



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**17<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Thursday, June 6, 2013**

Pages 2863 – 2918

**The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

**Hon. Jackie Jacobson**

(Nunakput)

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(Great Slave)

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*Minister of Human Resources*

*Minister of Public Works and Services*

*Minister responsible for the*

*Public Utilities Board*

**Hon. Tom Beaulieu**

(Tu Nedhe)

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*Minister responsible for*

*Persons with Disabilities*

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(Frame Lake)

**Mr. Frederick Blake**

(Mackenzie Delta)

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(Hay River North)

**Mr. Bob Bromley**

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**Mr. Daryl Dolynny**

(Range Lake)

**Mrs. Jane Groenewegen**

(Hay River South)

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*NWT Housing Corporation*

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**Hon. J. Michael Miltenberger**

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*Government House Leader*

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*NWT Power Corporation*

**Mr. Alfred Moses**

(Inuvik Boot Lake)

**Mr. Michael Nadli**

(Deh Cho)

**Hon. David Ramsay**

(Kam Lake)

*Minister of Industry, Tourism*

*and Investment*

*Minister of Transportation*

**Mr. Norman Yakeleya**

(Sahtu)

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**

Thursday, June 6, 2013

**Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Hon. Tom Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Blake, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Dolynny, 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 1:32 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER'S RULING**

**SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson):** Good afternoon, colleagues. Before we get started today, I will provide my ruling on the point of order raised by Mr. Abernethy yesterday, June 5, 2013, regarding comments made by Mr. Dolynny which were perceived to impute false or hidden motives and were viewed as allegations against Mr. Abernethy. As Members are aware, a point of order must be raised at the earliest opportunity and I find that Mr. Abernethy did, in fact, raise the point of order at the earliest opportunity.

I have now had the opportunity to review the unedited transcripts from yesterday and wish to bring focus to the remarks which gave rise to the point of order.

Mr. Dolynny, in speaking about the new downtown Yellowknife office building, expressed concerns about responses he had received from the Minister's office to requests for information pertaining to the terms and conditions of the construction contract. Mr. Dolynny indicated his 'shock' at finding, "the department wanted to charge me \$1,477.75 to photocopy a whopping 1,992 pages of documents." He then went on to describe this as, "nothing more than a document dump and a ridiculous charge to ward off a Member of this government the right to get answers to simple questions and to protect the public purse." He also coloured this response as a "recurrent theme" which he sees "all too often." He went on to state: "It almost appears that this government has a history of document dumping and fee shock to scare off would-be inquiries," and, "now appears to be the tactics used on an elected Member of this House." It was shortly after these remarks that Mr. Abernethy rose on his point of order.

Mr. Abernethy's point was that Mr. Dolynny, by questioning the responses received from the department, was directly questioning his motives with regard to the capital project under discussion

and the process to be adhered to in requesting information relative to the project. I will quote Mr. Abernethy in stating his point of order found on page 13 of the unedited Hansard for Wednesday, June 5, 2013: "...the Member for Range Lake has suggested that we are impeding his ability to get detailed information to do his job." He went on to say: "...the Member is suggesting that we are intentionally trying to keep information from him, which is not the case."

In reviewing these comments, I examined closely the rules cited by Mr. Abernethy in his point of order, and in doing so, I considered the following questions: Did Mr. Dolynny make an allegation against Mr. Abernethy? Did he impute false or hidden motives to him?

I find the answers to both of these questions is, clearly, no. Mr. Dolynny made no direct allegations against Mr. Abernethy. I also fail to see where the comments imputed a false or hidden motive to him. I do not find that Mr. Dolynny's remarks were directed specifically at Mr. Abernethy, nor do I find they questioned Mr. Abernethy's personal integrity, honesty or character. Therefore, I find there is no point of order.

I wish to thank all Members who offered their views on the point of order. I particularly appreciate the respectful and balanced tone of the discussion. Thank you, Members.

Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for social programs.

**Ministers' Statements****MINISTER'S STATEMENT 70-17(4):  
ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to this Assembly's goal of helping our residents become and stay healthy, educated people free from poverty. A strong territory needs a strong society. All residents of the NWT should have the chance to enjoy the benefits of living in a prosperous, well-governed territory and to participate fully in a healthy, just society.

This is why the Premier committed last year to the development of an Anti-Poverty Strategy. At the

appropriate time today, I will table the Strategic Framework towards the Elimination of Poverty in the NWT. This framework has been developed in partnership with the No Place for Poverty Coalition, representatives from the business sector, as well as Aboriginal and community governments.

I want to acknowledge the efforts of the many partners on the steering committee who devoted countless hours over the past year to this important work. Not only is the framework an excellent document and a roadmap for the future, it is also a testament to what we can achieve by working in collaboration.

Mr. Speaker, poverty is complex, and to tackle this issue requires action on many fronts. Our government's priorities all work together to address poverty. A thriving economy gives residents the chance to support themselves and their families. Healthy, educated people are better able to take advantage of economic opportunities.

The framework reflects this complexity and targets five priority areas for tackling poverty in the NWT. These include a focus on children and families, healthy living, safe and affordable housing, sustainable communities and better integration of services. Our government is already taking action in many of these areas. In this session alone we have heard about our commitments to renew the Early Childhood Development Framework, develop an Economic Opportunities Strategy, improve our relationships with Aboriginal governments, and address mental health and addictions in our communities. This work has a common thread. It is all part of our work to achieve our vision of a poverty-free NWT.

Now that the strategic framework is complete, it's time to focus on actions.

Over the summer Ministers will work together to develop action plans to coordinate responses to this and the other frameworks and strategies that have recently been tabled. I will encourage other stakeholder organizations to do the same. As plans are developed, I will host a symposium in the fall so we can all talk about what we want to do and how we might work together.

There is a role for everyone in our efforts to create a poverty-free NWT, and I look forward to new partnerships that will have long-term benefits for all of our people. By working together, we can make progress on our shared priorities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 71-17(4):  
CORRIDORS FOR CANADA III:  
BUILDING FOR PROSPERITY

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, achieving our government's vision of a strong, prosperous territory requires that adequate supporting infrastructure, such as the transportation system, is in place to effectively link communities to opportunities for social growth and economic prosperity.

The Department of Transportation has made significant improvements to the transportation system over the last 10 years through partnerships with the federal government under the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund and the Building Canada Plan. Through these partnership agreements, the GNWT and federal government have invested more than \$330 million in transportation infrastructure. These investments were guided by two funding proposals, Corridors for Canada I and Corridors for Canada II, submitted to the federal government under each of these federal funding programs.

Mr. Speaker, in March 2013, Canada announced details of its new infrastructure investment strategy under Canada's Economic Action Plan. This new federal funding program includes a new Building Canada Fund, with \$14 billion investments allocated over the next 10 years.

This new fund will provide our territory with an opportunity to continue the transportation system improvements accomplished through the previous infrastructure funding programs that are now coming to a close.

Mr. Speaker, later today, at the appropriate time, I will be pleased to table the Corridors for Canada III – Building for Prosperity, the Department of Transportation's strategic funding proposal that will be submitted for consideration under the new Building Canada Fund. The proposal includes a \$600 million investment over 10 years to improve our winter roads, highways, bridges, marine and airport infrastructure.

Corridors for Canada III is an action plan that addresses transportation infrastructure needs across all regions of the Northwest Territories.

These investments are proposed under the two separate components of the new Building Canada Fund: the \$10 billion Provincial-Territorial Infrastructure Fund and the \$4 billion National Infrastructure Fund.

We are proposing to invest \$415 million over 10 years under the provincial-territorial base funding program. Investment is proposed for reconstruction, grade and safety improvements on all of our eight public highways and the Detah access road, bridge

rehabilitation and replacement, a new air terminal building in Inuvik, and upgrades to our ferry landings.

We are also proposing an investment of \$185 million over 10 years under the second component of the Building Canada Fund, called the National Infrastructure Fund, a merit-based investment program that targets projects of national significance. Projects proposed under this fund address the next steps to advance the Mackenzie Valley Highway, enable economic development and help the transportation system adapt to climate change.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada recognizes the Mackenzie Valley Highway as a project of national significance that will improve industry access to energy resources and lead to prosperity and economic benefits spread across the country. The future completion of an all-weather Mackenzie Valley Highway is also a priority of this government.

The Mackenzie Valley Highway investments proposed include completing the highway's environmental assessment, constructing bridges including the Bear River Bridge, and a new segment of winter road linking Fort Good Hope to the Dempster Highway. Grade improvements along the existing alignment will also bring us closer to the future completion of the all-weather highway.

This government is taking a balanced approach that will help us grow our economy, support our people and manage our environment responsibly. Corridors for Canada III is an important part of that approach. The objective of our infrastructure funding proposal is to continue working with Canada to address our transportation infrastructure priorities that lead to jobs, economic growth, and prosperous communities in the Northwest Territories. We will promote this proposal to the federal government this summer, and I will report back on our success during the fall session. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 72-17(4):  
UPDATE ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LAND USE  
AND SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to update the people of the Northwest Territories about the Government of the Northwest Territories Land Use and Sustainability Framework.

A healthy, well-managed environment sustains all of our people and is the foundation for a healthy life. The land nourishes us and is the driving force of our economy. Following our historic debate and

vote on the devolution motion yesterday, we will have enhanced decision-making power to manage land, develop the economy, and protect the environment. A Land Use and Sustainability Framework will guide the Government of the Northwest Territories in making land management decisions and it will provide transparency and consistency to the interests that we bring when working with Aboriginal governments and other land partners.

Over the past year we have been discussing land management with residents and stakeholders. Last July we distributed Land is Life, a discussion paper that laid out our vision, interests and principles for making land management decisions on behalf of residents of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, later today I will table What We Heard About...Land is Life. We heard that people are comfortable with our vision and principles for land use. We heard about the need to balance conservation and economic development and we heard about the need to work together.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is one partner in an integrated land management system. The Devolution Agreement contains provisions for intergovernmental coordination and collaboration on lands and resources management. The land is our life and the source of our wealth and well-being.

Healthy people depend on a healthy environment, and our natural resources have the potential to transform our economy, creating jobs and opportunities for all.

While the operating environment is still unfolding and the framework is not yet finalized, we have been hard at work. Sustainability is much broader than the physical landscape, it must consider water, wildlife, land, energy, renewable and non-renewable resources. We have completed a Water Stewardship Strategy. We have undertaken significant discussion and engagement on energy planning, economic opportunities and mineral development in the Northwest Territories, and standing committee consultations are currently underway on a proposed new Wildlife Act.

All of these are connected under the broad vision of the Land Use and Sustainability Framework. The values and operating principles of the framework build on our Sustainability Development Policy and provide guidance to other strategies that will affect how our land and resources are used. All of these are critical in achieving the vision of the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Working together, we will responsibly and sustainably manage the lands, waters and natural resources of the Northwest Territories for the benefit of current and future generations.

We have reached consensus on a Devolution Final Agreement with an effective date of April 1, 2014.

The Government of the Northwest Territories needs to be well prepared for that change and is setting out an appropriate land management framework that will encourage and support northern leadership over northern lands. Making the right decisions on the use of land and its resources is one of our greatest responsibilities, and we want to get it right. I look forward to bringing the final Land Use and Sustainability Framework to this House during our fall session. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 73-17(4):  
SAHTU CHALLENGES AND  
OPPORTUNITIES REPORT

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, the oil and gas activity in the Sahtu Region has the potential to grow and diversify the Northwest Territories economy, a key priority of this government. In the last few years, this potential has created many opportunities and challenges for the people, businesses, and industry working in the area.

We want to make sure development continues in a timely yet environmentally sustainable way, and that local residents and businesses benefit. Later today, at the appropriate time, I will be tabling the Resource Exploration in the Sahtu Settlement Area: Opportunities and Challenges, wherein these issues are addressed.

Our natural resources are the source of our prosperity, and after devolution, they will provide additional revenues to support investments in our people, our environment and our economy.

The report takes a closer look at projections for exploration activity in the Sahtu over the next five years, the potential for opportunities and challenges related to the level of activity, and how the GNWT can prepare to respond.

It includes a number of recommendations, highlighting areas that must be addressed to maximize benefits for NWT residents, businesses, and communities.

These include:

- the need for an approved land use plan for the Sahtu;
- the need for improved training opportunities;
- the need to develop comprehensive environmental baseline information for the proposed exploration areas; and
- the need for improved information-gathering procedures to better understand the

opportunities and impacts related to hydrocarbon development.

Mr. Speaker, petroleum exploration and development is important to the Sahtu region. After the busy winter work season, many residents have had training and job opportunities, and NWT businesses have profited from company spending.

However, we as a government have always adhered to the principles of sustainable development. This prosperity will not come at the expense of those who live and work in the region. Investments in managing our land and environment help us use our resources wisely and sustainably while continuing to protect the health of our land and our people.

The Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment has been working closely with a number of other GNWT departments to address any issues related to development.

We want to ensure the services and resources needed in the region are readily available, and that those resources are being used effectively.

Just last week, representatives from the GNWT, industry, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Canadian Economic Development Agency, National Energy Board, Sahtu Land and Water Board, Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board, Sahtu Renewable Resource Board and other groups came together in Norman Wells to identify common actions to support the ongoing exploration activity in the region.

Mr. Speaker, by being proactive and taking steps to identify challenges early, these impacts can be managed efficiently and effectively.

We are continuously building relationships and identifying the needs for partnerships.

By continuing to maintain a consistent dialogue between industry, all levels of government, between GNWT departments, Aboriginal organizations, and NWT residents and businesses, we will be better prepared to address any social, environmental and economic issues related to this activity and will ensure resource development continues to be part of our diversified economy that provides all communities and regions with opportunities and choices. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for NTPC.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 74-17(4):  
LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS SUPPLY  
FOR INUVIK

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, on May 31, 2013, in response to questions from Mr.



Alfred Moses, Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, I addressed aspects of this government's plan to provide relief for the residents of Inuvik by introducing liquefied natural gas, or LNG, to the community. I would like to clarify one point about LNG storage plans.

Northwest Territories Power Corporation plans to store just under a weeks' supply of LNG on site for the electricity project. A full year's supply of backup diesel is already on hand in Inuvik. Once the pilot year is completed, an evaluation of storage requirements will determine what the optimal storage requirements will be and that may be as much as 30 days.

While providing lower cost electricity to NTPC customers is certainly a central objective of this initiative, it may not be the only way that Inuvik residents will be able to enjoy the benefits of LNG. Provided that the LNG pilot year for electricity proves successful, the community may wish to consider the merits of LNG as part of the heating solution for the town as they may receive some economies of scale by exploring an LNG solution alongside NTPC.

The seasonal heating requirements for the town will require a higher level of storage - in the order of 30 days' worth of storage. The optimum level of storage and the overall viability of LNG for heating supply will have to be evaluated after the LNG pilot year is operational and the impact of extended ferry service has been assessed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

### Members' Statements

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Elders make a difference in our communities every day. Elders are deeply involved in our communities and their contributions benefit NWT residents of all ages. I'm really pleased to see so many MLAs wearing purple here today to raise awareness of elder abuse.

June 15<sup>th</sup> is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and I'm going to do my part today to raise the awareness of elder abuse. Elder abuse is a significant threat to the older residents of our NWT communities, as Members well know, and it is a problem in both small communities and larger centres.

For many years elder abuse remained a private matter, hidden from view and not talked about.

Thankfully, in the last 30 years or so, elder abuse has become increasingly more important to our society and it's now seen as a public problem that needs attention.

The World Health Organization report called Missing Voices stated that abuse, neglect and financial exploitation of elders are much more common than societies admit. The same report demonstrates clear links between elder abuse and disempowerment and discrimination of elders.

Elder abuse is defined as any kind of physical, sexual, psychological or economic abuse, as well as neglect. Perhaps surprisingly, male elders are almost at the same risk of abuse as female elders. Elders are taken advantage of because they are physically frail or have diminished mental capacity. Family members extort money from their elders or force them to sign over property. It's very unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, but elders are an easy target.

Elder abuse does not discriminate. It happens in institutions as well as private homes and to elders of all races. Our elders should be respected and honoured. They hold the wisdom, the history and the knowledge of our communities and our territory. We must not ignore elder abuse, and understanding it gives us the power to fight it. Society has recognized that elder abuse and neglect is occurring and must raise awareness of the problem. We need to inform health and social service practitioners and the general public about elder abuse, ensure that they can identify the signs of elder abuse and know where to find the help to combat it. We need to use the media to change attitudes and reduce stereotyping of the elders, and we need to educate our elders as well.

All of these actions bring the problem of elder abuse out into the open, encourage acknowledgement that it's a problem, and we can start to eradicate it. Next Saturday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, wear purple again, find an elder, show them the respect they deserve, and let them know you care.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MINERAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Pathways to Mineral Development is an excellent portrayal of industry perspectives. Compiled in partnership with the NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines and paneled with industry professionals without even an offer of public meetings, it is an imbalanced agenda of corporate priorities that in whole sections is completely devoid of public interest and environmental sustainability perspectives.

Here are a few high points, or really low points: There's the basic premise that corporations are to be wooed with a blend of government-funded subsidies, debased regulatory standards and freedom from social benefits and employment requirements or environmental accountability. The report envisages our good old 43,000 person territory as a mid-Canadian jurisdiction class – between Newfoundland and Ontario – cashbox of subsidies and inducements. Recommendations call for the creation of a cadre of public-funded development advocates who would act as industry handmaidens assuming the responsibilities and costs of industry to engage the regulatory process. Lack of skilled northern workers is referred to as a deterrent to investment rather than an obstacle to the prosperity of the NWT residents who must be the first beneficiaries when their birthright is merchandised. Fly-in/fly-out is taken as a given. An even worse given premise is the casual expectation that we will continue in the creation of contaminated sites requiring perpetual care. That's if, and at costs to government, the land and people that far outstrip one-time benefits of the developments. The report refers to the yo-yo spurts of Yukon and Nunavut exploration spending as plights to be envied, not instability to be avoided.

The biggest mantra is marketing. Public dismay at environmental degradation and lack of corporate accountability for costs of cleanup are seen as problems of public misperception to be schmoozed away. Recommendation priorities hammer on the notion that the NWT must be seen as eager for any development at any cost, greased through a disassembled regulatory system with government-funded staff, taxpayer subsidies and relaxed socioeconomic requirements.

This is the fox owning the henhouse.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. BROMLEY:** This is the fox owning the henhouse. Acceptance of such recommendations as the fuel of post-devolution policy is deeply chilling. Where's the balance?

If the Minister's intent was to get the industry to dream in colour and tell them what they want, that's fine, but please, go now to a respected public interest policy group and get that perspective added in before developing a final strategy.

I will have questions.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NON-TOXIC PEST CONTROL PROGRAMS

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Second to none, Fort Providence is home to the biggest horseflies in the Northwest Territories. They are nasty, vicious biters which cut through the skin to feed on blood. Swarms of mosquitoes and sandflies also leave itchy bites and cause some people to suffer allergic reactions. These bugs are attracted to movement, bright colours and carbon dioxide in our breath.

The Government of the Northwest Territories leaves it up to municipalities and hungry birds, fish and frogs to work out their own abatement programs. In the interests of health, tourism and our economy, we need to launch a nontoxic pest control that does not involve telling people and animals in the NWT to always wear light colours and stop breathing. The fact that large-scale solution lies in bug biomass, an innovation that will benefit our communities, improve our economy and help solve other issues along the way.

Vehicles hit thousands of horseflies along the highway all summer, requiring motorists to scrape carcasses off their vehicles after every trip. The attack on mosquitos and horseflies that get drawn to a vehicle was that these and an equally irritating child is enough to make even the keenest tourists want to jump off the Deh Cho Bridge.

---Laughter

I urge the departments of Environment and Natural Resources and Industry, Tourism and Investment to install giant insect traps in all of our small communities so we can collect bugs and use them along with wood pellets to heat our homes and public buildings. As technology advances, soon we will be able to harness living insects and use them to produce power as they buzz around inside small generation units instead of our windows, screen doors and picnic tables.

Bug biomass helps us tackle the issues that get under our skin. Harvesting this natural resource reduces fossil fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, eliminates the need for pesticides, attracts tourists, and increases the number of happy campers and blissful buffalo, bears, caribou and other animals who are also harassed by bugs. Rest assured there will be still plenty of insects to feed all the birds, frogs, dragonflies and spiders up and down the food chain for generations to come.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. NADLI:** I would like to take this opportunity to wish my colleagues, constituents and all the residents of the Northwest Territories a safe and

enjoyable summer. Wear sunscreen and don't let the bugs bite. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
CORRIDORS FOR CANADA III  
TRANSPORTATION  
INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I was very pleased to hear the Minister of Transportation's statement on Corridors for Canada III, a document for building prosperity. While I cannot share any details before it is tabled later today, I can say that potential investment in Highway No. 7 brings a tear to my eye. An improved transportation network is a foundation required to support economic development and the future prosperity in the NWT. Improvements to transportation also benefit our communities and people, by improving their level of service like more chipseal and by making our highways safer. I support this Government of the Northwest Territories in being proactive and submitting this infrastructure proposal to the federal government in advance of the funding program details being known. This may help to form and shape the federal program so that the North can realize more infrastructure improvements.

The investments made under Corridors for Canada I and Corridors for Canada II have made significant improvements to the system. I look forward to continuing the improvements. There is much work to do. I am also encouraged that investments are proposed in every region across the NWT. There are many needs in my riding, as I have been raising in this House. Normally my favourite two words are Highway 7. I do recognize that this proposal needs to be strategic and we can't include everything we would like. I am pleased that it appears that the government has been listening to my concerns, and also on reconstructed Highway No. 7 and improvements to the Mackenzie Highway including sections towards Wrigley. I also hope to see more chipseal from Fort Simpson towards Hay River, which is being asked for by my constituents.

The Deh Cho travelling through Nahendeh this winter has dramatically increased and, also, they expect an increase in industrial traffic in Fort Liard this year as well. I am very supportive of the projects included to advance the Mackenzie Valley Highway. I look forward to finding even more funding to begin constructing this highway north of Wrigley. Industry will substantially benefit from the investment, perhaps our partnerships, opportunities to invest even more. Once again, I look forward to a positive response from the federal government as the Department of Transportation and other

governments make our plans this summer. Mahsi cho.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member for Frame Lake brought an important topic to the House today and I'd like to continue that work on, as she put it, elders do make a difference, and I totally agree with her.

During this session we heard about what the Department of Education, Culture and Employment is doing to combat bullying in schools. This House even passed a motion joining our national legislative colleagues on denouncing cyberbullying. It seems everywhere you turn a form of bullying is making its way to mainstream media through social networks.

Another not so well known or talked about form of abuse is bullying of our beloved seniors and our respected elders. This is being brought forward this year as the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, which is happening on June 15<sup>th</sup>.

So why is this so important for us here in the NWT? I have to thank the hardworking NWT Seniors' Society, because they carried out a recent study and it was a questionnaire, and 528 people through 11 communities around the Northwest Territories participated in this questionnaire, and 71 percent who completed this questionnaire indicated that elder abuse was an issue in their community, which is fairly significant. During this study they found that there were some common patterns of abuse worth noting. As they said, all forms of abuse were prevalent, but they did earmark the fact that there were some quite common ones in their report. That one was financial, followed by neglect, emotional and, finally, verbal abuse.

More importantly, it was also noted that there was a lot of silence around the issue, with little or no reporting or understanding of what to do about it, which is a very common practice with elder abuse.

During this awareness day on June 15<sup>th</sup>, I will challenge all Northerners, including Members of this House, to find ways to recognize the signs of elder abuse in our communities.

I'm hoping that everyone will take the time to reach out and take an active role on this topic, pass it on, and that's not the abuse I mean, but pass it on in terms of the information and the knowledge that we have by sharing this today, and collect local stories from our elders and our seniors and let them have a voice on this day, and even doing what we're doing

here today, Mr. Speaker, and supporting us by wearing purple.

So I'd like to thank the Minister's office, the Minister of Health and Social Services, for spearheading this today. You'll notice a lot of us are wearing our corsages and I'd like to thank everyone for their participation today. Thank you.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DISABILITIES AWARENESS WEEK

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot stand today to do my Member's statement. The reason being is I've committed to being in a wheelchair for today, and although I did stand when the Mace came in and during the prayer, I did that out of respect for the House and the rules of the House.

The reason I'm in a wheelchair today is because I've committed to creating awareness of a different kind: awareness for people with disabilities. This week is Disabilities Awareness Week and the theme is Disability Awareness: Creating an Accessible and Welcoming Community for all People.

As I sit here in a wheelchair today, I've been going around the building to see how accessible the Legislative Assembly is. I also do this not only in support of people with disabilities, but for the good, hard work and commitment from the people who do work for people with disabilities. The NWT Disabilities Council, more importantly a group that I've done work with and volunteered with in the past, and that is the Inuvik Disabilities Council as well, who, on a short budget – earlier this week we talked about the NGO Stabilization Fund – raised and did a lot of volunteer fundraising to get a transportation van that actually does a lot of really good work in Inuvik, and they hold an annual dinner to raise money in support for people with disabilities. So I just wanted to shed light on the good work that people are doing as well.

There was more than just reason about awareness. I wanted to create some of the things that we've heard while sitting in this Assembly. In the NWT Human Rights Commission Annual Report, of the 38 new complaints this year, 20 of them were categorized as a disability. That in itself should say we need to do more work and look into this to get these addressed.

Persons with disabilities have the right to be treated equally, with dignity and respect. We not only need to engage the communities, make them more accessible, but today we did something different, we've engaged the Legislative Assembly. We've brought something to light that's sometimes never

really talked about or brought action to, and I can speak to this because I've lived it for just part of the day. Later today I will be going out in Yellowknife and do some other things to see how accessible the city of Yellowknife is. I do hope to set up a meeting with the Persons with Disabilities here in Yellowknife before I do leave.

I'd just like to thank my colleagues today for assisting me in any types of assistance that I did need, but I'd also like to thank my colleagues and staff members who let me be independent and go around the building without any support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ACCESS TO BARIATRIC SURGERY

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to revisit an issue I've brought forward to this House before, bariatric surgery. As Members know, over the last two years I've been working hard to lose weight. I've lost just over 200 pounds.

---Applause

I appreciate that, but I'm working to pay it forward to the people that are still in the situation where they are seriously overweight. In my discussions with the Minister of Health and the Department of Health, they've told me the department is working on lifestyle choices, healthy lifestyle choices, and that they have lots of support out there for people who want to lose weight. I don't disagree with that. I know, as that individual two years ago, I had lots of support. I had nutritionists, dieticians, diabetic nurses that helped me out as much as they could.

But I'm not talking about people who need to lose 20 or 30 pounds, people who are slightly overweight. I'm talking about people who need to lose 50, 100, 200 pounds just to be in the normal weight category. It's not just a matter of just saying if you eat a little more veggies and exercise. When you're 403 pounds, you go and exercise one day, you have that ability, the next day it hurts, it hurts a lot, so you can't do this on a steady basis.

There are people out there who need this kind of weight loss and need additional help. Bariatric surgery provides that help, allows them to limit their food intake and assists them in losing weight, so when they do exercise, they see the results immediately.

The department has told me that they have done a cost estimate of the nutrition program and the costs attached to it. I understand that, but the costs that I'm talking about are other costs involved.

When I was 403 pounds, I was on insulin, Metformin, blood pressure pills, water pills and the GNWT was getting charged anywhere from \$800 to \$1,000 a month.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. BOUCHARD:** At that cost of \$800 to \$1,000 a month, which I was costing the GNWT every month, I have since then been able to get off of insulin, I haven't eliminated Metformin yet, I have gotten rid of water pills, and because I am on Metformin still, I need a blood pressure pill. Most of those costs are gone, Mr. Speaker. So the costs associated that are saved could be put towards bariatric surgery. That would be repaid within a year to two years, depending on the types of medications an individual is on.

I will have questions for the Minister of Health today to convince him and the department that this is a necessity for people who are seriously overweight. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SYNTHETIC NATURAL GAS FOR NORMAN WELLS

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to pass on my heartfelt appreciation for my friend here. He is walking his talk and it is much appreciated. The last years with my grandfather, the last 10 or 15 years or so, he spent in a wheelchair, so I appreciate what he's doing here.

I want to do my Member's statement on the synthetic natural gas in Norman Wells. Yesterday Member Bisaro talked about you can't get what you always want, the Rolling Stones tune. Mr. R.C. McLeod followed up with another line from the Rolling Stones: If you try some time, you might just find you get what you need. I like the Rolling Stones, so I'm going to do my Member's statement as: you can't get any satisfaction here.

The Town of Norman Wells has entered into an MOU with Dalkia Canada to provide a heating solution for the residents who will completely lose their natural gas source by this time next year. Dalkia has agreed to supply the community with synthetic natural gas for two years, until the town and the company decide on the best long-term heating solutions for Norman Wells. No one is really saying how much Dalkia's plan will cost. They have an estimate, so the residents of Norman Wells already know they're going to pay more to heat their homes. Some people have gone off the grid.

Norman Wells is a big part of the Northwest Territories renewable energy plan. Many people ask for subsidies to be able to afford to heat their homes. The Government of the Northwest Territories pays millions of dollars in energy subsidies. These costs have a huge impact on the fiscal framework. They affect our ability to provide programs and services and move forward on important initiatives.

Norman Wells isn't the only community facing an energy crisis. Between 2012 and 2014, this government will spend at least \$300,000 on exploring long-term energy solutions for Inuvik. Again, we need to invest in long-term solutions for Norman Wells, just as does our sister community in Inuvik. The Department of Public Works plans major investments in biomass in our airports and our schools. Biomass and district heating systems are among the options the community has proposed for long-term solutions. These efforts should be expanded and built upon to ensure a sustainable future for our community and natural resources.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my Member's statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. YAKELEYA:** The government needs to step up as an active player now and find long-term energy solutions for Norman Wells. We must fully support the residents' efforts to convert sustainable energy sources like biomass, hydro or solar power. We need to do this before our people go south or go broke. I'm looking for satisfaction.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. I just thank God you didn't sing it for us today. The Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HEALTH CARE CARD RENEWAL PROCESS

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to use today's Member's statement to revisit the health care card issue as it continues to be a bit of a frantic issue out there. Some people are defining it as maybe a mini scandal of some sort, and others say maybe an inquiry of some sort, as well, needs to be considered.

The fact that people have been e-mailing, whether they've been faxing or even mailing in their applications, they don't know where the information is going and it really continues to call into question the integrity of the system as well as the safety of that information being sent out there. Often enough we hear about how people are preyed upon when they have private information. Here we're talking about elder abuse. We have elders here who have often been targeted as people to get their private

information so nefarious people out there do nasty, nasty things.

The point here is we've got two issues. One, what's going to be done about the health care card application process. Is it a scandal? Is it a problem? We don't know how big the problem is because we can't even define how many applications have gone in there and where they've gone. We don't know who to contact because we don't know if we've processed them. By the time we finish this application process, it's going to be a year or two away. We're going to require immediate action.

But, as always, I try to bring a solution to the table at the same time. I've been looking at this issue from a different perspective. First of all, why do we renew health care cards? Well, one of the obvious reasons is we have to ensure Northerners are getting a northern health care card. In other words, we're not having the fly-in/fly-out workers using northern health care. We all know at length on how short or not available, that is, dollars are when it comes to paying for health care initiatives and how challenging that always is, so we want to ensure Northerners are getting health care that Northerners rightly deserve.

One of the solutions I'd like to propose is, because we have a DMV in many areas, whether they're in small communities, large regions or even in Yellowknife, why don't we look at considering the situation of providing a photo health care card? I'm not suggesting we stop, pull all the brakes out at this particular moment, but this is the type of initiative we could start planning for today. Kind of like a Service Canada model with the federal government where when you go into one stop, you can do a little bit of one-stop shopping.

If we had a photo ID, that would help protect the integrity of the system because you can demonstrate fully that that is you on the picture, and that is you getting northern health care, and that is you who is a true Northerner and you deserve that. That may not be the perfect solution, but we can work with ways moving forward. Again, I don't expect it now, but I do say this is something we can work towards.

That said, I will have questions for the Minister of Health about this potential scandalous situation and how we can solve some of the things going forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INTERIM PUBLIC SAFETY SOLUTIONS FOR TSIIGHEHTCHIC

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The RCMP has been part of our lives in the North since their arrival in 1904. We are proud of the relationships that our communities and the RCMP have built over the years. It is important that leaders support communities and the RCMP to continue to build on these positive working relationships. Our leaders and communities want to work alongside the RCMP to make our homes and communities a safer place to live.

Over the last couple of years, I have made a number of statements in this House concerning the lack of policing in Tsiigehtchic. There is no question in my mind that a police detachment in Tsiigehtchic is necessary and must be a part of this government's long-term plan. I do, however, recognize the reality and know that a detachment isn't going to happen tomorrow. I know a detachment is a ways off. It could be years. This is an unfortunate reality.

The problem is that, as I fight for my constituents and champion for a detachment, the needs of my people continue. The issues don't take a break because there is no detachment. In fact, it only gets worse.

Today I want to work with the Minister of Justice on some interim solutions to policing and public safety that can exist in Tsiigehtchic.

Our world is constantly changing. Today we are dealing with factors we did not traditionally see, such as drugs. Our elders are worried about how to deal with this and how to help our youth. We need to work together to explore all options, especially in our communities that do not have detachments.

I know that we have many committed people who will dedicate their time to help those who come into conflict with the law. There are community justice committees, victim service workers, volunteers for crime prevention activities and other community events. They require our ongoing support, as do the RCMP members who are working in our communities.

I want to explore all of the options to create links with the RCMP, recruitment, Aboriginal community constable programs, programs for the youth that may help address community safety and support policing in Tsiigehtchic.

Later today I will ask the Minister of Justice questions on what we can do while we are waiting for a detachment to become a reality in Tsiigehtchic, working together on these types of initiatives to help my constituents feel safe in their

homes and in the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Blake. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. McLeod.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
62<sup>ND</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF  
FRED AND BERNA MANDEVILLE

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the 62<sup>nd</sup> wedding anniversary of my in-laws, Fred and Berna Mandeville. Fred and Berna were married in Fort Resolution on April 13, 1951, so Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> is lucky after all. They have 12 children, of whom my wife, Melody, is the eldest. Fred and Berna live in Hay River and, at the young ages of 80 and 82, live on their own and continue to spend time at their cabin at Buffalo River whenever they can.

Their wedding was supposed to be a double wedding with George and Rosa Fabien. However, the 13<sup>th</sup> happened to be on a Friday, so George and Rosa decided to get married the day before. George and Rosa are also celebrating their 62<sup>nd</sup> wedding anniversary this year. They are both living in the extended care facility in Hay River. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILIES OF  
GRANT GIROUX AND BARRY SANDERSON

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to congratulate Adrian Lizotte, originally from Tu Nedhe, for receiving the Premier's Award yesterday for his work on anthrax.

It is with great sadness that I send my condolences to the family of the late Grant Giroux. He passed away on March 24, 2013, at age 58. He was born in Rocher River on February 18, 1955.

Grant was a hardworking, dedicated man and was dedicated to his seven children and 10 grandchildren. His work was always focused on the benefits for the people that he loved. He was a great father and grandfather and loved to show his love, and this will keep his memory strong.

Grant was a hunter and trapper, and also a heavy equipment operator instructor. All his life he always shared what he had with elders, friends and family. His life was always to help people. He had a great sense of humour and people would always surround him because he showed compassion to everyone he met.

Grant was predeceased by his parents, Wilfred and Elizabeth Giroux, and his sister, Violet Giroux-Bailey. My condolences go out to Grant's seven children, 10 grandchildren, his brothers, George, Raymond, Robert, David, Velmore, Carl and Justin, and his sisters, Edith and Dianne, and his many nephews, nieces, cousins and friends.

I also would like to send my deepest condolences to the family and friends of Mr. Barry Sanderson of Deninu K'ue, who passed away this year and had the funeral on May 14, 2013.

Barry was born November 25, 1966. He was a hardworking person with a loving heart and he loved his two children, Craig and Roberta, and his mother, Mary. He did the best he could for them.

He is survived by his mother, his brother, James, and sister, Cyndi. Barry had a great sense of humour and wanted to see family and friends smile and laugh. He loved life and always had a helping hand for those in need.

My sincerest condolences go out to his two children, Roberta and Craig, his mother, who will miss him dearly, his sister, Cyndi, and his brother, James, many nieces, nephews, cousins and many, many friends. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Mr. Nadli.

### Reports of Standing and Special Committees

COMMITTEE REPORT 5-17(4):  
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE  
REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF  
CANADA ON THE 2013 NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES INCOME SECURITY PROGRAMS

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Standing Committee on Government Operations is pleased to provide its report on the Report of the Auditor General of Canada on the 2013 Northwest Territories Income Security Programs and commends it to this House.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. You may proceed.

#### Introduction

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Standing Committee on Government Operations held its public review of the 2013 Report of the Auditor General of Canada on April 16 and 17, 2013.

The standing committee thanks assistant auditor general Ronnie Campbell, principal Glenn Wheeler, and lead auditor Erin Jellinek for preparing the report and assisting the committee during the public review. The committee also thanks the associate

deputy minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dana Heide; Deputy Minister Gabriella Eggenhofer; and the director of income security, Ms. Lois Walbourne, for appearing as witnesses at the review.

### **Role of the Auditor General of Canada in the NWT**

The Auditor General of Canada conducts financial and performance audits in all three northern territories. Financial audits tell the Legislative Assembly and the public whether the government is keeping proper accounts and records and presenting its financial information fairly. Performance audits consider whether programs are being run with due regard for economy, efficiency, effectiveness and environmental impacts. Since 2006, the Auditor General has conducted seven performance audits in the Northwest Territories and issued one status report covering progress on the recommendations of previous audits.

The Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Government Operations is mandated to review the reports of the Auditor General and make recommendations to the Government of the Northwest Territories.

Members look for efficiencies, best practices, and gaps, with the intent of improving services to residents. The Auditor General's reports are essential tools in Members' scrutiny of government spending and performance.

I will now hand the report over to my colleague Ms. Bisaro.

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

### **Northwest Territories Income Security Programs Delivered by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment**

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Auditor General's report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 7, 2013. This year's performance audit focused on four income security programs delivered by the Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE): Income Assistance, Student Financial Assistance, the Child Care User Subsidy, and the Senior Home Heating Subsidy.

All of these programs are directly related to the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly's goal of "healthy, educated people free from poverty."

In the past, northern indigenous peoples survived by following traditional laws of sharing, caring, and mutual respect. If someone was in need, they received help. There was no shame in that. Everyone had a contribution to make, and everyone was worthy of respect. Today Northwest Territories income security programs help meet the basic

needs of individuals and families for food, shelter, clothing and warmth. Members believe such programs should be delivered not only in compliance with modern-day statutes and regulations, but also in the spirit and with the intent of the traditional laws.

Northerners also strongly value self-reliance. Since 2007 this value has been explicitly reflected in Northwest Territories income security programs delivered by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. These programs reduce dependency on government by encouraging people who are able to enter or remain in the workforce, supporting students in post-secondary education, subsidizing child care to help parents become or stay employed, and helping seniors stay in their own homes through assistance with heating costs.

These are large and important programs. The number of people who received benefits under one of ECE's four programs in 2010-11 totalled 5,455, or roughly one in every eight Northwest Territories residents. The Government of the Northwest Territories spends about \$30 million per year on these programs.

### **The Auditor General's 2013 Report**

The Auditor General's performance audit covered program delivery between April 2009 and September 2012. Client files from April 2009 to June 2012 were sampled to determine if applicants were assessed and benefits paid according to requirements. ECE's efforts to assess program performance between January 2007 and September 2012 were examined, in order to include changes to the programs made in 2007.

The audit focused on two main questions. The first was whether the department was delivering its programs according to key elements of legislation and policies. The second was whether the department was collecting data and assessing program performance to ensure objectives are met.

The Standing Committee on Government Operations was dismayed to learn from the Auditor General's report that there are serious systemic problems with the delivery of income security programs by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

According to the Auditor General, the department is providing reasonable access to these programs and has established the required appeals processes.

However, the Auditor General also found that many client files are not managed according to requirements: processes are unclear, not followed or incomplete; monitoring is inconsistent; financial oversight is sometimes lacking; employees are not sufficiently trained; and there is limited assessment



of program performance. These issues are significant.

In delivering income security, the right amounts must go to the right people, at the right time, otherwise someone could be out on the street trying to collect enough pop bottles to pay for their next meal. A disabled person might not be able to meet their rent. A student could drop out, or an elder could get sick because their house is too cold. Behind the income security numbers are some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

### Observations and Recommendations

The Auditor General's observations on ECE income security programs, and the committee's ratings based on the audit, can be summarized as follows.

Access to income security programs?

- ECE promotes its programs through the media.
- Program information sessions are held.
- Routine visits to small/remote communities are made.
- Local Aboriginal language services are used.
- There have been improvements to appeal processes.

The committee considers this satisfactory.

Program delivery in accordance with requirements?

- Fifty-nine percent of 65 files reviewed did not meet one or more key requirements.
- Income Assistance had the most unsatisfactory files (90 percent)
  - Client eligibility was not consistently verified
    - regarding client income
    - regarding participation in required activities ("productive choices")
  - Payments were inaccurate
- Student Financial Assistance did better, but:
  - correctly determining residency was a problem
- Senior Home Heating and Child Care User Subsidy payments were not made within the required time frames.

The committee considers this unsatisfactory.

Processes and systems to support program delivery?

- Required processes are not consistently followed.
- Guidance to front-line workers is not clear.

- The training provided may not be adequate.
- There is insufficient monitoring of program delivery against requirements.

The committee considers this unsatisfactory.

Data collection and analysis?

- Data collected is not used to analyze program performance and modify programming.
- There has been no formal overall assessment of whether the programs are meeting their objectives.

The committee considers this unsatisfactory.

### I. General Considerations

#### 1. Integrated continuum of services

The standing committee is concerned about the coordination of income security programs within the GNWT and the coordination of income security and other services to residents in need.

The scope of the Auditor General's performance audit was limited to the four income security programs delivered by ECE. However, there is a larger context to consider. The department's income security programs are part of a network of 16 GNWT programs totalling \$140 million per year. The committee was told during the hearing that subsidy and benefit programs to help meet residents' income security needs are offered by the NWT Housing Corporation, Health and Social Services, Justice, and Municipal and Community Affairs, among others. Some programs are delivered through the tax system in conjunction with the federal government. The committee did not receive a complete inventory of these programs during the review.

From another perspective, the people who apply for ECE's income support programs are more than their bank accounts. They are whole human beings, with a wide range of needs and capabilities. During the public review, ECE's associate deputy minister suggested that as many as 30 percent of income assistance clients, in particular, might be more appropriately case-managed by another department or agency. ECE's programs are heavily oriented towards the labour market. Its client service officers operate in conjunction with regional service centres that also house career development officers. Client service officers are not social workers. While they can refer people to counselling, for example, as a productive choice, the client must self-identify.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is collaborating with Aboriginal governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the development and implementation of a poverty-free NWT strategy. As the department moves to

implement the Auditor General's recommendations, its officials will need to consider how these actions will impact the strategy and its implementation.

One of the pillars of the proposed Anti-Poverty Strategy is an integrated continuum of services. While the vision of the strategy is more wide-ranging, the standing committee would like to know, at a minimum, how ECE's income security programs complement other GNWT income security programs. The committee also encourages ECE to work with other GNWT social envelope departments and other service providers towards the development of an integrated case management system or team approach, consistent with its commitment to a culture of client service.

### Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment take the lead in working with other GNWT social envelope departments and other service providers towards the development of an integrated case management system, consistent with its commitment to a culture of client service.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to hand the reading of the report over to my colleague Mr. Dolynny. Thank you.

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

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Ms. Bisaro.

### 2. Program accountability and reporting relationships in ECE

The Auditor General's report briefly outlines how the Department of Education, Culture and Employment is organized to deliver its four income security programs. The associate deputy minister stated that he was ultimately accountable for these programs and their performance. The standing committee appreciates this statement. However, Members found they could not readily discern the reporting relationships and accountabilities of staff delivering income security programs at regional and community offices, regional superintendents of ECE, and managers and senior managers at headquarters.

### Recommendation 2

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment clarify the reporting relationships of staff involved in the delivery of its income security programs with a view to making their accountability evident, and

provide this information to the standing committee at the earliest opportunity.

### 3. Front-line staff are concerned about workloads and safety

The Auditor General's observations conclude with a section on the workload and safety concerns of front-line income security workers. These observations were outside the scope of the audit, but they are clearly important. The standing committee has stressed the need for staff to treat Income Security clients with respect and compassion. Front-line workers deserve the same treatment.

Client service officers, or CSOs, are the front-line workers who deliver the Income Assistance, Senior Home Heating and Child Care Assistance programs. CSO caseloads can be very heavy. Large numbers of cases leave the CSOs with little time to work with clients to provide services such as career planning. The Auditor General determined that in 2011, CSOs handled an average of 34 files a month. However, in some communities, CSOs are administering 65 to 119 files per month. These figures do not take into account Senior Home Heating or Child Care User Subsidy.

The department has not officially identified a standard for monthly caseloads. The standing committee learned during the hearing that ECE is working on its CSO training effort first, which may improve these workers' efficiency. The committee suggests trying another measure, as well, that may save both the CSOs and their clients some time. The regulatory framework for income assistance already permits ongoing clients to report their income at longer intervals, rather than having to provide documentation every month. This feature of the program is underutilized, perhaps owing to concern about overpayments.

### Recommendation 3

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment set a standard for monthly client service officer caseloads, review staffing levels and rebalance workloads as needed. A backup system should be in place to provide additional experienced staff support where there is a temporary overload.

The committee learned that the turnover rate for CSOs is approximately 50 percent annually. Such a high level of turnover is costly, and it impacts the quality and efficiency of service to clients. The Auditor General's staff and the associate deputy minister of ECE consider that better training will help retention, as will the development of caseload standards. The committee highlighted the need for mentoring of new staff, not only by supervisors but

by more experienced colleagues. An improved turnover rate would be a helpful indicator of whether working conditions and morale have improved, and whether training and caseload standards have been effectively implemented.

#### **Recommendation 4**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment report the turnover rate for its client service officers annually as a performance measure in the department's business plan.

Finally, some CSOs expressed safety concerns during the audit. Sadly, employees do not feel adequately protected from hostile clients. The department has provided a workplace protocol for hostile behaviour, and some offices have glass partitions and alternative exits. While physical measures like partitions may help with worker safety, they may not be welcoming for clients. It is also difficult to create safer conditions in smaller communities with one-person offices. Nevertheless, the standing committee believes front-line workers deserve a safer workplace. Solutions can and must be found to make their offices both safe and welcoming.

#### **Recommendation 5**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment prioritize the establishment of safe workplaces for its front-line Income Security workers, bearing in mind the need to retain a welcoming atmosphere for clients, and report on client service officers' satisfaction with safety measures annually as a performance measure in the department's business plan.

### **II. Access to income security programs**

1. The Auditor General found that the Department provides reasonable access to its income security programs

The standing committee was glad to hear that access to income security programs is provided across the Northwest Territories in a wide variety of ways and commends the department on its efforts in this area.

However, the statement in the Auditor General's report that "the department has worked with hamlet councils to implement a voucher system for the Income Assistance program" raised questions for the committee. Members recognize that vouchers were mentioned in connection with the department's ongoing efforts to respond to First Nations and community governments. Providing vouchers instead of cash is intended to help

address community social issues by ensuring that income assistance is spent on basic family needs.

Members learned at the public review that voucher systems are now in place in several Northwest Territories communities, and that the department has attempted to evaluate them, with inconclusive results. The committee would like to confirm that vouchers are not limiting eligible clients' access to income assistance, that they are being provided fairly and with due respect for the dignity of clients, that the system is not subject to abuse, and that vouchers are having the intended effect of reducing community social problems.

#### **Recommendation 6**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment report to the Standing Committee on Social Programs on the use of voucher systems for income assistance in Northwest Territories communities, noting locations, numbers of clients, features of the systems, monitoring by the department, performance measures and evaluation results.

2. The Auditor General found that the department has processes in place to administer client appeals

All four of ECE's income security programs require that there be an appeal process for clients who feel they have been treated unfairly. By 2010 ECE had established the required appeal committees and boards for income assistance. The department has also been following the required SFA appeal processes. An appeals coordinator has been hired to organize appeals for all income security programs and to assist clients. The Auditor General reviewed proceedings from 36 of 136 appeals (78 income assistance and 58 student financial assistance) and found that appeals committees and boards generally conduct them in an appropriate and timely manner.

The standing committee concurs that having all required appeals processes in place is a significant improvement. However, Members had concerns about the underlying fairness of the appeals processes. Currently, an appellant may be left without financial support until such time as the appeal is heard. While most appeals are now heard in a timely manner, it can take as long as a month to get a hearing. The committee believes appellants should be given the benefit of the doubt and that support should be provided at least until the hearing, in the case of both new and existing Income Assistance clients and for ongoing Student Financial Assistance clients.

### Recommendation 7

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment provide support to income security appellants at least until the hearing, in the case of both new and existing Income Assistance clients and for ongoing Student Financial Assistance clients.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to pass on the report to my colleague Mr. Moses. Thank you.

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

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Dolynny.

#### III. Program delivery in accordance with requirements

The Auditor General found that the majority of income security client files reviewed were not managed according to one or more program requirements.

The Auditor General's staff sampled client files from April 2009 to June 2012 to determine if applicants were assessed and benefits paid according to requirements. A random sample of 65 client files from all four programs was used, from both regional and small community service centres. The file review focused mainly on compliance with eligibility requirements and timely and accurate payments.

On the positive side, there were numerous examples of good case management practices, and requirements were consistently met in some areas. The Auditor General's staff also saw many examples of client service officers providing active help to clients, including home visits, help completing applications, alternative payment methods, and help with financial management. The standing committee recognizes and applauds the many CSOs who are putting great effort, compassion and respect into helping their clients.

However, the overall results of the file audit must be considered unsatisfactory. Key program requirements were not met in nearly 60 percent of the files. The review found significant issues with the delivery of the four programs in accordance with their governing legislation and regulations. As the report states, "Not complying with these requirements means the department may not be making effective use of public funds and may be compromising its commitments to support vulnerable residents and to help them become more self-reliant."

The Income Assistance program was clearly the most problematic of the four programs audited. Key requirements were not met in 90 percent of income assistance files audited. A substantial proportion of

the files contained inaccurate payments. Worse, CSOs' client assessments and adherence to policies and procedures were inconsistent. Some CSOs verified clients' income, while others did not. Some tracked participation in productive choices and paid or refused benefits accordingly, while others did not. This means clients received different benefits depending on which CSO was processing their file. The standing committee finds these results unacceptable. Moreover, Members are aware of other issues not highlighted in the audit, including lost documents and late payments. The department must improve in all these areas.

The Student Financial Assistance program, which is centrally administered from headquarters, had better results. About 35 percent of the files audited did not meet key requirements. One important finding was that student case officers did not make consistent decisions on student residency, and decisions did not always comply with program eligibility requirements. The standing committee expects the department to clarify Student Financial Assistance program guidelines on residency and eligibility not only for student case officers but also for students and the public, especially on the department's website.

Forty percent of Senior Home Heating Subsidy files did not meet one or more key requirements. One issue specific to this program is clients not receiving the amount of subsidy to which they were entitled. In some cases this was because seniors were granted the subsidy for a limited time, usually September to March, rather than over the full fiscal year. The Auditor General encouraged the department to consider options to ensure that recipients have the opportunity to use their full subsidy amount, but did not make a recommendation. The committee wants the department to take action and report back.

### Recommendation 8

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment consider options to ensure that Senior Home Heating Subsidy recipients have the opportunity to use their full subsidy amount, and that the department present these options to the Standing Committee on Social Programs within the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

Seventy percent of the Child Care User Subsidy files examined by the auditors did not meet requirements. Here, delays in payments to parents or child care providers were a significant problem. The Auditor General found that CSOs were often unclear about the required verification process and failed to meet required timelines for the payments. The Child Care User Subsidy was incorporated into the Income Assistance program in September

2012. As with student financial assistance, the standing committee is concerned not only with clear guidelines for staff but also for the general public. The department assured the committee during the review that the necessary information is publicly available.

The committee will make a formal recommendation concurring with the Auditor General's recommendation on this subject later in this report.

#### IV. Factors in the delivery and management of programs

The Auditor General identified six main factors in the department's difficulties in delivering and managing its income security programs according to the requirements of legislation, policies and guidelines. The standing committee concurs with all of the Auditor General's recommendations in these areas, including better monitoring, training and support to staff. The committee is pleased to note that the Minister and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment have accepted these recommendations and are working towards implementing them.

1. Processes to support program delivery are unclear in some areas

The Auditor General found that the department has processes and tools in place to support the delivery of income security programs, including detailed policies, procedures, guidelines and standard templates. In some instances, however, these are unclear. For example:

- For Income Assistance, processes are unclear in that policies and procedures do not provide clear instructions for CSOs on how to confirm clients' incomes when they apply and each month thereafter.
- For Student Financial Assistance, lack of clarity in the eligibility criteria related to student residency led to inconsistent decisions.
- For Senior Home Heating Subsidy, processes are unclear in that ECE's guidelines do not explain how to verify homeownership and who resides in the applicant's home. ECE in some regions also had difficulty tracking how much of the subsidy some clients used, because they did not get individual client invoices.
- For the Child Care User Subsidy, policies, procedures and guidelines did not provide clear guidance for verifying child care costs.

The Auditor General had two recommendations with respect to clarifying program guidelines, one general and one specific to the Child Care User Subsidy. The standing committee concurs with both.

#### Recommendation 9

The Standing Committee on Government Operations concurs with the Auditor General of Canada and recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment should clarify policies, procedures and guidelines outlining Income Security Program delivery requirements and how to meet them. It should ensure staff understand and are following these procedures and guidelines.

#### Recommendation 10

The Standing Committee on Government Operations concurs with the Auditor General of Canada and recommends that, as the Department of Education, Culture and Employment introduces its revised Child Care User Subsidy within the Income Assistance Program, it should develop clear guidelines that are consistent with program requirements and clearly communicate these requirements to front-line staff and potential applicants.

2. Lack of oversight increases risk in the use of the Client Management and Administration System (CMAS)

The CMAS database was used to support delivery of all four of the department's income security programs. The system is built on the assumption that CSOs verify client information before it is entered, and that they enter the information correctly.

However, the Auditor General's review found that errors do occur, CSOs do not verify client information in all files, and they do not always understand or apply program requirements in the same way.

For income assistance, CSOs also use the CMAS system to issue monthly payments. In ECE community service centres, CSOs can both commit and release payments through CMAS without sign-off by a second party. There is a risk ECE may not have the appropriate controls in place to help stop errors in payments to Income Assistance clients, or potential fraud. This issue was noted in a 2009 review, but as of September 2012 no action had been taken.

Payments under the other three programs are issued out of the GNWT's SAM financial system.

The Auditor General did not provide a recommendation. The standing committee heard during the review that ECE has not been able to find an acceptable solution with its existing CMAS system and limited staffing in small communities. The department is concerned about limiting CSOs' ability to provide emergency income assistance. The committee expects the department to develop a plan to provide the necessary oversight. The

department would do well to consult with the Department of Finance on audit and accounting protocols.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn over the reading of the report to Mr. Yakeleya.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

3. Monitoring of program delivery in regional/community service centres is inconsistent

According to the Auditor General, ECE's monitoring of income security programs delivered by regional and community service centres is inconsistent. Managers in some regions visit community service centres to monitor general program delivery and spending. However, in most regions they did not monitor files in detail for compliance due to costs of travel, staff shortages and workloads.

The OAG found examples of good monitoring practices in some regions. In one region, the manager reviews random client files and documents results to ensure CSOs verified information properly and the file complies with requirements. Findings are presented to CSOs, highlighting areas in need of attention. Another region implemented a buddy system that matches CSOs to a designated staff member to whom they can transfer responsibility for files involving family members or friends. The standing committee believes a buddy system would also be helpful in peer mentoring and as a backup in case of absence or overload.

#### **Recommendation 11**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations concurs with the Auditor General of Canada and recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment should ensure that regional managers and supervisors formally monitor client files. This monitoring should include regularly scheduled reviews of client files as well as the use of standard templates in all regions to help ensure a consistent approach. In cases where monitoring uncovers deficiencies or other issues, regional managers and supervisors should follow up formally.

The Auditor General also found that regional and community service centres set productive choice requirements inconsistently. CSOs in some regions thought 25 hours a month were required, while those in other regions thought no set hours were established. In some smaller communities, CSOs enforce a standard number of hours to avoid perceptions of unfairness.

#### **Recommendation 12**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations concurs with the Auditor General of Canada and recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment should clarify program requirements for productive choices in its guidance to client service officers and clearly communicate them. Regional managers should also monitor compliance with productive choice requirements and take corrective action where necessary.

The standing committee considers that some flexibility is needed in the number of hours, because of differences in client's abilities and difference in the choices available in communities. The committee's main concern, however, was that the productive choices should be genuinely productive for the clients. They often are not, in Members' experience. More guidance is needed for clients in what is expected of them when they undertake a productive choice such as education, training or, especially, volunteer work. In addition to the Auditor General's recommendation, the committee would like to see a full evaluation of the productive choices component of the Income Assistance program.

#### **Recommendation 13**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment undertake a complete evaluation of the productive choice component of the Income Assistance program, as a priority, that the evaluation involve the community leadership and residents, and that the department provide options for change in the productive choices component of Income Assistance to the Standing Committee on Social Programs within the life of the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

4. Processes to identify and address inaccurate payments have not been followed

Compliance reviews of selected files for all four programs are required by policy to ensure clients receive benefits to which they are entitled.

The Auditor General found that ECE had not developed a strategy or framework to identify files for compliance review and had reviewed files only after staff identified a problem or risk. ECE completed 72 file reviews in the three fiscal years from 2009-2010 to 2011-2012, mostly on income assistance files; three were student financial assistance files. No compliance reviews were done for Senior Home Heating Subsidy or Child Care User Subsidy.

The standing committee was pleased to hear that the department has made progress on a strategy and framework for file audits, and is now

undertaking file compliance audits in one community per region each year.

#### **Recommendation 14**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations concurs with the Auditor General of Canada and recommends that, in accordance with its program requirements, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment should review a selection of income security files periodically, to ensure that clients receive benefits to which they are entitled. The department should establish a framework to identify files to audit, based on predetermined criteria. Results should be reported to the director of income security annually.

Collection procedures for debts due to a department are required over a 90-day period under the GNWT FAM. If the debt cannot be collected, the department must forward the debts to Finance for collection.

The Auditor General found that ECE has not been following required collection procedures for overpayments of income assistance and 1,620 clients have received overpayments over the last 10 years amounting to about \$2 million. Only \$880,000 of this overpayment had been collected by September 2012. The department deducts \$25 per month from client benefits to recover overpayments. It does not collect from clients who are no longer on income assistance.

Finance has established a six-year statute of limitations for the collection of debts. There was 26 percent of clients who were overpaid who faced no collection activity in six years or more. These debts could be losses for ECE. The department does not report these debts in its annual financial statements. ECE says it does not follow the required procedure because the CMAS database does not have a trigger to set the process in motion. CMAS notifies the CSO of an overpayment but does not track the age of the debt.

The committee recognizes that the department is working on solutions to some of its collections issues and expects to see results by December 31, 2013.

#### **Recommendation 15**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations concurs with the Auditor General of Canada and recommends that when the Department of Education, Culture and Employment identifies income assistance overpayments, it should comply with the Financial Administration Manual requirements for collecting them. It should follow collection procedures by issuing invoices and written notifications, per the required schedule, and

forward outstanding debts to the Department of Finance for collection when required.

#### **5. Processes for managing remissible and repayable loans are incomplete**

As of March 2012, \$29.7 million in repayable student financial assistance loans was due to the department, and \$6.4 million in remissible loans. The default rate for repayable loans was about 31 percent in 2012, according to the Auditor General. The committee is concerned at the high rate of default. Monitoring processes for student financial assistance loans rely on officials manually reviewing program reports and on the student or the educational institution notifying the department. There is a risk loans due for repayment may be missed.

#### **Recommendation 16**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations concurs with the Auditor General of Canada and recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment should modify its management of student loans to ensure that identification of student loans due for repayment does not rely solely on student notification or manual review by officials.

Mr. Speaker, I will now turn over the report to the chair, Mr. Nadli.

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

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### **6. Front-line staff do not receive sufficient training**

Income security programs and the ECE strategic plan require the department to train staff to fulfill their duties. CSOs must complete a two-week course to receive their statutory designation, with authority to assess client eligibility, evaluate their financial needs and issue payments. The CSOs had completed the course, but the department does not have an ongoing training and development program for CSOs. Student financial assistance case officers, for their part, receive a binder, but no formal training. The department has not fully assessed training needs of CSOs or SFA case officers.

#### **Recommendation 17**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations concurs with the Auditor General of Canada and recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment should formalize current and future competency-based training programs for client service officers and student case officers. It should identify and provide core training so they can attain and maintain the competencies their job requires.

The department should also ensure that staff members receive regular training updates, to ensure that they fully understand Income Security Program requirements.

The standing committee considers regular training opportunities to be especially important in view of the very high turnover rate for CSOs. The committee also expects the department to ensure that there is no interruption of service when staff are attending training. A backup system that is more than a 1-800 number is required.

#### V. Data Collection and Analysis Towards Performance Assessment

The standing committee was reminded in a previous Auditor General's report that effective program management requires that:

- performance indicators and program standards are established;
- performance is measured and monitored against standards; and
- issues are identified and action taken to improve programs.

The second major question the Auditor General asked in this audit was whether ECE assessed the performance of its programs in order to ensure objectives are met. ECE's efforts to assess program performance between January 2007 and September 2012 were examined, in order to include the 2007 reform initiative that emphasized new goals of self-reliance for clients.

1. The Auditor General found that the department regularly solicits input from clients on program performance.

The department conducts ongoing client satisfaction surveys. During the review, the committee learned that 73 percent of income assistance respondents were satisfied with programs and services, according to the latest survey results. Members do not see 73 percent as a very good result. The department must focus on good client service. The survey results are valuable performance measures, and the committee would like to ensure they are eventually made public.

#### Recommendation 18

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment report its income assistance client survey results annually as a performance measure in the departmental business plan.

2. However, there is limited assessment of program performance

The department collects some relevant information through CMAS, including client characteristics and numbers, spending, and variances in program use and spending by community and region. The Auditor General found, however, that the department does little to track results.

The department had not established any targets or outcome measures for three of the four income security programs audited. It had only one target for Income Assistance: reducing the number of recipients in the 19 to 29 age group by providing supports for education and training.

The standing committee learned during the hearing that approximately 30 percent of the Income Assistance caseload is made up of recipients on assistance for more than one year. Additional monitoring and reporting would be helpful in determining the reasons for such a high proportion of recipients on long-term assistance and evaluating the department's success in meeting the self-reliance goal.

The department collects other information that could be used to measure whether Income Security objectives are being met; for example, the number of returning clients, length of time on benefits, and the number participating in productive choices. The department could also use info from its student financial assistance files to help determine the number of graduates.

In sum, the department has not formally evaluated the four programs to assess their performance, and ECE has not evaluated its success in meeting the new objective of client self-reliance since income security programs were restructured in 2007.

#### Recommendation 19

The Standing Committee on Government Operations concurs with the Auditor General of Canada and recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment should:

- establish targets and outcome measures that align with the overall objective for its income security programs;
- review the data it currently collects on income security programs, to ensure it has the data required to measure whether targets and outcomes are being met; and
- develop a plan to identify when it will evaluate its programs, to determine if the objective of its income security programs is being met.

#### Conclusion

The committee is encouraged that the Minister has accepted the Auditor General's recommendations and that the department plans to implement them.



Members are, nevertheless, convinced that ECE's Income Security Program delivery and evaluation will improve only if the department's senior management devotes sustained attention, over a period of years, to carrying out the planned reforms and creating an organizational culture of client service.

The standing committee remains deeply concerned by the findings of this audit. It is the Auditor General's practice from time to time to review the results of past audits and report on whether recommendations are being implemented. The standing committee is hopeful that the Auditor General of Canada will conduct a follow-up audit of ECE's income security programs at a suitable interval. Meanwhile, the committee expects the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to report on its implementation of the recommendations on an annual basis to the appropriate standing committee.

#### **Recommendation 20**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment report to the Standing Committee on Social Programs by April 30<sup>th</sup> each year on its progress in implementing the recommendations of the Auditor General and this House with respect to income security programs during the preceding fiscal year.

The committee believes the department is committed to change, and encourages its senior management to work consistently towards creating a far more client-centred and accountable organization for the delivery of vital income security programs.

#### **Recommendation 21**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the government provide a comprehensive response to this report within 120 days.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations on the Review of the Auditor General of Canada on the 2013 Income Security Programs.

**MOTION TO RECEIVE  
COMMITTEE REPORT 5-17(4) AND MOVE  
INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,  
CARRIED**

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that Committee Report 5-17(4) be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called.

---Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:** Committee Report 5-17(4) will be moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Mr. Nadli.

**MR. NADLI:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and move Committee Report 5-17(4) into Committee of the Whole for consideration today. Mahsi.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Colleagues, I'm going to take a 15-minute break.

---SHORT RECESS

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Abernethy.

#### **Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery**

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize two individuals who are on the Anti-Poverty Steering Committee, Ms. Bronwyn Watters and Ms. Julie Green, and thank you both so much for all the hard work you put into this strategy. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to recognize the flood of seniors we have here today, recognizing the day it is. From the NWT Seniors Society, we have Barb Hood, executive director; Carly Aasen, project intern officer; Yvonne Quick, who is a program coordinator as well as an Arctic ambassador. Maureen Hall, also known passionately as Squeak, of course, is president of the Yellowknife Seniors' Society. Marg Green is a member of the Yellowknife Seniors' Society. We all call her Nana Marg, by the way. June Van Dine Arden is a board member of the Yellowknife Seniors' Society. Kim Doyle, who is no stranger to Members here in the Assembly, is the executive director of the Seniors' Society. Della Green is the coordinator of the Victim Services Program. Esther Braden is past-president of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association chapter in Yellowknife.

I have a couple of other quick groups to recognize, some constituents in the gallery as well. I want to thank them, as Mr. Abernethy has said. Julie Green, thank you for staying, as well as Janice

McKenna; and Status of Women, Lorraine Phaneuf and Annemieke Mulders.

The last group I'd like to recognize are Engineers Canada. They are having their national coordinating body for all engineer professions and they're having their meeting here in Yellowknife. I think I have seen probably 40 or so, in that range, walking around the building. I want to thank them for coming to the Northwest Territories and let them know that there are many towns and special places outside of Yellowknife, so don't be afraid to come back and visit them. Thank you again for choosing Yellowknife. They're having their AGM on Saturday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. MOSES:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize my constituency assistant, Ms. Maia Lepage. I believe I did see her up in the stands earlier. She is also here chaperoning two Pages from Inuvik, Ms. Kyla Hvatum and Ms. Keisha Shaimaiyuk. They said they've been having a good time here in the capital as well as paging here in the Legislative Assembly. I'm really glad that they have had that experience and were able to come to Yellowknife and participate in the program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** I believe I still have some constituents from Weledeh in the House. Barb Hood, executive director of the NWT Seniors. I would also like to welcome the other seniors and other residents here. Aggie Brockman is here. Also Cominco, Greg Loftus, welcome, Greg. I would like to specially recognize my working partner for the last four years, my CA, Craig Yeo. Also, many of the seniors here that have been mentioned. Squeak is here. Welcome, Squeak. Also Marg Green, Della Green, Yvonne Quick. Esther Braden was here earlier. I don't know whether she is still here. Lorraine Phaneuf, Annemieke Mulders. I won't put her in the seniors' category, but many of these are, of course, some are real workhorses for public interest and public health and benefit for our people. Julie Green is out here, so much work on the Anti-Poverty Strategy and other aspects. Bronwyn Watters as well. Welcome to all of those folks and any that I have missed.

I would also like to recognize the Engineers Canada. I understand they are going to have their Engineers Canada gala at the Weledeh School here in Weledeh on Saturday night. Welcome to Weledeh a little bit in advance there. Thank you for choosing Yellowknife. Mahsi.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Jeff Corradetti, Frame Lake constituent. Thanks, Jeff, for coming to listen to us today. I would like to recognize the groups that came here, the seniors group that came. I don't think I need to go through the names. I'd like to particularly mention the members of the steering committee for the Anti-Poverty Strategy who are here and thank them for their work, and the Status of Women Council group who are here. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I'd like to welcome everybody here and thank you for coming in for today's proceedings.

Item 7, acknowledgements. Ms. Bisaro.

### Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 7-17(4):  
2013 PREMIER'S AWARD – IAN LAGAREE

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to acknowledge Frame Lake constituent Mr. Ian Lagaree, director of sport, recreation and youth with our Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Ian, yesterday, received the Dave Ramsden Career Excellence Award. This is the most prestigious of the awards presented at the annual Premier's Awards ceremony and it recognizes the outstanding achievements of an individual with 20 or more years of experience in the GNWT public service. Congratulations, Ian. Well deserved.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear! Hear!

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Item 8, oral questions. The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

### Oral Questions

QUESTION 311-17(4):  
POLICY ALLOWING ACCESS TO  
BARIATRIC SURGERY

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I talked about the bariatric surgery and my current situation. I have questions for the Minister of Health. I guess I'm basically looking for direction from the Minister of Health. Why does the GNWT not pay for bariatric surgery?

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time the bariatric surgery is not part of the formulary; however, it can be, depending on what type of programs the doctor will recommend to an individual that may require bariatric surgery,

depending on the body mass index. So, based on that, there would be several programs an individual could go through and nutrition programs, a routine that they would have to go through in order to become eligible for bariatric surgery. Thank you.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Along those lines, the department has indicated to me that it is insurable if it's medically necessary. Can the Minister explain to me what is medical necessity? Does it matter if you're 50 pounds overweight, 100 pounds overweight, 200 pounds overweight? When does it become a medical necessity to lose this weight?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** At one point when morbid obesity is being considered to be endangering an individual's life, then it would be considered medically necessary. Thank you.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** I think the longer that somebody is obese the more likely it's going to cost the system, and cost the system in different ways. As I indicated, I was a big cost on the system before with insulin and large volumes of Metformin a requirement.

As I indicated, the department will receive its money back quickly on bariatric surgery by reducing the amount of medication required. Has the Minister looked into the cost recovery process due to weight loss done by bariatric surgery? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Not officially and we understand that if an individual did receive bariatric surgery and then he was to come off some expensive diabetic medicines, then the recovery would be fairly rapid. Thank you.

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

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister indicated, a person could come off those medications really quickly and the money could be obtained quickly.

Can I get commitment from the Minister that his department will look into doing bariatric surgery sooner than later and helping these people in the North that are heavy, heavy people that are way overweight? I'm not talking about somebody that's 20 or 30 pounds, I'm talking about somebody that's 100, 150, 200 pounds, like I was.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** The department is interested in cost containment, and if we look at bariatric surgery and we recognize that the surgery is cost beneficial to the GNWT, and of course, changing the life of an individual that is morbidly obese, I will commit to looking into at least doing a cost-benefit analysis of that.

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

QUESTION 312-17(4):  
ACCESS TO CONTRACT INFORMATION

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I gave a Member's statement about the challenges which I had in accessing information from this government. More specifically, it was for a public government office building that's being built here in Yellowknife. I subsequently tabled, with this House, copies of my attempts to obtain a copy of this contract with the Department of Public Works. I also tabled an abstract from the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Section 3(2), which states that the act is in addition to and does not replace existing procedures for access to government information or records.

Yesterday the Minister of Public Works and Services stated that I failed to follow the usual procedures in getting a copy of this contract. I had the opportunity to take a look at the debate in this House when the access to legislation was passed. That was in 1994. This is in reference to page 265, of 1994, October 13<sup>th</sup>, that I'll table later on today. At that time, a concern was raised that the act would be used to deny information to MLAs, could take away their privileges as a Member. Then the Minister of the day for Justice, Mr. Kakfwi, clearly indicated that the legislation was, and his words were, "...in no way replaces current procedures in place for accessing information, which includes MLAs."

Given this background, will the honourable Minister of Justice and Minister of Public Works and Services commit to providing me a copy of the sought after contract without being redacted and without the necessity of me having to apply under the ATIPP Act?

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

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As MLAs, as Ministers we have a responsibility to protect the rights of privacies of individuals and organizations. We also have a responsibility to share information as much as we can with our colleagues. But there is a law. The ATIPP Act requires public bodies to protect the business interests of third parties, while balancing the right of the public to access information held by public bodies. Request for access to contract information is assessed against the protection afforded to third-party business interests contained within Section 24 of the act. This section requires public bodies to review whether disclosure of business information could, among other things, harm the competitiveness of a contractor providing services to public bodies.

Also, Mr. Dolynny has tabled Section 3(2) of the ATIPP Act, which requires or provides that this act

is in addition to and does not replace existing procedures for access to government information or records. Section 3(2) means that public bodies can, and should, apply policies and procedures related to routine disclosure of government information, without requiring individuals to resort to making requests under ATIPP.

Unfortunately, Mr. Dolyunny has not identified the policies or procedures to which Section 3(2) might apply, and under which of the contracts in question should have been disclosed to his constituency assistant as a matter of routine.

My record speaks for itself. I've been open and transparent with committee. I've been open and transparent with Members, and I've done everything I can legally to provide them legally appropriate documents. In this case, the law is clear. I cannot give the Member a copy of this contract without going to the public body or the organization that the contract is in party with.

I've encouraged the Member to file an ATIPP request. The Member has not filed an ATIPP request. Once the Member files an ATIPP request – and we as Members are all bound by the law; we're not above the law; it has to be applied accordingly, which basically means that the ATIPP request would go through the normal process – we would identify the number of pages that are required in the request and we would identify a cost. The Member has the opportunity then, if he were to file an ATIPP request, to actually ask us to waive the fee, which absolutely, as a Member, we would do, because we want Members to have the information they need to make informed decisions. There is a law. I as Attorney General of the Northwest Territories will not break the law to give the Member a contract. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. DOLYUNNY:** Mr. Speaker, yesterday I did table the document which I did. My office did apply for the ATIPP request. I have no reason to go collect bottles and pop cans around Yellowknife to raise \$1,500 to do so. My budget does not allow me to do that.

Given that I have an obligation as an MLA to hold this government accountable, and given that this House was expressly told that the access legislation wasn't meant to replace the usual way of accessing information, will this Minister, will the Department of Public Works and Services reconsider their position and provide me with this information even only on a confidential basis?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated yesterday, we've had one application for this information. It was from a private citizen sent from his private home, with no reference at all that he was working on behalf of the MLA. The staff who actually processed the request would have had no

idea that the Member was actually the one forwarding this request.

I would love to provide the contract to the Member. I would love to do it in open and in public. The problem is, there is a law. I can't break the law. I would like to work with the Member. I would like to sit down with the Member and identify what exactly he is trying to get to so that I can provide that information.

Over the last number of months we have provided significant information. The RFP was available online, which outlined the build of this building. We have had public discussion in committee about the budget, so everybody in the House knows what the budget is. The contract value is public. What we have actually signed with the contractor is, indeed, public. The timeline is known. We sat here in Committee of the Whole and discussed a timeline at length. The committee has been made aware of everything on this file. The contract is over 1,000 pages long and it is a third-party contract via an agreement with somebody else. An employee can sit down with the Member and walk through the contract and show him. I had to get permission from them. The way that we engage that process is through ATIPP. We happened to waive the fee for the Member, but the Member has to file an ATIPP request and ask us to waive the fee because it is clearly outlined in law. We will do that, but it has to be done through the appropriate channels, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. DOLYUNNY:** Mr. Speaker, believe me, the project is under budget and on time. We hear this time and time again and somehow we are supposed to believe all the information that we have here when we are disclosing witnesses. How can we, when we can't look at the information? That is basically the real problem. We have to believe that it is okay. I have the right to look at that information. I was elected to do so. I have the accountability of the people of Range Lake to do that business.

Will the Minister commit to a review of the policies and procedures around MLAs obtaining government information under the review of this so-called act that we are trying to hold dear to our heart, so as to ensure that the historical tradition and the consensus-based Legislature which we are in, of this government, will provide us as Members the continuous way so that we can do our proper business in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Let's have a bit of respect here. Mr. Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, we are not above the law. We are not above the law. As MLAs we are bound by the laws just like every

other citizen. We don't have the right, nor should we, to break the law so that we can get information that has action part and parcel of a third party. That third party may say yes, MLA Dolynny can look at that contract. We are willing to ask, once the Member files an ATIPP request. Until such a time as that happens, we can't do that. It would be against the law. I'm not going to change the law just so MLAs can have access to information that they probably shouldn't have.

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

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will reapply with an ATIPP request. I will include in my ATIPP request my addresses, birth certificate, my picture ID and my driver's licence. If I do all that, will the Minister comply and let me have a sneak peek of this contract? Thank you.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, the process is that it will be reviewed. It will be identified how many pages are required to meet the Member's request. It will identify the cost. The letter will indicate there is a cost. The Member can certainly ask us to waive the fee. Frankly, I'm interested in helping the Member obtain this information, so we will likely waive the fee, but we have to go through an appropriate process. We have to go through the legal process. I will do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 313-17(4):  
HEALTH CARE CARD RENEWAL PROCESS

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today I talked about the scandalous situation we have here about the lost faxes or even mailed health care forms when people are applying for renewal. My situation comes down to this: We don't know how many applications have been lost, we don't know where they have gone, we don't know who has this information, and we don't know what they're doing with this information.

So my question to the Minister of Health and Social Services is: Is he willing to do a public type of inquiry into this process to find out where this information has gone, how come something seems to be screwed up, and what is he going to do to fix it to show confidence in the public system? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister of Health, Mr. Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department is continuing to work to resolve the few issues that are out there with the people having misplaced in either the application process or the

card that was coming from the South to them. We don't see this as a major issue. We process 100 applications per day and we're doing those applications. We have a very high rate of compliance in returning health care cards. Most people have no issues with this, so I don't think it's a scandalous situation. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Well, let's get to the bottom of this then. The Minister cannot tell us where the information has gone, who has got it, what the problem is and what he is going to do about it. So how does he know it's not a scandal if he doesn't know what's happening? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** We judge our statistics on what we're getting from people that are indicating to us that they haven't received their health care card in the appropriate time. Most people aren't saying anything. As I indicated in the House previously, we received about 86 percent of the people who had birthdates up until a certain point that we were processing. That was 11,600 applications to the middle of May. If the information is lost, then we will do what we can to recover information. So the bottom line is, the individuals are covered for medical reasons and that's what we're trying to achieve. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** We have a leak in the ship and its sinking and no one seems to know or care why. You'd think that this is a serious problem.

The last point is, there's an integrity question being called into question and I think the integrity needs to rise all the way to the top to the Minister's office to say, how is he going to take this situation seriously and what is he going to do about it. So, quite frankly, does the Minister have any clue how many applications are at risk and who is at risk? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** I've received e-mails from the various MLAs. I would say under 20 e-mails indicating to us that there's an issue with health care cards not coming on time, but we've set allowances for those individuals if they had applied for a health care card and by the time their birthday came around had not received health care, then we would cover them.

I guess, again, we need to make sure that people have coverage, health coverage, and that's what we're doing. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Hope and pray cannot be the policy of this program at the Department of Health, that we hope nothing has happened to the information, we pray no one does anything to the information. So the fact is we don't know where the information is going.

Does the Minister know what's happening in this situation and what is he doing about it, because apparently he doesn't seem to be taking it very seriously that all this personal information is being sent out there, no one knows where it's going, no one knows where it's landed, no one knows who has it and they don't certainly know what they're doing with it. What is the Minister going to do with that?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** A very, very high percentage of the private information that's going to our office in Inuvik is getting to our office in Inuvik, being processed, cards are coming to the people. There are a few glitches in the system, yes. When you're processing that many applications, there's always something that will go wrong and sometimes information is lost. We try to recover that information. Individuals that apply for the card and are saying that the information is lost. We try to recover that information. Individuals who apply for the card and are saying the information was lost, we are dealing with those on a one-off basis. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 314-17(4):  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions today for the Minister responsible for the Social Justice Committee of Cabinet. I'd like to ask Minister Abernethy some questions around the Anti-Poverty Strategy and his statement today.

I'd like to, first of all, commend the steering committee who have worked so hard to produce the Anti-Poverty Strategy framework, strategy and/or framework, whatever it's going to be called. I understand, and the Minister referenced it in his statement today, that over the summer, he says Ministers will work together to develop action plans to coordinate responses to this and other strategies and frameworks.

To the Minister, I wonder if he could advise me and the House what the next steps are in regard to these action plans or with regard to the strategy. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thanks, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the Member for the question. I would like to echo the Member's comments in congratulations to the steering committee for all the incredible hard work they did, but also the working group who was involved from the beginning as well. They've done a wonderful job, but it is just the beginning, Mr. Speaker.

As I did say in my comments earlier today, we will be working on action plans over the summer months. There are a number of frameworks that have been released over this short session and all of them tie together to some degree, so we need to work together as a government on our responses and make sure whether clear linkages are identified, and we are coming together on more of a global approach on how we are going to be responding to these things. We will be working with committee over the summer and we hope to have action plans on all of these available for discussion in the fall. Once the action plan is done on the Anti-Poverty Strategy, I plan to take it forward to a larger group to have some more discussion on territorial response, which I identified in my statement, and we will be doing the symposium at that time.

At the same time as us doing our work, I will be working and encouraging our colleagues out there, our partners out there to be coming up with their response to a particular framework so when we meet for the symposium in the fall, we've all got some ideas on where we need to go as a government and as a territory and as NGOs. So we will be doing that work later, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister for the response. I can appreciate that. I understand that the government is going to be working on an action plan. I think he referenced that he's going to encourage other stakeholders to develop action plans as well. From my recollection – I'm testing my memory here – I think there's up to 29 different groups who have had a hand in, at some point in time or another, in terms of the Anti-Poverty Strategy with input.

So these various organizations all deal with people who are involved in a situation of poverty, assisting them and so on. These groups, as well, are not well funded. They generally have to do their own funding. So I'd like to know from the Minister if there's going to be an opportunity for this government to provide some funding, it doesn't have to be a lot, but some funding to these groups so that they can develop their own action plans in time for this symposium in the fall. Thank you.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, we don't have money to provide to individual organizations so that they can provide a response to the framework. But in the budget statement earlier in the year, there was reference for the fact that there was money being set aside to deal with the different frameworks and strategies that are going to be coming out, and there will be money in that to address poverty initiatives and issues once the extra plan is done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister. I am frowning over here because the money isn't necessarily needed after the action plan is done,

but the money is needed upfront so they can do the action plan, but I will leave it as it is.

One of the concerns that's been heard from Members, but I'm sure also from the stakeholders from the development of the Anti-Poverty Strategy and within the Anti-Poverty Coalition, has been, since 2010 we've been hearing about the government's conflicting policies which create barriers to allowing people who are in poverty to advance and to get out of poverty and to become better and a more productive members of society and for them to have a better sense of self.

So I would like to know whether or not it's on the radar for the Minister and for his colleagues in Cabinet as they develop this government action plan, are they going to be looking at policy and the conflicting policies that exist within this government that keep people in poverty?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** In coming forward with all these frameworks and strategies that have come forward in the last couple of months, or during this session anyway, it's clear that there are definite links and tie-in, and many of them are working towards the same ultimate goal coming at it from different angles, which is one of the reasons we want to take a little bit of time to make sure that as we move forward we link all those together so that we are not duplicating functions and we are not duplicating initiatives, that we are trying to work together for the best use of money for the best of the people of the Northwest Territories to battle poverty. I would say that yes, we are doing that, and that's our intention, and those discussions are happening at the Cabinet table as well as the Deputy Ministers' Social Envelope Committee.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister. Best use of money. I like that phrase. I hope that it proves out to be true. It's not always true, I think, in government, unfortunately.

To the issue of the symposium, you mentioned in the fall. Is this going to be early in the fall or later in the fall? How long do people have? It's over the summer, so how long do stakeholders have to get their action plans together?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** I can't remember the exact schedule, but I believe that we are coming together as Members in August, and that's going to be our opportunity to review the action plan. The symposium would be after we as an Assembly review the action plan, so later in the fall.

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

QUESTION 315-17(4):  
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES FUNDING

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions today for the Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities. Last year at some time, I made a Member's statement on reports that this government does, and sometimes doesn't take any to them, and sometimes these reports get shelved. Looking at the reports dealing with persons with disabilities, I've come across two here on the website. One is the NWT Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities, even though it deals with so many different areas: disabilities, education, employment, income, disabilities, sports, housing. I could each ask each one of the departments questions on it, but since we have a Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities, I'd like to ask him for an update on where this NWT Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities is currently sitting and how those action items have been addressed to date, if he has an update on that.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Moses. The Minister of Health, Mr. Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The 2007 NWT Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities had almost 90 recommendations. Of those recommendations, 41 of those recommendations were completed and 38 of those recommendations are ongoing. Nine of those recommendations were considered incomplete for one reason or another.

**MR. MOSES:** I know there were a lot of recommendations in the report. We're five years into a government for a document that was tabled in the House in 2008. That's five years of action and work that could have been done to addressing some of these recommendations. We're less than half completed, still a lot that are ongoing, and some that haven't even been addressed.

Can the Minister please go into detail on why some of these haven't been addressed and why we're not even getting half of these recommendations complete? Is it lack of resources? Is it lack of funding into these organizations? Because as we stated earlier this week, we do have a lot of NGOs in Inuvik, in Hay River that do this job on behalf of government but we're not funding, and that can take us back into a whole other discussion on finances.

Can he tell us, clarify why we're not addressing more than at least half of the recommendations being complete today?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** The items that are incomplete are incomplete for various reasons. Like I indicated, some of funding, definitely. Some have just not been signed off by the groups that are working on that particular action item, and some were considered not applicable. Of the 88

recommendations, nine of those fell into that category.

The 38 recommendations that are ongoing are being actioned, but they are in the nature where they weren't action plans that could have a completion date. Essentially they are action items that would continue on to support the persons with disabilities. Thank you.

**MR. MOSES:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister made a comment there that some of these recommendations were not applicable. How can this government have the NWT Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities when we have barely even discussed or even brought it up in the House, and have recommendations on the government document that is on the website, have recommendations that are not applicable to NWT residents, NWT residents that are living with disabilities when we try to talk about dignity, respect for all individuals of the NWT? How can he make the statement such as some of these not being applicable? Can he clarify that statement into detail? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct; the action plan is put together by government, but a lot of the actions are carried out by NGOs that we fund. I have a document here. Yesterday I spoke about the 50 or so NGOs that the Department of Health and Social Services support directly under the disabilities that I think may have perhaps six different organizations that we support within the funding of those NGOs. Our funding some of the action plans were put out. I think there are only a couple of them that are considered to be something that they were not going to carry out. I can go back to the organizations and discuss further why some of these action plans would not be carried out. That would just provide us with information as I have it here.

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

**MR. MOSES:** Mr. Speaker, with the theme of Disabilities Awareness Week creating accessible and welcome communities for all people, we only have a few communities that have accessible infrastructure. What is the Minister and his department doing to actually create accessible and welcoming communities within our 33 communities in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, I recognize that accessibility, we are talking about physical accessibility into buildings or into infrastructure at the community level. That is a major issue. Only a couple of communities have physical accessibility for persons with disabilities. We know of individuals

that cannot return to their home communities because they happen to be in a wheelchair and so on. We recognize that. It is a major project. I think that we would have to continue our work with the NWT Council for Persons with Disabilities. We would have to work with those guys in order to maybe try to create some more accessibility in public buildings all over our communities, but it would be quite a major task. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 316-17(4):  
MINERAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Speaker, my questions today are to the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment and follow up to my Member's statement with respect to the Pathways to Mineral Development report. I was very dismayed to see that there were no public meetings and that the process was essentially run by industry reps alone. I have to say I kind of like the guys. They are very personable. They are obviously professionals embedded within the industry, the panel itself. I know a partner was a Chamber of Mines.

I mentioned the need in my statement for a public interest policy review. Perhaps the Minister was just looking for mineral recommendations, but now that the Minister has the recommendations, will he seek the broader advice and see where a mining work panel or a similar group with both mining expertise and a public interest policy lens could be contracted to provide comments and make those commentaries public when they are received? Mahsi.

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

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We want to open new mines here in the Northwest Territories. We have the resources here in the NWT and I know I've mentioned it numerous times in speeches I've given. I know the Premier mentioned it in a speech he gave yesterday. We're not going to develop our resources at any cost and I think that has to be said again, Mr. Speaker. It has to be done in a sustainable, environmentally friendly fashion. We're going to forge ahead. We haven't opened a new mine, outside of a diamond mine, in the Northwest Territories for almost a quarter of a century and we're out to try to change that.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I don't recall saying anything about not opening a new mine, Mr. Speaker. I think that should be clear on the record. I hope the Minister will really listen and try to address my questions.



Consider what happens when you invite public comment when reviewing mining industry performance. The chair of the Minister's Economic Opportunities Panel, Joe Handley, was on radio this week talking about the feedback he heard in public meetings across the territory. He heard that "socio-economic agreements are almost cancelled agreements." Then, "we're going to have to enter into more binding contracts where there are clear penalties."

Since the Minister has feedback in spades from the Economic Opportunities Strategy recommendations, will he ensure these perspectives make it down the hall of the ITI offices and that this government's Mineral Development Strategy contains the requirements for enforceable northern benefits? That's what we're talking about. I'm not talking against the mines here, Mr. Speaker, for enforcement of northern benefits the publicly so clearly expressed when they were asked. Mahsi.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** One of the main pillars of the panel's report was sustainability and we're certainly going to work toward that. I agree with the Member that we're going to have to try to get more benefits for people who live here in the Northwest Territories. When we look at resource development here and specifically mining, I can point directly to the Member's riding and the success of some companies. The Deton' Cho run companies that have had a great deal of success from mining here in the Northwest Territories. We believe there are many more opportunities out there. We are going to continue down the path of trying to explore those opportunities. We will continue to advance the Mineral Development Strategy. We hope to have an action plan available sometime this fall, hopefully by October. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I'm hoping to contribute to the Minister's work through these comments here today, and questions. I agree, we have a thriving industry and it's great. Although we have had some bad performances in the past, we want more. As I pointed out, some of the basic premises of the recommendations are disturbing or even chilling as potential public policy, considering the bland statement casually put that we might allow projects that would result in requirements for perpetual care, perpetual environmental care. Maybe the panel should have taken a tour of the \$903 million Giant Mine Remediation Project plus infinite future cost just as a lesson in consequences.

Again, in the interests of balance and as we embark post-devolution on creating our mineral resource management regime, will the Minister commit that the upcoming strategy will contain a firm action item to create mandatory security provisions such as we've required for Commissioner's lands, and a firm statement that if perpetual care is a possible

consequence, the answer to the project will be no? Mahsi.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Some of these recommendations include considerations and recommendations about legally enforceable mine reclamation and ensuring security policies are in place. Those are in the panel's report as well.

I'm not sure if the Member had a chance to go over all those recommendations in there, but we believe this is just the beginning. It's the beginning of the Northwest Territories getting out, seeking that investment in our territory. We have to get more investment, more exploration dollars here in the Northwest Territories so that companies can come here, find the next mines so that we can employ our residents in the Northwest Territories.

We talked too long about high unemployment rates, especially in our smaller communities. We need to do something about that, Mr. Speaker, and if we don't do something about it, nobody is going to do that for us. Our belief is this is going to be an action plan with some tangible results, and we look forward to having the Member and the other Members opposite help us in achieving our goal of getting those opportunities for the people of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I acknowledge there were a few recommendations in this report where it was clearly industry professionals trying to meet sustainability requirements. A treasure chest wish list, though, of subsidies, public funding of staff to assume industry's responsibility for regulatory engagement, this industry panel really demonstrates how the public can't do enough to maximize industry profits at public cost, yet our people believe that development should first deliver benefits to them. So my brief question, Mr. Speaker, is: How does the Minister propose to bring the public interest to bear in this strategy? Mahsi.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Again, in the Northwest Territories, we have not opened a mine, outside of a diamond mine, in almost a quarter of a century. We have to change that. We've got the resources here. We need the jobs for the people here in the Northwest Territories. It makes sense to develop our resources. This is an effort to get the investment back here, to have the exploration dollars come back here so we can find some more mines and open some more mines so we can get jobs and opportunities for people and local businesses here in the Northwest Territories. We are going to do that and we will continue our efforts to move forward with the Mineral Development Strategy.

Again, the Member and other Members have provided input and we look forward to their continued involvement in the rollout of the action plan this fall. I look forward to meeting with committee again on this as we continue on the path of opening more mines here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 317-17(4):  
LONG-TERM ENERGY SOLUTIONS  
FOR NORMAN WELLS

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Following up on my Member's statement – and I used several references to Member Bisaro's and Minister R.C. McLeod – I want to ask Premier Bob McLeod, Minister of MACA, to follow in line with these questions. Like the Rolling Stones, I can't get no satisfaction.

The town of Norman Wells is looking for some satisfaction and answers on their long-term energy solutions. Next year at this time, the town is going to be off of the natural gas system. What is this government doing to ensure that the town has a solution for their long-term energy needs?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are working with the community to address these energy problems. Obviously, we are cooperating in every way possible. As the Member knows, Imperial Oil has advised the town, for commercial businesses they will no longer supply natural gas after June 2013 and for residential consumers they will stop in June 2014. So the Government of the Northwest Territories is taking steps to convert all their facilities and take them off natural gas, except for the NWT Power Corporation who will continue to receive gas to generate electricity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I'm looking for a satisfactory answer here. I would like to ask the Premier if there is any type of support available for residents to help them convert to any type of alternative energy sources.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** The Department of MACA is providing the town with funding so they can hire a program manager. The town has also engaged a consultant to convert to synthetic natural gas. As a government, based on our experience and working with the town of Inuvik, we think it's getting late into the game. There's less than a year before the residents will no longer have natural gas. The expectation is that the residents will be able to use their existing facilities to use synthetic natural gas, but there is some preparation that's needed that we

experienced in Inuvik, so we are going to work with them to make sure that they're aware of the experiences that we had in Inuvik so that they can take that into consideration.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** The town of Inuvik, the government's going to spend about \$300,000 exploring long-term energy solutions for that community. We're in a similar situation.

I want to ask this government here, what are the resources going to be allocated to help the town of Norman Wells to find a long-term renewable energy solution like they have done with the town of Inuvik.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** In Inuvik, just for clarification, we are undertaking a pilot project for our own purposes. It's for our own NTPC power plant in Inuvik. The results of the pilot project can be used in the Northwest Territories, so whatever we learn there we can apply anywhere in the Northwest Territories.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Norman Wells will follow shortly. By this time next year the residents are going to be off the natural gas. The cost of heating their homes will go up. They have the old energy report and they haven't seen anything in regard to the kind of funding that's going to help with the alternative energy solution.

I want to ask the Premier, in light of what the issues are going to be in Norman Wells, what can they expect this government here, within this short period of time, to help the residents in Norman Wells deal with the high cost of heating their homes and having energy in their homes other than what the Minister is saying right now which is, really, I don't know what to make of it.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** We're prepared to assist in the same way that we assisted in Inuvik.

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

QUESTION 318-17(4):  
ADDRESSING PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES  
IN TSIIGHTCHIC

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned in my statement today, I have questions for the Minister of Justice. It has been 40 to 50 years since the community of Tsiigehtchic, at the time Arctic Red River, has last seen an RCMP.

Short of establishing a detachment in Tsiigehtchic, what programs exist that we can put in place to help address policing and community safety in Tsiigehtchic?

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

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do have a dedicated officer in Fort McPherson that is intended to provide services to Tsiigehtchic. In the last sitting the Member did raise some concerns he had about some relationship between the community of Tsiigehtchic and the RCMP detachment in Fort McPherson, and I did have some staff and the commanding officer of "G" Division go out and visit Tsiigehtchic and try to work out some of the complications or difficulties that existed. It's my understanding that they have actually worked out a few things, which I think is a step in the right direction.

The Member is right; if a detachment ever does go to Tsiigehtchic, it's going to be a while, so we need to find some ways to help the people in that community today and tomorrow and until something like that were to happen. I have talked about the Community Safety Strategy that we're piloting right now. I think this is a fantastic tool that the government will be able to sit down with the community and map out some of the issues that face them and come up with partners in other organizations who may be able to help them.

I would encourage the Member and I would encourage the community to get in touch with the department, and I can certainly help facilitate that so that we can look at the Community Safety Strategy and how to apply it in Tsiigehtchic for the benefit of the people in that community.

**MR. BLAKE:** There is an Aboriginal community constable that has been successful in Hay River. These constables focus on community policing, crime prevention, activities frequently engaging youth, and support efforts of community justice committees. Can we see further progress in the Aboriginal Community Constable Policing Program in the Northwest Territories?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** The answer is yes. The program is in a pilot phase. It had its original delivery in November 2010, and we were fortunate enough to get the one member here in the Northwest Territories in Hay River. The RCMP is doing a second intake, which is intended to happen this September. We have, I think, a number of applications that have come in for the second troop. We have two seats, and we have applications from Fort McPherson, Fort Simpson, Behchoko, Ulukhaktok, Sachs Harbour, Hay River, Inuvik, Gameti and Yellowknife. We know at least two of these individuals will be going forward for this program, and should they be successful for the program, they will be in detachments in the Northwest Territories providing those services.

The constable in Hay River does amazing work. He goes into the schools. He helps the full members. He's about promotion, about education, as well as, to some degree, enforcement. If one of these positions will be in one of the smaller communities in the Northwest Territories in a detachment, they would be free to travel and provide services throughout the entire region. That could be a benefit to a community like Tsiigehtchic if we were fortunate enough to get somebody from the Mackenzie Delta in that program. It's a great opportunity.

**MR. BLAKE:** A number of years ago, I believe it was 10 to 15 years ago, we actually had somebody in the community who had a similar type of program that he'd taken and successfully passed. Will the department look at introducing special constables in the communities without police?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** There has been some discussion around this and it's something we're certainly interested in having some conversation on, but there are some challenges there that we have to be aware of; for instance, insurance coverage and making sure that the individual is safe. We need to make sure that an individual is safe, and if he or she happens to be the only individual in a community providing policing, or is seen as the only person, they could be in harm's way, so we need to make sure that we put in mechanisms to ensure that that is not the case, and we don't have those questions answered at this point. That is something that we do need to look at. We also have some problems, as well, if the individual is not linked directly to the RCMP. We would have a problem with individual communities setting up police officers because we lack a police act here in the Northwest Territories. But there are opportunities that do exist.

We do have the Axillary Program, so individuals in communities can approach the RCMP about joining the auxiliary, and they would assist the RCMP. There's no reason an individual from Tsiigehtchic couldn't join the axillary. Unfortunately, they would have to be working out of the Fort McPherson detachment, but it is an opportunity for information to flow both ways and to have individuals from Tsiigehtchic working collaboratively with the RCMP in Fort McPherson.

Once again, there could be some opportunities here, and I would like to work with the Member and discuss those further.

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

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister: Will the department develop a police act?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** We have been approached by some communities who have an interest. We've been approached by some organizations that have an interest. It's not currently in our legislative agenda, but it is something that we are...(inaudible)...and looking at. I can't say for sure whether or not we will actually see it come forward in the life of this Assembly, but I can commit that it is something that the department is looking at and will continue to look at. We do have in front of us, now that we have passed the motion on devolution, a pretty heavy legislative agenda. We've got a number of things outside of devolution we're working on that have been priorities of committee and Cabinet, so we do have a number in front of us, but I will have the department do a bit of an analysis on the Police Act that I can provide to the Member and committee so that they understand what some of the challenges around that particular act are.

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

QUESTION 319-17(4):  
HEALTH CARE CARD RENEWAL PROCESS

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address some questions to the Minister of Health and Social Services. I have held off on the health card debate, so to speak, but I have been listening to my colleagues' comments, questions and concerns, and I have some questions for the Minister with regard to the inability, it seems, of the department to handle health card renewals, for some people at least.

My first question goes to the process that is used by the department and the office in Inuvik. I'd like to know from the Minister what kind of a process is used when a renewal application comes in. Is it a manual process? Is it an automated process? Is there an outline that staff follow and that every staff have access to so that it is the same process that is followed for all applications? Is there a standard that is set? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, it is a standard process. It is a manual process. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Speaker, thanks to the Minister for the answer. I would like to know then, if it is a manual process and I'm a worker in Inuvik and I'm processing these applications, do I have a template? Do I have standards, guidelines that I follow so that Mr. Moses sitting next to me is actually doing the same work in the same way that I am doing? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, they do have a guideline, a procedure that they follow so that each application received with the appropriate

and correct information is processed in exactly the same way and then is sent out for a card. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Speaker, thanks to the Minister again. We made a change to the process of health card renewals. It started, I understand, in December of 2012 or January of 2013. Prior to making that change, I would like to know from the Minister what other jurisdictions were reviewed to set up this new health card renewal process. How did we evaluate what we were doing and what we are now currently doing? What other jurisdictions were canvassed to see what kind of a system would be best for us? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information with me, but I do know that we have looked at other jurisdictions. We recognize that there are various ways that other jurisdictions have gone about renewing their health care or providing health care cards such as decision to go with a picture on the health care card and so on. We have looked at other jurisdictions. Specifically which jurisdictions we looked at and tried to follow, I don't know which it was. I think we are continuing on with a system that we have developed ourselves. Thank you.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Speaker, thanks to the Minister. I guess I would like to suggest that if we are following a system that we have set up that perhaps is not working very well, then maybe we ought to look at other jurisdictions in a little more detail and perhaps change our system.

In our system, in our process and in these guidelines that staff has, does it identify a standard turnaround time and what that time is from the time the application comes in to when the renewed or new card goes back out to the individual? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, an individual may apply for their health care card in time within four months of their birthdate. The time frame is that if you apply within four months of your birthdate, then the process would run to where you will have your health care card prior to your birthdate. That is the time frame that we are using. Essentially we would, I guess, try to get everything done within those four months, not even longer or not much shorter because we need the time to do the process. At the same time, we have to protect the integrity of the card. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** From what I hear from the Minister, it sounds as though there is no standard. When an application comes in, there is no turnaround time of, say, five days, from the time that it is received on the desk to when I as a worker have to send it back

out. I would suggest to the Minister that that is not a good situation.

He has heard many complaints from Members, and I am sure he's heard from residents as well. I would like to know whether or not the Minister has done an evaluation of the workload in the Inuvik office to determine whether or not there is adequate staff there. Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, earlier on I indicated that perhaps we had a manpower issue in Inuvik because we were hearing some complaints about people not receiving their health care cards on time. However, that doesn't seem to be the case. The time frame is what the time frame is. The idea is to try to make sure that individuals are getting coverage. That is the objective. Therefore, when we have the window of four months before your birthdate, that is so that individuals are resident of the territory for sure. We figured that four months was a reasonable time that an individual that is living in the Northwest Territories would apply for a health care card and would come within that time frame.

We are processing approximately 100 applications per day. I don't really set up a system that tries to deal with it in certain time frames. We have the overall time frame. We recognize that if they are coming in at 100 applications per day, we have to move on each application every day. That is essential on how we are going about the process. The time frame is that time frame with the exception of a few people who didn't get their health care cards on time. Our success rate is very high. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Time for question period has expired. Item 9, written questions. Item 10, returns to written questions. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 8 on the orders of the day, oral questions. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent denied

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 11, replies to opening address. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent once again, to try to return to item 8 on the orders of the day, oral questions. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent denied

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Mr. Abernethy.

## Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 97-17(4):  
BUILDING ON THE STRENGTHS OF  
NORTHERNERS – A STRATEGIC  
FRAMEWORK TOWARD THE  
ELIMINATION OF POVERTY IN THE NWT,  
JUNE 2013

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled "Building on the Strengths of Northerners – A Strategic Framework Toward the Elimination of Poverty in the Northwest Territories, June 2013." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Premier McLeod.

TABLED DOCUMENT 98-17(4):  
WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT...LAND IS LIFE:  
TOWARDS A GNWT LAND USE AND  
SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK, MAY 2013

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled "What We Heard About...Land is Life: Towards the GNWT Land Use and Sustainability Framework, May 2013." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Minister Ramsay.

TABLED DOCUMENT 99-17(4):  
RESOURCE EXPLORATION IN THE SAHTU  
SETTLEMENT AREA: OPPORTUNITIES AND  
CHALLENGES, MAY 2013

TABLED DOCUMENT 100-17(4):  
GROWING FORWARD: SMALL SCALE FOODS  
PROGRAM 2012 ANNUAL REPORT

TABLED DOCUMENT 101-17(4):  
TAKE A KID TRAPPING AND HARVESTING  
REPORT 2011-2012

TABLED DOCUMENT 102-17(4):  
CORRIDORS FOR CANADA III:  
BUILDING FOR PROSPERITY, JUNE 2013

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following three documents, entitled "Resource Exploration in the Sahtu Settlement Area: Opportunities and Challenges, May 2013," "Growing Forward: Small Scale Foods Program 2012 Annual Report," and the "Take a Kid Trapping and Harvesting Report, 2011-2012." I would also like to table the following document, entitled "Corridors for Canada III: Building for Prosperity, June 2012." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

TABLED DOCUMENT 103-17(4):  
ANNUAL REPORT – NWT LEGISLATIVE  
ASSEMBLY PENSION PLANS,  
MARCH 31, 2012

TABLED DOCUMENT 104-17(4):  
PENSION ADMINISTRATION REPORT –  
RETIRING ALLOWANCES ACT AND  
SUPPLEMENTARY RETIRING ALLOWANCES  
ACT AT MARCH 31, 2012

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. I have two tabled documents for myself. Pursuant to Section 21(1) of the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Act and Section 11(1) of the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act, I wish to table the annual report for the Legislative Assembly's Pension Plan, March 31, 2012.

In accordance to Section 21(1) of the Retiring Allowances Act and Section 11(1) of the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act, I hereby table the Pension Administration Report for the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act, March 31, 2012. Thank you.

Mr. Hawkins.

TABLED DOCUMENT 105-17(4):  
ALLOCATION OF NEW RESOURCE REVENUES

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table a document. It's an illustration regarding the allocation of new resource revenues. I'll be drawing attention to it later today during a motion. It needs to be before the House.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 106-17(4):  
ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT –  
HANSARD DEBATES OCTOBER 13, 1994

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table a document referring to access to information for Regular Members. This is a two-page document out of Hansard from October 13, 1994, page 265 and page 266. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Mr. Dolynny.

## Motions

MOTION 18-17(4):  
ORGAN DONATION/HUMAN TISSUE ACT,  
CARRIED

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. WHEREAS very few organ donations are made in the NWT and no transplants are taking place;

AND WHEREAS the NWT's Human Tissue Act is extremely out of date and contains no legal definition of death for the purpose of transplantation;

AND WHEREAS the NWT's act lacks protection from criminal and civil liability for parties acting in good faith and without negligence;

AND WHEREAS the NWT's act contains no mention of who may carry out organ removal, beyond "therapeutic purposes," "medical education," and "medical research,"

AND WHEREAS the NWT's act does not explicitly provide for transplants between living bodies, such as for a kidney donation to a relative;

AND WHEREAS the NWT's act does not define what is considered to be "tissue;"

AND WHEREAS the NWT's act contains no penalties for violations of its provisions, and does not explicitly ban the sale of body parts or benefitting from donation of organs or tissue;

AND WHEREAS it is not clear in the NWT act's consent provision if a "spouse" would include a common-law partner;

AND WHEREAS the NWT's act has no clause dealing with confidentiality of information and how it may be used;

AND WHEREAS the NWT's act does not provide for the Commissioner or Minister to make regulations pertaining to such things as the qualifications of physicians involved in the donation and transplant process, or the establishment of a coordinating body to facilitate donations and use of donated organs or tissue;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that the Government of the Northwest Territories revise or replace the Human Tissue Act in order to create a framework for organ donation that reflects the best practices across Canada;

AND FURTHER, that the government provide a comprehensive response to this motion within 120 days.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the saddest things in the world is seeing a loved one die when they could have easily been saved. Unfortunately, this seems to happen in Canada more often than we'd like to admit and it's happened to residents of the Northwest Territories. And, Mr. Speaker, I've been personally affected by this myself.

I'd like to start with some facts. A single organ donor can save up to eight lives, and tissue can help up to 50 other people. More than 4,000 Canadians are on waitlists for transplants. The demand is not being met, often with tragic results.

Financially, a single kidney transplant saves the health system about \$250,000 every five years. The estimated savings of kidney transplant alone was \$800 million in Canada in 2009. One year, Mr. Speaker.

So why are we doing this? Saving lives, saving quality of life, or is it about saving money? Very few people in our territory donate their organs, but it's not because they don't want to, it's mainly because it's so hard to do it here.

Again some facts. Canada's system of organ donation is supported by legislation in each province or territory, but the NWT's Human Tissue Act is hopelessly out of date. Even if we improved our ability to donate organs, our legal framework is seriously deficient. We have to correct that and catch up with the rest of Canada.

Our act was passed in 1988. It is a very short act, only a page and a half, and it has been amended only once. My review of other acts across Canada revealed just how inadequate this act truly is. For example, we have to enable and protect our health system, doctors and donors if we are going to start saving some lives through organ and tissue donation and transplants. We have to make sure doctors have no conflict of interest but to protect the privacy of donors. We have to address liability issues. We need definitions such as what is tissue and what is...(inaudible)...and, yes, we need to give the Commissioner or Minister the authority to make some appropriate regulations.

It sounds complicated, but in reality it isn't really hard to do at all. There are many excellent laws in Canada, let alone the rest of the world.

We assume it's a big issue, and in reality, this is not a lengthy act. It should be stated that revising and replacing our act will not tax the expertise of our Health department or our fine lawyers in our justice system. I would be pleased to turn over all my research to get this ball rolling, Mr. Speaker. This work is long, long overdue. This issue has been raised by many Members in this House going back to at least 1994. That's when our former colleague, Mr. Tony Whitford, began a long push for volunteer

organ donation. MLA Groenewegen gave it another try in 1998 with no luck as well. MLA Charles Dent raised the issue again in 2001 and our colleague Mr. Miltenberger promised to investigate the situation. In 2002 Mr. Miltenberger announced a task force on organ donation. Mr. Speaker, it even included Dr. Corriveau, who works with us today, but there seems to be no record of this report or action plan. Quite frankly, who knows? It may never have been finished.

In 2009 MLA Hawkins urged the Health Minister, Sandy Lee, to take some action, but again, as usual, nothing happened. This shows sustained effort in this House that successive governments have put it aside or ignored over the years.

Improving the Human Tissue Act is a necessary first step in improving our system. We owe a functioning system of tissue donation to our residents and to other Canadians. Let's be clear. Right now, if one of our residents needs a kidney or a heart or a lung or even a cornea, they depend 100 percent on Canadians in other jurisdictions. We aren't helping, but we do benefit from the generosity of others.

It was asked in this House a number of times for information and statistics, and the only stats we have been given from the Department of Health and Social Services is that 22 NWT patients had a kidney transplant in the 15 years ending 2010. Twenty-six NWT residents received organ and tissue transplants in just five years from 1995 to 2000. Mr. Speaker, we need more statistics, as well, to support our facts, and I know that given a chance, the people of the Northwest Territories will help each other out as other Canadians. We are generous to a fault and we do so in every other way of our being here in the North.

What is the value of life? Just ask someone whose life was saved or a person who helped save another's life. To sum it all up, we have a good many reasons to overhaul or replace our Human Tissue Act.

I sincerely thank my colleagues for the support on this leading up to today's motion. I hope that through some hope and force I can extend my Cabinet colleagues here an opportunity to vote in favour of this motion as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a few words to thank Mr. Dolynny for bringing this motion to the floor. When I first looked at it some time ago and Mr. Hawkins, as Mr. Dolynny pointed out, I didn't really think much about this from an Aboriginal perspective. When we pass away, we are buried with all our parts. I had a hard time to

come to grips with this, not until I heard some reports that a young man here in Yellowknife saved lives in Edmonton. I thought that was something. It must have taken a sacrifice by the family, just coming into a belief of a person who is deceased and how you do that with a loved one. I had a hard time understanding that at first, but when I heard the reports on the radio that there was a young man who saved six people's lives because of what we know now today of the miracle of surgery and medical use and how we can save another life even though we are no longer here on this land here.

I was happy to second the motion in regard to having the government look at it and say is this possible. How can we have people in the Northwest Territories who can help other people in the North or in southern Canada? How can we put a more updated legislation together that we can come and have some discussion on? It doesn't mean we're going to do it. There are going to be other factors that they're going to come into drafting this legislation like they do with other LPs, that we have a good discussion.

We need a starting point, and I think the motion calls for some discussion point, so if we look at possibly legislation within the two years of this government to look at something that's worthwhile, support the people like this young man's family, and looking at ways that we can help each other in Canada. I think that my saying yes to support this motion is by bringing it to the floor. Thank you, Mr. Dolynny, for bringing this motion forward.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. To the motion. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also speak in support of this motion. The motion really does speak for itself. It's laid out quite well here, and I thank my colleagues for bringing this forward.

Legislation is overdue. Obviously, 25 years old this year, and only one and half pages, very few amendments. The definitions are clearly out of date and there is no protection from liability. We know that our residents are accepting organs and it's extending their lives, cutting our health costs right here in the Northwest Territories.

There is no reason why we shouldn't be participating, and I know that our residents would be signing up. I know one of the issues is apparently we don't have a mechanism for somebody to use their signature to indicate that they can have their organs donated after their death. Simple things like that. I know there are extra challenges in the Northwest Territories related to our many communities that are remote and many situations are remote. People need to be maintained on life support systems and so on, so

there are challenges here and it's trying, but Northerners are used to these sorts of conditions.

I know also that we have partners that help out, the Alberta Health ministry and the HOPE Foundation and so on, and they will always be there for us, but I think we have now the maturity and the time to move on this. I express my support. I will be voting in support.

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

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last year on October 31<sup>st</sup>, I made a Member's statement and asked questions of the Minister of Health and Social Services on stem cell donation, dealing with cancer and leukemia and those types of cancers and how it can be prevented, how we can increase our database so we get more people signing up to be donors to save people's lives. This goes along the same lines of something that I had pushed for last year, so obviously, I will be voting in support of this motion.

It's a motion that shows action needs to be done to update and modernize the current act that we have. With the greater prevalence of diseases and illnesses in this day and age, we have to find ways that we can protect the residents of the Northwest Territories, and throughout all of Canada, for that matter, and be able to save lives, like I said. It's something that I do promote, and promote having people be educated and be aware of how to become a donor to such a good cause.

I will support this motion. I do thank Mr. Dolynny for bringing the motion forward, Mr. Yakeleya for seconding it, and all Members that are speaking in favour of this motion today.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, am going to stand and vote in favour of this motion. As stated by my colleagues, it's quite straightforward. This is asking for an updating of an act which is very much out of date. It's asking for changes that will allow us to provide better services to our residents. It will allow us as residents to feel a bit more involved to allow us to do sort of the social service aspect of our lives, if we wish to do it, which we certainly can't do now.

The whereases in the motion talk about specific areas in the current act which are out of date and which need to be changed. Organ donation and tissue donation has become something which is far more common now than it was certainly in 1980, whatever, when this act was originally developed. I recognize that this is not on the government's legislative agenda at this point, but I think what Members are trying to say is it should be, and I



think that our Department of Health needs to take this motion, should it pass, and they need to consider the recommendation in this motion seriously, look at their legislative agenda, and perhaps revise it and bring the idea of this motion into their agenda and move it up.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise with great pleasure on this particular issue. As Member Dolynny has pointed out, a few years ago I raised this issue as well. But you know what? I only sit on the shoulders of others to help try to carry the issue forward. With that, I'm going to thank Mr. Dolynny for hoping this time that we nudge it across the goal line. He's taken on this issue with some new emotion and new fervency in the sense of zeal that I hope it carries it across that line.

I am not sure what seems to be the issue with government realizing on how important something like this motion can be. I mean, quite frankly, this not only changes lives, it saves lives. There isn't really anything more precious out there than life itself, and you question yourself by asking why does the government continue to either ignore or disregard the plea or call for something like this. We've had other pleas about trying to extend drivers' licences to allow that information to be put on so if somebody does show up in an accident and we don't know them, we can access this type of information and find out one of the choices of life of this person was to help continue the life of others. But we don't have that ability. This is just one more piece in this puzzle.

It is a paralyzing issue for many people. I've talked to folks before, and folks are nervous. Yes, it may not be for everyone, but I can tell you, if you hear somebody waiting for a transplant, I mean, every day... I can tell you this for a fact, because a close friend of mine lost a child, and many people know who that is, and it's not the only time we know these terrible things have happened, but they went through terrible emotions every day, thinking the only way their child was going to survive was another child had to die. It was horrible. And the likelihood of somebody coming forward in that circumstance, the same age and the same sort of compatibility was very slim. It was such an emotional drain for that family. It was horrible to watch them go through.

All of a sudden now we have barriers that we can take down. This is a barrier that says it doesn't mean there's going to be a flood of donations. No, it won't. But what it means is people will have access to a process to allow this to happen. Because if somebody's last wish of their life is to help sustain someone else's life, allow them to return to a normal life, I mean, why would we be denying this?

I can remember those tragic weeks and months with great pain myself, and it wasn't easy. All I can remember is the father telling me that statement I said earlier. It's such a horrible paradox to be carrying that. The only way that their child will live is another child had to die. That is so awful to think, and that's not a good thing to be sitting there. Yet, as I said earlier, and I will continue to say, we have barriers here that stop us from helping those who want to do this, and we're taking their choice away. I'd say let's find a way to help them with their choice that they want to give. It's a choice that they make deep inside. It's a choice that some, maybe their families don't support, or their families do support, but we must make the choice available for people and that's why this motion is so critical.

I want to finish by once again thanking Member Dolynny and certainly Member Yakeleya for being the stewards of this latest push. I just hope this push isn't seen as fruitless, because it's very important. To the government, it's paperwork, it's policy, it's oh, we have to make some time, but I can guarantee we'd get thank you letters every day from the one family we saved. We'd hear endless thanks from them because we did take the time to recognize how important this is.

As said, I think already by Mr. Dolynny, we can't appreciate how important this is until you've run into it in your own circle of life, whether it's happened to you and your individual family or it has happened to a friend or even just someone you know. With that, I will certainly be supporting this with significant pride. I'm very thankful it is being brought forward today. Thank you.

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

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, will be voting in favour of this motion. Many things have changed over the years as the territory is changing. I know it is not traditional for many people to donate their organs, but like I mentioned, many things have changed and there are a lot of people that are here in the Northwest Territories who want to help their family or friends by donating an organ. I think that that should be made available in this territory in this day and age, 2013. We need to come up to speed like many of the provinces in Canada. For that reason I am supporting this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services supports organ and tissue donation. The best way for people to ensure their wish to be an organ donor is to let family members and loved ones know and ask for

their support, should they be in a position to donate when they are unable to speak for themselves.

The NWT is in partnership with Alberta Health Services. They provide transplant services for our residents. They are currently looking for better ways, better options to identifying potential donors, including the possibility of a registry that will include our residents in any initiatives they develop.

The department will look at ways that the NWT residents can identify their wish to donate their organs through health care cards. The department will work with Canadian Blood Services and Alberta Health Services to develop our own common materials from organ and tissue donation in the NWT. The partner will discuss with Canadian Blood Services strategies for them to be more visible in the NWT and further encourage NWT residents to become donors of blood, organs and tissue. Implementing organ and tissue harvesting in the NWT would be costly due to specialized resources needed for laboratory organ storage and staffing.

Family's right to refuse to donate requires an amendment to the Human Tissue Act, NWT. Specialized surgical teams, equipment and advanced life support essential to organ harvesting are not available in the NWT. Logistical barriers such as geography, transit times and lab limitations also prevent NWT from organ harvesting. Although organ and tissue harvesting is not available in the NWT, the Stanton Health Authority has partnered with the Human Organ Procedure Exchange Program based in Alberta which funds all air and ground travel costs for potential NWT donors to travel to Alberta.

In the case where a patient on life support at the Stanton Territorial Hospital is identified as a potential donor and where the donor can be transported to Edmonton in the condition where the organs will remain suitable for transplant, Stanton Territorial Health Authority can contact HOPE to medevac a donor to Edmonton and have their organs harvested. The dialysis unit at the Stanton Territorial Hospital provides dialysis patients who are on the transplant list with a pager so they can be located at any time, should a kidney become available.

The Human Tissue Act in the NWT, which came into force in 1988, provides the basic legislative framework for consent for organ and tissue donation. A brief scan of the legislation in other provinces shows some of the acts also include provisions respecting the requirement for two physicians to declare death, criteria for brain death, prohibition on declaring the doctor to be involved in the transplant – that is the same doctor that is declaring death – the prohibition on buying and selling or dealing with human tissue, and confidentiality.

Historical figures in the NWT where the recipients obtained through HOPE: in 2008-09, three kidney recipients and one liver recipient; in 2009-10, one heart recipient and two kidney recipients; in 2010-11, four liver recipients; in 2011-12, five liver recipients, islet cell recipient, one; liver, partial donation from living donor. At present there are seven NWT residents on the waiting list to receive organs: one heart, one double lung and five liver.

This motion is a direction to the GNWT, to government, so we will be abstaining from the vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. I will allow the mover of the motion to have final remarks. To the motion, Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the seconder of the motion. I forgot to do that earlier. I do thank him for coming forward and letting the debate happen today, Mr. Yakeleya.

I am honoured. I heard a lot of positive comments from my colleagues from different perspectives and looking at it from many different angles. I do appreciate all of the support. They see the vision. They understand. You can't put a price on human life.

We heard from the Minister of Health and Social Services that he had a brief scan of the Human Tissue Act. I have done a full review of this act. This group of my colleagues know very well I am very thorough in my design. This act is deficient and is defiant of what is considered best practice and standards across Canada. It doesn't hold up to what we consider on a worldwide basis in the Human Tissue Act or the harvesting of organs. This act is greatly deficient.

The pass of a vote that we are hearing from across the hall here is not soothing words for the people of the Northwest Territories. We need to hear an active role. This motion speaks to an active role that this government can pursue and do for the people of the Northwest Territories, nothing more. It is not about dollars. You can do what you like with the barriers to life, and I think Members on this side of the House are trying to remove those barriers so we are giving life a fair chance in the Northwest Territories. I am hoping our colleagues across the room are thinking in the same capacity.

With that, I would like to thank everyone who spoke again towards the motion. I will be asking for a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### RECORDED VOTE

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member is asking for a recorded vote. All those in favour, please rise.

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan):** Mr. Dolynny, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Hawkins, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Moses, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Blake.

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

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan):** Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. McLeod - Yellowknife South, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. McLeod - Inuvik Twin Lakes.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Clerk. All those in favour, eight; all those opposed, zero; all those abstaining, seven. The motion is carried.

---Carried

---Applause

Mr. Hawkins or, sorry, Mr. Yakeleya.

MOTION 19-17(4):  
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE  
TO OCTOBER 17, 2013,  
CARRIED

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on June 6, 2013, it shall be adjourned until Thursday, October 17, 2013;

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to October 17, 2013, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called.

---Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. By the authority given to me by Motion 1-17(4), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily sitting hour of adjournment to consider business before the House.

Mr. Hawkins.

MOTION 20-17(4):  
PROPOSAL FOR USE OF  
NEW RESOURCE REVENUES,  
CARRIED

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories is considering signing a Final Agreement on Devolution of Lands and Resources in the imminent future;

AND WHEREAS the agreement, if signed, will result in new resource revenues accruing to the Government of the northwest Territories beginning in 2014-2015;

AND WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories has committed 25 percent of ongoing future resource revenues to Aboriginal governments;

AND WHEREAS it is desirable that there be public transparency and accountability in where the remaining 75 percent of resource revenues will be used and directed, and that new spending be reflective of four guiding priority areas of the Legislative Assembly;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that this Legislative Assembly proposes on an annual basis the GNWT's share of the new Devolution Agreement resource revenues be expended according to the following formula:

- one-quarter to infrastructure investment;
- one-quarter to one-time Assembly priorities;
- one-quarter to the Heritage Fund; and
- one-quarter to debt repayment.

AND FURTHER, that the Government of the Northwest Territories seek public input on the above proposal for the use of new resource revenue and report back to the Assembly on the results of those consultations;

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you. This motion is not about devolution itself, it's about what to do with the resource revenue after the Devolution Agreement has been signed and resources finally start flowing to the Northwest Territories.

If we don't start providing some guiding principles, whether we call them pillars, whether we call them ideas, if we don't start providing these, in typical and usual fashion, our Cabinet will find new ways

and define it as invest the money under the guide of government priorities all built under their own guidance. This motion helps Members guide where this revenue is going. On top of that, it speaks to public engagement.

This motion wouldn't be here today without the good support of my colleague Mr. Nadli, and I want to give thanks to that for helping get this motion on the floor.

This also speaks to different types of investments, but it's a structure of how and what we should do with the public money for the public with their guidance. So, Mr. Speaker, this might not be the be-all and end-all final formula of how this resource money should go. Maybe after good public consultation, a little public input if the government is willing to put a little grease on the wheel and go back to the public and ask them what do they think their money should be doing and how do they think their money should be invested back into our people, maybe the formula might be slightly different. It's not up to me to say.

The important thing here today is to create a mechanism so people have a chance to give some ideas and show people where their money is going when it's a resource revenue and how we can help direct it for useful purposes.

As a reminder, in case I forget later, I will want a recorded vote on this particular issue.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. Mr. Nadli, seconder of the motion.

**MR. NADLI:** I'd like to thank my colleague Mr. Hawkins for initiating this motion. I understand that down the road the government will be receiving a portion of the \$70 million or so. Initial thoughts were that it should be invested perhaps in infrastructure, Heritage Fund or debt repayment. The question should be: Should we invest more in the public sector or less in the private sector? This is an opportunity for the public to have a say in terms of how resource revenues should be decided. Therefore, I support the principle of this motion. Mahsi.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very glad that this motion has come forward and I'd like to thank the mover and the seconder for bringing it to the floor.

I've spoken to the issue of new resource revenues, yesterday, when I was speaking to the devolution motion and the debate that we had there. This motion particularly identifies four areas where these resource revenues should go. Certainly, one-quarter is going to aboriginal governments and I find no fault with that whatsoever.

The other three areas I think need to be debated. I don't necessarily agree with these four priorities as they are laid out. But I think what this motion asks for, and what needs to be emphasized in this motion, is we need to have a debate not only within the House and amongst Members but it needs to go to the public. I spoke to that yesterday. It needs to go to the public so we can get their ideas.

I'm sure there are ideas out there which we have not heard. We're not all that brilliant, all of us. We need to hear from the public what ideas they have, consider those and then make an educated decision. We didn't involve the public, to my view, as much as we should have when we were talking about the Devolution Agreement, and this is an opportunity to go back to the public and say we maybe made a mistake the first time around. Here's an opportunity for you to tell us what we should do with our revenues.

These revenues belong to the people. They don't belong to the House. They don't belong to individual Members. They don't belong to Cabinet. They belong to the people. It's coming from the resources of the people and I think we need to hear from them. Thank you.

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

**MR. DOLYUNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise here in support of this motion. I want to applaud Mr. Hawkins for bringing a visionary motion to the table here. I would like to thank Mr. Nadli for seconding it to allow for debate here today.

Not less than 24 hours ago here in this Chamber, we witnessed something monumental, something historical that was put to us. Now we've got to roll up our sleeves and get down to brass tacks because we know there's money coming into the coffers. I think this motion speaks to the vision we have to have as residents of the Northwest Territories.

What we have before us are guidelines. We aren't saying this is the be-all and end-all, Mr. Speaker. This is the starting point for us to discuss what we are going to do with this money moving forward. I think what a lot of Members fear is this money could turn into a slush fund for our Cabinet colleagues to identify their priorities. We've got a lot of competing priorities. Everyone here on this side of the House always has issues to deal with that we can actually improve our constituents. Mr. Menicoche's Highway No. 7, for example. It's one of those things we hear time and time again.

Not that I want to use this analogy, but we tell our children, be good stewards with your money, put some in the bank and spend a little and have some fun. This is kind of what we're saying. Not to say the Cabinet Members are a bunch of children, Mr.

Speaker, but the fact is these are guidelines. It's something that Cabinet has to listen to because this is coming from people on this side of the House who represent many of the residents across the Northwest Territories.

As you heard, the public has the right to have some input on this. This is their money, the public's money, the residents' money. This is hard earned tax money. These are people that believed in devolution. They are the ones who said yes, we want devolution. It's their money.

To restrict or put a caveat and not having an opportunity to say where that money is going would really be an unfortunate day, Mr. Speaker. So I will be voting in support of this motion. Thank you.

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

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The principle of the motion is one that's pretty interesting indeed, and with the new dollars that we're getting, I do support that we have to have a debate. I feel that we are going to have a debate anyway, once we get these revenue resources into the government budget.

However, I don't feel that I could support the motion at this time in regard to the therefore section allocating specific percentages of dollars into different areas within our government system. When we go through the business plans, we see areas such as deferred maintenance, infrastructure projects, areas that reflect our social conditions in the communities that I feel we could do a one-time-off investment in a lot of areas, specifically in some of the deferred maintenance within our government structure, our government assets, as well as some of our housing units. We do have a homeless issue that we can address. We spoke with the Anti-Poverty Strategy and they said their first main priority is housing. We could address that in a one-time shot. We could look at where our priorities are and where we go with this government.

By divvying up the dollars into four different sections, that puts a limit on where we can start speeding up these projects and becoming more successful and putting action into some of the areas that need it.

I've been in this government for 20 months. I see where a lot of the needs are, and I do agree with the principle of the motion, but I don't think today I can vote in favour of the motion, only because I think there are investments, there are areas of importance that we need to focus on. I don't feel that we should be limiting the dollars that we're going to be getting into areas at this time.

At this time, I will not be supporting the motion based on the therefore clauses and the

percentages of dollars. I feel that we're going to be limiting our government, limiting our decisions and where those dollars can be spent, but I do appreciate the efforts put on by Mr. Hawkins and other Members who are supporting this motion.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to my colleagues for bringing this motion forward. I guess I find myself aligning with Ms. Bisaro's comments, so I won't repeat them all, but I don't necessarily agree with the formula, but I strongly support taking the question to the public, and I very much appreciate that. That's the main thrust of this motion. These are public dollars. In my view, I think, in the short term, all of the dollars should go into the Heritage Act Fund while we have a mature discussion and really examine where we see the needs and where the public would like to see these dollars going. I'm also not sure to what degree we can bind future governments on these dollars. They will be part of our annual budget and so on. But they do represent new revenues and that does qualify them for some serious discussion and serious public participation and might go some way to help bind up those wounds that the public is feeling about being left out of this sort of thing in the past. Mahsi.

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

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, cannot support this motion at this time. I do agree with some of the investments that are listed, but I believe this process is not quite completed yet. We still need a number of people to sign on to the actual final agreement, and I believe once that is complete, then this government could move forward as to deciding where we are going to spend those funds. There are a lot of projects that the communities, the smaller communities would like to see, and I believe that some focus should be put into those areas, building up our infrastructure. We have schools, for example in Aklavik, that are 40 to 50 years old, yet it's not receiving any attention. We need new schools in our communities, new nursing stations. I believe that once everything is signed with the final agreement, then we as a group can sit down and do some brainstorming as to how this fund would be best spent. I believe now is not the time.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We fully recognize that there is a process ahead of us here as we sign the Devolution Agreement. The money and resources won't flow until probably 2015-16, that we have time for the

debate and discussion about devolution and all facets of it including the resource revenue sharing.

I would comment, I'm continually surprised by some of the Member's opposite that talk about the budgeting process we have, which is the most comprehensive and inclusive in the country, and make it sound like a budget appears in this House that is totally untouched by them with no involvement and is not their document, and that every budget that has been through this House that I can recollect has pretty well been done on unanimous support at the end of the day.

We do have a very inclusive budgeting process. I've committed as Finance Minister, from the start of this Assembly, that we would do budget consultations, and we'll do that again this fall. Clearly, this will be one of the items on the agenda, one of the main big ticket items. Since the last budget, we'll have signed the Devolution Agreement. We'll have the resource revenue issue to have those discussions.

While some say this is just a general start of the process, there are some very specific targets in there: 25 percent, 25 percent, 25 percent, 25 percent. The Member for Kam Lake indicated a Cabinet slush fund. I'm not sure what...

---Applause

I'm sorry. Let me stand corrected.

---Laughter

Let the record show it was the Member for Range Lake. Give credit where credit is due for the comment about a Cabinet slush fund. The budget and the budget process we have is under enormous scrutiny, so I defy anybody to stand up and show me, because after all these years, 18 years, if there's a Cabinet slush fund, I'd like to know where it is, because we're constantly borrowing money to try to meet the demands of this House. There are those that would say 25 percent for one-time legislative priorities could be easily interpreted or construed to be pretty discretionary type of funding.

The commitment, of course, is budget consultation. We recognize that this is a start of a process. This motion, I believe, is somewhat premature, given the time ahead of us to sort this out through a more considered forum where we'd have more debate and discussion.

With those comments, I'll just note that since this is the direction of Cabinet, we will be abstaining.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I'll allow the mover of the motion to have final remarks. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Well, certainly the fact that we had that Freudian slip on the record, I'm going to say that, quite frankly, I agree with Minister Miltenberger about this and the characterization of slush fund, because the reality is, it is a Cabinet slush fund. That's the fact. I mean, the Cabinet doesn't want to call it a slush fund because they have all the money at their fingertips.

The fact that when we had to ask for a \$3 million adjustment to the budget just here a few months ago, they went kicking and screaming and complained, oh, woe is us. The Members try to have some influence on the budget and they go, the sky is falling. Now we just want to set up some parameters and say how we think the public's money should be spent with the public's opinion. Let the public have the say. Well, you can play that violin, Minister Miltenberger, all you want, but it's true.

If we don't provide some guidance and guidelines with public input, and I want to thank those who saw that exactly. That's all this is, is about trying to set up a framework and a structure to get public input on.

The Cabinet will divvy this up at the FMB table. The Cabinet will scribe it out, and then they'll send us almost the finalized 99 percent version and say, what do you think? Oh, by the way, go fight for the scraps on the side. Fight amongst each other. You know, fight, fight, fight. And then we know you'll never get unanimity because there's 11 of you from 11 different regions; and don't worry, we'll play divisive politics; and don't worry, it will all be fine.

The reality here is all this motion here is, is a framework. It's the people's money. Let's not put barriers in front of the people's money. Let's not be afraid of what the people have to say about their money. This gives the chance of the public to get out there early. This is visioning amongst all colleagues. This isn't just from me. This is all colleagues. You hear Mr. Blake talk about wanting infrastructure. This motion talks about infrastructure, about investing in our communities, our schools, our houses, one-time Assembly priorities.

I've come to three Assemblies so far and every time the new Assembly begins, they say they'd like these as priorities, and every time the Finance Minister walks out the door and he goes, well, I'll see what I can do. Where am I going to cut? Who's going to give it up? Here is a plan.

I tabled earlier just a bit of an illustration and I talked about where the extra money will go, and it shows it's over and above normal operational revenue. It's a way to work with all Members. The moaning and groaning from Cabinet is because they don't want Members to have a say on where

money goes. That's it. They don't want to give up the piece of the pie. It is not about us controlling it. It is about being involved in the process up front.

When I talk about a Heritage Fund, again, these are just ideas, a quarter here and there, but these are ideas that say we have to invest now and to the future such as the Heritage Fund. If we don't do it today, it will be almost impossible tomorrow.

The last point on here on debt repayment, again, if we don't seriously get committed behind these initiatives, it's things like this will always be in trouble. You have other jurisdictions who do not have the financial management the Northwest Territories has, which we have an amazing style and good procedures here, but the fact is, this shows we are in control of our debt. Our debt is almost maximized. Throw in another \$300 million project – the Inuvik-Tuk highway – all of a sudden it stresses our credit limit. How much more money do we have to pay? People are going to want an extension of the Deh Cho Highway. How much more money? We have so many things.

These are just pillars of ideas. I think enough has been said, but the important thing is, this is a framework to take to the people, because it's their money. The fact that the obstruction or fighting of this or the concern that we are trying to control anybody, it is not that at all. It is about setting up ideals and principles by the public for the public so they can be involved. It is their money. We have nothing to hide and we certainly have nothing to be ashamed of by asking the public of their opinion and getting their fingerprints on this, because otherwise, they have no say and they have to go through every process.

It is a challenging process even for those in this building. It is almost enormously impossible if you are not in this room making some of these decisions. That is why it's important to go to the public.

As I said earlier, I wish a recorded vote on this issue. Thank you.

#### RECORDED VOTE

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

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan):** Mr. Hawkins, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Dolynny, Mr. Nadli.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those opposed, please stand.

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan):** Mr. Moses, Mr. Blake.

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

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan):** Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. McLeod - Yellowknife South, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. McLeod - Inuvik Twin Lakes.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those in favour was six; all those opposed, two; abstentions, seven. The motion is carried.

---Carried

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Yakeleya.

#### MOTION 21-17(4): LIQUOR COMMISSION PROFITS TO PREVENTION, CARRIED

**MR. YAKELEYA:** WHEREAS alcohol and drug abuse is increasing throughout the Northwest Territories with devastating effects on family and community well-being and economic opportunity;

AND WHEREAS substance abuse and addictions issues cost the Government of the Northwest Territories millions of dollars in terms of health care and criminal justice systems;

AND WHEREAS liquor is a luxury item and taxed, generating revenues for the Government of the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS substance abuse treatment and prevention programs are limited and in need of additional resources;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that the Government of the Northwest Territories devote 10 percent of the net revenues generated by the Northwest Territories Liquor Commission to an alcohol abuse prevention and education campaign in communities throughout the Northwest Territories;

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

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. When most people talk about the price of liquor, they mean the price of a bottle of something at the store. Some of them are even run by our own government.

When we talk about it as we do as MLAs every single day, we talk about the real price, the price of our people through lost opportunities and even suffering. It is the price to our health system, to our

education, to the courts and corrections. We may be talking about hundreds of millions of dollars. I don't think Finance has added that up for us. I want to have a final view of those costs, all us here and the public.

We may not think much about this. Let's start with the Northwest Territories hospitalization report released in April. Overall we spend about \$70 million to take care of 3,500 residents hospitalized each year; 40 percent of the middle-aged adults are admitted with mental health issues or injuries. In other cases alcohol abuse is a very common factor. It is also a common factor of many of the chronic conditions causing injuries to go to the hospital, mental health issues, diabetes, kidney disease and so on. It is up tens of millions of dollars of hospital care alone. You get the idea.

There are big monies spent on doctors' and nurses' appointments, specialist care and medical travel. I would like to remind everyone that, overall, we spend about \$350 million on health and social services. We also know that alcohol is a factor in about 90 percent of the crimes in the Northwest Territories.

We have the highest rate of police reported crimes in Canada. How sad is that? Think about all the victims of these crimes. What does it cost to a woman who was assaulted? What is the cost of a broken family? What is the cost of bootlegging in our communities? What is the cost of culture being enveloped by booze? I can't put numbers on those, but my heart aches when I see these things in our communities. I think about what I might be able to do as an MLA.

The cost of our justice system is another matter. I can put some numbers to that. Overall we spend \$115 million here in Justice. Obviously, we can't save 90 percent that is due to the alcohol abuse, but it is safe to say that alcohol abuse is the cause of producing a significant amount, and that is about \$41 million a year. Alcohol is a factor in most of the crimes that result in jail time. The correction system costs us \$38 million a year. I'm sure our judges are very sick of hearing about alcohol addiction in the cases they hear. Court services cost about \$12 million a year with civil cases being some of that.

I made the point that alcohol abuse is a plague in our communities, and our government right now is dealing with it. I wouldn't get into the cost of education. The reason students don't show up in school and all that. We all know it is a very serious problem with huge consequences and it costs the whole Territories. Also, a lot of other costs are with the departments.

I do want to take a look at the liquor sales. Since this motion is about allocating some of the funds to the prevention of alcohol abuse, the Liquor

Commission sells \$46 million worth of hard liquor, beer and wine a year. That makes about 53 percent profit on it. By dollar value, our government sells more hard liquor than anything else. That's \$19.5 million per year, or 42 percent of the total sales of alcohol. I would bet it is hard liquor that is the most harmful to our people. I should ask that all the profits on the hard liquor be spent on prevention and education, but I am being modest here. The motion calls for 10 percent of the Liquor Commission's profits be spent on the alcohol abuse prevention and education campaigns in our communities. Last year that would be \$2.94 million, less than \$3 million. That is not too much to ask. It is common sense that we do it.

I want to make one point, it is a Liquor Commission's public reported mission to develop a healthy, responsible culture in our territory, but they are not doing it or it's not working. That is why we should pass this motion and the government act on it. It might take 12 steps to solve our alcohol problems, but let's take this crucial first step. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Ms. Bisaro, the seconder of the motion.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a few remarks. I would like to thank Mr. Yakeleya for bringing this motion forward. I am happy to second it to get it to the floor for some debate.

In my time in the North, I think nothing is a bigger issue for us than alcohol and alcohol abuse, and the resulting effects of alcohol on our residents and on our society. I was thinking about this the other day. I think the word scourge applies best to alcohol. Alcohol is a scourge of the NWT and the North and our society. We have to do something to try and address it, something more concrete, something more deliberate than what we are doing now. I'm not saying we're doing nothing. We certainly are doing things to try to address alcohol and alcohol abuse and the resulting ills that it creates for us.

We struggle every year it seems, when budget time comes around, to put an adequate amount of money into prevention, particularly for Health. Mr. Yakeleya mentioned a whole whack of numbers. The departments of Health and Justice particularly are really burdened by the cost of the results of alcohol amongst our residents. We have yet, I think from this side of the House, to see that we have put the correct amount of money into prevention. I know there's difficulty with people feeling targeting funds to a specific program is not well received in many areas. I think if we have a specific campaign – and in this case it's to deal with alcohol and alcohol abuse – I think it's the right thing to do and I think we could do the same in other areas of the government with some discussion.



I guess the last thing I would like to say is, this motion references an education campaign, and education campaigns well done can be very positive and they can have a positive effect on people's mentalities. I continually refer to drinking and driving. It used to be, however many years ago, depending on where you lived, I guess, quite acceptable for people to go drinking and then go driving. It is no longer acceptable to drink and drive and it's taken a very long time for us to get to this point and to get to this mindset, both as individuals and as a society. We no longer accept it and we can do the same thing for the use of alcohol and the abuse of alcohol, the need for us to abstain from it for our health, for the health of our society, for the health of our families, for the health of our children.

This targeting of funds to an alcohol abuse campaign and an education campaign are justified. I would encourage my colleagues to vote for the motion. I would hope that Cabinet would see it that way, as well, but I suspect not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, rise in support of this motion. I want to thank Member Yakeleya for his stewardship in this area. He's been a strong crusader of alcohol-related issues in communities, and I think this is just one of those good missions that he's on and I think he's doing a great job in doing so. I would like to thank the seconder, Ms. Bisaro, for allowing us to discuss this today here.

The motion comes down to literally almost the last or the second last line where it talks about devoting 10 percent of net revenues generated by a product in itself that has potential abusive properties and putting it into what we call prevention or promotion or an education campaign.

This is a strong area that's been championed by members of Social Programs in terms of putting more money back in. There's always been debate about how much money this government is spending on prevention and promotion. That number could be a moving target, depending what lens or what eyeglass you are looking at. We aren't hitting that mark right now, according to our calculations from the standing committee's perspective.

So this motion does speak to looking at a targeted item. This item is really an item of putting the money back into the very product that's causing damage to the moral fabric of our health care system. So really, in essence, it's a prudent investment if you look at it from that point of view.

The way it's generated right now, as we know on this side of the House, this is just general revenue. So again, when you have an opportunity of general revenues and not targeted revenues, we have less control on this side of the House to make sure we are targeting areas that need to be targeted for the Northwest Territories.

There is no denying that alcohol is tearing this territory apart and is causing our residents a lot of discord which then leads to a whole myriad of issues. So by this motion coming to light and the amount of debate we're having here really proves the fact that we care. This is a caring motion. Yes, it has a financial implication, but that financial implication is one in which is a business case, as far as I'm concerned. It's showing good stewardship from our side of the House and I'm hoping that Cabinet sees the same. I will be voting in support of this motion.

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

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You've heard my colleagues. They've all expressed reasons why we need to invest more dollars. Over our last couple of budgets, we've asked for those dollars, we fought for those dollars to be put into these areas. You've heard me in the House speaking in favour of the Mental Health Act, how we need to get more dollars for detox beds, treatment centres. This motion speaks to that. Plain and simple, we've heard it before over the 20 months.

Just for the record, I want to say I'm in support of this motion. I will support my colleagues moving forward and getting 10 percent of the revenue put back to help people who these sales are actually hurting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate all my colleagues' comments here and my colleagues who have brought this forward. I will be supporting this motion as well.

I frequently hear from constituents that we should be making this connection between dollars coming in from certain sources and issues that are related to that. That seems to be very problematic for government. I realize that. But here I think we are getting a common voice that reflects what we hear out on the street. So I'd really appreciate it if we can get this done. I will be supporting it. Mahsi.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The money from liquor revenues flow into general revenue. Out of general revenue, we

do the budget. Out of that budget, we target about \$350 million a year to Health and Social Services. That figure increases yearly at the highest rate of any department in government. That includes the cost related to addictions. So every Assembly I have been in – five now – they say, let's have the symbolic gesture of taking some money that already goes into revenue and target it and have some special levy on alcohol that you can point to that we are doing work over and above \$350 million. It comes up every year. So we will have that discussion. We'll have the discussion on what's adequate for prevention.

I do agree, first and foremost, with Ms. Bisaro that abuse of alcohol is without doubt a scourge. It is. I agree with her, as well, it's probably the biggest social problem we do have. So we will look at that through the budgeting process.

On behalf of my colleague Minister Beaulieu, Health and Social Services, I'd also like to just put on the record a fact that he forgot to mention in his comments to the previous issue of organ and tissue donation, that he will be instructing and bringing forward a legislative proposal for committee redoing the bill. So I have that on record. I know there are press releases that have gone out already on this issue, so you might have to do a caveat on that, but the government is going to come forward with a legislative proposal.

With regard to this issue, this is direction to government, we will continue to flow significant amounts of money. In fact, the forced growth money we have this coming year, the majority goes to health right off the top. So that continued investment will be there. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just briefly, I will be supporting the motion. I think my colleagues have said it quite well, so there's no need to continue on the process of reminding everyone. I think it's already been said repeatedly. I don't think I could say it better.

The only thing I would like to add is, it's a shame to be known for number one and this is not a category anyone should be proud of about alcohol abuse. The fact is we should be known as the number one crusaders to stop this problem, the number one people to protect our folks. So it's the wrong category to be known for and it's nothing to be proud of.

This motion says let's fight back with full vigor. So I will be supporting this motion.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I will allow the mover to have final remarks.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be short. I do want to thank the Members here, and I thank Ms. Bisaro for seconding this motion and the Members for supporting the motion. I do also want to thank the honourable Members from across to have this in consideration, recognizing the amount of money that we do put into health programs and the amount of money it costs our government due to the abuse of alcohol or just dealing with that issue in our small communities and even in our larger centres here. It is no stranger to anyone what we're dealing with.

I do want to say that what this motion is saying, is that we're giving strong recommendation to the government that revenue sales of liquor in the Northwest Territories, 10 percent of it should be taken out and go directly into communities for on-the-land programs, for active campaigning programs, for prevention and awareness, along with the health programs. There was \$2.24 million of profit made last year; \$2.4 million should be going directly into the communities along with the other programs that we have with Health and Social Services, Justice, Education, just like we have the Butthead campaign that actively is discouraging people from taking up tobacco and smoking.

That has to have that discussion. It's a strong, symbolic message to give the money to our people in our communities so they can use that money to do what they can do, take the people on the land and do some active campaigning. That is a very strong symbol that this government means serious business by taking money out of the revenue of the liquor sales.

That's what I'm asking, is a strong message to this government, and I hope they listen, because I will look forward to some of the discussions when we come to the floor on discussing the issues of alcohol and drug abuse in our communities, but more importantly, how can we save lives.

#### RECORDED VOTE

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The Member has asked for a recorded vote. All those in favour, please rise.

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan):** Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Blake, Mr. Dolynny, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Hawkins, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Moses, Mr. Bromley.

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

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan):** Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. McLeod - Yellowknife South, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. McLeod - Inuvik Twin Lakes.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Clerk. All those in favour, eight; all those abstaining, seven. The motion is carried.

---Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Mr. Miltenberger.

### First Reading of Bills

BILL 25:  
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT  
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),  
NO. 2, 2013-2014

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Bill 25, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2013-2014, be read for the first time. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Bill 25, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2013-2014, has had first reading.

---Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 19, second reading of bills. Mr. Yakeleya.

### Second Reading of Bills

BILL 24:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE LIQUOR ACT

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act, be read for the second time.

This bill amends the Liquor Act to enable Sahtu communities to request that the Minister hold a plebiscite to determine the wish of voters in those communities respecting the limitations of sale of liquor by a liquor store in the Sahtu communities.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 24 has had second reading is being referred to a standing committee.

---Carried

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

BILL 25:  
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT  
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),  
NO. 2, 2013-2014

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Bill 25, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2013-2014, be read for the second time.

This bill will make supplementary appropriations for operations expenditures for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 25 has had second reading.

---Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 22, Territorial Emblems and Honours Act; Tabled Document 70-17(4), Electoral Boundaries Commission, Final Report, May 2013; and Committee Report 5-17(4), Report on the Review of the Report of the Auditor General of Canada on the 2013 Northwest Territories Income Security Programs, with Mr. Dolynny in the chair.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. Ms. Bisaro, what is the wish of committee?

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Committee would like to consider Committee Report 5-17(4).

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Is committee agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you. First off is Mr. Nadli.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Government Operations has presented its report on the review of the 2013 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly. The committee's report, which was read into the record, includes 21 recommendations. For the benefit of the public, Members would like to explain how and why the committee conducts a review, as well as what's in the report.

Mr. Chair, the Auditor General of Canada is an important source of independent, professional advice for this Legislative Assembly. The Auditor General usually conducts one performance audit each year on specific programs and services of the Government of the Northwest Territories. The Assembly can make suggestions, but the choice of which programs to audit is up to the Auditor General.

Each year's audit report is provided to the Legislative Assembly and tabled in the House. Under the Rules of the Legislative Assembly, the Standing Committee on Government Operations has the mandate to review the Auditor General's reports. The committee holds preparatory meetings with the Auditor General's staff. The committee

then holds a public review and questions witnesses from the department or agency responsible. The committee issues its own report, based on what was learned during the public review. In this case, the committee has added 12 recommendations to the nine made by the Auditor General.

Mr. Chair, it is the Legislative Assembly's job to scrutinize government spending and performance, to ask questions and to hold the government publicly accountable for its actions. That's why the Standing Committee on Government Operations conducts a public review, reads its report into the public record, and moves the report's recommendations for adoption by the Assembly in Committee of the Whole. The government is obliged to account to the House by responding to the recommendations on the record within a specified time frame. The committee, the Assembly and the public expect answers.

The Standing Committee on Government Operations thanks the Auditor General of Canada and his staff for their work on the 2013 audit of four income security programs delivered by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. The programs audited were Income Assistance, Student Financial Assistance, the Senior Home Heating Subsidy and the Child Care User Subsidy.

The audit focused on two main questions. The first was whether the department was delivering its programs according to key elements of legislation and policies. The second was whether the department was collecting data and assessing program performance to ensure objectives are met.

The Standing Committee on Government Operations was dismayed to learn there are serious systemic problems with the delivery of income security programs with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. According to the Auditor General, the department is providing reasonable access to these programs and has established the required appeals processes. However, the Auditor General also found that many client files are not managed according to requirements; processes are unclear, not followed or incomplete; monitoring is inconsistent; financial oversight is sometimes lacking; employees are not sufficiently trained; and there is limited assessment of program performance. These issues are significant.

In its review of the report, the standing committee considered general issues as well as the specific findings of the audit. The committee concurs with the Auditor General's recommendations with regard to program delivery and evaluation, and makes additional recommendations on such issues as an integrated continuum of services, program accountability and reporting relationships, workload and safety concerns of front-line workers, the use of

voucher systems for income assistance and fairness of the appeals processes.

The Department of Education's income security programs cost the government \$30 million each year and affect more than 5,000 of our residents. These are important programs for people in need, students and seniors.

The committee is encouraged that the Minister has accepted the Auditor General's recommendations and that the department plans to implement them. Members are, nevertheless, convinced that ECE's Income Security Program delivery and evaluation will improve only if the department's senior management devotes sustained attention over a period of years to carry out the plan for reforms and create an organizational culture of client service.

The committee believes the Minister and the department are committed to change and we commend them for this. However, they are only at the beginning of a long journey. This Assembly, too, must develop sustained attention to ensure that the needed changes happen. Mahsi, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Mr. Nadli, for those opening comments. General comments. Mr. Nadli.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Before moving into a motion, I think it's been said that perhaps we need to understand this process of ensuring that we scrutinize the government and keep them accountable in terms of how funding is dispersed and policies are maintained, and the integrity of the institutions that we uphold on behalf of the public is something that our voters expect us to maintain. Therefore, an exercise that we had to endure today is a procedure that has been mandated to this committee. It has been a fairly monotonous task that needs to go forth.

COMMITTEE MOTION 67-17(4):  
INTEGRATED CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM,  
CARRIED

I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment take the lead in working with other GNWT social envelope departments and other service providers towards the development of an integrated case management system, consistent with its commitment to a culture of client service. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Ms. Bisaro.

COMMITTEE MOTION 68-17(4):  
STAFF REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS,  
CARRIED

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment clarify the reporting relationships of staff involved in the delivery of its income security programs with a view to making their accountability evident, and provide this information to the standing committee at the earliest opportunity.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the motion. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to make some general comments on all of these motions. I think it's important that we state how much effort the committee put into the consideration of this report. There was a great deal of detail that the Auditor General presented to committee in the report and committee considered it at length and quite carefully. I think the number of motions that have come out of this report are an indication of the concern that committee had for the findings in the Auditor General's report.

I realize the late hour. I would speak to some other motions, but I think I will just combine my comments to sort of general comments on this particular motion. I would urge the department to look seriously at all of the recommendations from committee. We didn't make them lightly. We certainly considered not making some of these motions but felt that they were... The point we're trying to get across was important enough that we did want to have more motions rather than less. In terms of all of these motions, they go to a particular concern either raised by the Auditor General and agreed to by the committee or a concern that the committee had that came from some of the information that the Auditor General brought forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Moses.

COMMITTEE MOTION 69-17(4):  
CLIENT SERVICE OFFICER CASELOADS,  
CARRIED

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Department of

Education, Culture and Employment set a standard for monthly client service officer caseloads, review staffing levels and rebalance workloads as needed. A backup system should be in place to provide additional experienced staff support where there is a temporary overload. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Moses. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Moses.

**MR. MOSES:** Mr. Chair, it has been a long day. We did read it in the 21 page report earlier. Being new to the government, I do feel that there are a lot of areas that needed to be fixed. We wouldn't have had to read a 21 page report with 21 recommendations into this House if the Department of Education, Culture and Employment were on top of things. I would have rather read it in a five page report or no report at all that said everything was good. We had a lot of unsatisfactory areas that deal with a lot of people that have come to my office and we actually had people in the gallery who had to express interest on this. With the low literacy rates that we already have in the Northwest Territories that contribute to our poverty, there is no way we could have deemed that report read, hoping that somebody is going to read this report to some of our clientele. That is ridiculous.

I will make one general comment here today on all the motions. They do need to be addressed. People are still living in poverty. We are burning out our workers, our CSOs, and the decision of committee this morning was to read it because we felt that we as a committee had to be accountable, transparent, had to let residents of the NWT hear what was in the report so that they can keep us accountable as well.

The committee has worked hard on this. Staff has worked hard on this. Just moving forward, I just needed to make the general comment on all of our areas. The report itself has a lot of really good information in there. This is something that we do owe to the residents of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Moses. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question is being called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Yakeleya.

COMMITTEE MOTION 70-17(4):  
REPORTING OF CLIENT SERVICE OFFICERS'  
TURNOVER RATES,  
CARRIED

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment report the turnover rate for its client service officers annually as a performance measure in the department's business plan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Nadli.

COMMITTEE MOTION 71-17(4):  
SAFE AND WELCOMING WORKPLACES FOR  
FRONT-LINE INCOME SECURITY WORKERS,  
CARRIED

**MR. NADLI:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment prioritize the establishment of safe workplaces for its front-line Income Security workers, bearing in mind the need to retain a welcoming atmosphere for clients, and the report on client service officers' satisfaction with safety measures annually as a performance measure in the department's business plan.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Ms. Bisaro.

COMMITTEE MOTION 72-17(4):  
REPORTING ON VOUCHER SYSTEMS  
FOR INCOME ASSISTANCE,  
CARRIED

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment report to the Standing Committee on Social Programs on the use of voucher systems for income assistance in Northwest Territories communities, noting locations, numbers of clients, features of the systems, monitoring by the department, performance measures and evaluation results. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Moses.

COMMITTEE MOTION 73-17(4):  
SUPPORT FOR INCOME SECURITY  
APPELLANTS,  
CARRIED

**MR. MOSES:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment provide support to income security appellants at least until the hearing, in the case of both new and existing income assistance clients and for ongoing student financial assistance clients. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Moses. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Yakeleya.

COMMITTEE MOTION 74-17(4):  
SENIOR HOME HEATING SUBSIDY,  
CARRIED

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment considers options to ensure that Senior Home Heating Subsidy recipients have the opportunity to use their fuel subsidy amount, and that the department presents needs options to the Standing Committee on Social Programs within the 2013-2014 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Nadli.

COMMITTEE MOTION 75-17(4):  
POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES  
FOR INCOME SECURITY PROGRAM DELIVERY,  
CARRIED

**MR. NADLI:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment clarify policies, procedures and guidelines outlining Income Security Program delivery requirements and how to meet them, and ensure staff understand and are following these procedures and guidelines. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Ms. Bisaro.

COMMITTEE MOTION 76-17(4):  
REVISED CHILD CARE USER SUBSIDY,  
CARRIED

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that as the Department of Education, Culture and Employment introduces its revised Child Care User Subsidy within the Income Assistance program, it should develop clear guidelines that are consistent with program requirements and clearly communicate these requirements to front-line staff and potential applicants. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Moses.

COMMITTEE MOTION 77-17(4):  
MONITORING OF CLIENT FILES BY REGIONAL  
MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS,  
CARRIED

**MR. MOSES:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment ensure that regional managers and supervisors formally monitor client files. This monitoring should include regularly scheduled reviews of client files as well as the use of standard templates in all regions to help ensure a consistent approach. In cases where monitoring uncovers deficiencies or other issues, regional

managers and supervisors should follow up formally. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Moses. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Yakeleya.

COMMITTEE MOTION 78-17(4):  
PRODUCTIVE CHOICES  
PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS,  
CARRIED

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment clarify program requirements for productive choices in its guidance to client service officers and clearly communicate them. Regional managers should also monitor compliance with productive choice requirements and take corrective action where necessary. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Nadli.

COMMITTEE MOTION 79-17(4):  
EVALUATION OF PRODUCTIVE CHOICES  
PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS,  
CARRIED

**MR. NADLI:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment undertake a complete evaluation of the productive choice component of the Income Assistance program as a priority, that the evaluation involve the community leadership and residents, and the department provide options for change in their productive choices component of Income Assistance to the Standing Committee on Social Programs within the life of the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Mahsi, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Ms. Bisaro.

COMMITTEE MOTION 80-17(4):  
AUDITING INCOME SECURITY FILES,  
CARRIED

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that in accordance with its program requirements, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment should review a selection of income security files periodically, to ensure that clients receive benefits to which they are entitled. The department should establish a framework to identify files to audit, based on predetermined criteria. Results should be reported to the director of income security annually.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Moses.

COMMITTEE MOTION 81-17(4):  
COLLECTION PROCEDURES FOR INCOME  
ASSISTANCE OVERPAYMENTS,  
CARRIED

**MR. MOSES:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment identifies income assistance overpayments, it should comply with the Financial Administration Manual requirements for collecting them. It should follow collection procedures by issuing invoices and written notifications per the required schedule, and forward outstanding debts to the Department of Finance for collection when required. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Moses. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Yakeleya.

COMMITTEE MOTION 82-17(4):  
REPAYMENT OF STUDENT LOANS,  
CARRIED

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment should modify

its management of student loans to ensure that identification of student loans due for repayment does not rely solely on students' notification or manual review by the officials. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Nadli.

COMMITTEE MOTION 83-17(4):  
COMPETENCY-BASED TRAINING PROGRAMS  
FOR CLIENT SERVICE AND  
STUDENT CASE OFFICERS,  
CARRIED

**MR. NADLI:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment formalize current and future competency-based training programs for client service officers and student case officers, and should identify and provide core training so officers can attain and maintain the competencies their jobs require. The department should also ensure that staff members receive regular training updates, to ensure that they fully understand Income Security Program requirements. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know this is one of the really important, they are all important, but this one was key in terms of delivering a good quality service to our public that the Auditor General spoke to. I really very much appreciate all the work of this committee on all of these recommendations coming forward, a really good piece of work here.

The thing I hear most frequently from clients and from non-government organizations that often support and assist them in gaining access to government services is the lack of dignity. It is very unusual to find anybody who chooses to be in these unfortunate situations and have to go looking for assistance. When they do, they are very vulnerable people. That can make a huge difference in their lives in so many other ways. Several of these motions have dealt with this, making the office welcoming as well as safe and so on. I just want to bring that up.

I know that the Minister is well aware of this and working on this as we speak, but it has been brought forward very clearly here by committee and I support this. Mahsi.



**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Ms. Bisaro.

COMMITTEE MOTION 84-17(4):  
REPORTING OF INCOME ASSISTANCE  
CLIENT SURVEY RESULTS,  
CARRIED

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment report its Income Assistance client survey results annually as a performance measure in the departmental business plan. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Moses.

COMMITTEE MOTION 85-17(4):  
TARGETS AND OUTCOME MEASURES FOR  
INCOME SECURITY PROGRAMS,  
CARRIED

**MR. MOSES:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment establish targets and outcome measures that align with the overall objective for its income security programs; review the data it currently collects on income security programs, to ensure it has the data required to measure whether targets and outcomes are being met; and develop a plan to identify when it will evaluate its programs, to determine if the objective of those income security programs is being met. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Moses. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Yakeleya.

COMMITTEE MOTION 86-17(4):  
PROGRESS REPORT ON INCOME SECURITY  
PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS,  
CARRIED

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment report to the Standing Committee on Social Programs by April 30<sup>th</sup> of each year on its progress in implementing the recommendations of the Auditor General and this House with respect to income security programs during the preceding fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Nadli.

COMMITTEE MOTION 87-17(4):  
RESPONSE WITHIN 120 DAYS,  
CARRIED

**MR. NADLI:** Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment provide a comprehensive response to this report within 120 days. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Committee, is consideration of Committee Report 5-17(4), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the Report of the Auditor General Canada on the 2013 Northwest Territories Income Security Program concluded?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that we report progress.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** I will now rise and report progress. Thank you.

### Report of Committee of the Whole

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

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Committee Report 5-17(4), Report on the Review of the Auditor General of Canada on the 2013 Northwest Territories Income Security Programs and I'd like to report progress with 21 motions being adopted and that Committee Report 5-17(4) is concluded. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Motion is in order. Do we have a seconder to the motion? Mr. Miltenberger.

---Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Miltenberger.

### Third Reading of Bills

BILL 25:  
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT  
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),  
NO. 2, 2013-2014

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Bill 25, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2013-2014, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 25, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2013-2014, has had third reading.

---Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:** Madam Clerk, would you ascertain if the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, George L. Tuccaro, is prepared to enter the Chamber to assent to bills.

### ASSENT TO BILLS

**COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Hon. George Tuccaro):** Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly, good afternoon.

I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to many Northerners who, over the past several months, have been presented with many awards to recognize their name and varied achievements, including educators, graduating students from high schools and Aurora College, "wise women," NWT volunteers, athletes and coaches, and volunteers with St. John Ambulance.

I would like to wish each of you a safe, healthy and happy summer as you take your break and enjoy quality time with your families, even as you continue working for the betterment of all Northerners.

Please encourage and remind your families, friends and people in your communities to be safe out on the land and to wear personal flotation devices when travelling by boat on our waterways

I look forward to seeing you all again here in the House during the fall sitting.

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I am pleased to assent to the following bills:

- Bill 11, Financial Administration and Public Agency Statutes (Borrowing Provisions) Amendment Act;
- Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Tlicho Community Government Act;
- Bill 22, Territorial Emblems and Honours Act;
- Bill 23, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2013-2014; and
- Bill 25, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2013-2014.

Thank you, merci beaucoup, mahsi cho, quanani, koana.

I stand corrected, Bill 22 is not ready for assent at this time. Thank you very much.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Colleagues, be seated. My turn. Colleagues, before we close today, I'd like to take the opportunity to recognize one of my elders and express my condolences. In my home community, we just recently lost one of our respected elders, Joe Panaktalok. Originally from Cambridge Bay, he set sail with his parents on the St. Roch, when he was four years old, to Tuktoyaktuk, where he made his home.

He went from travelling with dog teams, reindeer herding and gold mining to running heavy equipment. Joe has seen change in our way of life but kept his traditional knowledge and his culture very strong. He taught and passed his hunting skills on to his children and his grandchildren well. Our community of Tuktoyaktuk and beyond respected Joe, who was always willing to lend a helping hand in any way.

Joe was a family man. He kept his circle strong. Over the years his health began to slow and not once did he complain. Our community will miss him dearly. "Joe Blow" was a mighty man. We value and respect our elders who are keepers of our land, culture and tradition.

I am sending prayers and sincere condolences to his wife, Barb, family and friends.

I'd also like to express my condolences to the family in Tulita of Mrs. Lucy Doctor. Mrs. Doctor was born in Tulita and spent her life living in a traditional way on the land. She's raised all of her 11 children, many other children, and 50 grandchildren.

My sincere condolences to the family of Mrs. Doctor and to Faye and Mervin Junior. Mervin, who is in Tulita, thoughts and prayers with you and your family.

Although it's been a relatively short sitting of our Assembly, you have accomplished a great deal in the time allotted. You have considered and adopted four bills, two of them dealing with supplementary appropriations; considered three committee reports; debated nine motions; and referred 11 bills to standing committee for further consideration during the summer and fall.

We are all aware, colleagues, that this sitting will also be remembered for the introduction, debate and adoption of a motion of support for the approval of the Northwest Territories Lands and Resources Devolution Agreement, a historic event for this Assembly and for our territory.

---Applause

As we leave the Chamber today, it's looking like a very busy summer for all Members of this Assembly. There is much work to be done, with committees travelling throughout the territory on the review of bills, the government preparing for devolution implementation and departments continuing their work. In spite of this schedule, I do encourage you all to take the time to celebrate two very special events coming up – National Aboriginal Day on June 21<sup>st</sup> and Canada Day on July 1<sup>st</sup> – the perfect opportunity to celebrate both the outstanding achievements and diverse culture of the Northwest Territories and our special place in Canada.

A little earlier, colleagues, I spoke of the history being made in this Assembly. I'd like to take this opportunity to invite you and all residents of the NWT to help us celebrate some of that history. This September that marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our beautiful Assembly building and the official dedication by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Our celebrations will be taking place September 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, and I invite you all to join us in the capital to mark this milestone.

Of course, I cannot close without a thank you to the Pages who have assisted us during this session. We have had students from Range Lake North School in Yellowknife, East Three School in Inuvik

and Deh Gah School in Fort Providence. Thank you to all our Pages.

---Applause

To my colleagues and Members, I wish you a safe summer. Be safe when you're travelling, spend time with your families, and God bless you. Watch yourselves.

Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

#### **ACTING CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Ms. Langlois):**

Mr. Speaker, orders of the day for Thursday, October 17, 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
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 22, Territorial Emblems and Honours Act
  - Tabled Document 70-17(4), Electoral Boundaries Commission, Final Report, May 2013
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, October 17<sup>th</sup>, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:38 p.m.