise before this House on the issue of carbon monoxide detector awareness, and now is the second time that I rise about the findings of the Yukon Oil-Fired Appliance Working Group as a result of that tragedy, and this is my second time regarding specific concerns of the Arctic Energy Alliance.

There was an oral exchange yesterday between the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs and MLA Groenewegen. I wish to dovetail on this topic. Admittedly, the Minister of MACA mentioned yesterday that all structures built from 2008 now have a CO detector due to national building codes. Can the Minister indicate which community regional office oversees the compliance, the review, the approval and the final inspection of installation of fuel-fired appliances, which would include pellet stoves especially in our non-commercial single-family dwellings and auxiliary buildings? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The fire marshal's office would usually review the plan and they would all have to be code compliant as far as the actual inspection. If they are private dwellings built in communities, if they have a municipal enforcement officer, a building plans officer, I'm sure he would inspect them. In the case of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, all of our units are inspected by our projects people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOLYNNY: Can the Minister clarify one more time? He used the word "if." By what means and how does the Department of MACA monitor the safe installation inspection of oil-fired, wood and pellet stoves in our communities?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Through our fire marshal's office under the review of the building plans. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: The fact remains that I'm not sure if the Minister is truly answering the question that I'm trying to get to. There's a basic premise for my questions. Who governs, inspects and validates the compliance of our NWT fire prevention regulations in our non-commercial, single-family dwellings and auxiliary buildings? Could the Minister indicate

what his department is doing to make sure this sector of our market is complying to standards and are not just subject to request of adherence to specific guidelines? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We all know that the carbon monoxide issue is a big one the last little while and we are doing what we can to deal with it. The Housing Corporation, their part is to make sure all of our units, all 2,400 units have working CO detectors, and through the fire marshal's office and the Fire Chief Association of the NWT, we're creating a public awareness program to ensure that all our residents understand the importance of having carbon monoxide detectors. Again, through the fire marshal's office, we would work with communities to make sure they are compliant with the new code. Thank you.

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

MR. DOLYUNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the Minister's reply, but when can we expect to see the department and Minister review the findings and recommendations from this Yukon tragedy and formally come up with a plan, a policy or a framework to protect all buildings, including residential buildings in all residences of the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We were working on a plan while this tragedy happened in the Yukon. Unfortunately, a tragedy like this brings the issue to the forefront, therefore, it gets a lot more publicity, but we didn't wait until this report came out to do the work.

As I said, all 2,400 of our public housing units have working carbon monoxide detectors, so we've been proactive. We haven't been reacting to the issues that happened in the Yukon and we will continue to be proactive on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 108-17(4):

REVIEW OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to give the Minister of Education a bit of a break and address my questions to the Minister of Human Resources today. During Committee of the Whole consideration of the Department of Human Resources, Members were able to make comments and I was able to make some comments. I appreciated that, but one of the questions I asked during my comments kind of slipped through the cracks and I don't think I got an answer from the Minister. I'd like to ask the Minister that question now. I'm not sure where the information came from, but I believe the Minister of Human Resources is conducting a number of policy reviews now and in the next fiscal year. I would like to ask the Minister

if one of these reviews will include a review of the Affirmative Action Policy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Honourable Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time, we're not planning a thorough review of the Affirmative Action Policy. We were always looking for input, guidance and advice on how we can improve our policies and procedures in the best interest of our employees and, by default, the residents of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. BISARO: If the Minister is asking for advice, he will always get some from this side of the House and I would hope that every Minister over there would want to hear our advice. Following up on the Affirmative Action Policy, Mr. Speaker, and it's not referenced in the policy but it is found within the Human Resources manual, which falls under the authority, pretty much, only of the Minister. There are a number of – two, actually – priority lists which list the priorities of the special groups we have within our government. So I'd like to know from the Minister, as part of the policy review, whether he intends or whether he will consider an evaluation of the priority lists in the Human Resources manual. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: At this time, that's not something we're planning, but if committee were to ask us to take a look at that, we're always open to have discussions with committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. BISARO: I'd like to thank the Minister for that commitment. We will perhaps be back from committee once we've had a chance to discuss it.

The Minister, in his remarks over the last little while, has indicated a focus on persons with disability numbers and on numbers of Aboriginals in our GNWT workforce. We've heard the Minister provide us with numbers on recent successes. The numbers seem to be going up and that's a good thing. But I've heard little, I've heard little said, I've heard little in the comments by the Minister about the number of women that we have in our workforce, particularly women managers. So I'd like to ask the Minister if he can advise – he might not have the info – the percentage of women managers out of all of our managers in our workforce. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I don't have that information at the tip of my fingers, but I will commit to getting that information for the Member and committee. Thank you.

MS. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Final, short supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to seeing the information that he can provide. I don't really have a question, but I'd simply like to point out that we do have an awful lot of women deputy ministers and I think that's a good thing, so I'll be really interested to seeing women versus men as managers. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. No question. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 109-17(4):

EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN FINLAND

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to follow up on my Member's statement this afternoon with questions to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. I described the Finnish educational system now recognized, after 30 years of reform, as about the best in the world. It has some neat characteristics that really ring sympathetic bells with many of the Members, I think, because some of these things address the issues we still see as being needed to be addressed. I know the Minister has some of that too.

Will the Minister and his staff have a critical review of this system and consider what lessons could be learned and applied in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. When I talk about the educational renewal, it does cover a broad sector of areas. There have been talks about educational reform, there have been talks about inclusive schooling, formal funding, small schools, the capital and so forth. So it would capture a lot of those areas, and once we hear from the general public, I will be before the standing committee. A lot of discussion will be taking place. Members alluding to specific areas can be part of the discussion as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister. So I appreciate that this will be a very broad review and, I'm assuming, the Minister replied with some interest in looking at the finished system.

Will the Minister report to the committee on the results of the review of the Finnish system and really work with us on a plan to adopt, fund and implement those aspects that we think are warranted?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I spoke earlier about various research that we are currently undertaking, because this is a complex document that we're faced with when we talk about the renewal. There have been other studies. As the Member alluded to, the Finnish system that he

shared with us. I can share what we currently have, but it's all preliminary right now. Once it's available to me, then I can share with the standing committee the updated status in due time.

MR. BROMLEY: I know committee's looking forward to that offer for information. What I'm specifically asking, recognizing that this is apparently the best educational system in the world, they were where we are now, they moved to address that and now they're the best in the world. Will the Minister specifically have his department look at the Finnish system and bring to us the results of that review and what could work in the Northwest Territories? I know social passing and so on, and many of the things that are brought up today are addressed in that Finnish system.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: The peer passing has been addressed in the House. My staff have been diligently reviewing this. The Finnish system, there's been research across the country and internationally. I will provide that information of what we have to the Members and the standing committee as well.

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

QUESTION 110-17(4):

COMMUNITY POLICING PLANS IN SCHOOLS

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to continue with questions for the Minister of Justice here. In his statement he mentioned that one of our goals is sustainable, vibrant and safe communities. We also have to make that the focus of the schools. He talked about the community policing plan. I just want to ask the Minister of Justice in his community policing plan if, in the plan itself, the RCMP are asked to go into the school and be a presence in the schools, having them make sure that our teachers and students are safe and have that assurance of having their presence there. Is that part of the policing plan in any of the communities?

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These community policing plans are actually an agreement between the RCMP and the community itself. They sit down and talk about what the priorities are and set some of their direction. I can't tell you what every community policing plan says. There are 33 of them. I do know that in some communities, the communities have indicated that education and visits to the school are a priority, and that is in some of the community policing plans.

MR. MOSES: Would the Minister commit to creating a ministerial directive in speaking with the RCMP to make it a priority, and make it mandatory for RCMP to be in the schools and educate the

students on what their roles are in the community and in the schools, and create that strong partnership so that our students can speak up, our teachers can speak up, and let RCMP know what some of their concerns are in terms of bullying, violence, and other things that are happening in the school system or on school grounds?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I've had a lot of conversations with the commanding officer of "G" Division where I've indicated that education is very important in the Northwest Territories. Having the RCMP engage with students is a priority. I do know that a number of the detachments have been very active with community groups and things like the Not Us! campaign. As I've already indicated, I do know that in a number of communities, the communities have made that a priority as well. I'll continue to have the conversations with the commanding officer of "G" Division and continue to encourage him to engage our communities, to provide education and, where possible, get into the schools.

MR. MOSES: Just for an example, our Not Us! Committee in Inuvik invited all RCMP staff to a family night. We introduced them to the community and they engaged and played board games, had discussions, sat down, had tea and coffee with the residents of the community. It really builds that strength and partnership and relationship within our community so that we feel comfortable talking to them and they feel comfortable talking to us. It's been very helpful.

A while back when I was doing health promotion, we had a program with the coroner's office where the coroner went into the schools and did an education on things like drinking and driving, and violence. I was just wondering if the Minister had any programs in the future, or near future, where the coroner goes into the schools and does an education on their job and some of the things that they do see, because it's a reality but it really sends a very strong message and education.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I'm not certain whether that program still exists in the Department of Justice. I don't recall it, but it sounds like a really great idea. What I'll do is talk to the department to see what existed in the past and whether or not something could be put in place, and I will certainly come and talk to the Member and committee to see if that's something that we might be able to do in the future.

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

QUESTION 111-17(4):
INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to follow up on the theme of education and Education

Week, and I'd like to address my questions to the Minister of Education. He's had lots of questions today about inclusive schooling and I also have some with regard to inclusive schooling and students.

I know the Minister recognizes, and I think all Members recognize, that we have some special needs students in our classrooms who require more attention and more support than others. Some of them require, in some cases, two special needs aides as opposed to just one or, in some cases, none. I'd like to ask the Minister, first of all, whether or not the current funding formula for special needs for schools recognizes that we have students with greater needs than others.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Currently, we contribute approximately \$26 million towards inclusive schooling and \$666,000 to a Student Success Initiative. It may not capture every challenge that there is in the school system. That's the very reason why we are going to re-evaluate our inclusive schooling funding. We've been told, when visiting communities, that they should be based on students' needs, special students and so forth, special needs. Those are the factors that will be taken into consideration. I will be addressing it with the standing committee.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for his response, though I would have to infer from that response that, no, our current formula does not recognize that we have some students who have much higher needs than others and, therefore, the board requires much more funding. I'm pleased to hear the Minister state that there's going to be a review. I think part of the educational review initiative or renewal initiative, I guess it's called, is going to include looking at the Inclusive Schooling Policy and, I think, also the funding.

I'd like to know from the Minister, when that review is being done, will it include what I think is an objective review. That would be an external review as opposed to an internal review of the funding formula and the students within our system that require special needs support.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: As I stated before, we need to reach out to the front-line workers as well. We are doing research and we are reaching out to experts as well. We want to have those best practices from elsewhere, as well, within Canada, and even in the States and internationally, as Mr. Bromley alluded to earlier. Those are the outside experts that are informing us and providing input. We will continue to address that and reach out to various sectors out there, outside our educational system.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. I appreciate there is an awful lot of research going on and that the Minister indicates that they're reaching out. It's one thing to do research and to look at policy. One thing I'm asking for is an external evaluation of our current situation in all our schools within the NWT system. We need to know what students currently exist with what special needs and how much support each is requiring. I would like to know from the Minister if the renewal initiative includes an evaluation of the current special needs requirements in our system.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: There are various areas that are evaluating various programs, an external review and so forth. We will take those into consideration as well.

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

MS. BISARO: I'm not sure I really understood the Minister's answer. Reaching out. I guess I appreciate that. When the Minister said external, I wonder if he could expand on what he meant by "external" in his last answer.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: When I talk about external, there are other sources and experts that we need to depend on. When the Member is talking about external evaluation, those are some of the key factors that we need to take into consideration as well.

I stated before that we're doing a lot of research in this area. We want to have the best product for the Northwest Territories that meets our educational system. That's what we're doing. It is a comprehensive and complex issue.

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

QUESTION 112-17(4):
INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions will be again to the Minister of Education regarding inclusive schooling. Maybe, for this moment, on my first question I'll ask the Minister his version of what is inclusive schooling. Maybe he can explain that. What is the purpose of the money and how does it help the students?

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. This whole inclusive schooling, the funding that's been allocated to the school boards is to provide services to those students that are in the needs of various areas within the educational system. We provide \$26 million and \$666,000 towards the Student Success Initiative within the

schools. We continue to work closely with the school boards. Part of the discussions that we've been having with the school boards and communities is that we understand there are special needs within the school system. Parents would have to come and say to do an assessment. There is a lot of hesitation as well. We try to work around that system, as well, but based on this comprehensive review that's going to be undertaken, I'm certainly hoping that will capture those key areas that we've been hearing from the communities.

MR. HAWKINS: I have to admit that I didn't understand that answer. I heard needs in various areas and those key areas. With all those various needs and community needs and various area needs, maybe the Minister can explain how a reduction in funding does a better program delivery. I'm not talking about the upcoming review. I'm talking about the reduction of the \$26 million he's talking about. How does that create better services and supports for those students?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I'd like to focus on what we have here today. Reduction, in the past we've transferred funding from inclusive to early childhood. That was the direction and recommendation from the standing committee that I work with. I need to work with what we have. So we work closely with standing committee. If there is a guidance or advice given to us, we need to work with it. If early childhood development is a priority, then we need to focus in those areas.

With respect to inclusive schooling, again we are re-evaluating the program and if we are going to be making some changes, I will be coming back to standing committee to make those changes.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I don't recall it being a standing committee recommendation, but if the Minister wants to blame standing committee, I guess we're big enough to just accept that and move forward. We're talking about going forward, of course.

Was the reduction of inclusive education money meant to penalize or redirect those who were not spending the money properly? Was it a form of punishment? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, absolutely not. It was towards the early childhood development. Mahsi.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, the question is simple. How has he made inclusive education better by these reductions? The people want that answered. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, I don't know how many times I have to say this, but we are

currently going through the review process. That's what we heard from the general public and from the Members of this Assembly, so we are moving forward on that. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 8, written questions. Mr. Bromley.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 13-17(4): IMPACTS OF HYDRAULIC FRACTURING (FRACKING) ON WATER USE AND WATER QUALITY

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Environment and Natural.

1. What are the comparative cost benefits of employing the different methods of fracking for fossil fuel extraction?
2. What is the failure rate of fracking operations (e.g. drill casings) and, since failure is inevitable and we plan to permit fracking, what predicted level of failure will we permit?
3. What is the potential for contamination of drinking water from fracking operations?
4. Given our low rates of precipitation and replenishment of waters, and the unpredictable rates of precipitation levels as a consequence of climate change, how have we assessed our ability to remove large volumes of this resource from the water cycle for use in fracking?

Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

---Unanimous consent granted

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery (Reversion)

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome, from Aklavik, Mr. Charlie Furlong. I know she's been recognized a couple of times before, but I also want to point out that Shirley was born in Aklavik, raised in Inuvik, a good Delta girl. Welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 8, written questions. Mr. Hawkins.

Written Questions (Reversion)

WRITTEN QUESTION 14-17(4): REDUCTION IN INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING FUNDING

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My written question is to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Would the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment please provide the analysis that was used to support a funding reduction for inclusive schooling?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, 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.

By the authority given to me as Speaker, by Motion 1-17(4), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the normal daily hours of adjournment to consider the business before the House, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I call Committee of the Whole to order. We have two items before us. Mr. Menicoche, what is the wish of the committee?

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. The committee wishes to consider Tabled Document 9-17(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-2014, with the continuance of Industry, Tourism and Investment as well as NWT Housing Corporation. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): We will commence with that after a brief recess. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. We're on the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment. When we recessed yesterday we were

on page 12-18 and before we continue on the detail, I'd like to ask Minister Ramsay if he'd like to bring witnesses into the chamber.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Yes please, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Is the committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. I'll ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses to the table.

Mr. Ramsay, for the record, could you please introduce your witnesses.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. To my left I've got Mr. Peter Vician, deputy minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, and to my right, Ms. Nancy Magrum, director of shared services, finance and administration, ITI and Environment and Natural Resources. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Industry, Tourism and Investment, activity summary, minerals and petroleum resources, grants and contributions, contributions, \$745,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. We are on page 12-18, Industry, Tourism and Investment. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Page 12-19, Industry, Tourism and Investment, information item, mineral and petroleum resources, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Moving on to page 12-21, activity summary, energy, operations expenditure summary, \$1.679 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd say the energy planning role of this government is one of our most vital roles and, unfortunately, the challenges are so huge that we have made very little progress in this area. I'm very disappointed to see that our funding has continued to decline, I think, \$4 million a couple years ago and a couple million last year, and for this current year it's down another half a million or so.

I think there are some fundamental issues that we should have been able to address that we haven't. An example, certainly, is that incredibly we are still spewing megawatts of electricity over the falls without it being used. We're just letting it go into the environment. This, while our people are facing a high cost of living and so on. This is clean energy that's being produced anyway. That's really no additional cost. Rather than figuring out how to use

these megawatts of power in the South Slave and figure out a way to reduce our costs, at least in that region where we have it, to me is untenable. We continue to spend millions of dollars as planners, and we have done this for years and years. The only thing we've done in terms of hydro where we spent this money, is replace a dam that we bought in a very dilapidated condition a few years before. So I'm very concerned about our investment in energy planning here.

I know there are plans to hook up the system and whatnot and I agree when we can, we need to connect our regions, but certainly to think that we can connect to the South and expect anything other than a commitment to buying coal-produced energy, with all that that means, and sending our money south instead of supporting local energy providers, it's certainly nonsensical in terms of real, full economic sense. I know there's an effort now to look at connecting our systems within the Northwest Territories. To me that sounds reasonable, but there is so much that could be done and within the existing, and we know that the South Slave has the demand and yet we continue to spill those megawatts of power. It's just beyond comprehension.

So I want to express my disappointment in the performance so far. We've studied many dams, many projects and I suppose at some point maybe the data we produce will be useful there. But I really wish this government could focus on taking advantage of the stuff that's before our very eyes instead of pursuing the elusive, so expensive and so megaproject sort of an approach that they're generally not attainable. They're not really economic. It's well demonstrated the smaller the things are, the more economic they are when you bring in full cost accounting and so on. Certainly, the more achievable they are. There is so much we could be doing and I have to admit when it comes to actually doing things on the ground, there's a lot that's happening. I think ENR has a lot of good stuff going in biomass and now starting on solar and so on.

Let me start with that. Could I get the Minister's take on what we can do to turn this around into where we're planning in a way that actually we can see things implemented at an appropriate scale, living within our means, as the Minister of Finance says, and so on? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair, and I thank the Member for his comments. I certainly appreciate his take on things, but we are making progress. I'm convinced we are making some progress here. We're getting close to the end of negotiations on devolution.

We continue to talk to industry at every opportunity about power from Taltson. We need transmission, we need a very sizeable investment in the transmission lines. I know there's been a lot of talk about the interconnect on the grid north and south, and I believe that can happen with that type of investment and it should happen. I think that's something that we should certainly strive for. The government is working hard on trying to achieve that objective. We do need to plan. I mean, these things just don't materialize. You don't pull \$700 million or \$800 million out of thin air. We need to plan. We need to have a plan that we can target, we can get the money, get the funding and the customers. I mean, it's all about having customers at the end of the day and a place to sell that power.

So we continue to work on that through MECC and the Premier's leadership of MECC and Minister Miltenberger. We are making progress. It might seem to some that we're not moving fast enough, we need more money, obviously, but our belief is we're going to continue to move forward and make this work. After devolution there's probably going to be a reorganization. As far as coordination goes, there might be different models that are looked at. So that remains to be seen, but from a coordination perspective, energy is still under MECC and the guidance of the MECC committee. So we continue to, again, ensure that this file is moving forward and my belief is that it is moving forward. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I have to say I am disappointed in the Minister's response. Transmission lines are at least \$750,000 a kilometre, typically more, and in our environment probably more. That's not what I'm talking about. We've been talking about that for decades. We can't do that. We don't have the money. The Minister said it himself. I agree with the Minister; we do not have the money. What we do have are customers. All of the South Slave.

Everybody uses energy. We heat our homes, we drive our vehicles, et cetera. Arctic Energy Alliance studies once again have demonstrated, for example, that the entire community of Fort Resolution could use a good amount of that power efficiently with ground source heat pumps, for example, to heat all their buildings, take one unit of electricity, produce four units of heat, and I would imagine the same is true for Fort Smith and Hay River where we have done a few sort of token projects, maybe a couple.

Clearly, the market is there, the energy is there. To think that, I keep saying we're 43,000 people, 41,000, whatever. Let's live within our means. Let's adjust the scale of our thinking to where we actually benefit people where it's possible, rather than pursuing these distant projects. We have \$1.7 million, roughly, in energy planning. Will the Minister commit to looking at where it's possible to get things on the ground soon in a scale that suits

our communities and reflects the size of our communities and realizes the opportunities we have?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I appreciate the Member's comments. Those are the type of comments that we're looking for as we advance the discussion on energy through the Energy Plan.

We recently had the energy charrette. Those are the types of things and comments that we need to hear. We are going to have to present alternatives and options, new options, on how we get this done. I look forward to that discussion. We have to continue moving in the right direction and, again, through planning that's how we're going to arrive at the alternatives and make some decisions on where we go next. That has to happen. I thank the Member for his comments and I appreciate his comments on the matter.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to continue on the efforts from my colleague from Weledeh. I think we're onto something here and I do realize that we have limited funds and there's been a lot of austerity means to have a prudent budget before us. However, the concern I think many of us have, as you hear, is our energy costs and the costs associated with the cost of living. These are paramount questions that are asked time and time again, not only in the House but anywhere we go as Regular Members or as Members of the House.

The concern I have is that less than a year ago, in 2011-2012, we had \$5.5 million of sunsets. A lot of the sunsets in this initiative were hydro initiatives. There was the Lutselk'e mini-hydro, there was an anti-Hydro Strategy, there was a Sahtu hydro assessment. These comprised a large part of that \$5.5 million. Yet, as I said in one of my comments on the opening statement, our Hydro Strategy, in terms of our significant change that we need to do as a society to mitigate our use of fossil fuels, is very lax in this budget. In fact, we've been talking about hydro initiatives or strategies for the last two years. We don't really see it again this year.

Can the Minister indicate when we will see the full investment in hydro and to coordinate that with, obviously, the transmission line strategy that we keep hearing about, especially since the charrette is now over?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I thank the Member for his comments. They're spot on. That's exactly what we're trying to achieve here. We've got the Hydro Strategy rolled up with the Energy Plan. We have to get those alternatives. We have to get that investment back. It's through the

planning that we're going to get there. Like Mr. Bromley, I thank Mr. Dolyunny for bringing these issues up. We will get there. I know it might seem like a long way away, but we are working toward these solutions and we will continue to work toward the solutions through the planning.

MR. DOLYUNNY: I do appreciate the Minister earmarking the need. I guess the question is when. If he has the ability to ask that, it would be nice for the House to know what the master plan is behind it. More importantly, we found out yesterday through our deliberations that through the Opportunities Fund this government has roughly \$7 million parked, for what I really don't know. I would assume it's for initiatives. If so, I would say that this is possibly a really good initiative to invest this money in. Maybe if we can get an answer as to if this is not a good initiative, what initiative is the money that \$7 million or so in this Opportunities Fund doing and what is it earmarked for?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. It's a bit of a change of topic from a budgetary point of view. Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I thank the Member for the suggestion. Yesterday I mentioned that the remaining balance in the NWT Opportunities Fund is earmarked for economic pursuits in the territory. I haven't seen a proposal. I know the department is working on a proposal on where and how that remaining balance should be spent and whether or not it's on hydro, I would have to go to the deputy minister. We haven't seen a plan come through FMB and that should be coming through FMB and hitting my desk, hopefully, sometime very soon. As I mentioned yesterday, when that happens our hope is to be able to share it with Members as soon as we get that plan. We're still in the process of trying to find out the best way to proportion that \$7 million.

MR. DOLYUNNY: By no means do I want to direct the spending of Cabinet. The suggestion is if we're looking for new monies and new opportunities, that's basically why I posed the question. Here's an opportunity to put much needed funds to really have a true impact on the cost of living here for the Northwest Territories.

Just one other question with respect to this energy budget and everything. The NWT power system has been discussed a number of times here in the House, and the formulation of a plan, grid efficiencies or grid expansion. Can the Minister indicate, if this is entirely an important focus for government, is that reflected in this current budget, and if so, where is it in this budget?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: It's incorporated in the work that we've given to NTEC. That discussion on the power system here in the Northwest Territories, that dialogue continues through MECC. We've just recently met with officials from the Power

Corporation. That discussion and dialogue continues. The planning continues and, yes, it is contained in the budget through NTEC.

MR. DOLYUNNY: Can the Minister be a bit more specific as to what percentage or dollar figure NTEC has in order to look at the power system plan?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Within the budget for the energy activity, which totals \$1.679 million, there's \$1.1 million in grants and contributions. Of that \$1.1 million, \$700,000 is dedicated to contributions to the NWT Energy Corporation and the Energy Corporation is focused on solutions particularly in hydro development. That supports the costs of doing the work in that branch.

MR. DOLYUNNY: Could we get some clarification? Is this a one-time allotment to the NWT Energy Corporation or is this a multi-year program? I guess what I'm looking for is, what is the long-term strategy? Is this multi-year funding or one-time funding?

MR. VICIAN: Through the Ministerial Energy Coordinating Committee the appropriation of funding for energy initiatives is approved on an annual basis. That information is shared with committee. There is no commitment to multi-year funding. The funding is considered on an annual basis and then brought to the Legislature through appropriation authority. At this point in time the focus is on hydro-development and the corporation focus is on working with us today, specifically completion of the Energy Plan with a large component focused on hydro solutions in addition, of course, to the other areas of energy solutions for the territory.

MR. DOLYUNNY: I guess the Minister leads me to my final question on the overall Energy Plan. As I mentioned in my opening comments, with all the different initiatives that we have on the go, there's a myriad of multi-disciplinary, multi-functionality initiatives dealing with energy resources and cost of living. Everything boils down to this Energy Plan that we keep hearing about here in the House. Will we be expecting to see a finalized document, action plan for energy initiatives within this fiscal year?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I mentioned earlier, getting close to a deal on devolution, and certainly the Member hit a couple of high points here on the coordination. The proposal may be to look at a reorg and have a department like Energy Mines and Petroleum Resources set up where the coordination could take place inside one department. Those are decisions that are going to be made in the very near future, I would say. We

have that to look forward to. I think that has been an issue for some time on the coordination side. This might be an opportunity to correct some of that coordination and put it inside one department.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Madam Chair. I wanted to ask a few questions with regard to energy and the Energy Plan, and funding within the budget. Mr. Vician advised that we have \$700,000 out of the \$1.1 million in grants and contributions that's going to NT Energy Corporation. I'd like to know, first off, what the other \$400,000 is for, what initiatives or activities it's funding.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. The remaining \$400,000 would be for medium- and long-term energy options for Inuvik at \$100,000, a water monitoring program in Kakisa for \$50,000, and the Whati T-line completion of regulatory application for \$250,000.

MS. BISARO: With regard to the Energy Plan, I too have concerns. We have been putting money into NT Energy Corporation as a corporation. The government has been putting money into NT Energy Corporation for quite some time. I appreciate that the department wants to focus on hydro and hydro initiatives but I'm quite concerned that we've been giving up money, so to speak, and not seeing anything for it. We haven't had any results since I don't know when it was. How many years ago now? There was a plan to have a transmission line go from south of the lake up to the mines and that now has been put aside and we're looking at other things. I don't have a sense from the department or from NT Energy Corporation of what the plan is for hydro going forward. I imagine the Minister is going to tell me that's what this Energy Plan is going to be for.

Like my colleagues, I feel really strongly that we need to focus on getting ourselves off diesel. We need to focus on reducing the cost of our electricity and cost-of-living in that particular area. I don't see that we have that long-term vision and plan. There's lots of talk, I've heard lots of talk, but I haven't seen anything concrete. The only thing in this budget that was just mentioned was the Whati transmission line. There's money in the budget for that and that's great, but there's been any number of other projects mentioned which, sort of, are highlighted in one year and then fall off the table. I would like to know from the Minister, if we have a plan, when we're going to see it, and if we don't have a plan, why not. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Madam Chair, on the Hydro Strategy and plan, it does fit in with the Energy Plan. We hope to have the work done on

that hopefully by the end of this year – by this spring, Peter says – then we can start making some decisions. I think the planning has to go into this.

The Member talks about getting off of diesel and I think that is our primary objective here. We have to find a way to get communities off of diesel, whether it's hydro or through natural gas development in the central Mackenzie or in the Mackenzie Delta. We have to look at getting communities off of diesel. That has to happen. It has to be coordinated. It is through the planning that we're going to get this coordination.

I thank the Member for her comments. We're working toward just what she's talking about, it's going to take us a little bit more time. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Sorry, I'm laughing, Mr. Minister, because you say it's going to take a little more time. Everything seems to take a little more time.

You said the end of this year and I hope you meant not calendar year but fiscal year, then I heard the word spring, so the Minister is nodding. That is the spring of 2013. Thanks for that confirmation.

I guess I'm a little frustrated with the fact that I don't see, hear or get a sense that we have a long-term plan for our hydro. To get ourselves off of diesel, we're going to have to get ourselves onto hydro. I'm talking about not just communities in and around Yellowknife and south of the Lake, but we need to be talking about hydro for the communities that are north of us here.

If we're going to see that in the spring, if this Energy Plan and Hydro Plan are going to be presented to us in the spring, that's great. I'd like to know from the Minister, what time frame is this plan going to cover. Are we talking one or two years? That is kind of what I've seen from my time here.

I feel that we need a plan that's going to span not just a couple of years, but 10 or 20 years if it's going to actually get us someplace. The reason why I say that is because there are huge costs associated with adding hydro initiatives, transmission line costs and generating hydro costs money as well. We need to plan for those huge expenses and we have a few other ones already on the books. What kind of time frame is it for the plan? That is about the basis of my question. Thanks.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Madam Chair, yes, and it's this fiscal year, not next fiscal year. At the very earliest opportunity, I am sure, through MECC, we will bring the Energy Plan through committee, share it with committee sometime before the next session in May. We will get that there. We'll have this discussion and I think it's going to be a very good discussion. The plan is going to be multi-year. Obviously, some of the bigger projects would require large investments and be carried out over multiple years. There will obviously be some

smaller things that could happen in the near term over one or two years.

This discussion has to happen. We will, like I said, at the earliest opportunity, through the chair of MECC and the MECC committee, bring the plan to committee at the earliest opportunity. That will probably be sometime before the session in May. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Madam Chair, thanks to the Minister, I think, for that response. It's kind of like, trust me, it's going to be great, just wait, wait until you see it, it's going to be really good. Pardon my cynicism, Mr. Minister. I believe there's money in the budget for energy policy development, I think; I'm not exactly sure. I wonder if the Minister could explain to me if there is money in the budget for energy policy initiatives or development, and if so, what is the intent of the use of that money? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Madam Chair, yes, the Member has indicated there is, within this budget, \$100,000 allocated for energy policy. At this point in time, the MECC committee has asked that this funding not proceed for the 2013-14 year. It will be reconsidered as part of the Energy Plan. We intend to proceed, through committee's advice, with an alternative investment of possibly in the alternate energy area. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MS. BISARO: Madam Chair, I'm done.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Madam Chair, I just want to follow up a little bit here. The Minister mentioned, I think yesterday, the \$9 million being spent on the Territorial Power Subsidy Program, and in addition to that, the \$34 million over four years. I think the first year was \$17 million. I think the next year was \$9 million, or something like that, anyway descending as electricity rates go up and the public begins to catch up with the rates, which I appreciate the gradual approach there.

Did the Minister work with his colleagues to capture the difference in annual expenditures? For example, \$17 million and next year \$9 million. That's a difference of \$8 million we are no longer putting in. Did the Minister attempt to capture that and direct that, with his colleagues, to energy expenditures to help us deal with this situation?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Madam Chair, I don't have the details in terms of the process of that allocation over the four-year period to temper the impact of the rate change that was affected by the application to the Public Utilities Board. But fundamentally, the

challenge, of course, was trying to minimize the impact across the Northwest Territories to electrical consumers as a result of the driver with regard to covering the costs of the higher fuel costs and other additional costs that were facing the Power Corporation over the five-year period that they had to look at the rate increase. Overall, that was considered carefully in terms of how to minimize that impact, and it was considered an important balance in terms of making that investment as it was shown.

I hope that answers the question, but it is difficult to have any further numbers at this time. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Madam Chair, it doesn't answer the question but, yes. I think we continue to see our energy dollars decrease when the need is, in fact, increasing and there is an opportunity to redirect the funds that we're no longer using to subsidize energy to put into energy initiatives. I'm very disappointed if the Minister did not try to capture some of those dollars here.

I think the point is, hydro we know is expensive. It has serious frontend costs, but it's also self-financing. It's typically very long lived, 50 to 70 years. We have an opportunity, if we were to capture these dollars. The difference between \$17 million and \$9 million or whatever, that is significant when it comes to a modest-sized hydro operation given that we don't need to pay it all up front. These are opportunities that continue to slide by as we spend, I would say, literally millions of dollars studying the situation rather than focusing on one and getting it done, one that is an appropriate size for our needs and communities.

On that, I think it's not just our communities we should be looking at. Our communities are very important and it helps with the cost of living, but another perspective is that our industry requires energy and they are typically associated with one community or another, often thermal communities. There is another opportunity to help deal with some of the frontend costs. Again, I just don't see that happening. I will leave that as a comment.

I have one more comment. The Department of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, you know what is going to happen to energy when it is in such a department. I think we stressed, as committee, the need to have a Department of Energy that actually brings the focus as needed to the issue. But lodge such an issue in a department that deals with energy, mines and petroleum development, we know exactly what's committed to the future on our energy concerns. It's unfortunately more of the same.

I just wanted to register those comments and welcome any response from the Minister. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the Minister's comments, and as industry and energy go together with communities, that is something – and I mentioned it earlier in response to another Member – we have to always be looking for opportunities when there is resource development near a community that we can get long-term, lasting benefits for the community. You look around the Northwest Territories today, hydro is here because of the mining past and history of the territory with Taltson, Snare and Bluefish. So there's been a history of that and if we are going to get to some long-lasting improvements, especially in the area of hydro development here in the territory, there has to be a benefit to both industry and, on the social side, to communities currently on diesel. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: My last point is we are slacking off on expenditures here. We need to continue to invest in this area. I think we need to add, I think the Minister needs to add to the budget here. What's really needed is a fund to work with our businesses and industry in a way that can be significant in helping them play a role in renewable energy development. What would the Minister do if he had some additional half million or million dollars here that's in line with that pursuit?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: There are some great opportunities and the Member has a good suggestion. We currently don't have a half a million extra dollars here, so it's a bit hypothetical at this point, but certainly the money would be put to good use and we will be working with the Members, through committee, to find out where the best investment would be made with that money. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate the Minister's comments. I would hope, if and when we do have such money, that there will be a focus to getting something done on the ground rather than just planning. Again, I appreciate the Minister's comments. That's all I have at this stage. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Industry, Tourism and Investment, operations expenditure summary, energy, \$1.679 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Moving on to page 12-22, energy, grants and contributions, contributions. Agreed? Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. The regional hydro and renewable energy solutions with respect to the Sahtu, I know there were some efforts going on there. Can we get an update on where the Sahtu is at with regard to the interest, particularly Deline? There have been some

investments over the years. Just an update on that would be appreciated. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. That question falls under page 12-23. Can we finish and deal with 12-22? Energy, grants and contributions, contributions. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Moving on to page 12-23, energy, grants and contributions, continued, \$1.1 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks. I think the Minister has my question, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thanks very much, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. The funding that was provided in previous years, '12-13, towards renewable energy solutions, hydro solutions in communities, was directed at a number of key initiatives, particularly the Sahtu initiative which looked at potential hydrokinetic energy, electrical energy solutions from the Bear River particularly. We continue to work with the community on those options. Feasibility work was carried out last year looking at some alternative technologies and we look at some of the feasibility of the costs associated with that. These solutions have not panned out in a feasible manner. We can provide the reporting for committee's consideration, but it's a matter of scale and installation that challenges us. Of course, the local load and distribution of that load to make it effective. We continue to work closely with the Tlicho Government with regard to solutions in that region and, of course, as was indicated by the Member, in the area of Lutselk'e it continues to be on the radar and work continues and dialogue continues on that solution. Nevertheless, all of these things, once you look into them, you face the challenges of the cost and the feasibility of the project. We'd be more than happy to share the results of that with committee. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Vician. Energy, grants and contributions, \$1.1 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Energy, active positions, page 12-24.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Page 12-27, tourism and parks, operations expenditure summary, \$11.962 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: I know we've got a plan underway for working on some of the issues at Prelude Lake Territorial Park. I'm just wondering if this budget will deal with the implementation of the results of that plan. Also I'm wondering what the results of the public has been. I understand consultation is coming to an end fairly soon. I'm wondering if the Minister feels they have had a good response, the word got out there that this plan needed to be looked at. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thanks, Madam Chair. It's partially included in this year's budget, but for the detail I'll go to Deputy Minister Vician.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Vician.

Mr. VICIAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. The capital projects that were approved in the fall session identified capital investment for fiscal year 2013-14 of about \$150,000 which will be used to expand some parking capacity which has been identified by residents and users as a challenge in the park. So we're quite pleased with the support of that expansion.

With regard to the question regarding consultation, the development of the management plan for the park has been a very successful process. Good engagement happened earlier in the calendar year, in January, with a very well-attended event, public event, that brought users of the park to discuss in a workshop format the priorities that were needed in the park. We've had good feedback. We're compiling the report at this point and committee will see that in short order.

In addition to that, dialogue continues with Yellowknives Dene First Nation and the residents and users that are adjacent or within the park boundary that take residence in that area. Generally speaking, there's been very positive feedback on the park planning and some key issues have been identified particularly in capacity issues as we see across the Northwest Territories. Our parks are facing a bit of a transformation with regard to user groups. We have larger type vehicles being used in the park and we need to make accommodations for that. We have been quite successful in using renewable energy and other solutions in our park showers and facilities. So, more of that has been identified. So I believe it's been a very successful process. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Vician. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Certainly parking has been an issue and I appreciate the work being done to address that. Part of it seems to be related to trespassers using the facility for parking while

they're at illegal facilities on the lake. I'm wondering if we're able to resolve that situation at all. Also, the park is a bit odd in that there are residents who own lots there as well as some that lease lots there and, obviously, have to park in the park. I think the proposal is to start charging them for parking. That seems a bit odd to me. I'm wondering if that situation has been discussed and whether we'll hear some solutions for those concerns.

MR. VICIAN: In regard to the parking challenges by unauthorized users, we hope to introduce legislation through this House, through the Minister in the House with regard to some better enforcement techniques to manage unauthorized parking. We hope to see that perhaps even in this session. That would be a key objective to managing the problem. We don't disagree that the problem exists. It's just a question of how do you manage and enforce that.

In terms of the use by the residents in the park proper, we continue to work out with our colleagues in MACA proper ranges with regard to using those rights and that continue, and those persons or residents should have continued use of those rights without cost. We've developed a good relationship and that's part of the dialogue. During the consultations in January, a special session was held with those users to identify some of those issues. I believe the park management plan will identify that with a good solution going forward.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Vician. Tourism and parks, operations expenditure summary, \$11.962 million. Mr. Dolynny.

**COMMITTEE MOTION 3-17(4):
INCREASED FUNDING FOR
TOURISM INDUSTRY MARKETING,
CARRIED**

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I do have a motion here with respect to this page. I move that this committee strongly recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories take immediate action to increase funding identified for the tourism industry contribution in the amount of \$600,000 for the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment under the tourism and parks activity.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. We'll just wait for the motion to be circulated to the Members. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, colleagues. I bring this motion with the support of my colleagues here today to address and, obviously, do a thank you for the hard work that our NWT Tourism folks do to promote our territory with all their marketing initiatives. I believe that although

we see a \$600,000 increase in this year's budget, the fact remains that this government promised a \$1.2 million insertion and has made a decision to do so over a two-year period. We're trying to earmark the fact that we're looking forward to the additional \$600,000 that this motion be moved in the form of a supplementation at the appropriate time. The rationale for that is quite empirical in nature. The fact that what they're doing right now is very well-targeted marketing campaigns but they're not able to do all the campaigns needed in the regional centres that they have a plan for. They want to do things to improve tourism information in all these regional areas. There is a lack of capacity in the current framework. We know that the NWT Tourism also has a plan for more emphasis on Aboriginal tourism, so by adding this money we know that it is going towards these very important initiatives throughout our communities and infrastructure. We know that the monies that we're looking at earmarking will definitely help with overall marketing and training, and again, adding jobs to our communities goes hand in hand with all the initiatives that we've put forward as the 17th Assembly.

The other area that we've mentioned here, and a number of my colleagues have mentioned, is the fact that we need a better presence and better leveraging opportunities with our current film industry. The Minister has even said on record that they're looking at initiatives but, again, to leverage these initiatives from a financial standpoint, we have a golden opportunity to use our existing success stories in many of the different features, national and international filmmakers who are here, and to exploit and be proud of all the different activities that we have in the Northwest Territories and our regional centres. We know this money will prove a great asset to move that agenda forward.

It goes without saying that tourism and arts go hand in hand, and we know that with these increased funds we are definitely contributing to the enhancement of our arts with this tourism integration program of extra monies. If we also look at the economic return of what the Department of Tourism currently does with the minimal budget that they have, it's phenomenal. The department has provided us documentation, and numbers have been tabled in this House numerous times, that the current budget produces, on average, about \$100 million to our GDP. When you do the quick math it's almost a 20 times return on your investment. As I said in my opening address, that type of return on an RRSP portfolio would be phenomenal. We know historical background what these fine folks do is paramount to our economy and we know that this additional \$600,000, should everything hold true to their performance measures, will attribute about a \$12 million return in GDP. Those are incredible numbers when you look at it. Again, these are

speculative numbers at best, but there are enough facts in there to support the investment, and I want to stress that.

Our counterparts to the west, and I'm referring to the territory of Yukon, we can learn a lot of things from our neighbours. They have been leaders and stewards in proper funding for tourism. Their budget is more than double our budget and, as a result, you can clearly see that the Yukon model for tourism investment and the output that they do for the people of the Yukon is phenomenal. I think we just need to look at what we can do. The \$600,000 does not bring us on par with Yukon but it's getting us and inching us closer to what we see as a very good model to which we hope, at one point in time, the government could emulate.

I'm hoping some of my colleagues here will hopefully speak towards this, and the government will heed to the wishes of this committee and look at their current budget and fiscal forecast to see if we can, through the proper channels, hold true to their word to this \$1.2 million and add the additional \$600,000 during this fiscal year.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. To the motion. Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the efforts of committee and the work that we have been doing going through the budget dialogue process and looking at putting dollars where we feel that has not been looked at or supported in quite a number of years. I think, for the past six years NWT Tourism has been operating on the same budget and doing a really great job in terms of getting out to the markets and other jurisdictions, while at the same time still operating on the second-lowest budget in all of Canada. Even with this little increase that we're asking for, we appreciate the \$600,000 that's being allocated to marketing this upcoming fiscal year, and they do have a very concrete business plan, an expanded Marketing Program that would benefit all residents of the Northwest Territories, and in the jobs that they've been doing and the work that we've seen them do, they've been very diligent in getting the jobs done that they have set out and spreading their dollars as thin as they could.

With the inflation and increased costs of advertising and the increased costs of travel, doing business in the Northwest Territories, especially when they're competing with other northern jurisdictions, we need to support this group that's been doing a lot of really great work over the past number of years. We want to continue to support this group, and just from the NWT Days and the work that they did there, they were a great presence. I think they were a big contributing factor on the success of NWT Days. I know there were very interactive displays at the pavilion in Ottawa there and I know they will probably be a big reason why this government has

been invited to many other functions in Canada to attend and show our spectacular NWT.

I would support the supplementary appropriation that's been asked for by our colleague to increase it. This organization has shown, and proven, that they can do the job successfully with the amount of dollars that they have with the \$1.2 million fully to get this expanded program on the ground and running and providing those dollars invested in marketing so that we can increase the return on investment in the Northwest Territories. They've been doing a great job. It shows that this is our biggest industry that we should be supporting on the lowest budget with the biggest return on investment for the Northwest Territories. I wouldn't say we're nickel and diming them, but they do need more support.

That said, this is something that we brought up through the beginning of this budget dialogue process. I feel that NWT Tourism has been doing a great job, excellent job, has been very successful and professional. For the last six years they've been operating on a very thin budget and it's about time that we recognized the hardworking staff over there, we recognize the work that they do, we recognize the investments that they bring to the Northwest Territories and that we do agree and get them that \$1.2 million so that they can continue to go out and promote the Northwest Territories to other markets globally and bring more visitors to the Northwest Territories.

I am in favour of this motion and I applaud the work that NWT Tourism does and the motion that my colleague brought before the House today.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Next I have Mr. Bouchard. To the motion.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to thank Mr. Dolynny for bringing this motion forward and I support both my colleagues' comments about the importance of tourism. In the South Slave we've seen a great deal of interest recently in tourism and we support any marketing of the Northwest Territories. I think the department has been doing a great job on the marketing side. I think these dollars will go a long ways to promoting and improving the Northwest Territories.

We started this process and this ask for additional funds in marketing some six months ago. We've been in the budget process, and half the funds were received or accepted in the budget, and this is the other half that we were asking for. I think we just see the commitment, we see the multiplier effect and the results that marketing does to the tourism industry in the Northwest Territories. We feel it's important to put this into fruition for this upcoming budget. It would have to be a supplementary budget, but we see that as an important thing for the Northwest Territories in

promoting this renewable resource that we have and promoting the Northwest Territories to the world and the rest of Canada. I support the motion as it reads.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. To the motion. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I just want to say that I will be supporting this motion and I believe that we can do definitely more. I've read through the NWT Tourism Marketing Plan, and even though we've identified an extra \$600,000 in this year's budget, I truly believe that we can capitalize and further show the world how spectacular NWT we are, once we've got the appropriate budget to do it.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to say briefly, I too will be voting in favour of the motion. I think any way that we can help buttress very important if not supercritical industry to draw new money into the territory, I think we need to take every step we can, as highlighted by Mr. Dolynny. He's quite right that this is an industry that draws good money, well-invested money into a return that is fantastic and, of course, in times of trying to compete with the world of interest and getting people in your area to spend money and invest money and be part of the opportunities, this certainly seems to be a worthy and well-worthwhile investment. If anything, I would be surprised if, next year, we start to reap what we've sown, we will start to ask ourselves questions: why didn't we do this sooner? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Madam Chair. I, too, will be in support of this motion. I think it's been a while since we have been raising this matter for some time on this side of the House. I basically support what my colleagues have stated in terms of support for this sector of the economy. There's great potential there. There's been some great work done. I'd like to see the expansion of this initiative into the small communities, ensuring that we have a very good marketing strategy and we basically both worked on this initiative. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. To the motion. Is there anyone else who would like to speak to the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Question is being called.

---Carried

---Applause

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Tourism and Parks, operations expenditure summary. You can cheer when you get the money.

---Laughter

Operations and expenditure summary, \$11.962 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Industry, Tourism and Investment, tourism and parks, grants and contributions, activity summary, contributions, \$4.447 million. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. My question has to do with the Northern Frontier Visitors Centre. We see a continuance of contributions here of \$111,000. However, recently CanNor funding in the fall produced, I believe, about \$1 million or so for Northern Frontier Visitors Centre. How did that CanNor federal infusion affect our annual contributions for this year? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Madam Chair, that won't change our contributions to the Northern Frontier Visitors Association at all. We will continue to fund them to the level that you see in the budget. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Madam Chair, I have a question in regard to this sport hunt outfitter marketing support. I mentioned it in my opening remarks. In 2011-12, the actual amount was \$494,000. This current fiscal year and intended for 2013-14 is \$300,000. I would like to know why the amount has gone down. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Madam Chair, the budget has gone down. There's much debate about whether the program itself survived. My belief is that we are fortunate to have \$300,000 in this year's budget to continue the Sport Hunt Outfitter Marketing Program. We've done our best to keep it in this year's budget. It's at the level it is at and that's the way it is, Madam Chair. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Madam Chair, that's a great explanation for the outfitters: Sorry, guys; that's the way it is. I want to reiterate my comments from previously. It is imperative that we find some way to assist these outfitters to maintain at least break-even year to year in keeping their camps from deteriorating any more than they currently are. I think I mentioned the other day that it costs them right now more to maintain a camp for a year when there's nobody there – and they're not getting any revenue but they still have to do the maintenance

and the upkeep – it costs them more than what they're getting out of the Sport Hunt Outfitter Marketing Support Program.

Two things I emphasized the other day that I want to re-emphasize: one is that whatever we can do to fund the outfitters to the value of what it costs them to maintain their camp and, secondly, that the department seriously look at a longer term program as opposed to year to year, that we look at a two- or a three-year program until these outfitters, if and when they get caribou tags, can actually get back to doing the business that they want to do. Thank you, Madam Chair.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Madam Chair, I have a lot of sympathy for the outfitters. I have constituents that are in that business that have camps out there north of Yellowknife. The fact of the matter remains. We've been funding this for the past four years. The Bathurst caribou herd are not scheduled to be surveyed again until 2015. By the time the results come in, that's 2016. At some point in time, we are going to have to ask ourselves a question about how long do the taxpayers of the Northwest Territories continue to fund these outfitters that are up there with no caribou to hunt. I can't put it much more bluntly than that. That's the dilemma that we are going to be faced with.

As to the future of this program, I think that is going to be front and centre during the business plans later this year. It is a question we're going to have to ask ourselves. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Madam Chair, to the Minister I guess I want to say that the defeatist tone or the defeatist words, I guess, that he's saying are a real problem for me. Outfitters have generated millions and millions of dollars. It's in the order of 30 or 40 million dollars, I believe, and yet we are talking \$300,000 a year which is peanuts when you compare it to the 30 or 40 million dollars.

I think for the Minister to say we have to let these businesses go, this department is in the business of encouraging industry and maintaining industry. We have umpteen contributions throughout this particular department to various and sundry businesses to help them out and to keep them going. I think we need to reconsider where these particular businesses are at, and we need to consider the revenue we're going to forgo as a territory and think twice about, well, that's going to have to be that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Madam Chair, I'm certainly not a defeatist. I'm a real optimist, believe me. I always believe that we can get to where we need to go. But the fact of the matter remains. We put \$1.8 million into supporting the outfitters. I will mention this, we also contributed \$900,000 on this product diversification marketing, some of which accessed this funding to try to diversify their operations so they can get into different lines, not

just caribou outfitting, but different lines of operations, whether it's getting people out on environmental photo shoots or taking photos of wildlife. Some have looked at that. We've put a lot of effort into these programs.

Again, this is a question of how long do we continue to put the money in there. That's all I'm saying. I'm not taking a defeatist attitude. If we had a defeatist attitude the money wouldn't be in the budget this year. We need to continue to support them. I'm not saying we don't support them. I'm just saying we have to make some decisions here soon on how long that support is going to last. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MS. BISARO: Madam Chair, thanks to the Minister. I have to say that I do appreciate that this money is here and I'm sure the outfitters do as well. To the tourism diversification efforts, there have been efforts but they haven't panned out. I think the Minister probably knows that. It's not replacing the outfitting business that these guys had before.

I've lost my thought. I want to go back to something that the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources committed to when we were doing that department, and I guess I would like to ask the Minister of ITI if he would perhaps attend the same meeting. The Minister of ENR committed to meet with the outfitters to discuss the possibility of tags. Would the Minister of ITI consider meeting with the outfitters to discuss their situation at the same time? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Madam Chair, absolutely. We certainly will look at suggesting a joint meeting. That could happen. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. What page are we on? Page 12-28, thank you. Tourism and parks, grants and contributions, contributions. Mr. Bromley.

Mr. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to do a little follow-up there. I think this fund is very much appreciated and it is a real struggle. I know the Minister is aware of that and I know the outfitters have been working hard to try to diversify, as the Minister is well aware. I'm sure that's been helpful, but the challenges are clear.

I agree that this government certainly encouraged these outfitters to develop in this way and this government is responsible and failed in their management of caribou. So there is some responsibility here and I'm sure that's part of the consideration as we support these outfitters.

What we have here is an opportunity for those that actually should have a viable hunt still today. I agree that those that rely on the Bathurst caribou, we've failed to get the herd in recovery mode as the responsible managers here. There's work to be done and the future is bleak. But for those who use the Bluenose-East – I think that's primarily what

we're talking about, it seems that there are a couple of outfitters there – there is some hope for. So I hope the Minister will retain and continue this support and I appreciate his offer.

My question is, apparently without significant income and certainly no income from their facilities, there are caches of fuel that are out there. Again, this government told them there would be a hunt and there wasn't, so they prepared for the hunt. Now they can't afford to get that fuel back because of environmental concern as well. In those sorts of extraordinary situations, if there was a situation, are we requiring that they declare bankruptcy and walk away before we help? Or would the Minister try to figure out where to try to help address that situation. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. We have been very flexible on how they use the funding and we will continue to be as flexible as we can be in working with them. We want to see an industry back there eventually. If there are some prospects with the Bluenose-East and those opportunities present themselves, we should be flexible. We should be working with the outfitters to see some business come back. The dialogue just has to continue. I mentioned earlier to MLA Bisaro that we could look at a joint meeting with ITI, ENR and the outfitters. We need to chart a course forward. We have to put everything on the table.

Like I said, the funding that we've got, it can't last forever. It is probably not going to last forever. That's why we need to come up with a plan. Whether it's through product diversification and we try to identify operators that are able to look at diversifying their product, and perhaps there's some that aren't, and we have to try to work with them to try to find solutions. That dialogue has to continue.

So I really do appreciate the Members bringing the issue up today. It's a tough issue, Madam Chair. We're going to have to make some decisions here soon. It's by working with the industry and working with ENR that we're going to do that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Just before I move on to Mr. Dolynny, there's been a few questions asked here today that are clearly posed in the hypothetical and I'm trying to think of how they could be reposed. One was if you had another \$5 million, what would you do with it, and if the outfitters go broke, what would you do about it. I know there must be some way to ask about some kind of a plan, you know, in the eventuality of people having to cease operations, you know, something, but clearly asking the Minister hypothetical questions that have that kind of an "if" in it, maybe we could find some other way to pose it. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to dovetail on some of the questions regarding the sport hunter outfitter marketing money. Really, I think we heard a genuine offer from the Minister here. Could the Minister go on record with this committee? Timing is paramount and we agree. We need to look at beyond just the \$300,000. These companies, these organizations want to get back on the road to recovery. They want to get back into their business and timing is of the essence. Right now, they've got to deal with things this spring in order to plan marketing shows for the fall if, indeed, it's imminent. So would the Minister commit before the end of this sitting, with his counterpart, to meet with the outfitters and meet with Regular Members to come and put a plan of action together? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dollynny. Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I will have that discussion with my colleague Minister Miltenberger and we'll get back to the Members on that. We'll see what we can make happen, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Tourism and parks, grants and contributions, contributions, \$4.447 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Moving on to page 12-29, Industry, Tourism and Investment, tourism and parks, active positions, information item. Mr. Dollynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I made a note to ask this question. Last year the department added a research analyst into the fold. At the time, Madam Chair, I did have to question the rationale with that insertion. How were the measurable outcomes to adding this research analyst to this division last year?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dollynny. Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. The specific measure in association with what the committee has seen with regard to the annual Tourism Marketing Plan. NWT Tourism relies on the department extensively for its statistical work in terms of guidance, and how various efforts made in the marketing of our tourism products worldwide reaches success. So it's a reliance of the industry and dependence on the industry on the department for that statistical research. We've had a very limited capacity and appreciate the support for the additional position. That has been actioned on. That work continues and we will support the ongoing Tourism Marketing Advisory Committee's review of the annual marketing plan and, as this House will see shortly, the proposed 2013-14 marketing plan developed by NWTT in concert with ourselves. I

have to candidly say the performance measures incorporated in that plan are exactly what this researcher contributes to developing and we've been very pleased with that presentation. It's probably one of the best in terms of business planning processes that we use. I think that's exactly why we needed that extra effort. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Vician. Industry, Tourism and Investment, tourism and parks, active positions, information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Page 12-31, economic diversification and business support, operations expenditure summary, \$22.961 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can the Minister explain on some of the work they're doing in the traditional economy, please?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. We've heard many discussions in the House in regard to the traditional economy. We've got the Take a Kid Trapping Program. We've got the Western Harvesters Assistance Program. We have increased the trappers' grubstake as well. In fact, we've doubled the funding available to trappers across the Northwest Territories. We continue to make great strides in the traditional economy in that area. We've got some great staff in the department. Our furs are recognized around the globe and we continue to make progress. Perhaps for some further detail I will go to Deputy Minister Vician.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Of course, above all, we are most pleased with the success of the Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur Program, an international brand that's had extensive success and really provides the trappers of the Northwest Territories with direct income through the process we use in the Northwest Territories. In addition to that, as the Minister has indicated, our Western Harvesters Assistance Program, our support for local wildlife committees, our Community Harvesters Assistance Program, and probably, as well, most interesting is our Take a Kid Trapping Program which continues to be a huge success in bringing youth to participate on the land. We can't measure the success of that for the small amount of money that is invested in that area, a little over

\$125,000 by the department, but in partnership with other groups up to around \$400,000.

One of the more recent programs I'd like to highlight for you is the High Procurement Program. This committee has identified this in the past. This is where we assist traditional craft producers in the Northwest Territories with a source of moose and caribou, but obviously the seal industry has been hard hit in the world and today we now repurchase seal product at wholesale price and provide that at discount price to our crafters around the Northwest Territories. Now, that's extended, as well, to some of our beaver product. You're seeing more and more of our crafters use that product across the territory providing that to artisans and making it a great step forward. Overall, this program has been a great success and, I believe, through the Minister, we've had some good response to that across the Northwest Territories.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Vician. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to let the Minister know, and certainly the deputy minister know, I sincerely appreciated that detailed example because the traditional economy is very important to Northerners, as we all know.

I just want to change subjects, but on the same page. It's no surprise that I, as well as many of the Members in this House, am very supportive of the film industry. We've seen such phenomenal growth and attention of the world. I think we're just on the cusp of greater success, and in talking to many of the filmmakers in the Northwest Territories that some of whom I've gotten to know and some I've known since I was a kid, their work needs to be further supported by this government with better policy and ways of setting up grants. In the past there was talk about having a tax credit but recently I'm hearing more and more from them that the tax credit sort of means along those lines that you have to make money to have a tax credit and first the logistics behind it become cumbersome. I've even brought this subject to Mr. Miltenberger and see notes that we could simplify our process by providing a grant process rather than a tax credit. I think it could help everyone around. With that said, I'd like to move a motion.

COMMITTEE MOTION 4-17(4):
DEVELOPMENT OF A NORTHERN
FILM AND MEDIA ARTS INDUSTRY
GRANT PROGRAM,
CARRIED

I move that this committee strongly recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories take immediate action to develop a northern film and media arts industry grant program to provide funding assistance for production filming in the

Northwest Territories to replace the proposed film tax credit system;

And further, that this grant program be implemented on an ongoing basis starting in the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Motion is being circulated. Motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I think some of my colleagues may speak to this, but there are important people who are breaking ground every day. I want to give credit to people like Amos Scott, who I have known since I was a kid growing up in Simpson. He's doing phenomenal work which is being recognized. He had a big production here recently at NACC and he had a great celebration when we were out at NWT Days. Artless Collection, Jay Bulckaet and Pablo Saravanja, they are doing phenomenal work. There are many other people. We know about the story of Lesser Blessed, people like Travis Mercredi working forward, making great strides. There are so many more success stories that could be built upon our growing film industry.

Rather than trying to use all the time up, I think the message is pretty clear that I think this is important, and what I'm suggesting is this is something that gets built in the budget programming going forward starting in the 2014-2015 fiscal year. As Mr. Miltenberger said the other day, they're building the next budget as we speak, so it's important to get these messages officially on the record. That's all.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Very quickly. I appreciate this being brought forward and I will be supporting the motion. This is the sort of thing that both Yukon and Nunavut have. It's been called for for a long time. We did a review of support for the film industry during the 16th Assembly. Some good improvements were made and this is taking the next logical step that addresses the big gap that remains out there. The SEED program is supportive but what is needed is exactly what's defined in this motion. I will be supporting it.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. To the motion. Mr. Dolyunny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate Mr. Hawkins' for bringing this motion forwards and I know colleagues that have been speaking towards it. This is just the evolutionary progression of what is just good stewardship and management of an industry.

This industry, as we are well aware, is very nomadic when it comes to our national and international filmmakers. This motion does speak very highly to helping our local film producers, as

mentioned by Mr. Hawkins. I had the pleasure of having one-on-one dialogues with the national film producers of Arctic Air and Ice Pilots NWT and they clearly said, as much as they appreciate tax incentives, that is not the impetus for them to do filming here in the North. What would be a value add to them was very clear. Their cost of air travel, their cost of lodging, these are true tangible costs. These were impediments for them to do business here, but they want to do business here. We have to make it easy for them. If we don't make it easy for them, we know full well that the industry will move on. Just ask the Province of Saskatchewan. That was a lesson learned. We've got to learn from the mistakes, possibly of others, and make sure we put adequate measures to mitigate it.

On top of that, not speaking to this motion, is the fact that these very same stewards and film producers clearly indicated they needed cultural experts as well. I know, not speaking to the motion, but we've got to listen to these, these are fundamentally the stewards, these are the people who are promoting the NWT through film and industry, and I think we need to look at it. I hope that Cabinet is listening because if Cabinet is not listening, they're saying no in essence to this industry by not supporting it.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. To the motion. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Madam Chair. I will be abstaining from this vote on this motion. The difficulty I have with this process is we're talking about the 2013-2014 budget and this is an initiative they want implemented into the 2014-2015 budget. We have a process in place. We have a business plan process that, as a new Member, I think we have a way to put these initiatives into it. Every one of these Members here have initiatives that are good, strong initiatives. I can sit here and probably make 10 motions of things that I want in the 2014-2015 budget, a year from now, two years from now. Where are we going to go with this? If we're going to continue the budget process, the discussion should be on the 2013-2014 budget and I've already indicated to the Member that I don't support this concept of putting additional 2014-2015 items into this year's budget. It's not the process, that's not the avenue we have to give our initiatives there. I will be abstaining from this motion.

---Applause

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Glad to see the Cabinet is listening. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Question is being called.

---Carried

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Back to page 12-31, Industry, Tourism and Investment, economic diversification and business support. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I will give the Minister a chance to get his seat there. I do appreciate the Minister's support for agriculture under the economic diversification business support side of things. I know he had a bit of a peak experience with the Polar Egg move. I just want to explore the Growing Forward Program a little bit. I understand it's being renewed, Growing Forward 2. Of Growing Forward 1, what proportion of the funds – I don't remember how much it was – was allocated to contributions to other parties and what was spent with our own programs internally, agricultural programs internally?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Growing Forward Program that is in place to the end of March 31st called Growing Forward 1 basically invested \$3.2 million in our agricultural programs. I don't have the exact value. I'd have to look at the individual main estimate and public accounts how the actual breakdown occurred, but the majority of that allocation was distributed in contributions to parties across the Northwest Territories in various areas.

I'll just reference the typical annual budget allocation. Small Scale Food, around \$245,000; northern agri-food programs, \$105,000; inter-settlement trade initiatives, around \$12,000; traditional harvesting sourced a great deal of the program at \$234,000; contributions were made to still commercial wildlife support of \$80,000; in one particular area we made a contribution of about \$50,000 to bison agricultural development. That would be a typical allocation by the agricultural sector, but overall the small scale foods and traditional side was where the primary support existed.

The products on traditional would be, for example, the Muskox Harvesting Program for a number of years was quite well supported and continues to be reviewed. Overall, it's primarily a contribution program and with the hopeful conclusion of negotiations early in the fiscal year with the federal government Department of Agriculture, we'll see an increase to \$1.2 million annually in that program and we're quite excited as, through the Minister, for a five-year agreement to see such success in this and the support by the federal government in this area.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for those comments. I guess I'm particularly interested in the Small Scale Food Program. I know we have a very active program in that area and I'm getting a lot of feedback from the communities that our approach

hasn't been the most productive. We tend to go into communities, choose the location of a plot of land, plow it up, plant it, then leave. I think the work that the department has been doing more recently and the partners that they've been supporting who are bringing in many other partners are actually working with individuals in the communities to be much more effective and I'm hoping that will actually characterize the work going forward. I would appreciate that breakdown, at least on what we spent internally versus what we made through contributions to partners. Just on that, if we have a community garden put in, say, Whati and we go in and do it and so on, is that an internal expenditure or is that considered a contribution to a partner?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to the Member's last question, it could be both. It depends on which community and the dynamics of it.

On the Member's other question, we are going to have more money through Growing Forward 2 and Deputy Minister Vician mentioned \$1.2 million. So it's about \$6 million over five years. We need to come up with a plan on how best to spend that money. We've had discussions with the Territorial Farmers Association late last year and they have some really interesting plans on how to train folks from the smaller communities, bring them into Hay River, provide them with training and support so that they can go back into their home communities and train others. It sounds like a very good model and it's something that as we move forward and negotiate this deal and plan how we're going to spend that money, I think that's going to be a part of it. We certainly will have some more money and I think it's going to be exciting to put a plan together on how best to spend that money and we certainly look forward to working with the Members on EDI and other Members that are interested on how best to utilize this new funding.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister's comments. I appreciate that. I think this is an opportunity to do some serious navel gazing to see how well we've done and how productive our work has been with internal efforts versus through contributions. I know there seems to be an effort out there that restricts contributions to projects that are less than an acre in size. To me, that's completely crazy. It ignores the size of our communities and so on and I have to wonder where that's coming from.

I think the Minister is on the right track and good, full discussions on this with all of our partners who are out there doing the real work would be a good way to go. That is all I have on gardening.

Maybe just let me throw in a comment on fisheries. I know that it is dear to some folks' heart. The

Minister mentioned in discussions – I believe it was yesterday; it seems like several days ago – the Great Bear Lake trout. I completely agree with him. I have eaten at the same table as the Minister. That is a pretty amazing fish.

The difficulty is the Freshwater Fish Marketing Board. It becomes lake trout from somewhere in Canada. That has always been the problem. It's still the problem. At one point, the fishers were going to get out of fishing and that was reversed, but it is such a dilemma that we are losing out considerably. We used to ship fish from Great Slave Lake to Chicago in the '60s and get over \$1.50 a pound, big bucks in those days. Then along came this operation and that's gone. So it's a sad state compared to what our potential is. I look forward to any comments the Minister has on how we can do it. It is a tough one, I am the first to admit, but we do need to deal with it somehow. Thank you, Madam Chair.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Madam Chair, I really do appreciate the Member's comments. I know I mentioned yesterday that, with the Great Slave Lake fishery, that is something that over the next two and a half years I think we need to put some real push behind. I have had meetings with the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. We need to be working together with the industry, both in Hay River and here in Yellowknife. I really think we can make some progress here. It is a resource that is right here. It's at our doorstep.

I know Mr. Bromley has been here for a number of years. We used to be taking a lot more fish out of that lake than we currently are. I do believe there's some room to move there. I've been encouraged with the discussions I have had with the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. Our efforts will be on how we can work together. I think that's how we're going to proceed on that.

It gets back to some of the dialogue that we've heard through the Economic Opportunities Strategy. The panel was down in Hay River. This is a subject that has been brought up repeatedly around Great Slave Lake, is the government has to be doing more with the fishery. Certainly I think you'll see perhaps some recommendations in the EOS report when it does come back through the strategy. We hope to be able to get some solid recommendations that we can act upon. It is a resource that is right there.

As far as Great Bear Lake goes, when I was responding to MLA Yakeleya, there might be some other opportunities, perhaps not through the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation, for Great Bear trout. It is a specialized product. I can see it being a specialized product. There might be a certain market out there for that fish. I know it is a tremendous fish. Any time I get a chance to go to

Deline, I always have to try the trout from Great Bear Lake. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Next I have Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have one question in this section. This question has to do with the BDIC. Section 41 of the NWT BDIC Act establishes mandatory review of BDIC programs every five years. The act came into force in 2005. Therefore, there should have been a review in 2010, which I don't believe there was. We're nearing the second anniversary of a potential review. Because the section does establish a mandatory review, maybe if we can get an update as to why the 2010 review didn't happen and whether or not we're going to see a review in short order. Thank you, Madam Chair.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Madam Chair, for a detailed response I will go to Deputy Minister Vician, but I just met with the BDIC board. There are going to be efforts underway to do the work the Member is talking about. For the specifics, I will go to Deputy Minister Vician.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Madam Chair, as the Member has indicated, yes, the review is a requirement under the statute, and that review will be undertaken. There have been delays in undertaking that review. We have, through the Department of ITI and the BDIC management, utilized the services of the program review office in the Department of Executive. There have been delays with regard to some capacity issues at that point. However, it is identified as an ongoing effort, and the program review office is undertaking that work and has committed to completing that work in the coming months and we hope to report out through committee on the results of that report. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Vician. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Madam Chair, if we can get a bit more clarity as to the full scope of this review, given the fact that we are many, many years behind this review process. The Minister indicated that it has gone to the program review office. Can we get an indication here as to is this a full-scale review or are we looking at certain components within the framework of BDIC? Thank you.

MR. VICIAN: The statute requires that the Minister must have a review of the programs established under the BDIC Act. The financial programs that exist currently in the BDIC are under the financial program area, loans, the term loans, the standby letters of credit, working capital guarantees, contributions and subsidy programs. There are similarly additional programs, adventure

investment, and business services. The requirement under the statute is to review the scope of all of these programs and identify any issues with regard to the program effectiveness and report out and, obviously, during the course of that, identify opportunities that might exist to potentially be considered as additional programming or other considerations. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MR. DOLYNNY: Madam Chair, if I can interpret what the Minister just indicated, this will be a full review and not a partial review of programs. We are expecting a full forensic review of all financial programs involving the BDIC. Thank you.

MR. VICIAN: This will be a full review of the programs that exist currently within the BDIC. It will not be a forensic assessment. The assessment of the programs and corporate operations of the BDIC is done on an annual basis and tabled in this House through the corporate plan of the corporation. But this will look completely at all of the programs that are offered today and, again, identify other recommendations that may emerge for other programs in the future. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MR. DOLYNNY: Madam Chair, as I said, this act came into force in 2005. We have yet to see any full-scale review. We are talking about programs that were, from what I gather from the Minister's comments, active programs. Can the Minister indicate to this House, has there been any programs that have sunsetted since 2005 that are no longer an active program and if those programs also be looked at within this process? Thank you.

MR. VICIAN: All of the programs I have identified today are, in some form, active. I will indicate that some of them have had less activity since the act was enabled in 2005. Most of the programs actually bridged from the creation of the BDIC with the Business Credit Corporation and the Development Corporation prior to 2005. An example might be the Venture Investment Program has not seen activity for many years outside of pre-investment activity prior to 2005. That was carried over into the new act. There have been no sunsets specifically over the period of that 2005-2010 period. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just so I'm perfectly clear, we believe that there are contribution programs and the Minister indicated that there are venture investment programs. Will they, too, be under the premise of this program review? Thank you.

MR. VICIAN: As I indicated earlier, yes, those contribution programs and venture investment programs are part of the review. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MR. DOLYNNY: We know that there have been discussions in the past regarding the formal review process, as indicated in the House. Can we get an

indication as to when Members will be able to see the interim or the final report from this process? Thank you.

MR. VICIAN: The program review office has indicated to the CEO of the Business Development Corporation and myself that they intend to complete this work in fiscal year 2013-14. We're anxious to see a good portion of this work completed before the business plan reviews are undertaken in September of 2013. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thanks, Mr. Vician. Next on the list, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Just with regard to grants and contributions, there's an increment or a new addition for Canadian Zinc Socio-economic Agreement. Maybe if the Minister can just explain how that budget of \$30,000 would be used. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Minister Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. If the Member could just restate his question, I missed the first part of it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Just with regard to the Canadian Zinc Socio-economic Agreement under grants and contributions of \$30,000, how is that money going to be used?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. For that we'll go to Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The purpose of that fund arises out of the socio-economic agreement that was signed between the GNWT and Canadian Zinc in regard to the Prairie Creek Mine. The purpose of that contribution is to support the advisory board and the community committee to basically assess and monitor the success of the objectives or the commitments made in the socio-economic agreement on employment, business activity, community wellness and monitoring issues. So collectively, it will support that community base to do the work it needs to do for the coming years. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Who makes up this Socio-economic Advisory Committee? Thanks.

MR. VICIAN: The committee is constituted by members of the company Canadian Zinc, by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, by the Department of ITI and by representatives of the Fort Simpson band and by representatives of the Nahanni Butte band. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much. Just on a different topic altogether with the disaster compensation, I see that we've got grants at

\$15,000. How would that disaster grant have applied to the community of Nahanni Butte for this year or last year?

MR. VICIAN: The Harvester Disaster Compensation Program, \$15,000, provides up to \$4,500 per applicant to defray the portion of their costs to repair or replace assets that are lost or damaged in unavoidable disasters. In '11-12, of course, we saw issues in the Sahtu, in Inuvik and, subsequently, we saw issues in the Nahanni Butte area as part of the flood and harvesters would have had access to that. I don't have any particulars on any particular applications at this time, but if it fell under that condition and met the requirements of the program they would have had access to those program areas. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Just for the 2011-2012 actuals of \$80,000, was that a previously budgeted amount or were there some exceptional circumstances in that year? Thanks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. For that we'll go to Minister Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That was an exceptional circumstance with very high water in the Peel and Mackenzie, in the Beaufort-Delta that year. There were 13 claims that year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Moving on with questions. Again, colleagues, we're on 12-31. I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chair, my questions are actually on 12-33 if we want to wait until we get there. I can ask them now, they're sort of related.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Okay, committee, we'll move on, then. Again, 12-31, Industry, Tourism and Investment, activity summary, economic diversification and business support, operations expenditure summary, \$22.961 million. Committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Page 12-32, Industry, Tourism and Investment, activity summary, economic diversification and business support, grants and contributions, grants, \$625,000, contributions, and carried forward to page 12-33, sorry, and 12-34. Total contributions. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I have some questions here related to the Business Development Investment Corporation and I've been wondering about the BDIC for a number of years, a while, I guess maybe not a number of years, but I did a little looking into the organization and the number of staff and so on, and I'm more than a little concerned. I'm quite concerned about the org chart, I guess, the staff that work this organization. There are 14 staff if the org chart is correct, but out of that

14 staff, I think one is empty, but there are scheduled seven managers. So 50 percent of the staffing of this particular corporation is managers or higher, directors. We've got a CEO, we have two directors and we have managers. So I'm quite concerned that we have more managers than workers, so to speak, and in looking at the org chart, we have several managers who manage one person. It seems to me that this is, perhaps, an organization which could probably use a little less staff, or certainly use fewer managers.

So I'd like to ask the Minister whether or not he considers this normal, that we would have an organization with 14 staff of which seven are managers or higher? Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That comes under the purview of the board and, certainly, I appreciate the Member bringing that to my attention. I have the opportunity to meet with the board quite often. Actually, I just met with them last week and I'd be more than happy to raise the concern the Member brings on the number of managers in the organization to the board, and I'll get her a response from the board after I meet with them. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for that. I guess in looking at this page, there's \$3.754 million that this government gives to the BDIC, and if the Minister does not have any opportunity to have more input than just having a chat with the board, I'm a little concerned about that. I would think that if we are funding the organization, we should be able to have a bit more input and direction given to the board about what they do with the money that we're giving them.

So in regard to the \$3.7 million for '13-14 that is scheduled to be given to BDIC, I'd like to know how much of that is admin, how much of that goes to administering the office, and how much of that goes to loans and credit and so on. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That plan is tabled in the House on an annual basis and I think it may be – the Member is asking a number of questions – very beneficial to get the board, the chairman in to meet with Regular Members. If Regular Members have concerns or questions about the operation, it would be a perfect opportunity to ask the board. They are an independent board. Certainly, they provide me with a corporate overview and I do meet with them to talk about their operations with subsidiaries. But, again, I think there could be a lot of utility in having the board come and meet with Members to address some of the concerns the Member's raising.

MS. BISARO: I accept the Minister's offer of a meeting. I think it's probably something that should

be discussed. We'll have to see if committee agrees to that.

In looking at the corporate plan for BDIC for '13-14, I don't know exactly where the right piece of paper is but I think it was something like almost \$2.2 million for administration for salaries and benefits for this organization. It seems to me that that's a lot of money for 14 people, \$2.2 million.

My other question has to do with a program that is run through BDIC and a program that's run through ITI. I know that the organization and the department are quite closely connected, but I'd like to know in terms of the SEED program, which is run by ITI, and the programs which are run through BDIC. As I read on this page, the purpose of BDIC is to encourage the creation and development of northern business. How are these two programs different? Thank you.

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

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The SEED program is disbursed across the Northwest Territories through our regional offices to support a wide range of business entrepreneurial initiatives. There are some focussed efforts in particular areas; for example, earlier we discussed the film industry. Those programs are well subscribed. The program budget is typically oversubscribed. It's a little over \$3.8 million annually and we have been able, through some readjustments in the department, to look at almost \$4 million annually to provide contributions to entrepreneurs and businesses across the Northwest Territories.

The BDIC operates and focused program for contributions that are smaller, and deals with issues pertaining to much of their specific portfolio. So, for example, they're dealing with some of the lending portfolio issues and they may direct some of that contribution money to assist with a particular client who's dealing with them on a particular loan or typical application for a loan. So it's a little more focused to their program area.

The department's SEED program is much more open and widely disbursed to all types of entrepreneurial initiatives in the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to Mr. Vician for the explanation. I appreciate the descriptions, but I have to say that I fail to understand why we could not administer both of these programs from one place, why we need to have staff in two places basically providing funds to businesses within the NWT, albeit the criteria are slightly different. I feel that there's some economy that can be had here, and I would seriously encourage the department to look at reducing the staff between both ITI and BDIC, not by kicking people out of a job but through

attrition, because there's always an opportunity to reduce our staffing through attrition.

Mr. Dolynny mentioned – I guess maybe it was Mr. Vician – the Venture Investment Program. I did look at the corporate plan for '13-14 and I did look at the website for BDIC. On the one hand, the website indicates that this investment program is not accepting any applications, but I think in the corporate plan it indicates that this program is going to be, I think, regenerated, so to speak. Does the Minister know anything about what actually is going on with that program? Is it active or inactive? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe it's subject to the program review currently, so it's inactive. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I do have another question about staffing. I'll ask the question and the Minister can refer me to the board, I guess, if that's what he needs to do.

I struggle with the Community Futures program and the BDIC program. They are different, I agree, but they are also somewhat similar. If you look on this page, Community Futures is about \$1.3 million, BDIC is about \$3.7 million. The staffing complements are similar. The number of organizations within each is similar. Yet in terms of jobs that are produced or jobs that are developed through lending and through the support of organizations, I think Community Futures is something like 130 jobs averaging over the last couple of years and BDIC is something like 47 jobs. So on the one hand we're... There's a difference of about \$2.5 million, yet one organization is producing, in terms of jobs, a heck of a lot more than the other one.

Specifically to BDIC, if I look at their org chart I see that we have, in terms of subsidiaries, there are, I think, eight subsidiaries under BDIC, and these are companies which, presumably, we own. There are, as I look at the org chart, four staff, I think, managing these subsidiaries. I have a really hard time believing that we need that many staff to monitor businesses. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Chairman, again, the Member raises a number of concerns and, again, it's an independent board and I look forward to having them here to discuss issues with the Members.

We have to remember, in regard to the subsidiaries, they were set up, when they were set up to create employment in communities, provide economic opportunities and that's what they're set out to do. The subsidiaries are a big part of what the BDIC does. It provides economic activity in some of our smaller communities. So again, this is

a discussion that the Member wants to have with the BDIC board and I think we should try to put that meeting together as soon as possible. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Ms. Bisaro, your time is up but I have no one else on the list, so if you want to continue, go ahead.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Just one more question, I guess. Also, by way of explanation, I'm not suggesting that we should close down these subsidiaries. I recognize they are businesses which are operating and they are providing an economic source within many of our communities. But if they are a business which is in operation within a community, I struggle to understand why we need so many staff at BDIC to monitor, so to speak, these organizations. I think I will pursue, with the Minister, a meeting with BDIC and see which committee it needs to go to and when. That's all. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I believe that was more of a comment. Again, committee members, 12-32, 12-33 and 12-34, Industry, Tourism and Investment, activity summary, economic diversification and business support, grants and contributions, grants, \$625,000; contributions, total contributions, \$13.240 million; total grants and contributions, \$13.865 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Page 12-35, Industry, Tourism and Investment, information item, economic diversification, business support, active positions. Any questions? None. Page 12-36, Industry, Tourism and Investment, information item, lease commitments – infrastructure. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Seeing none, 12-37, Industry, Tourism and Investment, information item, Fur Marketing Service Revolving Fund. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Seeing none, 12-38, Industry, Tourism and Investment, information item, work performed on behalf of others. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Industry, Tourism and Investment, 12-39, information item, work performed on behalf of others. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. If I can get committee members to return to 12-7 for the department summary, Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Mr. Menicoche.

COMMITTEE MOTION 5-17(4):
DEFERRAL OF DEPARTMENT SUMMARY
FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY,
TOURISM AND INVESTMENT,
CARRIED

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee defer further consideration of the department summary for the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment main estimates 2013-2014 on page 12-7 at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The motion is just being circulated right now. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): The motion is carried. Sorry. Committee, upon review, one Member was not in her seat. As a result of process, this is now a tie. The Chair will vote to the motion and, as usual, to continue the spirit and prolong discussion and debate, the Chair will vote in favour of the motion. The motion is carried.

Committee, this concludes our deliberations today with the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment. I would like to thank Ms. Magrum and Mr. Vician for your time today. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort our witnesses out of the Chamber.

Committee members, I would direct your attention to the NWT Housing Corporation. With that, I will be asking the Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation, Minister McLeod, do you have any opening comments?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I do, Mr. Chair. I am pleased to present the 2013-14 Main Estimates for the NWT Housing Corporation. The main estimates propose a budget of \$112.782 million, a decrease of 0.4 percent from the 2012-13 Main Estimates. The budget includes a contribution of \$67.492 million from the GNWT for 2013-14.

As Members are aware, one of the five priorities identified by the 17th Legislative Assembly was to address housing needs. Housing is a complex issue in many of our communities. There are significant differences in housing needs and challenges between our market and non-market communities, and there are needs along the entire housing continuum from homelessness to home ownership. Our approach to housing should strengthen self-reliance and support residents in meeting their own shelter needs, but also needs to recognize the importance of housing in supporting community sustainability, contributing to efforts to reduce poverty, and reflect the linkages between housing and education and health issues. These challenges need to be addressed in the context of declining federal funding for operating and

maintaining social housing in the Northwest Territories.

The actions of the NWT Housing Corporation are being guided by Building for the Future, our strategic plan, and the priorities of the 17th Legislative Assembly.

Public housing continues to be the largest program offered by the NWTHC with approximately 2,400 units and planned expenditures of \$45 million in 2013-14. A number of actions are being undertaken to improve public housing. The new rent scale was implemented on July 1, 2012, and made rent simpler, more predictable and fair.

This new rent scale also addressed the disincentive to work that has been a long-standing concern.

We have improved management of the Public Housing Program with the introduction of new information management systems, increased emphasis on support for the LHOs and continued investment to improve the quality of our public housing stock.

In 2013-14, over \$14 million will be spent to improve the quality of our public housing stock. This will include eight public housing replacements, 171 major retrofits, and a variety of minor maintenance and improvement projects. These investments build on the \$141 million we have invested in the public housing stock over the past six years.

The 2013-14 budget also contains a \$540,000 forced-growth investment to offset the increased utility costs related to public housing. While some success has been achieved on the consumption side with the energy investments and investments in upgraded stock, these don't completely offset the rising prices for utilities. An additional \$700,000 has also been identified to continue the energy investments on public housing during 2013-14, with the focus on installing wood pellet boilers that will impact about 50 units.

The NWTHC has also taken significant steps to support home ownership in the Northwest Territories. The NWTHC will spend approximately \$9.5 million in 2013-14 supporting home ownership and providing support to homeowners completing repairs to their houses. We have introduced SAFE, a new emergency repair program, and made changes to our CARE preventative maintenance program for low-income homeowners. In 2013-14, changes will be made to PATH, our subsidy to support the home purchases, which will make this program more effective in supporting home ownership in non-market communities and expand the potential pool of clients.

Late in 2012-13, steps were taken to provide home ownership clients that have a mortgage with the NWTHC revised mortgage balances and affordable repayment options. Letters were sent to clients in December and community visits are underway now

to review the new loan agreements. The steps we have taken as part of this initiative provides these homeowners with a fresh start on their mortgages and provides clients stable, affordable monthly mortgage payments.

In addition to the public housing rental program, during 2013-14 the NWT HC will spend about \$6.2 million supporting other rental housing. This spending includes administration and maintenance associated with 118 market rents, 265 households operating under our HELP and supported lease programs and 463 homes operated by third-party community-based organizations. It also includes funding for the Transitional Rent Supplement Program which provides support to reduce the affordability problems and core need among residents in market rentals.

In 2013-14 the Housing for Staff program will be reintroduced. This program provides a subsidy to developers to develop rental housing in small NWT communities where recruitment has been particularly challenging. Changes are being introduced to the program to increase its effectiveness. To further support housing for critical staff that deliver services in smaller communities, the NWT HC has also taken steps to standardize rental rates in our own market rental units and to ensure that all available affordable housing units are used whenever possible. We will work closely with departments and agencies to improve awareness of rental opportunities and the new rental rates. We will also look for opportunities to expand our stock of rental units in communities where there is the greatest need for housing for critical staff.

In relation to homelessness, the NWT HC administers the Homelessness Assistance Fund and the Small Community Homelessness Fund. The \$325,000 for these two funds provides support and direct assistance to residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and funds projects in smaller NWT communities that address issues related to homelessness in these communities.

On the revenue side, and as was noted previously, our efforts to address housing needs are further challenged by the declining federal funding for operating social housing. As Members know, the GNWT will see reduced annual funding of \$2.1 million over the life of this Assembly as part of the ongoing declines that will see federal funding for operating social housing eliminated by 2037-38. For these main estimates, an investment of just over \$1 million was made by the GNWT to offset the federal decline in 2013-14.

That concludes my opening remarks. At this time I would be pleased to answer any questions the committee may have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Do you have any witnesses you would like to bring into the Chamber today?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I do, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you very much. If I could get the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Thank you.

Thank you, Minister McLeod. Minister McLeod, do you have any witnesses you would like to bring into the Chamber today?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I do, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Can I get the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Thank you.

Minister McLeod, would you like to introduce your guests to the Chamber, please?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my right I have Mr. David Stewart, president of Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. To my left I have Mr. Jeff Anderson, vice-president of financial and infrastructure services with the NWT Housing Corporation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Stewart, Mr. Anderson, welcome back to the House. We are going to move on to general comments. Again, protocol. We will just go through the general comments in sequence and will allow the Minister to have an opportunity for reply at the end here. General comments of NWT Housing Corporation. I am hearing detail. Thank you, committee.

Page 5-43, NWT Housing Corporation, information item, financial summary, information. Are there any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 5-45, NWT Housing Corporation, information item, corporate summary, operations expenditure summary. Are there any questions? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a general question. It is referenced in the Minister's opening remarks, the declining CMHC funding. The Minister and Members are well aware that this money is going down. Every year we're having to put more and more of our own money into housing in order to maintain our stock, and continue to operate and maintain it.

I appreciate that the corporation has done a number of things in the last year to two years to try and bring costs down, to try and maintain as much stock as we have without it costing us too much more money. But I have yet to get from the Minister, from the corporation, a plan that will outline to me or make me feel comfortable that we know where we're going as this money declines and should this money completely end in 2038.

I appreciate that the Minister is working very hard, along with other Ministers for Housing across the country, to try and get the federal government to reinstate some kind of a program, but I still think we need a contingency. We need a plan should, within the next year or so, we discover that no, the money is not going to be forthcoming. We cannot continue to every year add another million dollars to the Housing Corporation's budget without seriously having some plan in place that people can look at and say, okay, fine, we are doing this this year and we're doing that next year.

Where is the corporation at, relative to a concrete plan, long term, say a 10-year plan to deal with the declining CMHC funding? Thank you.

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, the Member is correct; we are concerned with declining CMHC funding. We have made some adjustments to try to control our costs so we don't have to keep coming back to the Assembly every year for funds to offset our losses. We did make our case to the federal Minister when we were down in Ottawa. We are planning on having an FTP quite soon, because we are the co-chairs this year. I know our other jurisdictional partners are also concerned with this because it affects them a lot more than it's affecting us.

I believe we have briefed committee at least once or twice on what our plans are going forward. We would be more than willing to sit down with committee again and give them a concrete plan. We have a plan going forward. We look forward to sitting with committee again, and reviewing that plan and getting their input. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chair, thanks to the Minister for the response. I do appreciate it. I think other Members also appreciate the information we have gotten from the corporation. We have had updates quite regularly and that has been very helpful.

I guess my thinking of a plan is the Minister said in his remarks that this budget has a million dollars in it to offset declining CMHC funding for 2013-14. What I would like to see as opposed to the initiatives that the corporation has planned, because I know that they are there, I would like to see the dollars that are associated with these initiatives that will say to me, we're putting in a

million dollars in 2013-14 but we're going to do X, Y and Z, so it's only going to be \$500,000 by the time we get to, say, 2018. I don't think that is there and if it is, my apologies to the Minister, but that's the kind of plan that I'm looking for, specifics and dollars and cents in it.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, maybe it was a slip on our part, because I know we were providing committee with an update on what we had planned to do, but the Member is correct; there were really no numbers attached to that. I can commit to the Member and Regular Members that we will put this information together. We will put some dollar figures to it, and then we'll sit down with committee and they'll have a better idea of exactly what we do plan on doing and how much, at the end of the day, that we're thinking is going to save us.

I know we have sat with committee and said we are trying to reduce our public housing stock because of the maintenance dollars, but we never attached any dollar figures to it. So we will do some work on that and, at their earliest convenience, we will sit with committee and give them an update on the numbers. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chair, I appreciate the commitment from the Minister and I look forward to that information. That's all I have. Thanks.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I noticed the mortgage principal and interest amounts going down steadily over the years. Maybe I can just get an explanation. If these are what we are carrying, is this related? Like, these are under other expenses so it doesn't seem to be the grants and contributions aspect. Maybe I can get an explanation of that. Thank you.

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

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The debt principal and interest payments are related to the debt that the corporation has borrowed, back from 1974, from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and it's declining. It declines at the same pace that the agreements expire and the O and M money falls off the table to run public housing. At the end of this upcoming fiscal year, we will be down to \$47.7 million at the debt level at that point. Of the payments that we make of \$6.6 million, over \$5 million is funded by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the NWT portion is \$1.4 million. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you for that explanation. That clears it up. I think I probably ask that sort of thing every year. I appreciate the refresher.

I noticed in the narrative here, they talk about the incorporation of energy-efficient technologies and so on in the housing design retrofits, but I don't believe the expenditures in that area are on this page. If I'm right, I will hold questions until later, but if they are somewhere on this page, I will ask questions there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. For that response we'll go to Mr. Stewart.

MR. STEWART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The energy investments that we're doing in the upcoming year are actually recorded as part of the infrastructure acquisition plan that is recorded on that page. So you are on the right page.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chair, I'm having problems finding the infrastructure acquisition. Is there a line item on that here? Sorry.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Can we get clarification, Mr. Stewart?

MR. STEWART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to clarify with the Member, are you on 5-43 or 5-45?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Mr. Stewart, we're on page 5-45 currently.

MR. STEWART: Thank you, Mr. Chair, my apologies. The capital infrastructure was described in 5-43. So it will come up later as well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Stewart. Committee, we are on page 5-45, NWT Housing Corporation, information item, corporate summary, operations expenditure summary. Any questions? Seeing none, 5-46, NWT Housing Corporation, information item, active positions by region. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Page 5-49, NWT Housing, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm not sure if this question belongs here, but I think so because it talks about policy. I've discovered over my few years here that we, unfortunately, as a government, have way too many policies that contradict each other between one department and another, particularly with regard to Income Support, Health and Social Services, and Housing.

I just wondered whether or not the corporation does any review of their policies with a view to how they conflict with other policies in other departments, with a view to ensuring that housing, people applying for housing or people in housing, that we're looking after their best interests and that we're taking down the hurdles as opposed to putting the barriers up for them. So it's kind of a general question. But is looking at policies with a view to how they interact with other policies within the government something that the corporation does on a regular basis? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that response I'll go to Mr. Stewart.

MR. STEWART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is something we do on a regular basis. Certainly, when we developed the rent scale changes, for example, we spent a lot of time with ECE so that they would be able to make sure we're aligning and adjust their policies as were necessary in terms of implementing that.

As part of the anti-poverty work, as well, we've spent a fair amount of time looking at the very issue that the Member raises, of how do all of these policies interact with one another and making sure there's coherence there. Sometimes differences are there for a reason, but I think the Member is correct that it is a useful exercise to always take that look and see what's the impact on the client of all the various policies from the various departments. So we do it on a regular basis.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Stewart. I have to ask the question – I think it's implied and inherent in the answer – but when you find policies that are contradictory and that do make life difficult for our residents as opposed to making it easier, are those policies changed? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. A bit of a hypothetical question, but I'll allow an answer. Mr. Stewart.

MR. STEWART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, they would be changed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Stewart. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you. That was the answer I was hoping I would hear. So my last question has to do with the amount of flexibility in these policies. I understand that policies are set in place to try and restrict certain things, but if it's a unique circumstance or if extenuating circumstances crop up, does the corporation have any flexibility in how they apply their policies? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that we'll go to Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do have policies, and we try to follow them as closely as possible. The Member asked if we were flexible. I think we've proven in the past that we can be fairly flexible. One of the things we don't want to do is do a lot of one-off deals. We'll look at each situation as it arises, but policy sometimes is to protect ourselves, to protect the clients out there and to make everything fair for everyone. But I think we've proven on a couple of occasions that we can be flexible looking at individual circumstances. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we're on 5-49, NWT Housing

Corporation, information item, executive, operations expenditure summary. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Seeing none, 5-51, NWT Housing Corporation, information item. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe I'm correct in addressing my infrastructure dollars, energy efficiency stuff here. So I want to start off by saying I'm very pleased to see the investments in this line. I know we've addressed some of our energy costs through the work that's been done. There's been some progressive work over the last six years, I think I heard 1.8 or 9 percent savings in energy costs, and a significant effort being proposed for this fiscal year. It's got my support.

My first question, was it \$14 million, 171 units, about \$82,000 per unit? That seems to be the cost of major renovations to achieve these sorts of efficiencies. Would the Minister know what number out of the 2,400 public housing units that we have are considered current with respect to the energy efficiency standards of today, such as EG 80 or thereabouts? I know we've been working on this over the last six years. So we're doing 141 this year. We have 2,400. About where are we at in the long-term effort on this front? Thank you.

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I apologize to the Member; we don't have an exact number right now. One of the things that we are planning, and we'd indicated this to committee, was with the territorial information system we're able to plug into the LHOs and their condition ratings. I think from those condition ratings we'll be able to come up with a solid number for the Member on the number of houses that have been updated. So I'll commit to getting all of that information to the Member once we're able to gather the information. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks. I appreciate that. Thanks to the Minister. Just on that, where are we in the implementation of that new system? I mean, I think we have great hopes for that, and we're finally going to see things very transparently and in one spot. Thank you.

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

MR. STEWART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There are three basic components to the system in our information management. So there's what's called the territorial housing system, which is really our client system. It was implemented on April 1st of last year. It's fully implemented now. All of the LHOs are using it and it's working very well, I think, in terms of there's always a certain number of growing pains.

But we're quite pleased with how well it is being used and the information that we're able to get out of it.

The second system that we've developed and implemented recently is an overall asset system so that we can better track exactly the information that you just asked about in terms of not only what our stock is out there and what it looks like, in terms of the age structure and those sorts of things, but any major repairs that have been done with it and the condition ratings and those sorts of things.

Then the third system that was in last year's business plan was a new maintenance management system. That one was to be developed this year, and it's on track. It will be implemented on April 1st on a pilot basis in a few LHOs to test to see that it works well, and then we would hope to roll it all out, so by about July, I guess.

So between those three systems, we now have a good information system on the client side, on the maintenance side, and then on the overall asset side. So I think it's starting to come together in terms of being able to tell a pretty good story around the housing infrastructure that we have at each community level. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. BROMLEY: That's good information. I missed the date that the asset system was brought on stream or will be brought on stream, but also I'll throw in my next question. Sort of getting back to the energy side, are the 171 major retrofits, are we taking the time to select those or using all of our information so that we get the best payback, that sort of thing, rather than just sort of methodically going through them from A to B? Thank you.

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We go by the age of the unit and then we also go by the condition ratings that the LHOs have provided us, and we make our decision based on that. So, obviously, the older unit that hasn't had a lot of maintenance before is a prime candidate for a major retrofit. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I'm wondering, just to go a step further, that sounds logical, but to go a step further, is there an opportunity to look at the payback, given what the local costs of energy are, and select those that will give the quickest payback. I'm just thinking of trying to make the most efficient return to the corporation investments here.

Once again, is the assets system on stream and operational now? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I apologize; January 1, 2013, the assets system was implemented.

To the Member's second question, we work closely with our LHOs, obviously. They would have a pretty

good indication of how much a unit is actually costing them to maintain with utilities and everything, so they would put those units forward for major retrofits. So there's a lot of thought that goes in there, and some of the quickest payback, and we rely heavily on the information we get from the LHOs. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for that information. On the \$700,000 for pellet boilers estimated to serve about 50 units, I'm very happy to see this. We've talked about this for a number of years and I appreciate the Minister moving this forward. Do we know what the anticipated savings... Have we had the opportunity to do that work yet, or is this where we would start? I'm just curious.

Again, have we got locations figured out for this? Would it be in several places or are we talking a couple places where we have a concentration of units? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): We're looking at probably a five-year payback on this investment. As far as communities go, we do have them spread out across the Northwest Territories. We're planning on doing some in Detah/Ndilo, Fort McPherson, Fort Providence, Fort Simpson, Inuvik and Norman Wells.

MR. BROMLEY: That's all I had on this page. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Moving on with questions I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wanted to follow up on the energy infrastructure work that's being done. I'm really pleased, as well, to see that there's a focus on putting wood pellet boilers into a number of units.

The Minister will know that there's a desire by the Members on this side of the House to look at replacing electric hot water heaters with oil-fired hot water heaters. I'd like to know if the corporation can advise how many units would have electric hot water heaters. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We'll go to Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have about 100 of them in our thermal communities and we're compiling a list to provide to the Members because, I believe, in a briefing we had the other day, I committed to providing the information to the Members. So we're compiling that information now.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. I guess I would like to know, I appreciate that there's a focus on wood pellet boilers, but I'd like to know, from the corporation's perspective, whether or not there's any focus on replacing these electric hot water heaters in thermal communities. It makes more sense to do it there than it does to do in hydro

communities. Is that something that the corporation recognizes is a good energy initiative and it is on the radar? If they agree with me that it's a good initiative, how soon will it get enacted? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, as part of our renovations when we do major retrofits, if they have an electric hot water heater, we will replace them with oil-fired. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I guess, then, that tells me that there is no intent to go out and actively replace the electric hot water heaters in these 100 units with oil-fired. The research is very clear; it's a savings on several fronts. I would encourage the corporation to look at the cost; it's not a heck of a lot of money, but I would encourage the corporation to look at actively replacing electric hot water heaters with oil-fired. I think you could probably find the money to do 50 of those hundred units within this budget year if you look really carefully. That's a comment. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thanks, Ms. Bisaro. I'll take it as a comment, unless the Minister wants to reply. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I wanted the last word. Part of these hundred units would be some of those that would be getting retrofitted. But I can assure the Member that every opportunity we have to replace the electric hot water heaters with oil-fired, we will take advantage of it. If it's just a matter of bringing in a few to replace them, then we will do that, too. We do realize that there is a significant cost-savings and that will bode well for the local housing authority. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. The Chair aims to please. Page 5-51, NWT Housing Corporation, information item, finance and infrastructure services, operations expenditure summary. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Seeing none, 5-52, NWT Housing Corporation, information item, finance and infrastructure services, grants and contributions. I have Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to thank the Minister and the department for reinstating the funding under the housing for staff. I know it was supposed to be taken out of the budget for this year, but I know through the business planning process we asked the Minister to reinstate that. I would just like to thank the Minister and department for doing that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I'll thank the Member very much for his comments, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Thank you, Mr. Blake. Any further

questions, Mr. Blake? Thank you. Moving on with questions on this page I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I wanted to ask a question on the housing for staff item as well. This was tried a number of years ago and it wasn't really successful, so what is the corporation doing different this time around to try and get a better buy-in from communities to provide housing for professional staff? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are increasing the amount of incentive we're offering to local developers. As well, I think we're going to be building some of these units ourselves. We're working very closely – we just had a meeting recently – with the NWTTA. They're doing, I think, a survey on the communities and what their needs are. So we're working very closely with them so we can identify the communities that they may identify and we may identify as those in most need. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. Good to hear that. I'll look forward to an update in a year's time and see how well this particular strategy worked.

I wanted to also ask about homelessness. I can't let the Minister go through a budget without asking about homelessness. There is \$325,000 there. It supports two programs and I hope by now that we have a homelessness coordinator, which the corporation was going to hire, to run these programs but I think also to look at what needs to be done with regard to homelessness in a larger sense.

I did note that the Minister, somewhere in here in his remarks, talked about the housing continuum from homelessness to home ownership, and I'm pleased to see that the corporation is now recognizing that we do have the continuum of housing that does include homelessness. I don't think that wording was there before, so I'm really pleased to see that.

My question here really is: Do we have a homelessness coordinator hired at this point, and is there any hope that in the 2014-15 budget year we will have a bigger budget for homelessness? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We're just doing the interviews right now, so we're hoping to have our homelessness coordinator on soon. As far as having a bigger budget for next year, we have to go through the budget planning cycle. We have to work with committee, and if there are opportunities there to put a little more money in this, it would have to be one that's made with the agreement of committee and Cabinet. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. It's been a long time coming, this coordinator position, but I'm glad we're at the interview stage. That's progress.

The other question I wanted to ask on this page has to do with the Transitional Rent Supplement Program. I know it's a new program. It's, presumably, been in place for a year. I think it was initiated in this current budget year. I don't remember exactly which month, what time of year, but I'd like to know from the Minister when enough time would have passed when we could get some kind of an update on the success or failure of this program. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: It was implemented September 1st and our goal was to go to 175 and we're going to phase them in. I think we've got 50 this year. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. So to the question of when an evaluation might be done with some kind of an update back to Members. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: As far as an evaluation, I think an ongoing evaluation and giving committee regular updates on how it's working so far. The fact that we've got 50 families out there we've been able to help I think is a pretty good indication of how well this is probably going to work. Once we get it fully implemented, we'd be more than happy to provide committee with an update on how well it is working. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: That's great. Thanks to the Minister. That's all I have, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Moving on with questions I have Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm just wondering, there seems to be a bit of a de-emphasis on Homeownership Entry Level Program funding and maybe a re-emphasis on the Market Housing Program. Could I just get the reasoning for those adjustments?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If you recall in the past, we did put a lot of HELP units on the ground. A lot of these HELP units in the communities were vacant because we didn't have clients for them. I think we built a lot of them on specs that we were going to get the clients and it didn't work out the way we had hoped, so our plan now is to... First of all, we're not getting as many applications and clients approved as we would like, so we've turned a lot of these units into public housing and we've turned some into staff housing, we've rented them out wherever we can. So we realize that we may need to scale back a bit on the HELP program and put more emphasis on the other programs. That's the reason that you see it come

down a bit. Instead of building on spec and having units sitting empty, we'll try to build where they're most needed. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just following up on the homelessness initiatives, I just want to ask the Minister if there was any funding moving forward for the day shelter that we have in Inuvik to try to keep its doors open longer during the winter months when it does get pretty cold out there, and the people who are accessing the day shelter are having to leave the day shelter because they can't operate it during the day because they don't have the funding. I just want to ask if there are any dollars that would be allocated so the doors could be open, specifically during the winter months when it's cold outside. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The new homeless shelter did get some money to operate the program out of there. As far as the exact amount, it's not on here but they did receive some money to operate a soup kitchen. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: Would the Minister be willing to look at the dollars that were allocated and rather than just the O and M costs, be looking at providing more funding, specifically over the winter months when these guys are accessing the day shelter so they are able to spend the days in the day shelter, so they can keep their doors open. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: A lot of the programs, and most of the ones that were approved, were applications that we had received from these groups and we reviewed all the applications and disbursed the funding. We work with them and will probably get an application in. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: Just moving further, Mr. Chair, at the Beaufort-Delta Regional Council meeting that was held in January, I know the leadership approved and supported moving forward with a women's shelter in Tuktoyaktuk. I believe the building they have now was constructed in the 1960s and requires a lot of renovations and upgrades on a consistent basis. They are looking at getting new infrastructure for the women's shelter. I just want to ask the Minister if he has that on the books and if it was something the Housing Corporation was looking into in the foreseeable future or near future. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: A lot of the issues that we hear from the groups that we meet with across the Northwest Territories, Housing always has it on its radar. It's just a matter of working with them to try to find some common ground. I can tell the Member that with the concern that was in Inuvik, I

know staff up there are working with the folks up in Tuk to see what we would be able to do. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Colleagues, we are on page 5-52, NWT Housing Corporation, information item, finance and infrastructure services, grants and contributions, contributions. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Moving on to 5-55, NWT Housing... Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't think it's any surprise that we have a waiting list for public housing and housing support. Certainly in the Yellowknife area we have a couple of offices, and Yellowknife Housing apparently has a list of 160 or so, also the YWCA has another list of 150 or so. I don't know if there might be overlap on those at all, but I know these are real. These are exceptional, these are recent and the staff are saying something is going on, we don't see this sort of thing. What do we do to monitor a waiting list and what can the Minister report on now? Is there any insight yet on the Yellowknife situation? I know the Minister is aware of this. What are we doing to get on top of this? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We've heard the concern about the waiting list in Yellowknife. I know some of the communities have waiting lists, not quite as large as here. We are planning on doing some work. After we had our briefing the other day, we went back and I was thinking about some of the people who were on a waiting list and I do know that if the requirement, I believe, for some of them that are accessing income support or having income support pay their rent in place they are living now, I think the requirement is to be on the waiting list of the local LHO. So we were planning on doing – and I talked to a couple of Members – some work there to see on the waiting list how many of them are actually in a unit or on the waiting list because they need to be on the waiting list to qualify for some of the programs. So we are going to undertake that work. I've seen a couple of the waiting lists. I've seen a waiting list of a place that I know quite well, and a lot of people that were on the list are living in units but ECE is paying their rent, and part of the requirement is you have to be on the waiting list with the LHO. So we are going to undertake some work and find out how much overlap there is, and I believe we could come down by probably 30 or 40 percent. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate the Minister. I know he has mentioned this before. I think I'm starting to get some understanding of what he's saying here. I

think that's important information to have, an important perspective. Obviously, it still leaves a considerable number of people on the waiting list.

Just to back off to sort of a larger-scale situation, I think it would be really good to try and have our fingers strongly on the pulse of where our people are at in terms of being on waiting lists across the territory. Will the Minister take on to come up with some sort of automated mechanism whereby we can monitor that situation, at any one time know what the situation is and where we are starting to have a situation develop because of resource development there or whatever the case might be? Who knows what might cause those sorts of changes. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, through the information system, we will be able to plug in to the communities. I think we are going to have a pretty good indication of what their waiting lists are like, so we will be able to monitor it a lot closer.

Again, as I was saying before, we have a lot of singles that are on the waiting lists that could be living with somebody but they are just trying to get their own place. We have to check all that information too. I believe, once we do the analysis, we're going to find that our waiting lists of people that are actually not in a unit are going to come down quite a bit. It is just folks that are waiting to get into a unit. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chair, I have a last question on that aspect. Are we regularly or do we routinely, at some interval, contact the YWCA agencies that would be expected to maintain waiting lists so that we are aware of what they're hearing and seeing on the ground? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We don't check with them regularly, but I can commit to the Members that we will start following up with not only the YWCA, we have 23 LHOs out there. We can follow up with them on what their waiting lists are like. We have a number of communities without LHOs that we have public housing stock in. We can check with them and see what their waiting lists are like. That way we will have a whole territory-wide indication of what the waiting lists are like across the territory. We will follow up with the Y and see what their waiting lists are like. I can commit to Members that we will check in with all of these groups on a regular basis.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Before we go on to our other MLA for questioning here, the Chair would just like to take a moment to recognize someone with us watching the proceedings tonight in the House, and that is Jean-Marc Miltenberger. Welcome to the Chamber.

---Applause

Moving on with questions I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Just with regard to programs and district operations, I noticed that the budget looks fairly stable, down by \$3 million. If you look further down under program delivery details, you see that the Nahendeh district is down, one of those 30 percent of the \$3 million that this program is down. Can the Minister give me an explanation as to why that is?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. For that we'll go to Minister McLeod. My apologies, we'll go to Mr. Stewart.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Chair, the information that the Member is looking at on the bottom of the page, you'll see from the main estimates of 2012 to the 2013-14, it is down a little bit but not a lot. The revised estimates that you see reflects carry-over projects that we have that we then add to our revised estimates. If there were carry-overs in 2012-13, that will end up in a revised estimate as well. The actual, when you compare the mains to mains, it is down a little bit but not a lot. Part of that is going to be driven by our program intake which we are just finishing up now and doing approvals, and that will improve that estimate as well. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you. I was a little bit concerned whether it was district operations or programs. It sounds like it is more specific of programs there. I am satisfied with that answer.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. I will take it as a comment. Page 5-55, NWT Housing Corporation, information item, programs and district operations, operations expenditure summary. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): We are moving on to 5-56. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have one question here. It is under the mobile and computer equipment line item. There is \$425,000 in 2012-13 and nothing in 2013-14, so what are we not doing? Thank you.

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, that is in capital now. That's why it's not reflected here.

MS. BISARO: Whose capital? Maybe the Minister could be a little more specific and tell me where the money is in the budget. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We'll go to Mr. Anderson.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Chair, yes, the funding for mobile and computer equipment has been transferred to, and is reflected in, the Infrastructure Acquisition Plan for the corporation for next year. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: That's good. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Committee, 5-56. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Just very quickly, there is a very steady and seemingly steep drop in the CMHC repair programs. Could I just request an explanation on that once again? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. For that we'll go to Mr. Stewart.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Chair, really what's going on there is that our own programs have become... People have been more aware of that. They have been applying for our programs as opposed to the CMHC programs. So we have moved some of the resources that previously were under those program titles into our own. It's not a question of them losing money, it's really us focusing on our own program offerings as opposed to what we are doing for CMHC. It's the same amount of money, but we are now focusing much more on our own design programs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Page 5-56, NWT Housing Corporation, information item, programs and district operations, grants and contributions, contributions. Are there any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Page 5-59, NWT Housing Corporation, information item, local housing organizations, operations expenditure summary. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Chair, I just wanted to ask the Minister if this included the forming of the housing board in Tsiigehtchic. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, it is a very consistent question for representatives from Tsiigehtchic and the Member for Mackenzie Delta. We have been waiting on the leadership in Tsiigehtchic to come to us and send us a letter saying they want to form a board. As far as I know, we haven't received that yet. This has been an ongoing issue for two or three years now. They have a desire to form a board. We may need to get our district folks to follow up with them to see if a letter is forthcoming.

MR. BLAKE: I was assured that the letter was sent, but I will double check and make sure of that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. I will take that as a comment. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chair, I'm just wondering where we're at in response to recovering from the episode of moving ECE for a few years and now back under this Minister's leadership. What is our debt situation and how are we doing with

collections? If I could just get an update on that area. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, I was hoping somebody would ask the question on collection rates because it is something that we're quite proud of, not only for ourselves but the tenants out there. The collection rates have been doing really well. We have one region in particular, the Sahtu. I think their collection rate there is over 100 percent. It is 122 percent collection rate in the Sahtu. That indicates that folks are keeping up with their assessments and they are also putting money on what arrears that they may have. So the collection rates across the Northwest Territories have been going really well.

We did a lot of work after it was transferred back to the NWT Housing Corp from ECE. There were a lot of people that had huge arrears. So I think I've told Committee of the Whole before that we've gone pretty well to every LHO, worked with every client, and a number of balances were adjusted because it was just a matter of not reporting their income, it was a bunch of different issues, but we've done quite well with that, and again, I commend all the people out there.

We have a couple of communities where it's still a bit of a challenge, but we are working with those communities to try and improve their collection rates, but overall I think we all should be very pleased with the collection rates in the communities. It indicates that people are starting to take a lot more responsibility for not only paying their rent, but the big problem was verifying their income and we seem to be going in the right direction. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister for that good news. I think it would be useful if the Minister could provide an update to all of us really, probably in our respective ridings, on where we're at. Maybe by community it would be useful for us to once again get on top of that. Just sort of a parallel question, if I could get a similar update of how our LHOs are doing knowing that those are related issues, but I know some of the LHOs have gone through real bottlenecks and difficulties with paying for utilities and so on and working within their budgets. If I could maybe get an update there. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We will provide the list of collection rates by community for across the Northwest Territories. That way the Members that have the ones with the lower collection rates can go and encourage them to start living up to their responsibilities. The communities have been responding pretty good.

As far as the LHOs go, we have seven that have a small deficit, it's probably our lowest number in the last six years. So they're doing quite well. The ones that we find that we were running into some situations with, we worked very closely with them to try and get everything worked out. So it's a work in progress and the LHOs are doing a much better job. Again, I keep going back to the new information system that we're rolling out. We can, almost daily, check on how they're doing and identify a problem before it gets too big and work with them to try and overcome that. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. Again, it seems to be good news on that front, Mr. Chair. So thanks for that information. I guess my last follow-up on that would be, are there things in particular for those seven that are common across them that they need to focus on or that we should be aware of. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Collection is probably one of the biggest ones because you find that the communities that have the lower collections are the ones that are having some trouble financially. Utilities might play a part in that because sometimes what you actually budget them for and what the utilities actually come in at, utility rates might rise. So that's an issue. But collection, again, is one of the biggest ones. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we're on 5-59, NWT Housing Corporation, information item, local housing organizations, operations expenditure summary. Any further questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 5-60, NWT Housing Corporation, information item, local housing organizations, grants and contributions, contributions. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): I see none. Page 5-61, NWT Housing Corporation, information item, lease commitments – infrastructure. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Seeing none. Page 5-62, NWT Housing Corporation, information item, infrastructure investment summary. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that consideration for NWT Housing Corporation is completed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. I would like to thank Minister McLeod. I'd like to thank Mr. Stewart and Mr. Anderson for joining us today. If I could get the Sergeant-at-Arms

to escort the witnesses out of the Chamber. Thank you.

Mr. Menicoche, what is the wish of committee?

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that committee reports progress.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): I will rise and report progress. Thank you.

Report of Committee of the Whole

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

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 9-17(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-2014, and would like to report progress with three motions being adopted. 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 is Mr. Jackson Lafferty.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Item 22, third reading of bills. Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan): Orders of the day for Thursday, February 21, 2013, 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Acknowledgements
8. Oral Questions
9. Written Questions
10. Returns to Written Questions
11. Replies to Opening Address
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills

- Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Territorial Parks Act

19. Second Reading of Bills

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

- Tabled Document 9-17(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-2014
- Bill 1, Tlicho Statutes Amendment Act

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, February 21st, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:56 p.m.