



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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

**Day 33**

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

## **HANSARD**

**Thursday, October 17, 2013**

Pages 2919 – 2954

**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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*Minister of Human Resources*

*Minister of Public Works and Services*

*Minister responsible for the*

*Public Utilities Board*

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(Tu Nedhe)

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**Mrs. Jane Groenewegen**

(Hay River South)

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**Hon. J. Michael Miltenberger**

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*Government House Leader*

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**Mr. Alfred Moses**

(Inuvik Boot Lake)

**Mr. Michael Nadli**

(Deh Cho)

**Hon. David Ramsay**

(Kam Lake)

*Minister of Industry, Tourism*

*and Investment*

*Minister of Transportation*

**Mr. Norman Yakeleya**

(Sahtu)

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>PRAYER</b> .....	<b>2919</b>
<b>MINISTERS' STATEMENTS</b> .....	<b>2920</b>
75-17(4) – Sessional Statement (B. McLeod) .....	2920
<b>MEMBERS' STATEMENTS</b> .....	<b>2922</b>
Benefits of Devolution and Opportunities for Development (Groenewegen) .....	2922
Closure of Nats'ejee K'eh Treatment Centre (Dolynny) .....	2922
Infrastructure Requirements in the Deh Cho (Nadli) .....	2923
Innovative Solutions to Giant Mine Remediation (Hawkins) .....	2924
International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (Bisaro) .....	2924
Homelessness, Addictions and Poverty in the Northwest Territories (Moses) .....	2925
Eradicating Poverty in the Northwest Territories (Bromley) .....	2925
Strategic Investments in the Sahtu Region (Yakeleya) .....	2926
Governance of the Deh Cho Health and Social Services Authority (Menicoche) .....	2926
Seasonal Greetings and Salutations (Blake) .....	2927
<b>RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY</b> .....	<b>2927</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>2928</b>
<b>ORAL QUESTIONS</b> .....	<b>2928</b>
<b>WRITTEN QUESTIONS</b> .....	<b>2938</b>
<b>RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS</b> .....	<b>2938</b>
<b>REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS</b> .....	<b>2940</b>
<b>TABLING OF DOCUMENTS</b> .....	<b>2941</b>
<b>CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS</b> .....	<b>2942</b>
<b>REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE</b> .....	<b>2952</b>
<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b> .....	<b>2953</b>



**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Thursday, October 17, 2013****Members Present**

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

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson):** Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back as we reconvene the Fourth Session of the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

It has been an exciting and very busy summer and fall for all of you as we prepare for the implementation of our Devolution Agreement currently in place with the Government of Canada.

In addition, our committees have been considering legislation and travelling throughout our territory to hear from NWT residents and bring their thoughts and concerns back to the House.

I would also like to take note that we're at the halfway point of the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, a time for reflection and renewed commitment to the people of the Northwest Territories.

This session will also be a time for celebration as the Assembly marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our current home. In 1990 the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories made the decision to proceed with the construction of a permanent Legislative Assembly building. This fall is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the occupancy of the building and its official dedication by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Colleagues, we are recognized by many jurisdictions for our distinctive form of government. I think we are also recognized for our distinctive and beautiful legislative home. I look forward to celebrating this building and all it signifies with the people of the Northwest Territories.

The doors of the Legislative Assembly, including the Chamber and the Caucus room, will be open to the public on Friday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, beginning at 4:30 p.m. and I extend an invitation to everyone to join us in celebrating our special occasion. We are considered a young Assembly by many, but our history is vibrant and lives with us every day, not only as our Legislative Assembly processes but in this building.

This session will also see the unveiling of the new Legislative Assembly website. The website was designed to highlight the work that we do here, and

to improve easy access, accountability and transparency.

The site is still being finalized. Stay tuned for the announcement when it's up and running, hopefully within the next few weeks. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our former Principal Clerk of Committees, Ms. Jennifer Knowlan, and public affairs and communications advisor, Danielle Mager, for all their hard work on this project.

On a more sombre note, it is with sincere condolences that I recognize with prayers and strength the families of the late Walter Elias for his wife, Maureen Elias, and their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren; Fiona Lennie for her mother and father, Margaret and Floyd Lennie, and her brothers and sisters; Mr. Robert Avik of Tuk for his common-law, Amanda Panaktolak, and their children; Lucy Kudlak for her mother and father, Martha and Frank Kudlak, and her children; Andy Carpenter Jr. for his mother and father, Kelly Stewart and Andy Carpenter Sr.; and Edward Ruben for his wife, Mabel Ruben, and their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Today I'm going to read Edward's eulogy. Edward Angusinauk Ruben was born May 1, 1917, to Angik and Sadie Sukayaluk Ruben. He was the third-oldest son and took the responsibility of caring and providing for his parents and younger brothers and sisters. Those early years were a struggle but also happy times. Times were hard, travelling great distances on foot or with dog teams, hunting and fishing, getting ready for the winter. Happy times also as he spent time with his dad, getting to know the land and happy just learning things from his dad. He enjoyed listening to his dad tell stories at this time and getting to know his dad's relatives through his stories.

He met and married Frances Nauyak Green, the adopted daughter of Johnny and Jessie Green, where he raised six children but lost a baby boy to illness. He lost his young wife to birthing complications in 1953. With the help of his parents and Jessie Green, he was able to continue to keep his family together.

In the early years he was employed as a cook on the mission boat, Lady of Lourdes, where he would travel to Aklavik and Tuk with the missionaries. In 1954 he began working for the DEW Line in Cape

Parry as a janitor. He took pride in his job, never once complaining of his position. He never had a formal education but he would be heard telling his grandchildren to get an education. During his time on the DEW Line, he had many friends who highly respected and liked him.

During the later '50s he met Mabel Jacobson, a young girl from Tuk, who he married in Cape Parry in 1959. With her, they bore 10 children. In 1966 he transferred to Cambridge Bay and remained there with his family until 1973. That same year his eldest son, James, joined him. After 20 years on the DEW Line, he finally retired and moved back to Paulatuk. He was happy to be back home amongst his brothers and sisters, happy to be hunting and trapping again and travelling out on the land. He had respect for the land where he was raised, and throughout his life he would raise his concerns and voice his strong opinions about the government wanting to make changes to his people's way of life. He was not one to remain still for long. He would keep himself busy in any way. In the 1970s he became involved with the COPE organization and traveled around to various communities with the group. Edward lived a full, rich life, surrounded by his family and loved ones. He was well respected. He lived through and witnessed many changes throughout his life, yet he remained true to his upbringing, keeping close to his heart what he was taught from his parents. He was a religious man and it would please him greatly when his family would gather together to say the rosary. Family was very important to him and he would often remind his children to stay together as a family and pray together.

He was the family stronghold and tried his best to keep his children rooted. He had a gentle manner and wisdom. His dedication will be greatly missed by the many people that he touched across the North and whoever visited him. There was more to Edward than his simple words, and in the hearts of many, they will realize this.

Rest safely in the arms of the many in heaven who have waited for your coming.

To all in the Northwest Territories who have lost loved ones, to friends and colleagues in the Yukon, as well, who have lost loved ones, our thoughts and prayers are with you all.

As we turn our attention, colleagues, to the work at hand, I ask that you continue to treat each other and this institution with dignity and respect. I will continue to guide this House and its actions according to the rules that the Assembly has agreed upon and the trust you have placed in me.

I would like to advise the House that I have received the following correspondence from the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories:

Dear Mr. Speaker: I wish to advise that I recommend to the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories the passage of Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2014-2015; Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2013-2014; and Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2013-2014, during the Fourth Session of the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. Yours truly, George L. Tuccaro, Commissioner.

Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

## Ministers' Statements

### MINISTER'S STATEMENT 75-17(4): SESSIONAL STATEMENT

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome my colleagues back to the continuation of the Fourth Session of the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. It is good to be getting back to work. We have an ambitious agenda, Mr. Speaker, and a lot left to accomplish as a territory and as a government, so I hope my colleagues are feeling well-rested.

The Fourth Session began on February 6, 2013. During the winter and spring sittings of this session, Members considered and passed 13 bills contributing to the good government and administration of the Northwest Territories. This included the 2013-14 budget, which was passed after extensive review and debate this past March.

Ensuring the effective and efficient use of public funds is one of our most important tasks as legislators, Mr. Speaker, and during this session we will be considering the 2014-15 Infrastructure Plan. For several years now we have reviewed the annual capital plan in the fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly to better support and prepare for the new construction season. Although we consider the capital and operations budgets at separate times, capital spending is a significant and critical part of the overall Government of the Northwest Territories budget.

Capital investments are necessary for building and maintaining the infrastructure – schools, health centres, garages, workshops and offices – where the government's programs and services are planned and delivered to the people of the Northwest Territories. The 2014-15 Infrastructure Budget continues this government's pursuit of a balanced agenda, with investments in the health and well-being of Northwest Territories residents, environmental management and economic development. Minister Miltenberger will have more to say about the capital budget when it is formally introduced for the consideration of the House.

More than a dozen pieces of legislation have been passed so far during the Fourth Session. There are a number of bills currently before standing committees, including a new Wildlife Act and amendments to the Education Act to address bullying. We look forward to continued debate on all these bills in Committee of the Whole after they have been reported back to the House.

While debates in this House are central to the business of government, this is not the only place that Members of the Legislative Assembly get the business of the people of the Northwest Territories done. Since our last sitting in May, I know that standing committees have been busy meeting and traveling to consider matters of importance to residents.

Ministers, too, have been busy advancing the interests of the Northwest Territories and meeting with residents around the North. Over the past few months, Cabinet Ministers and I continued our commitment to engaging with Aboriginal governments by attending summer assemblies and annual general meetings of the Tlicho, the Akaitcho and Gwich'in, as well as the Dene National Assembly. Next month Ministers will also be attending the Northwest Territories Metis Nation Annual General Meeting.

I was very pleased to attend the Sahtu Annual General Assembly in Tulita, where Mr. Yakeleya and I joined in celebrations marking the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Sahtu Dene and Metis Land Claim and unveiling of the Sahtu Land Use Plan. It was a privilege to be present for the arrival of the traditional moose skin boat, the first of its kind made and paddled on the Mackenzie in many years.

Engagement with our colleagues at the federal, provincial and territorial levels is another way that the Government of the Northwest Territories can represent and advance the interests of the people of the territory. Of particular note is work that this government is doing at the national level on the social housing and Aboriginal educational achievement files. We are also part of the ongoing national work on labour market and anti-bullying issues, which were discussed by Premiers at our Council of the Federation and Western Premiers meetings over the summer.

We have also had the opportunity to showcase the Northwest Territories and the work we are doing with our colleagues from across the country, at both the annual Energy and Mining Ministers Conference the Northwest Territories hosted in August and the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Seniors Ministers meetings that were held here in Yellowknife just last week. Next year we look forward to welcoming Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers responsible for the Status of Women to the Northwest Territories for their annual meeting.

On the international stage our government continues to promote awareness of the Northwest Territories and its interests. Canada's chairmanship of the Arctic Council will draw attention to Canada's North. We support Canada's focus on sustainable development and are engaged with the federal government to make sure our interests are represented in council proceedings. Canada's chairmanship will also be an opportunity to showcase the Northwest Territories to the world as Arctic Council meetings are held in our territory. Already we have hosted a meeting of the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna working group and look forward to more meetings, including the Senior Arctic Officials next March.

This summer also marked significant milestones in some major projects, including the commissioning of the Bluefish Dam, attended by Commissioner Tuccaro, Minister Miltenberger and Mr. Robert Hawkins, Member for Yellowknife Centre. The new dam is a major piece of public infrastructure that, along with the Snare Hydro system, supplies power for Behchoko, Yellowknife, Ndilo and Detah. Together the two systems are a source of renewable power for more than half the population of the territory that help to displace the use of more expensive diesel fuel and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Bluefish project was a step towards a future energy system that makes better use of the tremendous hydro potential the Northwest Territories has to help create sustainable communities and grow and diversify our economy.

Another significant achievement was the signing of the Final Agreement on Devolution on June 25<sup>th</sup>. I was proud to join Minister Valcourt and leaders from the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Northwest Territories Metis Nation, Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated, Gwich'in Tribal Council and Tlicho Government, as well as several Ministers and yourself, Mr. Speaker, in Inuvik for this historic event.

Gaining northern control over public lands and resources has been a long-standing goal for the government and Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, and many previous Legislative Assemblies. This agreement will make that dream a reality effective April 1, 2014, and give the people of this territory the authority to control development, protect the environment and direct our economic future according to northern priorities and values.

Work on this critical priority has continued over the summer and fall, and recently culminated in the announcement of the new organizational structure for the Government of the Northwest Territories when devolution takes effect on April 1, 2014. That announcement was made at the beginning of October, at the same time as our government issued job offers to 118 federal employees who

currently deliver programs and services that will be transferred to the Government of the Northwest Territories. We look forward to welcoming these dedicated and experienced people into the Government of the Northwest Territories, where they can continue their service to the North and help us make the transition to devolution smooth and efficient.

We also continue to work on the seven bills and over 20 regulations that must be enacted by April 1<sup>st</sup> in accordance with “mirroring” standards required in the Devolution Final Agreement. In addition, work is underway on new legislation required to implement the Devolution Agreement, including the NWT Intergovernmental Lands and Resources Management Agreement Act, the NWT Intergovernmental Resource Revenue Sharing Act and the Devolution Measures Implementation Act.

Mr. Speaker, the Government and Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories continue to work to advance the interests of all the people of this territory. We will pass the second anniversary of our first meeting as the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly during this Fourth Session. We have accomplished a lot on behalf of our people in the past two years, but there is much more work ahead. With the expected conclusion of the session and the opening of the Fifth Session next month, the Commissioner will be delivering his opening address outlining the government’s achievements to date and an agenda for the remainder of our term.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members’ statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

### Members’ Statements

#### MEMBER’S STATEMENT ON BENEFITS OF DEVOLUTION AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It’s a pleasure to be back here in the Legislative Assembly. It seems like we were gone for a long time.

Mr. Speaker, today I wanted to just touch on a few items related to devolution. The Premier has highlighted some of these benefits in his sessional statement that he just provided. He’s talked about jobs and he’s talked about the control of land and water and resources. I think we need to keep our eye on the big picture here. The revenues from royalties and the positions that will transfer to the North are, of course, a wonderful benefit and we’d like to see more of those in the regions than may be currently contemplated. We need to focus on the fact that we will have the control over the land and the resources. We need something to happen in the South Slave, and we have looked and talked about,

for so many years, the potential for development of our hydro resources. It’s a renewable resource. We look at the Taltson Dam, for example, which would be a very, very key project for the benefit of the people in the South Slave and for the whole territory, and we have kind of danced around that topic of the expansion of the Taltson for a very long time.

I’m hoping that devolution will be a part of us being able to take a bolder stand. We wasted \$17 million trying to figure out how to send the excess power and newly generated power to diamond mines that had a 25-year lifespan and we never had a real clear indication the diamond mines even wanted it, but we spent \$17 million doing that.

We have in northern Alberta, obviously a very ready market for hydro, clean energy. The Prime Minister of Canada stood here in the Great Hall of this Legislative Assembly and talked about natural gas and the clean energy that could come from the Northwest Territories. The export of that hydro power could contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and to a cleaner environment, not just for the North but for the whole globe.

I’m hoping that we’ll get our eye on the big picture. We have many opportunities for development. Obviously, if we were going to hang our hats on how many jobs we’re going to get in the South Slave from devolution, we would probably be sorely disappointed. I mean, we’ll see what rolls out in the future, but at this point, we’re not exactly jumping up and down for joy about that. But let’s look at the bigger picture; let’s look at the higher level.

I will have questions for the Premier later on today about how we can use this new-found authority and ability we have through devolution, to move forward and advance some of these major projects that can benefit all of the Northwest Territories, including the South Slave region, and not just continue to fight over a couple of jobs. Let’s look at the big picture. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER’S STATEMENT ON CLOSURE OF NATS’EJEE K’EH TREATMENT CENTRE

**MR. DOLYUNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It’s great to be back and it’s hard not to notice your brand-new moccasins today. Looking good, my friend, looking good.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this summer, and in stunning fashion, our Minister of Health and Social Services made a unilateral decision to cease funding to our only territorial residential addictions treatment facility.



I can assure the people of the Northwest Territories, if this was a complete surprise, you were not alone. We all know that drug and alcohol addictions are a very serious scourge in every community, large and small. Addictions are an immense personal problem in the lives of many of the people, including our students at school. Addictions also place an incredible burden on this government, particularly in health and social services, justice, housing and education. It's hard to quantify what addictions cost the GNWT, but some have speculated it to be more than \$100 million a year.

By human nature, we want to believe in the good that is achieved through research. So, last year the Health Minister tabled an Action Plan on Mental Health and Addictions, then there was a long-awaited report on the Minister's Forum on Addictions and Community Wellness. This forum was touted as what the people want. Like many, I was impressed, yet months later I'm questioning whether we're using these reports as a roadmap to reducing addictions and helping the people of the Northwest Territories.

Honestly, I've looked through both documents in detail and neither report mentioned any need to close the Nats'ejee K'eh Treatment Centre. In fact, these reports say quite the opposite, making recommendations for better coordination with the interagency representatives and developing mandatory six-month aftercare programs, but nothing about closing, and definitely nothing about its employees or clients being at risk as the Minister has referenced in the media.

Not only is there no detox centre, there is no inter-territory treatment centre either. Instead the people are left with the second empty treatment centre in 14 years with no indication of what will be done with the building.

I stand before this House, before the people of the Northwest Territories, struggling to reconcile the Minister's action plan for mental health and addictions. We clearly do not have the services we need to deal with the many gaps of our addictions and wellness programs.

We are failing our people who need the proper medically controlled detoxification program. We are failing our youth who need specific programs designed for them. We are failing people who need specialized treatments for crack cocaine addiction, solvent abuse and prescription drug abuse, and we are failing a large percentage of our people who don't fit in on-the-land and mobile treatment models.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. DOLYNNY:** The verdict is out. The people want answers. The people deserve answers to these addiction questions. In the spirit of transparency, I will be asking the Minister of Health, the man with the plan, to please enlighten us with his vision later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS IN THE DEH CHO

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This month it is our task to approve the Government of the Northwest Territories' 2014-15 Infrastructure Acquisition Plan. By now Members have all reviewed the plan and discussed how it meets our communities' needs. Our wishes will always exceed what fits into the budget, but our government still needs to focus on our small communities, especially in the Deh Cho.

Enterprise and Kakisa need local water treatment plants. There is no reason that in a jurisdiction with such an abundance of high-quality fresh water, that these communities must rely on trucked services from Hay River. The government can argue that it is up to the communities to fund this sort of project themselves, but while Enterprise and Kakisa might have the capacity to maintain a small-scale water treatment plant, they do not have the capacity to undertake such a project.

Mining and exploration camps provide clean drinking water, demonstrating that affordable small-scale water treatment solutions exist. I encourage the government to work with our small communities and take a more innovative approach to their water needs.

Schools in the Deh Cho and all our small communities need reliable Internet access, physical education, recreation and library facilities that can serve the whole community. They need to be well-lit, clean, safe places to work, play and learn.

Other Members as well as myself are sorry to note that the 2014-15 plan does not place enough emphasis on our school infrastructure needs. I am pleased, however, that the 2014-15 Capital Plan includes a new health centre in Fort Providence. It will make a difference not only to the people of the hamlet but throughout the Deh Cho. Our communities need quality health care. Service delivery is obviously different than in large centres, but the facilities need to be attractive to skilled professionals like doctors, nurses and teachers, and offer the amenities they need to do a good job serving the people.

The Deh Cho is one of the most accessible regions of the Northwest Territories, and one of the most breathtaking in terms of its landscape and scenery.

The 2014-15 Capital Plan includes enhancements to our territorial parks in the Deh Cho. Tourism opportunities abound in my riding, especially as we promote the Deh Cho Bridge. Efforts to maintain highways throughout the region will only make the destination more popular. Our parks will improve visitors' experiences in the Northwest Territories and make them want to return.

Investments in territorial infrastructure are truly that: investments, investments in our public places, our people and our future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO GIANT MINE REMEDIATION

**MR. HAWKINS:** Mr. Speaker, everywhere I go I hear the same story: Freezing of the arsenic in the ground is the best temporary solution, but people are expecting something better at the Giant Mine site. Yes, they know that the best engineering of the day is being implemented, but they don't want that as the long-term solution. There lies the problem, Mr. Speaker.

Some of the world's greatest innovators of our time have always found a way by facing down insurmountable challenges with both genius and, certainly, perseverance. The Giant Mine problem, as we know it, has left a costly legacy of arsenic in the ground for Northerners and Canadians alike. This problem, some will say, is way too big to solve. I say this problem is way too big to ignore.

As stated by the experts, it will cost \$1.9 million every year to operate this mine in perpetuity by freezing that arsenic under the ground. I say that's unacceptable. We could all agree that almost \$2 million a year definitely will add up and it could go in better areas where we need it.

It's not too late to start asking, have we done everything we could, have we done everything we can on this particular problem. Sometimes our greatest challenges are no less our greatest opportunities. All over the world there are talented individuals out there waiting to be inspired by this problem. Just a scratch away, they could solve it. We need to get out there and find these people. To stimulate innovation, I propose a lump-sum payment such as maybe 10 or 20 million dollars to inspire that innovation. For the successful innovator who can solve the Giant Mine problem permanently, this Giant Mine enigma, the reward would create inspired thinking and ingenuity across the world that would save the world rather than ignoring this problem.

If a solution is not found, we all know it would cost nothing, but we could do so much more with this potential of trying to get people engaged in our

problem. We are not alone, so stop tackling the problem alone as it is. This could be a landmark contribution, whether it's to the environment field or even just simply to humankind by saving our planet. People have always been motivated by the advances of science and opportunity. Here lies an opportunity. Let Churchill remind us clearly, "pessimists see the difficulty in every opportunity; optimists see the opportunity in every difficulty." It is time to reach for that opportunity through innovation. Today is the day.

I will be asking the Premier to see if he will work towards creating a partnership with our AANDC folks to stimulate innovation on solving the Giant Mine problem. Thank you.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. As the name suggests, it is celebrated every year on October 17<sup>th</sup> throughout the world.

One of the main aims of this day is to make the voice of the poor heard. It represents an opportunity to acknowledge the efforts and struggles of people living in poverty. It's a chance for them to speak up and make their concerns heard, and it offers a moment to recognize that people living in poverty are in the forefront of the fight against poverty.

Poverty can and has been reduced in a number of Canadian jurisdictions. In 10 years, 13 vibrant communities have assisted over 202,931 people in their journey out of poverty, through new strategies that have produced substantive policy changes in areas such as transportation, housing, early learning and income supports. That's not an empty claim. Four provinces have made investments in social assistance reform or have increased social assistance rates. Several have implemented new or increased tax credits for children and families.

Six provinces now have prescription drug, vision and dental plans for low-income residents. There have been increases to minimum wage legislation, working towards a living wage for low-income earners. Dear to MLA Bromley's heart, five provinces have made investments in their children's early years through daycare programs, family and literacy centres, and Ontario's Best Start program. There is plenty of evidence to support what is working well in our provinces and territories.

Closer to home, here in the NWT, NGOs and other organizations have been working to highlight and move this issue forward for literally years now. They have been officially calling for action against poverty by the territorial government since

December of 2009. Thankfully the Assembly has accepted the challenge to fight poverty, and Members and Ministers have been working diligently on an Anti-Poverty Strategy and framework for several years.

The GNWT document titled "Building on the Strength of Northerners: A Framework for Action on Poverty" is a basis, a start in moving forward on action to eliminate poverty in our territory. There is much work yet to be done, but we are at least started.

Today, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, is a call for us to act in solidarity against poverty and social injustice. As I have said before, together we can reduce poverty. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Before we continue, colleagues, I would like to welcome in the House someone who held every position in this Assembly, Mr. Anthony W.J. Whitford. Welcome back to the House, Tony.

---Applause

Also Mayor Heyck, mayor of Yellowknife, welcome to the House.

The honourable Member for Inuvik, Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HOMELESSNESS, ADDICTIONS AND POVERTY IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a good day to be back in the Assembly and welcome all my colleagues. Today I will be speaking, as well, on the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, specifically focussing here on the Northwest Territories.

Last week, on October 9<sup>th</sup>, I had the honour to go to a talking circle here in Yellowknife. It was a sharing circle, so there was nobody that was really afraid to speak up. All the communities shared their concerns, what they have seen, and specifically I would like to recognize the members from Inuvik who came down and spoke from their hearts, who talked about what is happening in Inuvik right now and what they are seeing on the streets and in the hospitals, what they are seeing in the schools and the RCMP jail cells, and the fact that we don't have a day shelter and a lot of our homeless people are out on the streets, and to the point where they get themselves in trouble and can't go back into the homeless shelter at night, which causes a rippling effect throughout the community and the services that are provided. The services that are provided are good. We just need a final way to keep our homeless people in a shelter environment during the day.

I know it didn't come from the participants, but on my last trip home I spoke with some of the Town of

Inuvik council who did make some moves this summer with regard to the homelessness on the streets in Inuvik. I also spoke with the RCMP on some new policies that they've got to develop, because a lot of our RCMP staff are dealing with people that are homeless and getting themselves into trouble with addictions and taking up the jail cells, where they're not able to work on other big issues such as other drug-related offenses, and specifically the emergency room, which is now being used as, I guess you could say, our detox centre, which we don't have one in the Northwest Territories.

These are all very important issues that need to be dealt with. We need treatment centres and psychiatrists. I will have questions for the Minister of Health later on today, but just before I finish off, I'd like to bring to the attention of Members of the Assembly and to the public, a video that was just released on YouTube. It's called, "A Cold Place to Live Outside: Homelessness in the Canadian Arctic."

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

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you. The YouTube video speaks to the realities that we see here, not only in the Beaufort-Delta region but throughout the Northwest Territories. Today and every day is a day that we should be fighting against homelessness, addictions and mental health issues. With the video also comes an interim report that deals with those topics.

Even though a lot of the stuff I'm saying is negative, this government for the last two years has done a good job with the Anti-Poverty Strategy and the collaborative work where the departments have been working together. The only question is we have to make sure that we hold government accountable to get that work done so we can have an impact on homelessness, mental health and addictions. Thank you.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ERADICATING POVERTY IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My colleagues have recognized that today is the United Nation's International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. The NWT No Place for Poverty Coalition has been working hard with our government to produce an Anti-Poverty Strategy. We look forward to an action plan that will generate real changes for people in poverty.

As one of the richest regions on the planet, the NWT has constructed a social safety net that is well

funded, with a significant part of our budget dedicated to caring for our people. Sadly, though, we still have Weledeh families who are homeless.

In spite of the best intentions, our social safety net can be a tangled web of conflicting policies. Consequently, some people can get stuck in poverty traps below the safety net and be kept in poverty by the system itself.

My constituents explain it this way: If a family going on income support is in need of housing, they need to show that they have a good credit rating so they qualify with a landlord. Income support does assist people with rental costs, but without a good credit rating, people cannot secure an apartment. Diabolically, without a place to stay, people do not qualify then for income support. Also, families with little to no income and carrying housing debt are forced to survive on their own for six months before ECE will approve their application for income support. During this period the family must get on the Housing Corporation's housing list, which requires making and honouring a monthly repayment plan, a six-month process.

There are many reasons why a family can find themselves in need of income assistance. For those in this situation, it is unlikely that they will have a positive credit rating and even more unlikely that they will independently be able to fully support their family for six months while they honour their repayment plans. Single parents with young children can have an especially difficult time and we know the critical lifelong importance of what happens to children during prenatal through age three. What will happen when these children have families of their own 20 or 30 years from now?

Let's honour the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty with a commitment to eradicate poverty right here in the Northwest Territories, and let's start by making sure our social safety net supports people to escape poverty rather than ensnaring them.

I will have questions for the Minister who is chair of the Social Envelope Committee. Mahsi.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS IN THE SAHTU REGION

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also want to share my condolences with you in your statement to the families who are going through their grieving process and praying for their loved ones.

If you were in my shoes, what would you do? The Sahtu is on the brink of evolving into a region that can help this government with its bank account, because the Sahtu is at the brink of becoming the

economic energy driver in Canada and the Northwest Territories.

We need to invest into our communities and into our regions, and we need to invest into the Sahtu, just like we're investing into the fibre optic line. Pay now, receive the benefits later. It's a good business case.

I want to talk about some of the things that we are challenged with in the Sahtu. The potential of becoming Canada's energy driver is real. We recently took a trip down to North Dakota and southeastern Saskatchewan, and we saw what the benefits could be there for the Northwest Territories and also for the communities in the Sahtu. We also saw the amount of work that was going on, and we're at the stage of what do we do. Our needs are high, but we're also very cautious and worried about the environmental impacts. We can become a contributor but we can also have a heavy cost to our environment. We're at a critical time.

The recent influx of alcohol and drugs is real. Just recently there was a seizure done by the RCMP in our small communities. Alcohol is still running rampant. We as a region are dealing with it, and as a region we're saying enough is enough.

We have social challenges. We have a high population of single parents. In Deline 35 percent of families are headed by single parents. That is a lot of work for a single parent, to raise their children, go to school, and try to do their best. Yet, in Deline only 42 percent of people are working. What do we do? There is potential to be had there.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Yakeleya, your time for your Member's statement has concluded.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I say to this government, through this infrastructure session here, let's do the right thing for the people in the North, let's do the right thing for the people in the Sahtu, and I say it's about time we get to work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GOVERNANCE OF THE DEH CHO HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. During my fall constituency tour, residents and communities are very concerned about the potential changes to the structure of our Deh Cho Health and Social Services. Rumour has it that the Minister and the Department of Health and Social Services are contemplating major changes since the health board was not reappointed in March of

this year. The plan, we hear, is to have a new CEO appointed in Hay River, and then this individual would then run both the Hay River Health Board and the Deh Cho Health Board. This is incredible.

Communities and regions want more autonomy, not less. My leaders and constituency are asking for information and consultations on this. When Health was devolved in 1988, it was the worst of all Aboriginal communities for authority and autonomy. Hence, the creation of our health boards; and this has worked very well up to this date.

In fact, I as the MLA have never been officially briefed on this plan. Now that I have heard from my constituency, I stand here and let the Minister of Health know that I unilaterally oppose this plan.

This change makes no sense. We cannot continually strip responsibilities and authorities away from our communities and send it to a community that has no idea how small communities operate.

I know, as a seasoned MLA, how government operates. If this was allowed to go through, it won't be much longer and they would want to centralize more responsibilities, which means my region and communities will be losing jobs.

I cannot imagine the infinite wisdom that went into this plan. A constituent of mine said there is no hope that this is the right thing for taking care of our health needs in the Deh Cho. You cannot and will not take this responsibility away from my communities.

Later today I will be asking the Minister of Health – as my colleague Mr. Dolynny said, the man with the plan – when will he put an end to this one. Thank you.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SESSIONAL GREETINGS AND SALUTATIONS

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure today to welcome back my colleagues to the fourth sitting of the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. Also, a speedy recovery to Mr. Bouchard. I hope to see you back soon.

As MLAs we come together once again to represent our ridings and to do what we can for our people back home.

We are gathered here for the next three weeks, making decisions that will have positive impacts on the Northwest Territories, as was highlighted by the Premier earlier today.

At this time, please allow me to send my thoughts and prayers to families in the Mackenzie Delta who have lost loved ones over the past couple of

months. Many of our people are suffering with illness and we continue to offer support in various ways. Please send your prayers to those who have lost loved ones and those who are suffering with illnesses. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize and welcome the Deputy Consul-General, Mr. Zengfeng Wan; and Economic Commercial Consul, Mr. Lei Jianzhong, both from the Consulate-General of the People's Republic of China in Calgary. We continue to welcome China's interest in our territory and look forward to a positive and prosperous relationship for both our peoples. Enjoy the rest of your stay in Yellowknife, and best wishes to the Chinese community here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to recognize my parents, Dick and Loretta Abernethy, in the gallery. Hi, Mom. Hi, Dad.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a couple of constituents of Frame Lake who are in the gallery today. Ms. Barb Wyness is hopefully still up there – there she is – public relations and research officer for the Union of Northern Workers. Mr. Jeff Coradetti is president of the NWT Liberal Party, a new political organization that is just emerging. I think has she just left, but I wanted to recognize Ms. Lydia Bardak, the executive director of the John Howard Society. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to use the opportunity to welcome our Chinese delegation, our deputy consul as well as his colleagues, so I would like to say to him... [English translation not provided.] Thank you.

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

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you no stranger to the House who is here on many occasions, and that's our protocol officer, Ms. Carmen Moore, who is also a resident of Range Lake. So, Carmen, welcome to the House. I would also like to welcome our

delegates from the Chinese community. Thank you very much.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to also recognize Tony Whitford, if he's still here. I don't know if Mayor Mark Heyck is still here. I'd also like to recognize – again I can't see them – Dick and Loretta Abernethy, both residents of Weledeh. Hi up there. Finally, Sophie Clark, a resident of Weledeh and one of our Pages today. Thanks very much for all the service the Pages are providing us. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 7, acknowledgements. Mr. Bromley.

### Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 8-17(4):  
PASSING OF WELEDEH ELDER  
MICHEL PAPER

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to acknowledge the passing of respected elder Michel Paper of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation.

Just two weeks away from his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, Michel loved sharing stories about the incredible changes he had lived through. From pre-contact times to trading with the Hudson's Bay Company, seeing an airplane for the first time, even colour TV in Detah, his experience spanned generations.

Michel was a man of faith and generous spirit. Every time we talked, he would say how he appreciated my work and that he was praying for me. This is just the kind of person he was.

I know all Members of this House join me in sending our thoughts and sympathies to Michel's family and the community who knew him and celebrate him today. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 8, oral questions. Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

### Oral Questions

QUESTION 320-17(4):  
DEVOLUTION AND OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR HYDRO DEVELOPMENT

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My Member's statement was a little all over the map today, I just had so much to talk about, I'm trying to get it all out there in the first day, but I'm going to try to cut back a little bit and just be a little more methodical about this now.

I'd like to ask the Premier – he's talked about devolution, we've talked a lot about devolution. We've talked a lot about devolution in terms of jobs

and the resource revenue proceeds from the resources that leave the Northwest Territories. The bigger picture has got to come to play in the fact that we will have more control, but people need to understand what more control means.

Let's use the Taltson Hydro Dam expansion as an example. How will devolution, after it is implemented, help us move projects like that ahead that benefit regions of the Northwest Territories like the South Slave? We've talked about it for so long, but how will that be a real benefit for us when devolution is in place? Thank you.

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

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are obviously very much looking forward to devolution, because as we've said many times, it will bring control and decision-making into our hands. Obviously, energy and our hydro development are first and foremost in our minds. We've been working very hard in putting together our Energy Plan, and also our NWT Power Corporation is working on a Hydro Development Strategy that we hope to be rolling out very soon.

When the Prime Minister was in Hay River I talked to him very specifically about hydro development and about the fact that even with devolution we still will be hampered or hamstrung by a borrowing limit imposed on our government. In order to be able to achieve our lofty visions of increasing our transmission lines, tying in all of our hydro energy together, we need to find a way so that the borrowing limit is not a hindrance. We're so confident in our plans and our vision that we think we can do it using our own resources, as long as we're not restricted.

Minister Miltenberger was in Hay River last week when he was doing a tour on how resource revenues would be spent, and he talked about it at that time. So, we're very bullish. We think hydro is a very good investment, especially developing the Taltson to its full potential. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Mr. Speaker, the Premier speaks of our borrowing limit and how that sometimes restrains us. In the past when we talked about projects like the Taltson Hydro expansion, we also talked about public funds combined with private investment, to see something like this go ahead. I was involved in those discussions. It seemed like a lot of that expansion kind of got all mixed in with transmission lines over the East Arm of Great Slave Lake and transmitting hydro to the diamond mines and so on. There was a real interest from the private sector in investing in the expansion of the Taltson Dam and I would like to know if that's still on the radar. Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you. I think our thinking is becoming very clear. We are going to

focus on expansion of transmission lines. Also, we feel we need the benefit of some of the businesspeople in the Northwest Territories, some of the people that have been around, very experienced businesspeople that we can work with and that can give us some advice on innovative ways to be able to finance and develop the hydro potential.

Also, when we talked to the Prime Minister he didn't say no, which we thought was a very good response, but he did indicate that we needed to have a very clear business case and also that we needed to have a very well-developed plan. We will be investing so that we can do both of those things. I think that as we go forward, we expect to have a very good plan and strategy that we'll be rolling out in the next few months. Thank you.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Again, not so many years ago we did have a business in Alberta that is very informed with respect to the development of energy and hydro, and we could never seem to advance that discussion as far as we wanted to. We had an unsolicited proposal from ATCO, out of Alberta, to partner with us to expand the Taltson. They've got money; they've got experience. One of the concerns at the time was that we didn't have the capacity on our side of the table to negotiate something that people thought would be fair for the Northwest Territories.

Do we have that capacity now and could we still be looking at some kind of a joint venture that would bring that kind of financial resource to a project like this so that we could get it off the ground? My comment at the time always was as the Northwest Territories we can own 100 percent of nothing or we can own 50 percent of something. Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you. I think the Member hit it right on the head. In the past whenever we wanted to develop our hydro resources, the companies that we were talking to always wanted us to take all of the risk and then they would take most of the power. I think that with the plan that we're developing, we need to find a way to transport the power first. We want to bring the power to where the development will be happening so that we can promote development.

There's a potential for nine new mines in the Northwest Territories by 2020 and invariably every one of them wants cheaper power. We're also talking with our colleagues south of us, Saskatchewan, Alberta, BC, who are very interested in power. For example, Saskatchewan, to tie into Taltson, it's only 119 kilometres away, so we'd only need to build a transmission line of that magnitude.

So we think that by finding a way to get the power to the people, to the companies and projects that need it, also the ability to sell the power when we have surplus power so that we can make money

while we're doing that as well. So, we're working on a technical study and developing our business case, and we think that it's a very significant opportunity for the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Premier for that answer. It's a win-win for everybody. It has the potential to offset the high cost of living in the North. It has the potential to be the impetus for development in these mining operations that the Premier refers to. I hope that the Premier will really run with this and keep us apprised.

We need a development like the Taltson expansion in the South Slave. We need something. We need devolution to mean something for our people.

Will the Premier take up this particular project with his Cabinet colleagues and report back to us on significant progress in the near future? Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you. Very pleased with the support, and we see this hydro development and the transmission line as probably the biggest project that we can start in the next two years, or in the remaining life of this 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 321-17(4):  
CLOSING OF NATS'EJEE K'EH  
TREATMENT CENTRE

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to follow up on my Member's statement earlier today on addictions and the closing of the Nats'ejee K'eh. This is the first opportunity I think the public has had to hear some of the rationale behind the Minister and the department as to the closing of this addictions facility, and really what is the plan of action for addiction treatment to follow in the Northwest Territories. We all know the issues. I'm not going to go into a long preamble because I do have a long list of questions, which probably will require a couple of times of going up to the table here.

So the Minister's press release on July 11, 2013, cites, "The department decided not to renew the" Nats'ejee K'eh "contract based on strong recommendations flowing from the Minister's Forum on Addictions and Community Wellness..."

Can the Minister point out the page number or paragraph in this report that supports this press release statement? Thank you.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister's forum didn't exactly advise us to close Nats'ejee K'eh. What it says was that we need to find alternatives for treatment such as on-the-land treatment, mobile treatment, treatment targeted for youth, so we're moving in that direction. This also pertains to what was happening in Nats'ejee K'eh. The closure of Nats'ejee K'eh was largely to do with what was happening within Nats'ejee K'eh at the time of the closure, or the elimination of the contract. Thank you.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** So, we just heard from the Minister that it's quite clear that there were no recommendations flowing from the Minister's forum clearly indicating the closure of this facility. This was another approach that the Minister and Department of Health have come to on their own, in terms of what they were going to do with this facility. So, again, I think the public needs to hear that up right and centre.

I guess to lead into another question based on my Member's statement, what is the plan now for medical detox? This is a clinical intervention that is required during the early stages of the pyramid of treatment. What are the plans for medical detox in the Northwest Territories and when will it be offered and where? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you. There wasn't medical detox occurring at Nats'ejee K'eh, number one. People were on a waiting list and they had to wait for six weeks in community counselling before they get to Nats'ejee K'eh, so there was no actual medical detox occurring in Nats'ejee K'eh.

Medical detox is available at the hospitals and individuals can be given hospital beds for medical detox based upon requests. At this time if individuals need medical detoxification outside of the hospital environment, then our option is to send that individual or individuals who are requiring medical detox to the southern treatment facilities. Thank you.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you. I concur there was no medical detox occurring at Nats'ejee K'eh, but the question of medical detox has been asked many times in this House. We've been promised here that there will be beds put aside we've heard in Yellowknife, we've also heard in Inuvik. But you go to the hospital and you ask the question, can you take me to the medical detox bed, and they'll say we don't know what you're talking about. There is no sign on the door that says "medical detox bed". There are such beds put aside in the event of capacity issues, yet are never used.

So, leading to another question here: What is available to help people addicted to prescription drugs, to crack cocaine or solvents? What are we doing with those types of individuals who require that assistance? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** What's available are the contracts that we obtained or signed with southern institutions in Alberta and British Columbia. So, if individuals are suffering from addictions, whether it be crack cocaine, prescription drugs, alcohol, marijuana, or anything else that they may be addicted to, there are options for them to go to the four southern treatment facilities that we have contracts with now. Thank you.

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

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess the Minister has kind of led into my other question here where he talked about the southern four providers that are now currently under contract. Can we maybe get an indication as to how many residents have used these southern farmed-out services, and of those who started the program down there, how many of them have actually completed it?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** I don't have the number of individuals that have taken advantage of the four treatment centres that we have contracts with in the South; however, I do know that when individuals have approached Health and Social Services, whether it be through a wellness office in their community or through the department or through one of the authorities, that it's been fairly quick. The process is very quick and the individual is able to go out for treatment in a very short time basis, and that is what we were trying to achieve. But the numbers of the people that went and the numbers that had completed the treatment facilities, I don't have those numbers here with me today.

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

QUESTION 322-17(4):  
WATER SERVICES IN  
DEH CHO COMMUNITIES

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the House might be aware, over the course of the summer we had a situation in Hay River. My question is directed to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

Can the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs update this House on the status of trucked water delivery in Hay River, especially to those communities that do receive trucked water delivery in Kakisa, Hay River and Enterprise? Thank you.

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

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that the communities have a contract with the water service deliveryman, and as far as I know, that contract is still in place. He, in turn, would get his water from the community



of Hay River. As far as I know, the contract, unless things have changed, is still in place.

**MR. NADLI:** What measures does the department have in place in the worst-case scenario that the tap of water is actually shut off for the communities receiving trucked water for Kakisa, Enterprise and the Hay River Reserve?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** We would work with the community to find other sources of water, be it bringing in water from another community, but again, my understanding is they do have a contract with the deliveryman who buys his water from the community of Hay River. But we would work closely with the community, and I think there have been some preliminary discussions as to one of the communities possibly looking at acquiring their own water treatment plant.

**MR. NADLI:** It's quite clear in this budget that they really amass a lot of effort in ensuring that the public, especially the communities of the North, receive vital infrastructure projects, especially in the Deh Cho where a water source is very vital and, of course, an intrinsic value that is given to the public.

My question to the Minister is: Would the Minister commit to entertaining, at least his department, supporting and facilitating a dialogue among communities to look at some immediate alternatives in terms of striking the possibility of doing a business case analysis of building their own water treatment plants?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Since the gas tax and the community infrastructure money were introduced a few years ago, a lot of the communities have built their own water treatment plant. There have been a few communities that have teamed up and did a bundled water treatment plant where, with economies of scale, they would get it a little cheaper. But we have money that's allocated for this particular type of initiative. It's \$28 million that we divide amongst the communities across the Northwest Territories, and then they determine that a water treatment plant is a priority, and they do have the tools in place to make it happen. A lot of the communities are doing that again.

We will work closely with the Member's communities if they wish to have our staff come in and start the dialogue as to how they best can acquire a water treatment plant using the experience we've had with many of the other communities that have put their own water treatment plants in.

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

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister has publicly stated that, indeed, it is up to the communities. The concern from the communities is getting caught with the... If they do build water

treatment plants in their communities, their concern is in terms of the operations and maintenance.

The Minister, at this point, has indicated yes, he is quite willing to support the idea of having his staff go into the communities to ensure that there is some dialogue amongst the communities.

Can the Minister commit to ensure that happens, that indeed his department officials will perhaps go to Kakisa and Enterprise and see if responsibilities of developing a business analysis, in terms of a cost analysis of whether it's viable or perhaps have a water treatment plant in either one of those communities? Would the Minister commit to that? Yes or no?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I will say yes with an explanation. I will commit to having our staff go into the communities, upon invitation from the community, to start discussing some of their options and start discussing how the O and M may be affected if they do get a water treatment plant. We will, again, upon invitation, go into these communities and start the discussion with them.

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

QUESTION 323-17(4):  
INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO  
GIANT MINE REMEDIATION PROJECT

**MR. HAWKINS:** Mr. Speaker, it should be no secret by now that I'm concerned about the way the Giant Mine has been left and the fact that arsenic is being left in the ground and certainly frozen there for the end of time. Whenever that may be scheduled, I don't think we should give up on trying to find a solution. No Northerner asked for this tragedy to be left here in the ground, and I don't know a single Northerner that thinks that that's the best solution.

My question for the Premier today is, of course, I'd like to hear the government's position on AANDC, which is the department that is now responsible for the freezing of the arsenic. I'd like to know what the government's position is with AANDC's opinion and direction to freeze the arsenic in the ground and ignore it until we find a solution that we have no idea when or where it will come from.

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

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if Churchill was thinking of Giant Mine when he made that famous quotation. Perhaps a Yogi Berra quote of "it ain't over 'til it's over" would be more appropriate.

We've been part of the Giant Mine process for some time. We see this as the most immediate response and step to deal with the problem. I'm not sure what the Member is suggesting, whether he's

suggesting we should stop everything and wait until somebody comes up with an innovative idea before we do anything more. As a government, we see the best approach right now is to deal with the immediate problem.

**MR. HAWKINS:** I know the Premier was listening closely to my Member's statement, as I know he always does, of course. He hangs on every word. I'm sure he would recognize that not at one time in my Member's statement or in my press release the week before I talked about stopping what we're doing today, because the engineering solution today is probably the only solution we have thus far.

But the same innovation that brought Banting to the solution for insulin, and the same spirit and drive of why people fight the good fight against cancer every single day is because they're looking for that solution and they're inspired.

In my Member's statement and as well as in the recent press release, I talked about stimulating innovation. Would the Premier be willing to lead a discussion with the Minister of AANDC about opening up a possibility of creating a reward process that stimulates people from around the world to help to look for a solution to the arsenic problem at Giant Mine? Quite frankly, the temporary solution is not the right solution. Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is there are quite a number of options that are out there. The option that is being pursued now is seen as the best, most immediate option. There are bacteria that eat arsenic that have been used in other processes to recover a mine. There are also some other approaches that are more expensive such as finding a way to get rid of the arsenic. One of the recommendations was to haul it away. There are a number of options, but the option that is being pursued now that is being undertaken is the most immediate and will have the best way to control the problem. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. HAWKINS:** When I was at the open house a couple of weeks ago, one of the Yellowknife Dene councillors asked if there was a way to solve this problem, and asked us to make the arsenic inert in a way that it doesn't cause any problem. The staff said there is no way of dealing with this. Quite frankly, it is because no one is looking at it. Out of 56 recommendations, there is not one that talks about innovation. It's almost like we need a Donald Trump here in the Northwest Territories, or a Richard Branson, saying how important this is for humanity to talk about let's find a breakthrough.

That said, there are only 56 recommendations on the table and, as I said, not one single one of them deals with innovation. That is why I ask the Premier to once again consider the concept of a knocking on the door and writing to the Minister of AANDC to

say, why don't we look at creating a reward process or a balloon payment to solve this. It would stimulate the type of thinking. Right now no one is working on that problem, and hence, if there is no one stimulated by opportunity, they may not be looking at this opportunity.

Hence, what the question really comes down to is: What can the Premier do about stimulating innovation to get people interested in our problem? Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, obviously if we could wave a magic wand and fix the problem tomorrow, we would be very interested in doing that. I think in order to go and approach the AANDC Minister, I think you have to be very clear on what the Member is asking for. Are we talking about only new innovative methods that are not already out there? Are we talking about somebody bringing a truckload of arsenic-eating bacteria, would we give them \$20 million? Is that what the Member is suggesting? I'm not very clear on what the Member is asking us to do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to send the Premier my most recent press release, and of course, I would be happy to walk over a copy of my Member's statement. I am talking about the federal government spends \$1.9 million every year to maintain this site. I am suggesting that we encourage them to package some money out of that. It wouldn't be ongoing funding; it would be a balloon payment – think of it as that way – to encourage. If anyone could come up with a solution for the Giant Mine problem, they can come get the reward or balloon payment. Call it what you will. Quite frankly, it costs the GNWT nothing but a little energy and a little motivation to say we need this once and for all.

I ask the Premier, does he see possibilities in this opportunity, or does he just see it as status quo is the best way to do business. I'm not against freezing it. I'm just saying we need to be looking towards the future. Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, as the Member knows, we always listen to suggestions from the other side, and we are able to do so again. I just need to know what it is that you are proposing. We can't manage through press releases, so we would need something more definitive. The Member knows the process. We don't respond to a single MLA. I think we would need a request from the committee. Obviously, if the committee requests us to seek this from the federal government and the committee supports it, we will do it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 324-17(4):  
APPOINTMENT OF STANTON  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions today for the Minister of Health and Social Services. I would like to ask some questions of the Minister of a situation that occurred over the summer that caused me some concern. It was a communication issue.

Here at the Assembly we have communications protocols. We have a number of protocols, and communications is one of them. Usually they work. It gives Members from both sides of the House advance notice of things that are going to be happening.

I'm referencing the appointment of a new chief executive officer for Stanton Territorial Hospital. The fact that we hired a new CEO prior to the current CEO leaving was a really good thing and I was very pleased to see that, but I was extremely surprised that the press release announcing the hiring of Ms. Fitzgerald arrived to Regular Members at the same time that it went to the general public. In my mind, the Minister of Health and Social Services is ultimately responsible for all health authorities, for staff and so on. I have to assume that he surely knew that this announcement was coming. My mind then goes to why were MLAs not advised, if not all MLAs, at least Yellowknife MLAs, at least the Standing Committee on Social Programs.

I would like to ask the Minister what is the process for a health authority, whether it is a health authority with a board or a health authority with a public administrator, what is the process for them to communicate the hiring of their most senior employee to both the public and to the Minister? Thank you.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The current process right now as it stands is that various health and social services authorities and the one agency is responsible for releasing information on hiring of the CEO for their authorities. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister for that clarification. I'm quite surprised at that. We provide them, through the Assembly, the Minister provides money to health authorities for their operations. All the employees are employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories. I am really surprised that we allow these authorities to have that much autonomy. They certainly don't in many other areas.

As I said, I think the Minister is ultimately responsible for these authorities. It seems to be the

way that the legislation reads. I would like to ask the Minister when he was aware that the new CEO had been hired for Stanton Territorial Hospital. Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, I became aware of the name shortly before the press release had occurred. Unfortunately, during the time when the decision was being made, we were in Ulukhaktok at the Caucus meeting. From Ulukhaktok, I then went south immediately, and that press release occurred on the day that I travelled to southern Canada.

The information is not given to me until the decision is made. I knew that we were seeking a CEO. I knew that. The deputy kept me advised that they were interviewing individuals, and the process was that once the decision was made, I would be advised. At this time I was advised just prior to the press release, but I was not aware that the press release was going to be going out on that type of schedule. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Speaker, thanks to the Minister. I have to reiterate, I think the Minister knows the importance of health and social service authorities and the operations of our health and social services system to Regular Members and particularly for a Yellowknife facility like the hospital to Yellowknife Members. We live closest to that facility, so it is part of our community.

The Minister said that he knew the name but we were at Caucus. I think certainly there was an opportunity for him to advise the Members who were at least at Caucus that this was happening. There was an opportunity to send an e-mail to all Members to say this is going to be released soon.

I would like to know from the Minister why he basically bypassed our communications protocol. Does he really think that it should be up to health authorities to make this communication as opposed to himself? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Yes, I do think it's the responsibility of the board or the public administrator of the health authority to do a press release. The timing I guess is something that has to be sorted out. Obviously, it has caused some issue with the timing of the release. In the future when there are other CEOs that are being contemplated or hired in the various authorities, we can find a way added into the process to advise the MLAs, all MLAs or the Assembly. Usually that's what we try to do. As I said, it's just an unfortunate thing that had occurred. Thank you.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister. I do agree that it was unfortunate, and I don't believe that it's a situation that should happen

again. I appreciate the Minister's comments that maybe it shouldn't happen again.

He's suggesting that he's going to set something in place. I'd like to know from the Minister when we can expect some communication from his office as to the new system that will be in place so this doesn't happen again. Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, I'm having a meeting with the JLC, Joint Leadership Council of all authorities, on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. We'll discuss it at that time. It should be soon after that. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 325-17(4):

ALCOHOL AND DRUG DETOXIFICATION  
SERVICE IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just going to follow up from my Member's statement today regarding homelessness. Of course, homelessness, you can't really talk about it without including some of the mental health and addictions that are occurring with people who are in homeless situations.

I just wanted to follow up, and I know the Minister is getting a lot of questions today, specifically from members of the Standing Committee on Social Programs. I just wanted to remind him that when we had our retreat, that was our number one concern, our priority, and we want to follow up on that. We're halfway through our session and we want to make sure this gets dealt with.

I had questions of my own, but listening to the responses to Member Dolynny, one answer that really sparked my interest was the Minister mentioned that a patient, a client can walk into a health centre, a hospital, and request medical detox and they'll get it. I want to know, when a person goes into a health centre or hospital, how long are they able to stay in that hospital for and get a bed for detox. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was referring to medical detox possibility at the hospitals. My understanding is that earlier on, during questioning on medical detoxification at the hospital, we agreed we could provide beds in the hospital; but to keep a bed vacant in hospitals all year long on standby for that would not be appropriate. So, any bed in acute care can be used for an individual to detoxify.

I don't think the health centres in the small communities would be set up for that, but they could possibly do it. With the right nursing staff in place, they could possibly do something like that if an individual was in some sort of distress over

detoxification. But my answer was more specifically to hospitals. Thank you.

**MR. MOSES:** I really enjoy dialogue with the Minister on services that we provide here in the Northwest Territories. Any bed in acute care that would be allocated for someone through detox, and if the Minister understands when a person goes through detox, all the implications that happen with that psychosis where they can be deathly.

Is this Minister willing to put someone going through extreme detox in the same bed as a public person who might only be in there for the flu? Can I ask the Minister, is he willing to support a bed in acute care for somebody going through extreme detox? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, I'm not a health professional. That responsibility for placing an individual in one of the acute care beds for going through medical detoxification would be made by a physician. Thank you.

**MR. MOSES:** I just want to state that I know we come down hard on the Minister all the time, and it's not only his responsibility. We deal with homelessness, mental health, and you deal with justice, employment, education, homelessness. As a matter of fact, he's responsible for the facilities here in the NWT.

The Minister also mentioned treatments, in answering a Member on this side. He said that treatment happens fairly quickly.

Can he give me a definite response on what "fairly quickly" means? I've been dealing with some of my constituents and I'd say it's been over a month already, so I'd like to ask the Minister what he means by fairly quickly, if he could give me a date, please.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** I'll talk a little bit about the original process. The original process was quite a long delay, where an individual had to be clean and sober and follow up with some community counselling, and then wait for the next intake into a treatment centre to go. Now, with the contracts that we have in the South that have continuous intake, I don't think it's every day but I think the intake is on a weekly basis, so every week new people wanting treatment come into the facility.

Our idea is once an individual comes into the system and requests treatment, that we try to bring them into the next intake at the closest intake possible that we can get them down there is what we are trying to achieve.

I was advised that people were going out at the latest within two weeks, so I didn't know there were individuals waiting for a month since we had discontinued Nats'ejee K'eh. Thank you.

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

**MR. MOSES:** I think we could solve this issue a little easier going forward here, and it all stems down to the written questions I had raised this summer during our last session, and that's dealing with the Mental Health Act.

Can the Minister look at trying to speed that review up and looking at the Mental Health Act and how we can get that addressed so we don't always have to be asking these same questions? Mental health actually takes care of the different legislative property. Can we see that speeded up during this Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, the target for finalization of the legislative proposal for the Mental Health Act review is for the winter of 2014. I'm hoping that's early winter and not late winter 2014. If that's not the case, then I will report back to the Member. My understanding is it's early winter 2014. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 326-17(4):  
ANTI-POVERTY ACTION PLAN

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to follow up from my earlier Member's statement with questions to the lead Minister for the Anti-Poverty Strategy, Mr. Abernethy.

As I mentioned in my statement today, my constituents are telling me that our social safety net contains poverty traps. Some of the rules make it very difficult for people to access the help they need.

I'd like to start by asking the Minister, first of all, what is the current status of the Anti-Poverty Strategy Action Plan. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister responsible for poverty, Mr. Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The framework was released earlier this calendar year, and the government and Cabinet have been working on an action plan to respond to that framework. We have shared that draft with committee and we are working on the committee's responses to it to improve that plan as we move forward.

In the meantime, we've funded the No Place for Poverty Coalition to have a roundtable of their own to start working on individual responses to the report so we can all come together in November. November 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> are the dates that have been confirmed for our territorial group to come together and work on a territorial response to poverty. It's important that we all work together, that we're working with the NGOs, and also working across departments, because it's going to take

everybody to deal with poverty in the North. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks to the Minister. I appreciate the Minister is seeking support or input from the wider community on this and that he's committed towards moving things forward towards implementation of the action plan.

The poverty traps I mentioned have been discovered by people trying to access the system. Obviously, these constituents are not policy analysts, but their experience highlights the need to research such policy issues and propose solutions. Can the Minister say how the action plan will tackle these needs?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you. The Ministers responsible for the social envelope have continued to have conversations on how we can bring the departments together to work more effectively together. In the development of our action plan, which we've shared with committee, the draft action plan, we worked really hard to make sure that we're using common language and where there was certain crossover between initiatives like the Economic Opportunities Strategy and Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan that the Minister is coming forward with, as well the Early Childhood Development Framework and Action Plan, as well as the good work that the Housing Corp has been doing. We've tried to ensure that all of that was incorporated within our territorial response, our GNWT response. But it's more important than just having a response; it's actually working together. The Social Envelope Committee of Ministers has been having conversations around this and has been directing our departments to find ways to actually break down some of the silos and work together. We continue to do that and we will continue to do that.

We also are always looking for examples, and the Member has provided me with a number of examples of where we've had some obvious breakdowns between different departments and some of the programs and we're looking to find remedies to that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BROMLEY:** The Minister has very correctly depicted this as a cross-departmental dilemma. Clearly focused attention is needed on these conflicting cross-departmental policies that entrap people in poverty, as the Minister has said.

Will the Anti-Poverty Action Plan include funding or dedicated personnel, almost an ombudsman sort of a person, to research and suggest solutions to poverty traps like these and other policy dilemmas as they come up? Thank you.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** An anti-poverty coordinator has been hired with an effective date of October 21, 2013. This individual coordinates territorial action plans, provides advice and

recommendations to the GNWT on any ongoing initiatives that support the priorities in the frameworks, and identify areas for collaboration actions to advance the priorities of the framework among all of our partners, including GNWT departments and NGOs. This position will also review annual results of the GNWT partner actions and complete results reports and report progress on broad social indicators. So the answer is yes.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister. I don't see a coordinator as being what I'm talking about here. Policy analysts are a very specific breed of cat and they have a specific focus and they get into the intricate examples of conflicting policies and weigh out the solutions. So I'm wondering: Has the work to date profiled issues such as these, other than a few examples provided by my colleagues and myself? What mechanism is being contemplated to ensure these policy conundrums are captured and brought forward for resolution so they don't recur? I don't think, again, a coordinator is what we're talking about. Mahsi.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** It's a title. The coordinator is a title. This individual will be reviewing policies across departments that are coming under this Anti-Poverty Action Plan and making sure that they're moving forward. The larger responsibility, obviously, belongs to the individual Ministers and the Social Envelope Committee of Ministers to make sure that departments are working together, and each department has their own policy unit who can do analysis. So, this coordinator will play an important role in analyzing and making recommendations on where these barriers tend to, or may, exist. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 327-17(4):

GOVERNANCE OF DEH CHO HEALTH  
AND SOCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today in my Member's statement, I was speaking about the Department of Health and Social Services pretty much stripping community authority over the Deh Cho Health and Social Services in my region. I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services what is going on here and what is the plan for the community. Originally when the board was not reappointed, the intent there was to reassess and evaluate and improve programs and services, but now we're going to lose governing power over our board. I don't think that was the intent and it's not the intent of my communities to support that.

So I'd like to know what is the plan for Deh Cho Health and Social Services. Thank you.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this point the plan for the Deh Cho Health and Social Services Authority is to remain with the public administrator – myself and the public administrator spoke – for at least two years in order to do some of the work that we think is necessary, some of the issues that we're dealing with in the Deh Cho Health and Social Services. Thank you.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much. Certainly, there were some issues there, like elders continuing to be sent home with aspirins instead of getting proper checkups. There was another instance of an incomplete and misdiagnosed elder who broke her wrist and wasn't diagnosed for months. I know that the public administrator was just put in place, but what is the plan to improve the programs and services for Deh Cho health and social services at this point? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you. The plan is to do consultation with the communities in the Deh Cho. One of the things that may have been misconstrued was the intent to try to provide better medical service to three of the communities in the Deh Cho by providing that medical service out of Hay River. The social services side of all of the Deh Cho, including the Hay River Reserve, Fort Providence and Kakisa where we are contemplating providing medical services out of Hay River as opposed to out of Fort Simpson, will all remain with the Deh Cho communities. So, social services side of it, there will be no change in who is providing the service. Now we're trying to figure out how Hay River can provide medical service to the three communities geographically closer to Hay River than they are to Fort Simpson. Thank you.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** The communities certainly want to have these consultations, they want to be advised, they want to be involved. But at the same time, rumours continue to persist. Improving services like providing better services to the communities surrounding Hay River and using their facilities certainly makes sense. What doesn't make sense is removing the power and control over the Deh Cho Health and Social Services. What is the plan there and will the Minister address that?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you. In all honesty, there was an idea at some point to increase the role in Hay River in the management of some of the Deh Cho communities. However, that was not accepted. It was something that we discussed for a very short time period and that was something that the communities in the Deh Cho did not accept. The new public administrator that was appointed to

replace the board did not accept that, based on his discussions with the leadership in the Deh Cho. So, we are not planning on rolling Deh Cho Health and Social Services under the Hay River authority.

In Hay River we will provide some support to Deh Cho Health and Social Services under the Hay River authority. In Hay River we will provide some support to Deh Cho Health and Social Services because currently Deh Cho Health and Social Services doesn't have a CEO and neither does Hay River, so we're moving some people around within our system to support all of the authorities. Specifically, we're trying to provide some of the support from Hay River as well as Yellowknife to the Deh Cho region.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to hear that that was just a bird's eye view and that they're not going there. Once again, Mr. Minister had travelled with me earlier in the year to the Nahendeh communities, and I would like to continue to invite him to complete the tour. Then I think we may have to make an extended tour again, because people do want to hear more about Deh Cho Health and Social Services, they want the programs and services to improve.

So will the Minister come with me on a tour, and as well as a plan with his department of addressing consultations with the communities as well?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** I'm certainly willing to complete the tour and even go back to the communities that the MLA and I travelled to already. Also, I agreed recently to start a bit of dialogue with the deputy minister to have a consultation with chiefs, the public administrator, the MLAs, and anybody else that would be impacted on any decisions that we make pertaining to Deh Cho Health and Social Services.

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

QUESTION 328-17(4):  
STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS  
IN THE SAHTU REGION

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier of the Northwest Territories. The Northwest Territories is very unique and our communities are very unique, so unique that the school in Colville Lake is so different than a school in any larger centres or regional centres. That's uniqueness. Yet, we try to have policies that cover everybody on a fair basis.

I want to ask the Premier here, in the Northwest Territories, with the uniqueness, is it so that our programs, our structures, our infrastructure priorities, certainly, they are different. Are there policies in the government that show that we should

be all equal in terms of where the funding goes in terms of the infrastructure based on the needs for that community?

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

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a government we live in a very large territory and there are a lot of regional, geographical and environmental differences. We try to maintain standards so that we have some consistent delivery of programs, but we recognize that not every region is going to be exactly the same. We try to maintain certain standards and we try to deliver the same level of programs and services, but it's not always achievable.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Premier, for your responses. I certainly want to say to you and Minister Glen Abernethy, coming down to the Sahtu and enjoying the uniqueness of the moose skin boat in the region. That's what I wanted to get to the uniqueness of the region and maintaining certain standards, and that's a fair response from the Premier here, that the communities in the Sahtu know we want to look at some of our standards in the smaller communities.

So, from saying that, I want to ask the Premier, are there different classes of infrastructure or classes of community. Colville Lake, Trout Lake, Ulukhaktok and, say, Tsiigehtchic, because they're small and there's a certain number that are deemed as a certain class within the government operations, so this is where they get different types of funding for their health centres or their education schooling.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** With the myriad of programs and services that we deliver, generally we take into account a number of different features. For example, population is a very important component of any program delivery. For example, Education, they tried to tie their funding to the number of students, parent/student ratios. The Department of Health has a compendium of care, and depending on the population, if we have very small communities we can't always have a nurse in every community. Some programs are tied to each other. Generally we don't send nurses where there are no RCMP officers. Those kinds of things.

We also, through the land claims, the negotiations, self-government negotiations, we've developed a directory of services and we're trying to maintain a standard so that people can be mobile and can expect a certain level of care and access to programs.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Fair enough. Thank you, Premier, for the explanation of the different level of communities in the Northwest Territories. That's probably one of our biggest challenges as legislators when we put together infrastructure or O and M budgets as to how do we maintain a certain

level of standard to ensure that the communities are receiving just about the same levels or standards of care in different communities and larger centres. That's where probably our biggest concern is.

I want to ask the Premier on that. Is there a point in the communities like Colville Lake where you know that a nurse comes in there once a month but they won't stay very long because of the time factor, is there is a level of health care standards, education standards or any other type of services that could be stated, well, that's similar to Inuvik, Hay River or Yellowknife or Fort Smith, saying that they're receiving the same type of care even though it doesn't seem that's the way the people see it in these small communities?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** For example, in education we have the same level of curriculum for all of the communities. Again, it's affected by population and the number of students. With health, we have a similar level of care. The health boards provide for health professionals to travel to communities on a regular basis in how they deal with health care. There are also certain standards in terms of placement of nurses and other health professionals.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier is correct that we do have the same health curriculum in the Northwest Territories, and I certainly agree with him. However, the disagreement for me is it's not taught in the same type of environment in teaching that health curriculum. Colville Lake has one room partitioned off by a paper-thin wall that has four different classes, five different classes in one building here. As to other schools, we don't have that type of scenario here. That's where I am getting at, that hopefully with the responsibility of new powers from Ottawa, we could make some of these changes to our smaller communities where they would feel that they are getting the same quality of learning environment in these small communities and that we would become a true partner in the Northwest Territories in its evolution of becoming, hopefully one day, a province.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** I think we all aspire to that. We are obviously limited by the level of resources. We try to do the best we can for every community. I should point out that in our capital needs assessment, Colville Lake has been identified in there, that there will be some planning studies that will be done to make sure that the needs of Colville Lake are eventually addressed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Time has expired for oral questions. Item 9, written questions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

## Written Questions

### WRITTEN QUESTION 27-17(4): ANTI-POVERTY ACTION PLAN AND ACCESS TO INCOME SUPPORT

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the chair of the Social Envelope Committee of Cabinet.

1. How will the Anti-Poverty Action Plan specifically change the social safety net system so that people with a disabling credit rating are still able to gain timely access to income support from Education, Culture and Employment that also meets their housing needs?
2. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment currently requires that people with housing debt establish and honour a repayment plan with the Housing Corporation for six months before qualifying for income support. How will the Anti-Poverty Action Plan specifically change the system so that people in immediate need do not have to wait before they are able to access income support from Education, Culture and Employment?

Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 10, returns to written questions. Ms. Langlois.

## Returns to Written Questions

### RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 26-17(4): SAHTU REGIONAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Ms. Langlois):** Mr. Speaker, I am in receipt of Return to Written Question 26-17(4) asked by Mr. Yakeleya on May 29, 2013, regarding the Sahtu regional training requirements.

1. Copy of Sahtu Regional Training Partnership five-year plan and milestones accomplished to date.

The Sahtu Regional Training Partnership Committee developed the five-year training plan for the Sahtu region in 2009-10, as a guiding document. The training plan is reviewed by the committee every six to 12 months to ensure that previously identified needs are being prioritized and adjustments made, as necessary. Later today, at the appropriate time, I will table the five-year training plan for the Sahtu region.

Statistics from the regional Sahtu ECE Service Centre show that through training delivery partnerships, approximately 456 people have been trained between 2009 and 2012 in a variety of courses and programs that include class 7 driver training, environmental monitoring, accounting software, and hospitality. There are also 18 registered apprentices in the region in carpentry,



electrical and other trades. Training offered has addressed the employment needs of both industry and secondary industry. To the committee, every individual trained represents a milestone.

The committee will focus its efforts going forward on the identification, preparation and coordination of training geared toward the oil and gas industry, the trades, tourism and the health sector.

2. Details on how senior officials from the departments of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI), Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), Transportation, and Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) plan to work together to meet the people's training needs in the Sahtu region.

The Sahtu Regional Training Partnership Committee is made up of senior officials and their representatives from Imperial Oil Resources, Husky Energy, ConocoPhillips, HRN Contracting (Hodgsons, Red Dog and Nuna Logistics), North Ridge Contracting, the Sahtu Business Development Centre, the K'asho Got'ine Charter Community Council, Tulita Land Corporation, Tulita Dene Band, Deline Land Corporation, Deline First Nation, the Charter Community of Deline, the Sahtu Dene Council, Behdzi Ahda First Nation, the Norman Wells Land Corporation, the Sahtu Divisional Education Council, Aurora College, ITI, ENR, ECE and Transportation. The committee aims to identify the training needs of the people in the Sahtu region and coordinate the courses and programs required to meet those training needs.

Two new term positions have been added in the Sahtu region for fiscal year 2013-14 to assist with the additional workload resulting from the oil and gas activity. One position, a Sahtu oil and gas training coordinator, is at Aurora College; the other is an additional career development officer at the regional Sahtu ECE Service Centre.

3. Final copy of the skilled workforce needs assessment in the Sahtu region.

The Sahtu Oil and Gas Needs Assessment is being conducted in two phases. The industry needs assessment that focuses on industry's employment and training needs was completed in January 2013.

The second phase will build on the first and focus on the employment and training needs of businesses, agencies, organizations and all levels of governments.

The second phase is underway and will include an on-line survey and in-person interviews, all scheduled for completion in late 2013.

Once completed and approved, the Sahtu Oil and Gas Needs Assessment phases one and two will be posted on the ECE website in early 2014.

4. Plan to show how the departments of ECE and ITI are working together to effectively meet the training needs of Sahtu residents and industry.

The work of the regional training partnership committee is the foundation for planning in the region. ECE and ITI, along with other committee members, work together to identify the training needs of the people in the Sahtu region and to coordinate the courses and programs required to meet those training needs. This is achieved by communicating with representatives from the oil and gas industry, the communities in the Sahtu and the secondary industry and businesses who identify their labour force needs and expectations to the committee. Committee members work together to prepare and organize the training programs.

Planning is key to furthering the professional development of Sahtu residents. ECE, ITI and other GNWT departments have participated in the following meetings:

- On September 25 to 26, 2012, ECE, ITI, and other departments and stakeholders participated in a larger planning session, the Sahtu Explorations Readiness Session "Getting Ready for a Productive, Healthy and Prosperous Work Season". Attendees included representatives from nine companies in the oil and gas industry, as well as officials from local, Aboriginal and territorial governments.
- On April 9 and 10, 2013, representatives from the GNWT, including ITI and ECE, met in Norman Wells to discuss the recent winter season, the coordination of information sharing, and joint planning to respond to training and related activities resulting from the increased oil and gas activity in the region.
- On June 4 and 5, 2013, the Sahtu Regional Training Partnership Committee met to review its five-year training program and to identify local and regional training needs going forward.
- As a part of the second Sahtu Readiness Session, a series of activities are taking place across the Sahtu. These activities, which are being coordinated by several GNWT departments including ECE, ITI and ENR, began in September 2013 and will last several months.

The number and types of training needs identified are currently estimates, pending completion of the Sahtu Oil and Gas Needs Assessment in early 2014.

ECE and ITI are committed to working together with other stakeholders to meet the training needs in the Sahtu. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 11, replies to opening address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13,

reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Moses.

### Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

BILL 15:  
GUNSHOT AND STAB WOUND  
MANDATORY DISCLOSURE ACT

BILL 16:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE  
JUSTICES OF THE PEACE ACT

BILL 17:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE PROTECTION  
AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE ACT

BILL 18:  
APOLOGY ACT

BILL 19:  
MISCELLANEOUS STATUTE LAW  
AMENDMENT ACT, 2013

BILL 21:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE  
DENTAL PROFESSION ACT

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 15, Gunshot and Stab Wound Mandatory Disclosure Act; Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Justices of the Peace Act; Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Protection Against Family Violence Act; Bill 18, Apology Act; and Bill 21, An Act to Amend the Dental Profession Act, and wishes to report to the Assembly that Bills 15, 16, 17, 18 and 21 are ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

The Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 19, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2013, and wishes to report that Bill 19 as amended and reprinted is also ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MOTION TO EXTEND REVIEW PERIOD  
FOR BILL 12, AN ACT TO AMEND THE  
EDUCATION ACT,  
CARRIED

The Standing Committee on Social Programs wishes to report that we are reviewing Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Education Act, and would like to report that additional time is required to complete the review of Bill 12. Therefore, in accordance with Rule 70(1)(1.3) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range

Lake, that the 120-day review period for Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Education Act, be extended to Monday, October 28, 2013. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Carried

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

BILL 13:  
AN ACT TO REPEAL THE  
CURFEW ACT

BILL 14:  
AN ACT TO REPEAL THE  
PAWNBROKERS AND  
SECOND-HAND DEALERS ACT

BILL 3:  
WILDLIFE ACT

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure has reviewed Bill 13, An Act to Repeal the Curfew Act; and Bill 14, An Act to Repeal the Pawnbrokers and Second-hand Dealers Act, and wishes to report that Bills 13 and 14 are ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure has reviewed Bill 3, Wildlife Act, and wishes to report that Bill 3 as amended and reprinted is also ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

BILL 24:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE  
LIQUOR ACT

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Government Operations has reviewed Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act, and wishes to report that Bill 24 as amended and reprinted is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Item 14, tabling of documents. Mr. Miltenberger.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 107-17(4):  
NWT CAPITAL ESTIMATES 2014-2015

TABLED DOCUMENT 108-17(4):  
GNWT RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE REPORT  
4-17(4): REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE  
2011-12 PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

TABLED DOCUMENT 109-17(4):  
GNWT RESPONSE TO MOTION 20-17(4),  
PROPOSAL FOR USE OF  
NEW RESOURCE REVENUES

TABLED DOCUMENT 110-17(4):  
GNWT RESPONSE TO MOTION 21-17(4),  
LIQUOR COMMISSION  
PROFITS TO PREVENTION

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following four documents, entitled NWT Capital Estimates 2014-2015; Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 4-17(4), Report on the Review of the Public Accounts; Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Motion 20-17(4), Proposal for the Use of New Resource Revenues; and Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Motion 21-17(4), Liquor Commission Profits to Prevention. Thank you.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 111-17(4):  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND  
EMPLOYMENT RESPONSE TO THE AUDITOR  
GENERAL'S REPORT ON THE NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES INCOME SECURITY PROGRAMS  
REFOCUSING THE FUTURE OF INCOME  
SECURITY PROGRAMS

TABLED DOCUMENT 112-17(4):  
GNWT RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE REPORT  
5-17(4), REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE  
REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF  
CANADA ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES INCOME  
SECURITY PROGRAMS

TABLED DOCUMENT 113-17(4):  
SAHTU 5-YEAR STRATEGIC TRAINING PLAN

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following three documents, entitled Department of Education, Culture and Employment Response to the Auditor General's Report on the Northwest Territories Income Security Programs; Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 5-17(4), Report on the Review

of the Auditor General of Canada on 2014 Northwest Territories Income Security Programs.

Further to my Return to Written Question 26-17(4), the Sahtu Five-Year Strategic Training Plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 114-17(4):  
GNWT RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE REPORT  
3-17(4), REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE  
2011-2012 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER  
OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 3-17(4), Report on the Review of the 2011-2012 Annual Report of the Information Privacy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 115-17(4):  
GNWT RESPONSE TO MOTION 4-17(4),  
FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR SAHTU JOBS  
AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Motion 4-17(4), Federal Support for Sahtu Jobs and Economic Growth. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 116-17(4):  
GNWT RESPONSE TO MOTION 6-17(4),  
GASOLINE PRICING REGULATIONS

TABLED DOCUMENT 117-17(4):  
GNWT RESPONSE TO MOTION 10-17(4),  
GROUND AMBULANCE AND  
HIGHWAY RESCUE SERVICES

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents, entitled Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Motion 6-17(4), Gasoline Pricing Regulations; and Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Motion 10-17(4), Ground Ambulance and Highway Rescue Services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 118-17(4):  
GNWT RESPONSE TO MOTION 18-17(4),  
ORGAN DONATION/HUMAN TISSUE ACT

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Motion 18-17(4), Organ Donation and Human Tissue Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 119-17(4):  
LETTER FROM KATLODEECHE FIRST NATION  
DETAILING CONCERNS RELATED TO BILL 3,  
WILDLIFE ACT

**MR. NADLI:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a letter from the Katlodeeche First Nation dated September 19, 2013, detailing concerns related to Bill 3, Wildlife Act.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 120-17(4):  
STICKERS FROM THE BAKKEN REGION  
OF NORTH DAKOTA

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's no secret, I recently went with the Minister to the Bakken to do some studying on hydraulic fracturing, and I'm going to table two stickers we received while we were there, and it speaks to the quality and attitude of hydraulic fracturing in North Dakota. The first sticker I'm going to table is Williston, Rockin' in the Bakken; and the second one is Build Baby Build. I encourage anyone to ask me details on the way they do business there. Thank you.

TABLED DOCUMENT 121-17(4):  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Members, pursuant to Section 21 of the Human Rights Act, I wish to table the Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission Annual Report 2012-2013.

Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 22, Territorial Emblems and Honours Act; Tabled Document 70-17(4), Electoral Boundaries Commission, Final Report, May 2013; Tabled Document 107-17(4), NWT Capital Estimates 2014-2015, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

Colleagues, before I place you into Committee of the Whole, by the authority given to me as Speaker, pursuant to Rule 11(4) of the Rules of the

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, I hereby appoint the Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bob Bromley, to act as deputy chair of Committee of the Whole for the remainder of this Fourth Session.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

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

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee today? Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Madam Chair. We would like to begin with general comments on the budget, Tabled Document 107-17(4).

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Is committee agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Alright. We will resume with that after a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** I'll call Committee of the Whole back to order. Before the break the committee agreed that we are going to consider Tabled Document 107-17(4). I'd like to ask Minister Miltenberger if he would like to make his opening comments. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I am here to present the 2014-15 Capital Estimates of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The estimates outline appropriations for government and infrastructure contributions of \$193 million and \$29 million respectively, in the 2014-15 fiscal year.

The estimates, however, do not include appropriations for housing infrastructure proposed by the NWT Housing Corporation in 2014-15, totaling \$31 million. The appropriation for these investments will be sought during committee's review of the 2014-15 Main Estimates. The NWT Housing Corporation's proposed 2014-15 Capital Plan, however, has been included in the estimates document as an information item for review and comment.

Including the proposed housing investment, the total planned infrastructure investment in 2014-15 will be \$254 million.

As Members will recall, 2014-15 is the first year of a two-year increase to the capital plan of \$50 million per year. Although this short-term increase will help address some critical infrastructure priorities, as Members are aware, the GNWT continues to have a significant infrastructure deficit. This deficit does

not include deficits also accruing in our municipal and housing infrastructure stock.

The current fiscal strategy will continue to address this deficit after the two-year top-up sunsets by providing a \$100 million allocation for capital planning in 2016-17 and escalating this by 5 percent thereafter. To ensure utilization of this allocation is maximized, funding for large projects such as the Stanton Hospital project and the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk highway will be provided for outside this base allocation.

The GNWT is facing the difficult challenge of maintaining existing assets, improving housing stock, and meeting legislative requirements with limited fiscal resources. Our ability to meet these needs is further constrained by a borrowing limit whose definition was broadened while the limit remains restrictive and does not reflect the debt carrying capacity of the territory.

Under the current limit there is limited opportunity for the GNWT to make investments to improve our territory's essential infrastructure base to deliver programs and services, to respond to slowdowns in the NWT's economy or to make investments in strategic infrastructure that will better position the territory and all of Canada to maximize economic opportunities of the North

Major highlights of these estimates include:

- \$90 million for highways and winter roads across the NWT. This includes funding for the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk highway, which will largely be funded by the federal government.
- \$62 million for health facility replacements, renovations and information system upgrades, including the initial funding required for the planning for the Stanton Territorial Hospital project.
- \$28 million to continue to contribute to community infrastructure needs
- \$12 million for small capital projects across all departments
- \$6 million for information technology projects
- \$4 million to continue the Capital Asset Retrofit Program for energy efficiency upgrades to existing GNWT buildings, including the installation of biomass heating systems, and
- \$3 million for improvements to NWT parks.

I am prepared to review the details of the 2014-15 Capital Estimates. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. I'd like to ask the Minister if he'd like to bring witnesses into the Chamber.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Yes, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

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

For the record, Minister Miltenberger, please introduce your witnesses.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I have with me Mr. Mike Aumond, deputy minister of Finance; Mr. Russ Neudorf, deputy minister of Transportation; and Mr. Paul Guy, deputy minister of Public Works and Services. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. I'll now open the floor for general comments on Tabled Document 107-17(4), Capital Estimates for the years 2014-2015. General comments. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I have a few comments I want to make about the budget. I will, no doubt, have specific questions and comments when we get to various departments, but I have a number of sort of overview comments that I would like to make.

I think at the outset I want to appreciate that, as the Finance Minister and the department have told us a number of times, we have huge unmet infrastructure needs and the government is doing its best to try and meet those needs. I think my difficulties lie in where the money is allocated. I don't necessarily agree with the budget that we have before us.

I think what struck me most, in considering the budget, is the size of the budget for the Department of Transportation compared to the rest of the departments and compared to the total size of the budget. Within the department itself it's a \$90 million or so budget and \$70 million is going towards one project. We have a huge number of roads which need either rehabilitation, or we need new roads and we are spending, in my mind, an exorbitant amount of money on one project.

I do have some difficulties particularly in the Department of Education, Culture and Employment where we are spending what I consider to be a paltry amount of money, \$3.7 million out of a total budget of \$222 million, almost \$223 million, and we're spending just a little less than \$4 million on our education infrastructure. From my perspective, particularly for my community, there are a number of schools in Yellowknife which should be receiving money for renovations or renewals or retrofits. Sissons School is one, which was certainly part of the capital plan a few years ago and now is no

longer on the capital plan and isn't for the foreseeable future. Mildred Hall School had renovations a number of years ago and has yet to have two or three parts of that project completed. That also is nowhere in this budget and is nowhere for the foreseeable future. William McDonald School is a school which is soon to be due for a retrofit, and it's not anywhere that I can see as well.

So the amount of money that we're putting into schools is definitely not enough and there are a number of schools in small communities which are well beyond their best before date and need to be renovated or expanded, and they are certainly not in this particular budget either. So those, in terms of education, I have some real major concerns with the amount of money we're spending and with the projects which are not in that budget.

Aurora College is another one that is basically nowhere on the horizon. Members have spoken a lot about the need for a stand-alone campus for Aurora College in Yellowknife. There's nothing in this budget to indicate that we're getting anywhere close to seeing that project come to fruition.

In terms of Health and Social Services, I have one major concern, and that's the retrofit, the renovation/expansion of Stanton Hospital. It is noted in the budget, but the amount of money that is in the budget is not an amount of money that is going to get us anywhere close to starting that kind of a renovation. I mean, we've heard numbers anywhere from \$100 million to \$400 million for this particular project, and it's necessary. The hospital is full to capacity and beyond capacity. It needs to be expanded and it needs to be retrofitted so we can provide health services to our residents in up-to-date facilities as opposed to facilities that were built 25 and 30 years ago. Those health facilities weren't built for the kind of health services that we provide right now in this day and age. I have a really big concern that we have nothing concrete to tell us when the Stanton project is going to be started, when we're going to start construction, how we're going to finance it. I know it's a big project, but I'm telling the Minister it's a concern for me.

Also under Health, I think the money is there, I can't quite remember, I think it's hidden, but I want to see support for the proposal from Avens for long-term care for all of our NWT seniors. This may be a facility that is located in Yellowknife, but they service seniors throughout the territory. Their proposal is well thought out. It's based on good research, which indicates we're going to be well behind the eight ball in spaces for our seniors in a very short time and it's a project that this government needs to get behind and I don't see that in the Health budget.

Other than that, I appreciate the focus on deferred maintenance in the Capital Asset Retrofit Program. We're still putting money into that and I think that is

a good thing. Deferred maintenance is something on which we spend a great deal of money and I know it's for older buildings and I would hope that for newer buildings, as they come into service, that we make sure we maintain them on a daily, monthly, yearly basis so that we don't fall behind and have to do deferred maintenance in 20 years' time. I'd appreciate a comment from the Minister on that. If our focus going forward is to keep our buildings up to date as much as possible, that's what I think we should be doing at the same time that we're trying to do all the maintenance that we've deferred for years and years on our older buildings.

The last comment I want to make has to do with Municipal and Community Affairs and the infrastructure contributions that go to our communities. It has remained the same for quite a few years. I don't know how many, but certainly for as long as I've been here. More and more our communities are taking on more and more infrastructure. As they get the responsibilities devolved to them, they also take over buildings and buildings that are infrastructure. They, therefore, need more money to deal with those buildings, to do maintenance on those buildings, to keep them in good working order, so I want to encourage the government and MACA to make sure that... It's not coming this year, I see that from the budget, but I would hope in the budget for '15-16 that we will see an increase to the infrastructure contributions for our communities. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The Member has helped articulate the clear difference between the needs and the resources. Just looking at a rough number here as the Member was articulating the concerns for Yellowknife alone, which would be well over half a billion dollars and these are all projects that have merit, that need to get done.

The issue of the Transportation money and too much being spent on one project, that project is underway. It's going to, in the long term, be of enormous benefit to the North, the most northerly portion of the Mackenzie Highway. We hope to achieve maximum benefit in terms of northern employment and business. We are working with that reality.

The amount of money that's in Education, as the Member knows, there are some discussions underway that will help us to hopefully allow us to address some of them in Yellowknife and Hay River.

The Aurora College campus has been noted. I think it's going to be looked at, at some point, in the not-too-distant future. It will probably be the object of a planning study. The retrofit to Stanton is definitely

going to be over \$300 million and it's probably going to be working well along the way higher than that. So, it will become the single biggest infrastructure project in the Northwest Territories when its time comes. The work on that, the schematic design and planning studies being completed... Not the planning study but the schematics and the P3 feasibility review is being looked at, and then starting next year we have \$20 million allocated, and that number, in all probability, once we know the final number, is going to be increased. So there is going to be a major investment into Stanton here over the next number of years.

The Avens Centre, we're aware of the pressures. We have some attention to be paid to places like the Sahtu where there is a long-term care facility on the books that is going to require the resources and attention on a go-forward basis to get up and running. We share the Member's concern on the deferred maintenance, and the intent is to try to stay as far ahead of that or catch up as best we can to that particular issue and not put ourselves in a position again of short-term gain for long-term pain when it comes to looking at trying to cut costs and doing it in a way that's going to end up costing us more down the road.

Finally, in the New Deal, the New Deal is set to increase starting in 2016-17, and as we've indicated in our comments, the intent is to tack on a 5 percent growth at that point on a go-forward basis.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Next I have Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I find a lot of my comments are the same as Ms. Bisaro's. I don't find the response from the Minister at all helpful. We are raising concerns here and he's just stating what the budget is.

I think the message here is that we're not happy with this budget. So, going through very quickly here, this is a very unbalanced, disproportionate budget. It's way over-weighted to highway, Department of Transportation highway projects, and primarily new highway projects.

I'd like to quote the Minister: "The GNWT is facing the difficult challenge of maintaining existing assets, improving housing stock, and meeting legislative requirements with limited fiscal resources." We certainly are. We're on the same boat here. And yet we're stepping out and throwing tens, hundreds of millions of dollars at new projects while we let these existing assets dwindle at the cost of our residents. I hope that does get through to this Minister and his colleagues.

Three percent of this budget, less than that for Education; Education, one of our biggest priorities,

probably our second largest department and a department with major failures right now. We are not educating our people as we want to be, and we are taking action to try and address those failures. But on the other hand, we are completely ignoring the needs of this department, and as we have been to a large degree in some regions for quite some time now.

Some examples: Highway No. 3 we know is our worst highway, our most challenging highway. Nothing this year, this proposed year. The Detah road has been hanging out there since a bulldozer went and threw materials over top of the trees and brush without even clearing it. We started this project several years ago; we've been hollering about it for decades. It's a modest project – one or two million dollars a year for a few years or a couple years, to do this project – and it remains not in this year's budget. Highway No. 3, again, finally getting a little attention, but way overdue. These are examples of simple maintenance and keeping up with the current infrastructure. Instead, we are ignoring these things and going on – and there are many others, of course – and throwing new dollars away on new projects that will hopefully bring maximum benefits, but there is no indication that they will bring enormous benefits, another word the Minister used. In fact, the studies indicate the opposite, that they will bring very modest benefits. They're being done as economic development projects, I mean, sort of pie in the sky hopeful. We've got our fingers crossed while we're throwing these hundreds of millions of dollars at these things.

There is no question that there could be other alternatives that we could throw money at for real, lasting, not temporary – you know, four-month winter jobs – but lasting long-term jobs.

The Inuvik-Tuk highway: We still don't know how much this project is going to cost us. We don't have an estimate. We had an 85 percent estimate, so called, with none of the bridges priced out, with the most problematic section of the road over a high ice content area. We know that the challenges remain, and continue, to find good quality gravel. And we still don't know what the estimated cost is for this project, or the liabilities. We know that this project would benefit from slowing down to get the economic development and the longer term employment we could use since we are throwing so much money and we've committed so much money at this project. We're not doing that. We're trying to finish it up as fast as we can, ignoring all these other needs.

Ms. Bisaro mentioned quite a number of education projects that are obviously overdue, and yes, they do total up to quite a bit, and several of them have been on the books, or not on the books but called

for, for many years in different parts of the Northwest Territories.

The health infrastructure side, I agree, is also a concern. Here we have a shameful lack of focus and progress on the Stanton Territorial Hospital, expenditure this year of \$1 million. That's something like 0.2 percent of this infrastructure project; 0.2 percent. That's one-fifth of 1 percent. Now we're proposing 1.7 percent. At that rate it will be 40 years, 50 years – longer than 50 years – 55 years before we finish the project, and the building will be falling apart. The next year, the Minister commented just now, \$20 million, that's 5 percent. It will take 20 years at that rate. The life of the building with this renovation is expected to be about 25 years.

We are doing some other health facilities throughout the Northwest Territories, which I'm happy to see happening. Ms. Bisaro, I believe, also mentioned the seniors' care requirements. That's an area that we need throughout the NWT. The numbers I've seen, predictions are tripling of our seniors that will need some level of care within the next 15 years. That's incredible. I mean, that means doubling of something less than that, which means, obviously, we've got to be focusing in here.

Again, yes, there are needs, and yes, we continue to throw money at new projects that we, as far as I can see, can't afford at the rate we're doing. I'll leave it at that and we can get into specifics as we go here, but again, not an impressive budget for me. Mahsi.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. This budget is entirely in keeping with the plan we laid out at the start of the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly, and I think we collectively should recognize how much work we've done to get to the point where we could actually put in an extra \$50 million a year over the next two years, the last two years of this government, to do a number of additional projects and deal with opportunities that occur like the Tuk-Inuvik highway where there is \$200 million, basically for us 30 cent dollars, and the opportunity to put in a piece of much needed infrastructure in the part of the territory that has no roads. I don't know the cumulative amount of money we spent on Highway No. 3, but I can well remember sitting in this Assembly where the majority of the money in the capital plan went to, in fact, paving Highway No. 3 and doing all the work. Back then it was well over \$100 million worth of major investments that we made as a government for quite some time and where there were a lot of other unmet needs.

Over time we have to make decisions. We have to pay attention to the whole territory. When you look at education, once again over time we had

extensive discussion in this Assembly about the amount of money we are spending on schools in Inuvik, for example. We have built schools in Tulita, Fort Good Hope, Ndilo and Inuvik in the last few years. This particular budget, at this point in time, doesn't have significant amounts of money for education, but if you take a long-term look at our investments, we have been paying, I think, very good attention to all those critical areas.

The issue of slowing down the Tuk-Inuvik highway will just drive up the cost of the project as we stretch it out over time, but I think it makes eminent good sense for us to try and maximize the economic benefit of \$300 million by maximizing northern investment, northern employment, northern business involvement, and we are doing that.

It's unfortunate that the Member has such low regard for this budget. I, on the other hand, as the Minister bringing it forward, think we have, once again, done a good job trying to incorporate all the concerns we have heard around the country and the balance of paying attention to the whole North and looking at trying to make a relatively modest amount of money go a very long way. We look forward to the discussion in the coming days with the Member. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. General comments. Mr. Nadli.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Overall, I think I understand how this budget came to be, and as we are kind of being reminded by the Minister, when we started the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly, we had an overview of the fiscal framework and how it's going to work over the next four years, so I have an understanding in terms of how things are being laid out as we invest in the infrastructure. Perhaps sometimes this is aging while at the same time there are real needs in terms of communities. It's vitally important and paramount that they receive the services that all Canadians enjoy across Canada.

I would like to say the budget overall this time around looks good, but of course, there are shortfalls. We are not going to please everybody. At the same time, there are some concerns that I have to obviously express on behalf of the constituents that I represent. Obviously, the first and foremost is the big gap in terms of ensuring that the basic, intrinsic and very vital infrastructure such as water treatment plants be considered. It is nowhere near in terms of studies in terms of whether it's going to happen or not. There have been some discussions that, yes, some communities do have the capacity. They have been devolved some responsibility of fiscal resources and they have to do their homework, most likely do a business case analysis in terms of how it is they can make and maintain



operation and maintenance. That is the challenge that our communities face.

At the same time, I am hoping in the future, perhaps next year, we will have some progress on the front. There are still some communities, especially on the highway system where we promote tourism and business development, people that would like to invest in those communities and want to ensure that there are proper services to the public and to communities as well.

There are some blank spots in the budget, I think. For one, especially for the communities that I represent. I think, and looking at the big picture, it obviously has some strengths but the finer details of how it is that the small things don't mean much for an overall view of the NWT budget, but is significantly needed for communities such as Fort Providence where there has been a growing interest in the area from the bridge to the old winter crossing. There are two peninsulas there that are heavily used in the summertime by tourists. They are very attracted to that area because in the summertime when they fish, there's a wind and it keeps the bugs away. The point is that that highway should not be abandoned. I think the community has come up with a strong pull to ensure that the government maintains its obligations, especially for public safety purposes.

Education, I agree with my colleagues. We have some startling figures that point to our failures in the small communities. Sure, perhaps throwing money at problems may not solve it, but there is such a thing, a belief that if you do something very nice, especially for kids, they will be attracted to going to school if you are a kid. If they relate to a nice, shiny building in our community that is very bright, teachers that recognize their gift and being able to create a good environment, I think, is an investment. So, I'm disappointed in the shortfall in this regard.

There are still some very startling needs, especially in housing. Right now we have made some strong efforts in trying to look at a system that is at least responsive to the public needs, especially people that live in communities in terms of falling through the system. Sometimes there are people who are unable to meet criteria and prerequisites and thresholds of income to be able to move out of public housing rent and try to get their own houses, especially young families. There is still a challenge out there. This effort falls short in terms of looking at some collaboration with agencies and stakeholders, and ensuring we come up with some very novel ideas that meet those needs of community residents that might want to, in the end, own their own houses.

There are still needs in terms of going back to the people's needs. We still have issues of homelessness and poverty that I think we still need

to work on. I am encouraged by my colleagues that that has to go forward. We need to have some substantive efforts to ensure that we show the public that yes, indeed, we're a government is responsive, and indeed some efforts and initiatives will result for work ahead of us.

I was really encouraged over the course of the summer of seeing the Anne Buggins Wellness Centre open on the Hay River Reserve. I know the Department of Health and Social Services had a pivotal role in ensuring that that came to a realization. I also understand and appreciate some of the complexities in terms of tenureship of lands, lands that are designated for federal Crown land within a reserve, and of course a reserve within the NWT. Fundamentally I think it is a challenge working with other jurisdictions, especially with the reserve, but I am encouraged with the idea that the health and wellness centre has opened up on the reserve. It has been a model perhaps that has been achieved because of inter-jurisdictional cooperation and understanding, and some trails that has been blazed. I commend the people who were involved with that project. I am encouraged to the point that I'm hoping that those advances that were made on the reserve will not stop. There are some comparative disparities in terms of the reserve and the town of Hay River. When people look across the river, they would like to receive the same services as other people enjoy right across Canada. I'm hoping that some arrangements will be struck at some point in terms of the Katlodeeche First Nations. They have an aspiration to create a land claim or treaty land entitlement structures. I know there are matters of jurisdiction that need to be sorted out. I am encouraged that government will make advances in the future.

Really, for the most part, infrastructure projects in communities are appreciated because it only does not create jobs for people, it creates jobs for people but at the same time it invigorates the business community. At this point in Fort Providence, the health centre is being constructed. It's a project that will likely last for two years. It will create employment and enhance the business community in Fort Providence.

So those were just a few comments that I wanted to make. I appreciate the time that has been recorded for this subject. Mahsi.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the Member's comments. The issue of the water treatment plants in Kakisa and Enterprise, I know the Member has initiated discussions with Minister McLeod. That issue will be given due consideration.

The issue of Providence and the old site where the road used to be and the ferry, Transportation is in

the process of responding to the letter from the Member who has raised that concern.

In terms of small communities and some of the school needs, we do have money in the budget for planning studies for Colville and Trout Lake, so there is going to be some progress on those two key issues.

The housing shortage is a critical one that we've talked about collectively as a Legislative Assembly. In addition to the money identified in this budget for housing as an information item at this point, it's our intention to come forward through the O and M side with another plan to do some dramatic investments in housing, especially in small communities to try to deal with the pressures especially for unfilled positions as it relates to government jobs, teachers, nurses and such.

All these processes and all these projects take time. The Anne Buggins Wellness Centre was started, if memory serves, way back in the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly. I was Minister of Health at the time and Minister McLeod was Minister of MACA, and we thought it would be a six-month process to sort everything out and it took considerably longer and finished off by those that came afterwards, but it's a good project to see done.

The level of service on the reserve tied to their TLE negotiations, it would be nice to have that resolved, as well, and I'm sure they've done that, but in my constituency we have two treaty land entitlement agreements. So, people can see how those work, the benefits as well as maybe some of the drawbacks. I thank the Member for his comments. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The process that the government takes for infrastructure and allocation of funding in the Northwest Territories happens on a government-wide approach. The government goes through this every year and they have community consultations that they go into the communities to explain the process and how they determine allocations. The government then comes back with a base, and other departments assess their own needs for infrastructure, and the government then has a process where the departments compete for the funding. If there are 10 dollars in the pot, the departments compete for those 10 dollars. Plus they also take the concerns of the MLAs here. Every community also may have an influence in the decision-making. Funding is then divvied up and comes to the MLAs and sometimes it doesn't match the needs of the MLAs on this side. We are happy when we hit the bull's eye and we say, yes, this project is coming to our community. It's long overdue.

We also recognize that we have a huge, I don't know if you'd call it a liability, but we have a huge bill on maintaining our assets. It's incredible. With what they are doing to catch-up, it's going to be a while yet, but they're doing the most critical part. The process that we follow sets out the criteria. The criteria are to look at what funding and infrastructure receives the highest priority. That funding is the protection of people. So I'm going to be questioning the Ministers and departments on their rationale on their funding. Why did this project get approved and this one didn't? Why isn't this project receiving some attention, especially in my region where there seems to be a huge increase in the oil and gas activity, and the protection of people on our winter roads, in our communities and some of the infrastructure that needs to happen in regard to the amount of alcohol sales that are being talked about. There was a huge increase we saw from the Northwest Territories Liquor Commission and the increase of purchasing hard liquor in my region seems to be lifting the liquor restriction at the Norman Wells liquor store.

So the main focus for me would be the protection of people, and the government, I think sometimes, in all its goodness, looks at the assets in the communities. I appreciate the continuous message that we need a long-term care facility in the Sahtu. We also need a new wellness centre and I appreciate the government moving on that front. It is slow, but it's moving. We've got different briefing notes of when it's going to start and when it's going to conclude. It's different, but I'm happy. I should knock on wood, I guess, that it's going to happen this winter. So that, I appreciate. That is over 10 years and for infrastructure on the activity in the Sahtu that needs to be really considered because of the increase of activity.

Last year the Minister of Transportation and I drove from Fort Good Hope to Fort Simpson – it's 700 and some-odd kilometres – and we saw the condition of the winter roads. My information tells me that there were about 2,200 or more big trucks on that winter road for that short period of time. That isn't going to stop. If Conoco or Shell or MGM is in that area and they want to further examine the potential for the Canol shale play, there's going to be more traffic on that winter road this year and the following years if they step it up to a production level, so I'm looking forward to some support on this front.

The community of Deline has always pushed for hydro, and there are opportunities to look at how we can best make use of this resource and look at other communities such as possibly helping Norman Wells with their natural gas situation. My people are getting quite concerned about the conversion and the cost of these conversions. Is there any type of support in infrastructure to help

the community of Norman Wells with their conversion?

I still am quite alarmed by the high percentage of core needs for housing in Colville Lake and the issue of TB. Why is TB still an issue in Colville Lake? It seems to be a resurgent theme every so often. Is it because of overcrowding? The high percentage of six or more people in one house is high in the Sahtu. I do appreciate the Minister of Housing coming forward later, on how we're going to address this issue. I'm looking forward to seeing if that percentage can be dropped. In 2009 it was 70 percent of core need in Colville Lake, and core need is suitability, affordability and the adequacy of a house. That needs to be addressed; otherwise we'll continue to see cases of TB in the small communities.

I look forward to looking at the infrastructure budget around the recreation areas. Fort Good Hope has asked to look at the existing recreation facility. It's actually in pretty bad shape. Fort Good Hope has a high crime rate in regard to alcohol-related issues. One of the prevention mechanism factors is to have young people be active and be healthy, and that recreation facility is not being used to its potential. It's actually falling apart. I was hoping that there would be some movement in this budget, hoping I could speak to it the budget on the issue of getting Fort Good Hope a more suitable recreation centre that people can be proud of and people can use, and maybe that will help us deter the use of alcohol and drugs amongst the young people. We have a high number of young people in the Sahtu region and that's going to be our target issue for the next couple of years.

I do want to thank the Minister and his staff and the Members for bringing forward this budget so we can have a good discussion in the next couple of weeks.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Miltenberger, any comments?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Member for his comments. The Ministers are now clearly on notice that as they come to this table in the coming weeks, to be able to answer questions in regard to the rationale for projects as posed by yourself.

I appreciate your recognition of the projects in the Sahtu. I well remember the times we spent getting started on a long-term care facility, for example.

Deline hydro, the intent, as the Member is aware, is to work with the community for the next fiscal year to conclude the studies that are required and then we would be able to make a full and informed decision about what are the best alternatives.

The issue of housing in Colville, it's those types of circumstances and the need to make a dent in this long-standing, persistent problem, as I've indicated

in my previous comments to the previous Member, that we're going to come forward outside of the Housing budget with a plan through the O and M side, through the main estimates, to put additional money into housing.

The Fort Good Hope Rec Centre, I'm not familiar with that particular project, though I do know that we've confirmed that we're going to continue to maintain the money to communities. In fact, in 2016-17 that money will go up and part of the possibilities for that type of money is for communities to have choices. If that is one of the areas that they want to look at devoting some of those resources, that would be totally within their authority. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, we're on general comments. Next I have Mr. Dolyunny.

**MR. DOLYUNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to welcome the Minister and his dream team of finance expertise here. I want to commend, I mean I know what it takes to put a budget together and this is not an easy endeavour. Albeit this is not the biggest budget we've seen in the House, this is still a fairly significant budget with respect to the public's money.

I'm going to keep my comments somewhat general, but I want to make sure that they're taken in the context as is being delivered, and it's important that it is being taken in the context delivered. You may hear, and you've heard maybe some overlap and some of the same concerns that Members have here. We're hoping that those comments do not get lost in the shuffle and that these comments need to be taken to heart.

I think the first comment that I think is critical is that we keep hearing that this is a budget of the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly, and I want to stress again, this is not the budget of the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly. This is the government's budget and Members have input on it. Albeit it feels at times less input, but this is not my budget. This is your budget and it's critical that if there are issues with your budget, we need to make a clear indication where there's opportunity, and you hear different variances of that depending on the Members that you have here, the different needs of the community. But I don't want to water down what those needs are. Those needs are critical. I do support whether it's infrastructure in the Sahtu, Beau-Del, Deh Cho, these are all important and they're important to Members, and they're important to all Members on this side of the House.

That being said, there are a couple of key areas to which I just want to take a moment to address in general format and I'll be looking forward to dealing with the individual items in detail. One of the observations, especially with deferred maintenance, is the fact that a lot of Members feel that deferred maintenance is a growing issue. It's something

we've got to do, we understand that, but the cycle is becoming larger, it's almost perpetuating and items are deteriorating at a faster rate. Whether we're catching them in time is something that we really want to put an emphasis on the department to maybe keep Members more in tune what's coming up on the horizon so we don't have surprises. I think that's probably the biggest question there.

The other thing is the fact that when we deal with a budget, it would be very nice to have what I refer to as one budget, not one budget here and an appropriation here and, well, we've got something coming in a few weeks here and, oh, by the way, we forgot about this here. It's very, very confusing to understand the overall arching issue of a budget when a budget is not all inclusive so that all capital amounts are put in place. So I strongly encourage the finance team, in conjunction with the deputy ministers and Ministers, to come up with one budget when we're doing this process, and not having well, we don't have all the pieces of the puzzle here, but we'll bring it in in a couple of months. It's extremely hard to follow the money when that occurs. It's also extremely hard... If we're having a hard time following money, I can assure that the general public, who have a reasonable degree of watching what we're doing here, would also have an extremely hard time watching the money. It's about transparency and I think we owe it to the public purse to be as transparent, open and less confusing as possible.

As well, it was also noted – and we had this conversation with the Minister – that we felt that although the term “forced growth” was indicated that it was capped at 1.5 percent, this number is maybe questionable, and that we may want to have that number revisited just to make sure that we are really dealing with a true number moving forward.

You heard from a number of Members here regarding education infrastructure and that there was a, I think Madam Bisaro used the word “paltry” amount put into education, and I agree with that word. But I can assure you that you're going to hear, during the course of this exercise, new school infrastructure in Trout Lake, Colville and in Yellowknife as being very important issues. Not to mention the fact, as we heard from a number of Members here, Aurora campus, college. These are important priorities and we need to look at assessing and applying the necessary funds for these priority projects. We're hoping that your team sees the need from our side of the fence here in terms of what is important, not just for the Members but for all the people of the Northwest Territories.

That being said, I want to just take a moment to talk a little bit about supporting for Avens. It was almost an implied, and Avens being a seniors complex that is requesting or has the foresight to look in the future and say we're going to run into problems. We

all agree that everyone around this table is inching ever so closely to that age of retirement, albeit some faster than others, but it is going to be a concern. Our aging population in the Northwest Territories is no different than any other jurisdiction in Canada, and every other jurisdiction in Canada is preparing for that. I thank Avens. We have to give them kudos for coming up with a plan, but we can't leave them high and dry. We have to work with this organization.

I want to make it quite clear that this is not a Yellowknife project. Yes, it's built in Yellowknife. Yes, it's located down the street from the Legislative Assembly, but I believe with the statistics that we were given, that over 60 percent of the residents at Avens are from outlying communities. This is a community centre. This is a community project, and I think it's important that we treat it as a community project and not just as a Yellowknife project. I'm going to be seeking not only support from my colleagues on this side of the House, I'm going to be seeking support from my colleagues on the other side of the House who are actually paying attention today. It's impressive. It's a novelty.

I think we've got to put it on the radar. We've got to put it on the radar sooner than later. I don't want to see it at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly; I want to see it during the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

Adding to that is that we've spoken many, many times in the House – I'm one of them; I'm inclusive in this – is the fact that public safety is of vital importance; public safety on our highways, public safety with ground ambulance. I can't tell you how many Member's statements and oral questions that I've made. I lost count how many on this side of the House. And those are just the few that actually make it to the floor of this House. How many other instances don't even make our in-box or e-mails or people who stopped us on the street or Tim Horton's and say, I'm concerned; I'm concerned that my wife went down the highway and something happened and there was nothing for her to have, and her cell phone didn't work where she was. The people have spoken loud and clear. They've said, quite clearly, fix the problem; deal with the problem.

When we're looking at an infrastructure budget like this where a weighted average, a heavy weighted average is with new road construction. And I get it. I've raised my hand and I've voted towards projects too. I'm just as guilty. But when the weighted average of a project like this is literally peeling the vital energy of resource dollars to one single project or new project of infrastructure and it's taking away from public safety, I think we've got to rebalance and redo our thinking.

Why are we rushing to build this in four years? We're hearing the fact that it's going to cost us more. Well, I can also tell you the fact that we don't

even have the full budget yet, as we clearly know, so it might cost us more. We can't guarantee this project is going to be under \$300 million. We know that. We just don't know what it is. You're going to hear me say many times during the next couple of weeks, give me a couple kilometres of road for this, give me a couple kilometres of road for that, because a couple kilometres of road is six million bucks. That's a lot of money. We can do some really good and a lot of endeavours, albeit outside of infrastructure, for anything. I'm just saying, we've got to think smarter, and I'm not sure if this budget is dealing with that type of smart thinking.

The other one I want to talk about just briefly – and it was touched on by Member Bromley – is we've got a couple highways in and around the Yellowknife area, and yes, we spent over \$100 million on Highway No. 3. Unfortunately, that last go-around had a taillight warranty and we got what we got. Now we've got exactly what we got, which is a public safety nightmare. There is no way on God's green earth you can drive that road at the posted speed limit. I double dog dare anyone in this room to do that. Good luck. It ain't going to happen. And if you do, you have a first round ticket to Canadian Tire to get new shocks, new tires, or maybe a new front end, because that's exactly what's going to happen. For us not to consider doing what's right, which is probably the most travelled road in the Northwest Territories, which is the Highway No. 3 segment between Behchoko and Yellowknife, you place that segment of road on any other road stretch in the Northwest Territories and I guarantee you it's off the charts. We don't like to talk about it very much, but it's off the charts. It's used more than any other road, but yet we're throwing rice at a freight train, and we're hoping that the little bit of patchwork and everything else, and we hear kilometre this and kilometre that has been done. It doesn't cut the mustard. It's a public safety nightmare. In fact, one of our own Members had to save a young man in the last year or so, and thank God one of our Members here with a SAT phone.

The other segment of road that I think is way overdue – and for whatever reason, whether they ran out of money or whatever – is the road to Detah. Why not finish that road? What makes them drop to the bottom of the queue over new road infrastructure? Who makes that decision? How is that decided upon? How many years are we going to leave that road unattended? These are questions that we continuously ask. I can dust off 100 Hansards and I bet you I can find that comment at least 100 times in this House. Yet, we're talking about it again, and it's still not on here. Yet, we've got a lot of new road infrastructure and a weighted average of this budget is towards that. I think we've really got to look at balancing.

All in all, again, I understand the complexities of doing a budget. I've done budgets all my life. But I also remember when I was doing budgets, you have to listen to the needs, not just the needs of the people in the ivory towers and what's important. You have to look at the needs of the people on this side of the House, and more importantly, you have to look at the needs of the people who put us in these chairs. They're holding us accountable, and they're holding the accountability of the Members on that side of the House – which are called Ministers – they're holding them accountable too. We're not heeding to their call, and I think that we've got an opportunity here, and I'm hoping through the next couple of weeks that we're going to be able to address this budget in its true format, talk about the high level items, and hopefully find some common ground and, hopefully, maybe make some changes if we can. But moreover, maybe set the stage for this next go-around so we can see it done a little bit better, a little bit more attuned to what the needs are, and let's listen to this side of the House.

I don't want to be just spewing hot air. I've got better things to do tonight. Thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. Mr. Miltenberger, would you like to reply?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank the Member for his comments, and I won't try to restate my comments that I made to Ms. Bisaro or Mr. Bromley, but I recognize the overlap that the Member is talking about.

The issue of this is not an Assembly budget, in a consensus government I would say that this is a collective process. If it wasn't an Assembly budget and this was party politics, we would have walked in here today and this would be the first time you would be seeing the budget, and we would be having a discussion that would last probably a few days, and then we would vote. I mean, we work on this process basically year round, so we are definitely listening.

You commented that you were glad to see we are paying attention, yet we've got to think smarter. I want to assure the Member that we listen extremely closely to every Member, take copious notes, and we definitely give the Members' comments the consideration they deserve. I just want to reassure that we are paying very close attention.

I won't touch on his comment about his spewing hot air. I will let that one stand on its own merit. He needs no help from us to defend that statement.

The issue of the education and health issues are noted. I would point out with the Avens that we, in the not-too-distant past, concluded a fairly significant addition. At that time we had the foresight, as well, working with them, to give them a

fairly large piece of land to be able to do expansions. We now know that there is a growing demand for seniors' services, which is one of the reasons why we are working in the Sahtu to put in a long-term care facility.

In the road to Detah, all of us can talk and point to no shortage of issues back to that we have far more needs than we have resources, that things are taking a long time and are going to continue to take time just because we have to make choices. I have sat here for going on my 19<sup>th</sup> year with Members from the Sahtu talking about basic roads, and as they listen to the discussion around the territory about we would like better roads, we would like paving, we would like chipseal, and now the two MLAs I have been working with have raised that point repeatedly just to remind us that there are, in fact, some jurisdictions that don't have any roads. We have to, as we make choices, keep those pressures in mind.

I thank the Member for his comments. We will collectively work to get through the review. At the end of the day, we will collectively vote on the budget of the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly for 2014-15. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The last person I have on my list today is Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a few comments that I would like to make to the budget. For the last two years the Minister has been saying that we are preserving our budget, keeping good track of our budget for the last two years of our term. Just looking at the budget, it is almost similar as last year. I was expecting maybe a \$300 million budget this year just spread out amongst the communities.

I do appreciate the budget right now. There is \$2 million set aside for the riding I represent, but there are a number of concerns in my riding, actually, with the project that is the Inuvik-Tuk highway.

Just one thing people would like to see is more training in the communities. That hasn't happened. I am very surprised. It seems like every time we see a major project, whether it is oil and gas in the Sahtu, training takes a long time to be implemented. As soon as we hear of a project that's going to happen, we need to start implementing right away these training mechanisms. I hope that starts right now because the employment rates are still the same in the communities, 30 to 35 percent. We need to improve that.

I was just thinking when my last colleague was speaking, just think of the boost we would give the communities if we were to give them \$1 million for their own projects, the amount of employment that we could create in the smaller communities. That is thinking outside the box. I think that is what we

need to do here. We have two years left in our term and I would like to see something like that happen.

With that said, I do appreciate the amount of money that is being spent in my riding. It could always be more, but I would like to thank everyone that worked together to get this budget in place. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Blake. I just want to remind everybody that we are talking about the capital budget here. Minister Miltenberger, do you have any remarks?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the Member's comments. I just want to point out that the prior year's budget was \$171.025 million. This year is \$254.118 million, so we are not quite at \$300 million. So we have added to the budget, but we do, as all Members recognize, have a very rigorous process. Over the years that has been tailored to try to deal with this because it is such an important issue and there are not a lot of resources, and that need for comfort, both to the public we represent and to the Members, that we have as fair and balanced a system as possible in trying to make the determination.

I appreciate the Member's wish that we had even more money and that we could spread it around with more enthusiasm, but I think we would hit the fairness test. The Minister of Transportation will be up here and will talk to you about the Inuvik-Tuk highway and training issues.

As we try to pursue the Member's suggestion that we think outside the box and be creative as possible, we are interested in being creative, but we also want to make sure that in 716 days when the new government comes into being, we have not stripped the cupboard bare, and that the incoming government has flexibility to carry on a lot of the good work. We have to hit that balance as we try to be more effective and creative in how we do this. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. I am sure we could all agree one wish is to have more money. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that we report progress.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** I will now rise and report progress. Before I do, I would like to ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses from the House. Thank you.

### Report of Committee of the Whole

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 107-17(4), Capital Estimates 2014-2015, and I would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. A motion is on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Mr. Ramsay.

---Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:** Opposed? Oh, one opposed. Mr. Hawkins.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Friday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

### Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Ms. Langlois):** Mr. Speaker, orders of the day for Friday, October 18, 2013, 10:00 a.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
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
  - Tabled Document 107-17(4), NWT Capital Estimates 2014-2015
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

