



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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Thursday, March 13, 2014

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The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

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(Nunakput)

Hon. Glen Abernethy

(Great Slave)

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Persons with Disabilities

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(Tu Nedhe)

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Mr. Alfred Moses

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Mr. Michael Nadli

(Deh Cho)

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, March 13, 2014****Members Present**

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

The House met at 1:32 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Good afternoon, colleagues. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 60-17(5):
CONGRATULATIONS ON THE
DELINE SELF-GOVERNMENT VOTE**

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Deline Land Corporation and the Deline First Nation whose members have voted to ratify the Deline Final Self-Government Agreement.

For Deline, this is the culmination of 18 years of negotiations. This is an historic moment for the Sahtu Dene and Metis of Deline.

The Deline Final Self-Government Agreement is the first community-based self-government agreement in the Northwest Territories to be negotiated in a region that has an existing land claim agreement.

Now that Deline has ratified their self-government agreement, the Government of the Northwest Territories will begin its consideration on ratifying the final agreement.

In the coming weeks and months, I will look forward to bringing the final agreement through the Government of the Northwest Territories ratification process. The Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to bringing the ratification process to completion in a timely manner.

I would like to acknowledge the work and dedication of the Deline self-government negotiating team in reaching this milestone, and thank the ratification committee for their work overseeing and conducting the ratification vote.

Northerners speaking and deciding for themselves has been a major priority of this government, Mr. Speaker. It is one of the principles behind devolution and one of the principles that we can see at work in this decision by the people of Deline.

A strong territory is founded on strong northern governments working together. This week the people of Deline have chosen a new, stronger role for themselves in our territory. I invite all Members to join me in congratulating them and I look forward to working with them and all community and regional Aboriginal governments to achieve our vision of a prosperous and sustainable Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 61-17(5):
NWT ARTS PROGRAM**

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories is proud to support the NWT's rich and varied NWT arts community through programs and initiatives delivered by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment. It is estimated that 20 percent of our population is involved in some element of arts and crafts production.

It is through artistic expressions captured in film, books, music, painting, photography, performance, sculpture and crafts that our residents share their stories and the natural wonders of our territory with the world.

In particular, Mr. Speaker, it is the time-honoured and traditionally created Aboriginal crafts, clothing and art that define, in large part, our identity as NWT residents to Canada and the world:

- beautifully beaded moccasins, gloves and accessories that portray the lineage and creativity of their designers;
- caribou and moosehide jackets with brilliantly designed floral designs proudly worn by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people alike;
- hand-crafted bark baskets sourced and created by the Dene from local birch trees;
- stone, wood and bone carvings, moose hair tuftings, quill work and fur products that take their inspiration from the traditional knowledge and experiences of our territory's Dene, Inuvialuit and Metis.

As access to our North grows, the demand for our unique NWT art products is also increasing and, so too, business and employment opportunities for all NWT artists.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to highlight for Members the official launch of the recently improved NWT Arts Program, a foundation for future marketing and promotional efforts for the NWT's arts sector.

The NWT Arts Program offers a coordinated and multi-pronged approach to telling and promoting the stories of our registered NWT artists. Over the past four years, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment has invested over \$400,000 in this program, to strengthen and promote potential markets for this very important sector of our territory's economy.

Our newly redesigned website enables visitors to learn about the diversity, value and authenticity of all NWT art and to connect with registered NWT artists, retailers and organizations.

The website also provides an extensive on-line library of artist profiles and NWT art, complete with professional images of the artists and their artwork. An on-line forum connects artists with each other.

Point-of-sale materials, educational brochures, and marketing materials, such as tags and stickers, are available at no cost for artists registered with the program. Meanwhile, a redefined branding program, supported by print and on-line advertising, is helping customers recognize and distinguish authentic NWT art in the marketplace.

Mr. Speaker, in the interest of increasing opportunities in the arts, the NWT Economic Opportunities Strategy recommends actions to establish a recognized and trusted branding program, a means to promote and protect NWT art in local, national and international markets and to increase the profile of both the NWT and its art by celebrating NWT artists as an element of our territory's rich tourism product.

I am pleased to advise Members that the updated NWT Arts Program addresses these recommendations and will continue to increase economic opportunities in the NWT's arts and fine crafts sector for years to come.

I encourage all Members to help spread the word about the new program to their local artists, to encourage access to the benefits and supports the program will provide. In doing so, we will help to build and strengthen the NWT's unique and creative arts culture and continue to strengthen and diversify our economy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Beaulieu.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 62-17(5): LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, to achieve the vision and goals of the 17th Legislative Assembly and the Government of the Northwest Territories, we have, and require, employees who see challenges as opportunities, employees who value lifelong learning and employees who are engaged in becoming strong, capable leaders. To support employee learning, I am pleased to advise the Department of Human Resources has three new learning and development initiatives planned for 2014-15.

The first initiative is a Learning and Development Policy. This policy highlights that learning and development opportunities should be available to all employees consistent with their job functions, career aspirations and with learning and development plans undertaken as part of the performance appraisal process. It also identifies that some training, such as workplace safety, is mandatory for employees to reduce the government's legal or financial risk.

The second initiative is a revised Leadership Development Program. This program was previously offered through a partnership with the University of Alberta. I am pleased to confirm that this partnership is again in place.

The Leadership Development Program continues to provide an academic perspective on leadership in the public service and incorporates competencies that are required in the GNWT workplace. A competency is a characteristic which enables people to deliver superior performance in a given job, role, or situation; they help focus on the characteristics that enable employees to consistently achieve high standards of performance. This program assists the GNWT in workforce planning by providing managers with opportunities to further enhance their existing management competencies and to prepare them for future roles and advancement within the public service.

The third initiative is the introduction of modules in a management training series. The modules feature a mix of mandatory and elective courses specific to the GNWT's legislative, policy, financial and human resources framework. They also focus on skills needed to perform management duties. This training ensures managers have a consistent knowledge base regarding the GNWT framework, regardless of their occupational area. GNWT employees who are technical experts in their field will deliver the sessions.

Mr. Speaker, these learning and development initiatives help the GNWT fulfill its commitment made in 20/20: A Brilliant North – NWT Public Service Strategic Plan to value organizational and individual learning and develop employees to

succeed in leadership roles and contribute to the Assembly's goal of an effective and efficient government. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 63-17(5):
WELCOME TO THE FEDERAL EMPLOYEES
JOINING THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, this is an exciting time for the Northwest Territories. We are about to take a significant step in our economic and political development by acquiring new legislative authorities and jurisdiction over our lands and resources. The successful implementation of devolution is not simply a matter of transferring authority from one government to another. Equally important is retaining the experience and expertise of the regional federal employees who have been delivering these programs and services in the Northwest Territories. On April 1st, 132 regional Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada employees will be joining our public service. This represents an acceptance rate of almost 100 percent of federal employees who received job offers from the Government of the Northwest Territories.

We look forward to welcoming these new employees to our public service. We already know them; they are our neighbors, friends and many of them have already been working very closely with their colleagues in the Government of the Northwest Territories to prepare for devolution. Soon we will be working together under one roof with the common purpose of responsibly managing the Northwest Territories lands and natural resources according to northern priorities and values.

Mr. Speaker, it has taken a tremendous amount of work to prepare for the transition that will occur on April 1, 2014. Yesterday we recognized the many contributions of Government of the Northwest Territories employees who are readying our government to accept and meaningfully implement these responsibilities.

It is equally important to recognize the collaboration, cooperation and hard work accomplished by federal employees, both in the region and in Ottawa. We knew from the start that we could not achieve a successful transition on our own. It has taken commitment, teamwork, patience and perseverance on all sides to get us to April 1, 2014.

Please join me in thanking the federal public servants, both those who are joining us and those who worked with us, to prepare for devolution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 64-17(5):
MINISTER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Robert C. McLeod will be absent from the House today to attend to a personal matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Junior kindergarten, or JK, is becoming our worst fear before the first child is in place. Putting preschoolers at desks, plans to merge them with kindergarten and grades 1, 2 and 3, in some communities; developing a combined curriculum for both JK and kindergarten that fails to distinguish developmentally between four and five-year-olds; JK start-ups before fully trained childhood educators are in place, as if study after study after study has not identified the essential need for high quality programs, at the risk of allowing an achievement gap that can last a lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, any attempt to postpone this program on merit is perceived or portrayed as an attack on small communities by Ministers or small community colleagues as if we don't really care about children in small communities. This is insulting. We care about all children deeply in all our communities and thus the passionate pleas. There is clear evidence that if we get this wrong, we will be hurting children instead of helping them.

Rather than support the existing community services currently available for four-year-olds across the NWT, ECE is saying too bad, we'll give you a few bucks for toys and you're switched to two and three-year-olds. Instead, we should be focusing on zero to three early childhood development where the desperate need for addressing the achievement gap in early childhood development is many times that of at four years of age.

We've heard this week about the hollow communication ECE has with the Aboriginal Head Start staff. Let's collaborate, they say, as they crush and render uneconomic these and similar services, as if a few toys make an ECD Program and care provider for children zero to three. You do it, ECE says to these current providers for four-year-olds. We'll take over the easy stuff.

Jack Shonkoff, a leading early childhood development scientist in North America, says, while JK is better than starting at age five, by age four children are so old in terms of brain development that the big opportunities are lost. Much more critical are the ages zero to three and specifically working with the adults who provide care for these very young children.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BROMLEY: Doing in the good services communities have already developed for four-year-olds, ignoring the biggest needs for an early childhood development focus on ages zero to three and their adult caregivers and trying to shift early years responsibilities to providers of four-year-old programs who are inadequately staffed, funded and prepared for younger children is irresponsible. Where is the leadership, the vision? Where is the common sense to follow the clear direction researchers are laying out?

For the life of me, Mr. Speaker, I will have questions. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to weigh in on where Mr. Bromley left off, but from a little bit of a different angle on junior kindergarten.

Throughout my time as a Member for Range Lake, I've been an unwavering advocate of early childhood development programs. We all know that junior kindergarten is just one component in the ECD Action Plan and I support this government's decision to bring it on. But I take issue with the government's method on how we're paying for it.

Junior kindergarten will roll out across the Northwest Territories beginning with small communities in 2014, followed by regional centres in 2015 and, finally, Yellowknife in 2016. There will be no injection of new money in the system. Instead, select district education authority councils, or DEAs, will be forced to do more with less.

Yellowknife boards will be the first to take the hit. Next year their budgets will decrease by hundreds of thousands of dollars to subsidize the junior kindergarten rollout happening elsewhere, and as a side effect, Yellowknife class sizes will expand and the quality of programs may diminish.

The Minister has stated that Yellowknife boards have a surplus, but it's important to know that these funds are raised, at least in part, through taxes on city ratepayers. I guarantee the JK rollout will jeopardize the fiscal equilibrium of Yellowknife

boards, forcing increases to mill rates. Let me remind you, leaning excessively on Yellowknife ratepayers doesn't pass any fairness test I can think of.

With this move, the government is up to its old tricks, Mr. Speaker. One only needs to look back in 2012 when a substantial sum was reallocated from inclusive schooling to ECD programs and the Yellowknife boards were forced to pony up.

It's unwise and even counterproductive to penalize any school board that engages in sound fiscal management. Poaching from hard-earned cash surpluses only breeds resentment. With no infusion of new money, is it fair to expect the DEAs to offer 14 grades of education for 13 grade dollars? It may be legal to adjust the pupil-teacher ratio, but at the end of the day the burden will be borne by our children.

I must return to my first point. Junior kindergarten makes good sense, but this government has yet again singled out a handful of DEAs, mainly ones with a tax base, to fund activities in small communities.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. DOLYNNY: When the education renewal action plan is finally tabled, I'll be watching to see if it receives the infusion of new money it deserves.

This government's re-profiling antics have to cease. Mr. Speaker, there is no more blood in these stones. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DEVOLUTION

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is our last day of session before April 1, 2014, the last day in this House before a very significant day and date in the history of the NWT, and I don't mean April Fool's Day, Mr. Speaker.

On April 1, 2014, we will receive control over our lands and resources. That power will be devolved from the federal government to the NWT government. It is indeed an historic date, one which will be remembered and celebrated in the future.

It's been a long time coming – decades, in fact – and this transfer is the result of the hard work of many, many people, GNWT staff in particular. Some are still with government; others have retired or moved on. Regardless, they are all owed a huge thank you.

As legislators, we provide direction and then turn it over to staff, who slog their way through the details of negotiating of agreements, the analysis of the

coming change, the organization of countless meetings. Without our staff providing backup, logistics, briefing notes, advice and countless other things, devolution would not be happening.

Credit must also go to Premier McLeod and his Cabinet, and to his office for the work done to draw Aboriginal governments into the devolution fold. That work is not easy and it required serious and prolonged commitment to engage and understand our partner governments. I hope to soon see the last couple of governments sign on to the Devolution Agreement.

I did not think in 2007, when I ran for office and was elected, that I would see devolution in my time here, and I'm very glad to be proved wrong. April 1st marks a milestone in the history of the NWT and an indication of our maturing as a Canadian jurisdiction. I'm honoured to be part of this historic event and I look forward to celebrating it with the Premier on April 1st. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CANCER SCREENING

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. There's more and more concern about cancer in the communities of Nahendeh. People believe that the rate of cancer is increasing. That alone should tell us that more support is needed in our small communities. More information is needed along with better support for people who do have cancer. Some sharing circles have been held and that is a good thing. More sharing circles for families should take place so that there is consistency in this form of support.

I have seen the numbers in the recent report on cancer in the Northwest Territories and it doesn't look like they have gone up very much, and I am glad of that, but it doesn't mean that there's no cause for alarm.

I see, for example, that the mortality rate, people that are dying from all cancers over the latest 10-year period was one and a half times higher for Dene people than non-Aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories. That's quite a scary number and it confirms what my constituents say, that we are losing way too many people to cancer.

This shows the need for earlier screening for cancer, especially among older people. I know that generally more screening has been taking place in recent years and I do fully support that, it's just that more needs to be done. Even for screening there are some inconsistencies. Screening for cervical cancer has shown great results, but of late, screening for it has declined somewhat in every size of community. We need to turn that around so we don't lose ground against cervical cancer.

Screening for colorectal cancer has been increasing and that's great, but again, I see that the rate of screening is lowest among Dene, Inuit and Metis in small communities. Something has to be done about that. It's just not right. If screening is not done, it is much harder to detect cancer early enough to cure people, plain and simple.

I am also concerned about the continuity of care. I know of patients in Nahendeh where follow-up did not take place. Somehow the tracking system is not working 100 percent of the time. There is just no excuse for that. We're talking about treatment that is necessary to save people's lives; there can be no more failures to follow up with these patients.

These issues alone are a good enough reason for nursing solutions in our small communities. Our people deserve the best quality health care in all the communities. Mahsi cho.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONSUMER PROTECTION MEASURES

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I continue to be concerned for the everyday working family. In most cases that family is trying to struggle to get by each and every single day, but the problems, as I see it, continue to point towards this government's inaction when it comes to using the leverage before it. If anything, they're not taking the responsibility they should. So this government continues to watch the everyday family struggle through their normal course of trying to get by rather than reaching for those levers to do something. That could be more described as inaction than action.

Here are some examples. According to Petro Canada, who some may say is a small, little business that might know something about the petroleum industry, and they say, in 2012 taxes in Canada represented an average of 39.9 cents per litre, which is approximately 31 percent of the price at the pump, when you do the math. So how does that work out here in the Yellowknife region? Well, the rack price, as a matter of fact this morning, out of Hay River, showed that gasoline is sold at 91.2 cents per litre. If you use Petro Canada's figures, again, accepting that they might know a thing or two about pricing on fuel, that brings us down to \$1.19 per litre. So if you work with that range, that's about 19 cents difference than the pumps on the ground here in Yellowknife.

In talking to Dan McTegue, again, a recognized expert in the industry of fuel pricing across Canada, he had said and predicted that the price in Yellowknife should fall in the range between \$1.18 to \$1.22 per litre. Again, about 20 cents difference from what you can buy it at the pump.

Now, some will say in Vancouver it's about the same price as it is here in Yellowknife so why are you complaining. That's an interesting point, but I think in some ways they're missing the bigger picture. The bigger picture also needs to include the fact that the state also adds carbon tax, higher provincial tax and even, in some cases, transit tax. So are they really the same prices at the pump?

We need full disclosure and that's why we need to have our consumer affairs division look closely at these things, but that's not the only example of concern. What about pricing on cell phone bills and our contracts? We enjoy national partners working in our territory, but are we really enjoying national prices?

Lastly, I'll provide an example of payday loans. Are we truly getting the scrutiny and fairness provided to those who are most at risk accessing those options of life? Are they being treated fairly? They need to be regulated.

I will have questions for somebody later today about these consumer affairs issues we need stepping up on. We're missing an opportunity to protect the everyday working family. That needs to be done.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON 2014 ARCTIC WINTER GAMES

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to proudly recognize a few of my constituents that will be representing Fort Providence in the Northwest Territories during this Arctic Winter Games in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Michael Leishman is a high school teacher who will be chaperoning four students of Fort Providence and will be attending the Arctic Winter Games. He's also one of the coaches who will be coaching the table tennis tournaments.

Christina Bonnetrouge, 16, is in Grade 10. She will be trying out for the juvenile women's badminton. Christina has always been in sports. One of her favourite sports is soccer.

Spencer Bonnetrouge, 17, is in Grade 12. He'll be playing in the junior men's badminton. Spencer has played hockey and soccer as long as he can remember.

Nathaniel Minoza, 17, will be trying out in the junior men's table tennis.

Mikaela Vandell, 15, will also try to win a medal in the juvenile women's table tennis.

These students are very excited and this will be their first time going to the Arctic Winter Games. Good luck to them all, and I hope they can bring back home a medal.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON 2014 ARCTIC WINTER GAMES

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Excitement is in the air in the Mackenzie Delta. A lot of athletes are getting very excited to travel to Fairbanks, Alaska, for the Arctic Winter Games. I'd like to wish them all well, and all their support, their parents and guardians that will be travelling with them as well. I wish them all safe travels and I hope you get a lot of golden ulus and meet a lot of friends out there. We wish you all the best.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON 2014 ARCTIC WINTER GAMES

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, as well, would like to wish good luck to all of our athletes from the Northwest Territories that are going to the Arctic Winter Games in Fairbanks. I wish we could all be there with you, but I think there will be a very good contingent from the Northwest Territories, and I have also been seeing all the posts and all the excitement of the athletes and the parents and the coaches and the volunteers. It is indeed an exciting time, and I expect a good report, but most of all, I think that everybody will have fun and enjoy themselves and ulus will be a bonus, but of course, we are all competitive, right? It will be good for them to bring home some ulus. I don't have every name of every person going. I believe my colleague Mr. Bouchard shared those earlier this week, but I wanted to join my voice in saying, Go Team NWT!

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

Reports of Standing and Special Committees

MOTION THAT COMMITTEE REPORT 5-17(5) BE DEEMED READ AND PRINTED IN HANSARD, CARRIED

MR. NADLI: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that Committee Report 5-17(5), Report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations on the Review of the 2012-2013 Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission Annual Report, be deemed read and printed in Hansard in its entirety.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is in order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

COMMITTEE REPORT 5-17(5):
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE 2012-2013
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

Introduction

The Standing Committee on Government Operations, "the committee," has completed its review of the 2012-2013 Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission, "the commission," Annual Report. The standing committee would like to thank Mr. Charles Dent, chair of the NWT Human Rights Commission, and Ms. Deborah McLeod, director of human rights, for their appearance before the committee on February 20, 2014.

2012-2013 Annual Report

About the Human Rights Commission

The NWT Human Rights Act sets up three independent but interrelated branches: the commission, the office of the director of human rights and the adjudication panel.

The Human Rights Commission is made up of three to five members of the public, each for a term of four years. They are appointed by and responsible to the Legislative Assembly for the general administration of the act. In addition to Mr. Charles Dent, chair, of Yellowknife, Marion Berls of Fort Smith, and Bronwyn Watters, Roger Wah-Shee and Yacub Adam, all of Yellowknife, were members of the commission during the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

The office of the director of human rights includes the director and commission staff who are members of the public service.

The adjudication panel is composed of at least three lawyers appointed by the Legislative Assembly, each for a term of two to four years. Adrian Wright of Yellowknife served as the chair of the adjudication panel in 2012-2013, along with Joan Mercredi and Louis Siebert of Fort Smith, and Sheldon Toner of Yellowknife who served as adjudicators. James Posynick and Karen Snowshoe concluded terms as adjudicators with the panel in 2012-2013. The committee wishes to thank all members of the commission and the adjudication panel for their service in 2012-2013.

Complaints and Inquiries

In 2012-2013 the director of human rights received 309 inquiries, 157, or 51 percent, of which originated in Yellowknife. Inquiries dropped by 16 percent from last year, which is the first year the number of inquiries has dropped since 2008. In his opening remarks to the committee, Mr. Dent was careful to note that this drop does not appear to

have signified a trend, as the number of complaints for the current fiscal year is back up to par.

In 2012-2013 there were 15 new complaints of discrimination on grounds prohibited under the NWT Human Rights Act. These complaints covered areas such as housing, employment, harassment and services to the public. Complaints were down by 61 percent from the previous year, which is the lowest number of complaints in eight years. Again this year, disability was the ground with the highest number of complaints, totalling 11, as it has been for the past eight years. The standing committee remains deeply concerned by the high number of complaints of discrimination on grounds of disability.

Of the 15 complaints, 10 alleged that the discrimination took place in Yellowknife, two in the Beaufort-Delta, one in the Tlicho region and two at remote camps. Twenty-two complaint files were closed in 2012-2013. Of these, eight were settled through mediation and nine referred to hearings.

Hearings and Decisions

The NWT Human Rights Adjudication Panel is separate and independent from the commission and hears complaints, referred by the director, and appeals of the director's decision to dismiss complaints. The adjudication panel received nine complaints this year. During the course of the year one complaint was resolved by mediation, one was resolved by a process other than mediation, two were concluded by decisions and seven remained outstanding. There were a total of four appeals ongoing as at March 31, 2013, while one appeal was concluded by decision during the year.

Public Education and Outreach

The NWT Human Rights Commission has done excellent promotional work to inform citizens of their rights and responsibilities. This work includes attending tradeshows and conferences, conducting presentations and workshops for employers and outreach to schools. Workshops for employers were delivered in five communities and audio conferences were offered on topics such as workplace bullying and accommodating employees with addictions or family obligations. The standing committee was impressed by the scope of public education and outreach undertaken by the commission in 2012-2013.

The standing committee is pleased that commission representatives visited nine communities during the year. The committee acknowledges that travelling to the smaller communities can be costly and logistically challenging. However, the committee feels that the presence of the NWT Human Rights Commission in these communities is instrumental in informing NWT citizens of their human rights, and in putting a "face" on the offices of the NWT Human Rights Commission, so that individuals may feel

more comfortable in disclosing their personal concerns.

Last year the committee recommended that the Government of the Northwest Territories, GNWT, provide the offices of the NWT Human Rights Commission with access to social media, so that the commission could use this popular form of communication to maintain and expand its presence in social media. The committee was pleased to hear that the commission has expanded its Facebook presence, from a Facebook advertisement in 2011-2012 to a new Facebook page, which was launched in October 2013. Mr. Dent informed the committee that the commission's Facebook page has replaced the electronic newsletter "Human Rights Matters," and is gaining popularity.

Workplace Bullying

Bullying is an issue of concern for Members, who were interested in hearing more about the prevalence of workplace bullying and the commission's work in this area. Ms. McLeod advised the committee that the subject of bullying in the workplace is viewed as important by the commission. The work of the director's office often involves a complex sorting process to help people determine whether they have grounds for a human rights complaint. Bullying is not a separate category under the Human Rights Act, so when someone contacts the director's office seeking assistance because they have been bullied in the workplace, it must be determined whether the bullying involves a prohibited ground of discrimination as described in the legislation. The unfortunate reality is that, even if the complainant's situation is severe, the NWT Human Rights Commission cannot offer assistance to someone who has been subjected to workplace bullying if that bullying does not also involve a prohibited ground of discrimination. In such instances, noted Ms. McLeod, there are not many places to refer people who are seeking assistance with workplace bullying.

Pilot Project

There is currently no legal aid available for individuals whose human rights complaint proceeds to a hearing. The Northwest Territories does not have community legal clinics and legal aid does not provide assistance for human rights complaints. As indicated in its annual report, the "Commission believes that the lack of legal assistance for parties participating in hearings compromises the effectiveness of the NWT Human Rights Act." For this reason, the commission initiated a pilot project in 2010-2011 in which it became a party to all complaints referred for hearings to the NWT Human Rights Adjudication Panel. The purpose of the pilot project was to ease the burden on self-represented parties by having the commission, acting as a "friend of the process," participate in hearings to

clarify human rights issues and ensure that all relevant information was placed before the adjudicator.

The commission evaluated the project this year and found that that legal costs in the early stage of the adjudication process were responsible for consuming a large proportion of the legal expenses budget, leaving little funding available for the commission to participate in the most important part of the process, which is the hearings.

In response to committee questions about the current status of the pilot project, Mr. Dent advised the committee that, for all intents and purposes, the commission considers the pilot project completed. Based on its findings, the commission adjusted its process in 2012-2013. In order to more effectively use its legal expenses budget, the commission now has members attend any initial pre-hearing conferences in order to provide information for the commission to determine its level of involvement in the adjudication process. The commission takes the position that it will be a party to each hearing going forward. In 2013-2014 the extent of the commission's participation in individual hearings is being determined on a case-by-case basis.

The standing committee continues to feel strongly that the public interest is served by ensuring there is a balance between parties to a complaint. The committee supports the commission's revised approach, and shares the commission's concern that supporting a fair process may require an increase in resources. The committee also acknowledges the chair's caution that the commission's revised approach works for the time being, because the composition of the commission lends itself to having members attend hearings, but that this approach may not be conducive as the composition of the commission changes over time. The committee notes Mr. Dent's observation that the commission anticipates that their legal expenses budget for 2013-2014 will be exceeded.

Members believe the commission should continue to have the opportunity to assist in creating balance between the parties to a complaint by participating in hearings as a "friend of the process" and that it should be appropriately funded for this purpose. The committee notes Mr. Dent's observation that the commission will be in a position to make recommendations on this matter after undertaking a comprehensive review.

Review of the NWT Human Rights Act

When the NWT Human Rights Act came into force in 2004, it was considered to be the most modern and up-to-date legislation of its kind in Canada. During the hearing, the commission chair again expressed the view that a review at the act's 10-year anniversary would be appropriate. The standing committee continues to support this initiative and looks forward to hearing the

commission's recommendations with respect to amending the legislation as this work proceeds.

Financial Summary

The budget for the commission is reviewed and approved by the Legislative Assembly's Board of Management. The Legislative Assembly pays the salary for the director and deputy director, honoraria for the Human Rights Adjudication Panel and rent expenses for the commission. These items are not included in the commission's financial statements.

Statement of General Operations for the year ended March 31, 2012 shows:

- The majority of the commission's revenue comes from the GNWT via an operating grant of \$250,000. This funding remains unchanged from the previous year.
- Total revenues less expense reimbursement equal \$222,230, a drop of 6.4 percent from the previous year.
- Expenses also decreased, dropping from \$259,442 to \$206,966, a decrease of 20 percent from the previous year.
- Significant drops in expenses for advertising and promotion, down 35 percent, and legal expenses, down 17 percent. Travel for the commission chair and Members also dropped by a total of 63 percent, from \$31,860 in 2011-2012 to \$11,791 in 2012-2013.
- Revenue over expenses totaled \$15,264, leaving the commission with a surplus in 2012-2013, as compared with the previous year's deficit of \$21,992.

2013-2014 Work Plan

The standing committee strongly supports the NWT Human Rights Commission's plans for continuing community visits and employer outreach in the 2013-2014 year. The committee is enthusiastic to note that the commission intends, in the coming year, to reach the milestone of having visited all 33 communities in the Northwest Territories within the first 10 years of its mandate and strongly encourages the commission to achieve this objective. Visits to Fort Simpson, Fort Smith, Hay River, Inuvik, Nahanni Butte, Sachs Harbour and Trout Lake are planned for 2013-2014.

In fall 2012 the commission launched its on-line social studies curriculum guide, the Teacher's Toolkit. The commission intends to add further resources to this website in the coming year.

In June 2012, during Disability Awareness Week, the commission, in partnership with the NWT Disabilities Council, awarded the 2012 Accessibility Award to the Yellowknife Branch of the CIBC for installing a wheelchair ramp. The committee

commends both the recipient and the Human Rights Commission for this important initiative. The committee is pleased to hear that the commission again intends to offer an award to a public service provider in the NWT for improved accessibility to physical premises in the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

Conclusion

The Standing Committee on Government Operations congratulates the NWT Human Rights Commission for a successful year and for the hard work of its members and staff in fulfilling their vision of "a North at peace with its diversity, where everyone is safe, confident and respected on their journey."

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Nadli.

MOTION TO RECEIVE AND ADOPT COMMITTEE REPORT 5-17(5), CARRIED

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that Committee Report 5-17(5), Report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations on the Review of the 2012-2013 Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission Annual Report, be received by the Assembly and adopted.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Ramsay.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a great pleasure to welcome a friend of mine and a colleague from the Yukon government, the Honourable Mike Nixon. He's the Minister of Justice and also the Minister of Tourism and Culture with the Yukon government. Accompanying Minister Nixon is Tom Ullyett. He's the deputy minister of Justice with the Yukon government. Ms. Lesley McCullough, the assistant deputy minister; and also Mr. Dan Cable, the director of policy with the Department of Justice, Yukon government. Welcome and thanks for visiting the Northwest Territories.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a couple of individuals: Ravan Bedingfield and Jessica Marriott. Jessica and Ravan are policy analysts with the

Department of Health and Social Services and I would like to acknowledge their role for preparing for session and for keeping track of all the work that's going on in the House, and I want to thank them for all their hard work and commitment. Thank you and it's great to have you both here.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I wish to recognize two Pages from Tu Nedhe, Fort Resolution: Clair Rymer-Lafferty and also Samantha King. They are travelling with their chaperone, Margaret Edjericon. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Page Program, I would like to say congratulations and a job well done to Dylan Steeves and Brandon Hardisty from Fort Liard, as well as their chaperon, Chris Leckenby. I want to say to their parents that they did well and they made Fort Liard proud. I hope you saw them performing on TV.

Also, if I may, Mr. Speaker, just let the Pages know that many MLAs were Pages and some of them are even sitting here today. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Just a note on that, we probably have the oldest Page in the Northwest Territories: Mr. Bromley.

---Laughter

---Applause

I would like to welcome everybody here in the public gallery. It's really good to have you with us today.

Item 7, acknowledgements. Item 8, oral questions. Mr. Bromley.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 284-17(5): JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to follow up on my Member's statement on a very serious subject here and that's how we're taking care of our kids, our smallest kids, with questions to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

The ECE pilot Junior Kindergarten Program in Fort Providence takes kids in the morning and sends them to the already existing Aboriginal Head Start for the normal 1:00 to 4:00 program in the afternoon, a program that has carried on for years. Aboriginal Head Start, or AHS, reports that kids are wiped out by early afternoon and their parents must be called to pick them up early.

What does this say about ECE plans for full-day JK for these four-year-olds across the NWT? Mahsi.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I've stated numerous times in this House that this whole Junior Kindergarten Program three-year phase rollout has been the voice of the North. We've been through various engagements. Through Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative a few years back, and then the Early Childhood Development Framework the action plan was brought to our attention, and also the education renewal innovation. There have been a lot of discussions that have happened. There has also been research throughout Canada and internationally. We brought those researchers here to Yellowknife so Members could have questions of the researchers as well. Based on that, we feel that junior kindergarten is the way to go throughout the Northwest Territories. Mahsi.

MR. BROMLEY: I have to say we did have questions for those people that the Minister brought forward. I just wonder about the responses that we received. I wonder if the Minister has been listening.

My question here is: What evaluation has been done on the pilot program in Fort Providence and how long has this been used to help design programs planned for this coming fall? Mahsi.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. We have to work with our federal counterparts, because what the Member is referring to is the Aboriginal Head Start program. That is funded through the federal government. We don't evaluate that, the federal government does. They report to the federal government. We work with them. We work with the communities, we work with all 33 communities and junior kindergarten is optional programming for the communities.

The Aboriginal Head Start program is in the communities. We support them as well. We provide funding to various child care programming in the communities. Some of the communities, as I stated before, do not have licenced early childhood programming, so this way it has the programming into the communities. Mahsi.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. The question was: What evaluation has been done on ECE's pilot program of junior kindergarten in Fort Providence? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Thank you. As I stated before, there have been various areas of evaluation and assessment of current delivery in the communities, whether it be preschools, early junior kindergarten and some of the development programming in the communities. So we've looked

at all of that and we're working, also, with the licenced child care programming, the centres.

This is an area that is not a brand new discussion we're having today. Over the years of engagement, we've been hearing from the parents and the educators that we need to move forward on focusing on the preschool. We currently deliver preschool in our school system throughout the Northwest Territories, but they want us to capture all 33 communities. So, that's our goal and objective. Mahsi.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't really know where to start. I'm number three in the one, two, three punch and hopefully the Minister is listening here and developing a tender spot. He's on the wrong track here. The plans to duplicate Aboriginal Head Start programs for four-year-olds and other programs for four-year-olds, wiping them off the map while putting in place their own inexperienced program when the research shows focus is needed on zero to three. What can I say? The Minister calls this collaboration? How is this collaboration?

Aboriginal Head Start has hard-earned experience, expertise, resources for providing ECE programs for four-year-olds in eight communities. Why will ECE not recognize this, work with Aboriginal Head Start to expand their existing service collaboratively and focus department efforts on providing zero to three early childhood development programs that the research said is desperately needed to avoid this achievement gap that lasts a lifetime? That's where the opportunity is. Mahsi.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. Let me be clear. We're not wiping out the other programs. We're enhancing the other programs that are in the communities and this is optional junior kindergarten programming for those individuals that cannot afford junior kindergarten in the communities. Ten communities without licenced child care programming, but we are going to be rolling out the program in 29 communities, the small, isolated communities that are without these licenced programming.

We are enhancing, yes there is preschool, there's also Head Start programming. As I've stated in this House, we have an early childhood consultant that is working very closely with the communities, the community operators such as the Head Start program, such as preschool educators. So we'll continue to push that forward. I want the support of those organizations as well and we're going to continue to do that. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 285-17(5):
CANCER SCREENING

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Earlier in the day I did my Member's statement on cancer and cancer screening in the smaller communities. I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services, how does the Minister explain the uneven levels of cancer screening in communities of different sizes and what will be done about it? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The Minister of Health, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of things that we're doing across the Northwest Territories, and each of the authorities is responsible for providing the health professionals in their communities, and nurses are out there trying to encourage people to come into the health centres when they're not feeling well, to get pre-screening and to get regular well man and well woman clinics done.

Prevention is one thing that we need to be doing, and we're doing that. The other thing that we need to be doing is making sure that people are getting a timely assessment. I would encourage the Member, I would encourage all residents of the Northwest Territories to go to your health centres, visit with your health professionals, do your well man and well woman clinics to make sure that all your health is being taken care of.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Certainly, I know that we do have a Cancer Strategy and it's well on track, but at the same time, when the Minister says go see your health professionals, we've got communities like Wrigley, Colville Lake, Tsiigehtchic, all my other communities, Nahanni Butte, we've got no nurses there, and people have not been tracked. They've gotten lost in the system and there are cases where follow-up was not done.

How is the Minister and how is our health system going to address this?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I've been the Minister of Health for about four months now, approaching five, and I've had this brought up to me several different times, and I personally have had the opportunity to sit down with residents in the Northwest Territories who have experienced cancer who have expressed the exact types of concerns that the Member is bringing up with me. We do have a cancer patient navigator position within Stanton. That position is intended to help individuals through the system. But I hear the Member and I know that we need to do a little bit more work there. We do have the Aboriginal health and community wellness division within the Department of Health and Social Services and they've been doing a number of things to promote regular assessment and regular visits with your

physician but also doing things like sharing circles to make sure that people who are experiencing cancer have the supports they need in the communities. But I do hear the Member. I do recognize that there are some challenges out there. I'm certainly interested in the Member's input and we will continue to work to enhance this particular area.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: The report also talks about morbidity rates, particularly amongst the Dene, Inuit and Metis people is 1.5 times higher, so what's happening is that more and more Aboriginal people are dying of cancer and some of it is because we are in the smaller communities.

I'd like to ask the Minister, has he reviewed the report, looked at the morbidity rates, most particularly amongst the Aboriginal people, and what will the department do about that?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I am aware of the rates and there are a number of things we're trying to do. We're obviously trying to encourage healthier living. We have the Healthy Choices framework where we're trying to encourage people to eat healthy, live healthy, be healthy, quit smoking and lose weight. All of these things obviously contribute to cancer rates in the Northwest Territories, so we're trying to help people make healthy choices. We do have system navigators in place to help individuals when they're through, and we do have health professionals in most of the communities where we're encouraging individuals to go for their regular visits with their practitioners to make sure that they're getting the treatment and support they need. Early detection is key, and that's why we really need people to work with their health centres.

I am happy to say that through the Aboriginal health and community wellness division, communities are starting to engage with their own community wellness plans to promote healthy living but also encourage people to utilize the services that exist.

But I will go back to the previous question. We know we need to do more around the navigation to make sure that people's journey through the system is as seamless as possible. We want better health, we want better care and we want a better future for all of our residents.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated in my Member's statement, as well, I'm pleased that our cancer rates aren't increasing, and I'm also pleased that we've undertaken a program called the cancer sharing circles. The report only spoke about three communities. I am supportive of it.

What is the ministry going to do about increasing the number of cancer sharing circles and the

frequency of it in all our communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: This is one of the areas that we've had some positive feedback on. We need to figure out ways to expand it out and make it more available. There are all sorts of opportunities here. Telehealth is one example. We have an opportunity to bring people together. I will commit to working with the Members to see what opportunities exist to expand this in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolyunny.

QUESTION 286-17(5):
JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today I brought up the issue of poaching hard-earned cash surpluses from our district education school boards in Yellowknife to fund the territorial Junior Kindergarten Program.

As I indicated today, this method of paying for school rollout initiatives is only penalizing school boards that have sound management in place and I believe this will only breed resentment. My questions today are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Prior to making this decision, can the Minister inform the House, did the department undertake a full-scale assessment of potential negative impact on Yellowknife school boards? Specifically, did the department anticipate an increase in the mill rate for Yellowknife taxpayers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Yes, my department has been engaged and has conducted a review of the implications for junior kindergarten in each school board across the Northwest Territories. We have also looked at the success of students in junior kindergarten when it was implemented in other jurisdictions, just to see the outcome of introducing a junior kindergarten.

The mill rate question is another one that we haven't looked at as a department or as GNWT. The mill rate, as it is, is a municipal jurisdiction. Many of our communities are non-tax-based communities. It would be unfair to Yellowknife to have Yellowknife taxpayers pay for junior kindergarten all across the Territories. So, those are some of the things we came up with. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOLYNNY: At least the Minister and I agree on one thing, it will have an effect on our mill rate in

Yellowknife, and unfortunately, we didn't do the math.

Can the Minister clarify, prior to making this decision to affect school board surpluses, what type of consultation was undertaken with the boards? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I have said on numerous occasions in this House that the department has been engaged with superintendents of all the school boards since last summer, and August 21, 2013, was our first, initial meeting we had last year, September 18th, November 27th and also January 22nd with the superintendents of all the school boards. So they've been fully engaged in our discussions and we will continue to have that dialogue with all the superintendents as we move forward for the next three years of our phased-in approach. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOLYNNY: School board surpluses are used by school administration to enhance programs or offer unique opportunities for our students which are not funded by any other means.

Can the Minister indicate what effect removing these surpluses will have on such complementary programs for our Yellowknife students? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: When we first introduced junior kindergarten as part of our discussions, obviously we don't want to have impacts on other programs in schools. With this approach, the school programs should not suffer, as the department funds school boards as part of our contributions. Nobody needs to rely on surpluses to fund education. We already provide funding for educational programming for the Northwest Territories, the 33 communities we contribute to on an annual basis. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister may want to go back and talk to his superintendents because the superintendents are being very clear this surplus, a lack of, will affect programming. This approach to funding junior kindergarten effectively curbs the autonomy of district education authorities.

Can the Minister explain what is the rationale behind this autocratic approach? Isn't there a risk in creating embittered relations between the department and Yellowknife school boards? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: The district education councils we've been engaged with have a considerable amount of authority in the present stages to make those decisions on education

issues and programming in the communities and regions. The Education Act does not define them as autonomous. In fact, we have one education system and it's paid entirely by the GNWT, with the exception of Yellowknife where approximately 18 percent for YK1 and 15 percent for YCS total revenue for municipal taxes. I would just like to highlight as Minister of Education, the buck stops here with me. I'm in charge and I'm acting in the best interest of all residents, including Yellowknife. Change can be difficult; I know that. I have confidence by this time next year, those experiencing junior kindergarten in communities, we're going to be seeing positive results. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 287-17(5):
JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to keep the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment going up and down for another few minutes yet. I would like to return to the issue that I discussed with the Minister yesterday and that's the impact of junior kindergarten on the Aboriginal Head Start program.

Yesterday I mentioned it was a federally funded program fully funded by the federal government. The Minister, in answering my colleague's question, I didn't really get a sense that he understands. He referenced a number of communities that don't have daycare; he referenced the need to put junior kindergarten into 29 communities, and I do not disagree. Junior kindergarten is a good program and, yes, we should be implementing it. However, we have Aboriginal Head Start in eight communities and I think we could already say we have junior kindergarten in those eight communities. Aboriginal Head Start services three and four-year-olds. Junior kindergarten is four-year-olds.

First, I'd like to ask the Minister why Education, Culture and Employment does not openly endorse the Aboriginal Head Start preschool programs in the eight communities in the NWT where it is operational. Why does the Minister not endorse these programs and use them as junior kindergarten? Thank you.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, I've already answered that question for Mr. Bromley. This is federal programming, the eight communities the Member is referring to. We're working with them. Junior kindergarten is a prime example as part of enhancing the program. Again, it's optional. We're not forcing parents to send their kids to junior

kindergarten; it is optional for parents. At this point, I'll have to take that question as notice. Mahsi

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

QUESTION 288-17(5):
JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, have a few questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. As junior kindergarten moves forward, we had a presentation earlier this month on what they plan to roll out. I would like to commend the Tlicho Government in taking over junior kindergarten and offering it in their language. I would like to see a lot more of that in the other regions as well.

Will the Minister work with other regions to ensure that happens? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. The honourable Minister of Education, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The Tlicho language is one of the prime examples, along with Fort Providence and the immersion programs and other communities who have initiated their own immersion programs as well. That's part of our overall goals and objections in introducing junior kindergarten. They can work very closely with the learning communities, as well, when it comes to culture and language preservation. I agree with the Member that we would like to see all 33 communities deliver similar to what Tlicho have initiated. I support that. We need to work towards that. I believe the three-year phased approach for junior kindergarten will cover all 33 communities. That will offset part of the initiative as we move forward to touch on the Tlicho immersion program in the Member's riding and other Members' ridings as well. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you. There's been a lot of talk these last couple days about junior kindergarten and there doesn't seem to be much support from here in Yellowknife and I can understand that. It will affect a lot of the daycares here in the city and my biggest concern is the education in the North. It's quite clear that we're well behind other provinces and jurisdictions. We need to do something and I believe junior kindergarten is a good start.

Will the Minister ensure that they follow through with the plans that they've had to implement more programs this fall? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. That is our overall plan, starting 2014, the new school year, we're going to be reaching out to 29 communities, especially those 10 communities that are without licenced child care programming. The Minister's riding is a prime example. He's part of a community

that would benefit once we roll out the program, and other communities as well. This has huge potential, very beneficial to the communities, especially those isolated communities that do not have this programming. The Member is quite correct that some of the communities are not in the same position as the larger communities. I totally understand that. So this is an area that we're moving forward with and it will capture that. Mahsi.

MR. BLAKE: The Minister must know something that I don't, because last time I looked, I'm a Regular Member.

---Laughter

But I would be interested in being a Minister down the road. To the question. There doesn't seem to be support here in the larger centres for junior kindergarten, so will the Minister look at possibly not rolling that out into the larger centres and focus more on the smaller centres? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. Our role is we want to capture all students, all children as best as we can and that means covering all 33 communities, small communities and larger centres. As the Minister responsible for 33 communities, I want to capture those students, even the unborn students as well.

So we are going to be rolling it out to 29 communities and then the following year we'll be in Hay River and the last phase will be to cover the Yellowknife sector. So this is an area that has been the prime focus. We are going to be rolling out this fall for the next three-year approach. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 289-17(5):
CONSUMER PROTECTION MEASURES

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising on the heels of my Member's statement, which I want to continue the questions about working for the everyday family, which, of course, cost is pretty tough on them. Speaking to the question of gasoline, payday loans and cell phone contracts, heavy scrutiny needs to be put on these things.

So my question is to somebody over there in Cabinet, I'm not sure to who we will direct the question to, but the question is: What powers and opportunities avail themselves to the consumer affairs division to deal with these types of problems to demonstrate there is transparency when it comes to fuel pricing, payday loans and cellphone contracts for Northerners? Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the fundamental question is what type of government or what kind of society does the

Member envision. He's calling for government regulation quite regularly in all areas of people's lives and there is some free market characteristics here that we have in our country that are important. There are things we can do with gas, there are things we can do in some areas, but the fundamental question is what type of society is the Member proposing? What level of government regulation does he expect this government to create so we don't exist in every facet of everybody's lives? Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you. I guess it's my job to answer my questions and not be posed them by the government, I guess.

My next question, if the Finance Minister wishes to answer rather than pose a question back to me is, of course, what powers of investigation does the consumer affairs division have in their own ability under the Consumer Affairs Act to go out, scrutinize some of these particular issues as I've highlighted, which are gasoline pricing, payday loans and cellphone contracts, in the public's interest? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. We have authorities, two in fact, that go out under the consumer affairs bill to look at areas where there are complaints, where there may be concerns. When those are brought forward, they're dealt with appropriately. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you. I really wish we had an expert on the act here today because the act only gives a reactionary power. What is the government willing to do to provide proactive powers to do investigations that protect consumers, protect working families, especially in the area I've highlighted, such as gasoline, payday loans and cellphone contracts, that put Northerners first? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. This government does put people first when you look at the amount of money we spend on social programs, the type of infrastructure we have, the services to people at all levels and ages in our communities. When it comes to protecting them in the marketplace, that's an area where we'd have to look carefully. Once again, the Member makes strong statements about wanting to know what we're going to do. I'm not sure if he wants some type of police state. It's not clear to me. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I could sit here and point to the loopholes provided by the Minister's answer about our customers, and certainly our everyday families that are working to get by, but the question is: What proactive powers can be put into place for consumer protection to ensure that they are being protected over the

pariah of poaching, whether it's high fees, lack of transparency or certainly being held hostage by being the only retailer? We want to put Northerners first. What powers can be put into the Consumer Affairs Act to protect our citizens, not leave them at risk? I would like the Minister to actually answer the question. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. We're back to the position where I do answer the questions and the Member doesn't like the answer. So if the committee has specific suggestions in terms of regulatory reform that will address the concerns of the Member, then let us see them, and as we move forward with the business planning process and when we look at the time we have left in our legislative agenda, if there are changes that are agreed to, we'd be happy to consider those. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 290-17(5):
JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to ask questions and let the Minister of Education and my constituents know that junior kindergarten, despite questions and concerns from Yellowknife Members, is a good thing for our small communities.

So, what I'd like to ask the Minister firstly, which communities currently do not have any licenced child care programming? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The Minister of Education, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. After our engagement with the communities, numerous discussions that we've been having, especially the small communities, it's been identified that there are 10 communities without licenced child care programming. First are Colville Lake, Enterprise, Jean Marie River, Lutselk'e, Kakisa, Nahanni Butte, Norman Wells, Trout Lake, Tsiigehtchic and Wrigley. Those are the communities without licenced child care programming. Mahsi.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much. So, the plan to roll out junior kindergarten, is that coming this fall?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. The plan is to obviously roll out the program this school year, 2014, covering the 29 communities, which will offset the 10 communities that are here before us without child care programming. The following year will be, obviously, regional to Hay River and then the following year, the last phase of approach will be to cover the Yellowknife area. Mahsi.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Certainly, there will be a role for early childhood workers. I'd like to ask the Minister what the plan is to assist education with early childhood workers as we move forward with junior kindergarten.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Part of the plan will be to work with existing professional staff that we have currently, and we're going to be providing specific training to deal with the early childhood as well. This will be happening prior to the summer and also in the fall time for those individuals that may have missed their training. Not only that, we are in the process of topping up the wages for those child care workers as well. Then we have scholarships for those individuals that want to pursue their higher education. We want them to come back, so we will be providing an incentive for them to come back to work for us, so we want to top up their wages so at least they'll be comparable to across Canada.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In our small communities there's a potential of increasing employment with early childhood workers and the junior kindergarten. Can the Minister confirm that?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We have to look at all angles, how many professionals that we have in the communities that can deal with... We currently have some of the preschools and we have junior kindergarten being rolled out as part of the kindergarten program because some of the communities are very small, the facility themselves as well, so it will be part of the kindergarten and also junior kindergarten, part of the play area. Those are areas that we're still identifying as we move forward, but it will be offset by those professions that are in the system and building on that.

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

QUESTION 291-17(5):
ON-THE-LAND MOBILE
TREATMENT PROGRAMMING

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've said repeatedly on the record that I support on-the-land treatment programs because I believe that there's certainly a need and a role for them. I even had a great discussion with an elder from the Sahtu, Ms. Beshia Blondin, the other day and we talked greatly about the wonderful things that they do. One of the things of concern with them is the quality of on-the-land treatment programs when they come to treating heavy alcohol and drug addictions and that type of problem where, really, you need experts. I'd like to hear more from the Minister of Health and

Social Services where things like on-the-land programs or even mobile treatment programs have been proven to work and what statistics can he provide that point to that direction where they've actually helped over the long haul. I believe there's a place for them when it comes to spirituality and working with the community, but when it comes to hard drugs and hard alcohol problems. I'd like to hear how they will help solve our problems over addictions.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The Minister of Health, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Based on recommendations from the Minister's Forum on Addictions, we have been pursuing options for on-the-land programming as well as mobile treatment. The on-the-land program may not be the most appropriate locations for specific hard core or hard drug addictions, but we do have some facilities in the South that we are contracted where that might be more appropriate. We're working with a number of different groups who have come forward with a bunch of different opportunities for on-the-land programming. Some of them are for more after-care follow-up, some of them are more preventative and some of them are more about giving families an opportunity to heal after people have returned from different facilities. There are a lot of different opportunities out there. We are pursuing each of these opportunities and we are following the direction that was outlined by the residents of the Northwest Territories and the Minister's Forum on Addictions.

MR. HAWKINS: Is the Minister able to speak to actual results of these types of programs where they have worked and cite any examples, because as I understand it, Nunavut shut down their mobile treatment program because they didn't think it worked or solved the problems they were striving for.

I would ask the Minister what success he can point to these two particular programs where they demonstrate they're worth investing in and, again, solving alcohol and drug treatment problems.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: In the Northwest Territories we want to make sure that our residents have options and choices, which is why we've gone with contracts in some southern facilities that provide some high quality programming. We are looking at on-the-land programming for, as I said, things like after-care or for prevention, support of families, and we are looking at a mobile option.

The Member is right; there was a pilot in Nunavut that didn't work out around mobile treatment, but we are working with some of the southern institutions as well as there are institutions here in the Northwest Territories who have expressed an interest in exploring different models of a mobile treatment program. We are exploring those and we

will have an evaluation framework put in place to make sure that we can assess them appropriately to make sure that they are providing positive results.

MR. HAWKINS: Now, I'm going to continue to speak in favour of doing business differently such as these things, but I would hope that the options and choices before us would be known as successful ones.

Would the Minister be able to point to where these have been seen as successful options so our Northerners are getting the best treatment for them available?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: With respect to the on-the-land programming that we're currently piloting with the different organizations through the Northwest Territories, each one is radically different, and each one has been designed by communities and Aboriginal governments with clinical partners to suit some specific needs they're trying to address within their communities. Each one is different. We will have evaluation frameworks around each one. In many ways, each one of these approaches are unique to the Northwest Territories as well as anywhere else, so we are going to put evaluation frameworks in to make sure that we can get quality assessment on these different pilots so that as we move forward and consider future on-the-land programs we make that we're supporting programs that work for the people of the Northwest Territories.

We heard clearly from the residents of the Northwest Territories that they are interested in these as an option in addition to facility-based as well as community-based programming.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I would think Northerners would want to know, especially the Department of Health and Social Services, that we can point to that these programs have been successful in some form or matter in other jurisdictions through their implementation when trying to deal with alcohol and drugs. Is the Minister able to point to anywhere that these types of programs have been successful? Because I believe we need to provide options. I'm not against them. I just want to see that they're working in the right, appropriate areas.

Is he able to point to any successful indicators whether they're stats, through numbers, whatever the case may be? Provide the House some examples where they've helped alcohol and drug treatment.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We're definitely breaking new ground in this area and we are working with our partners in the communities as well as across the Northwest Territories and they

are working with clinical professionals who have provided more standard, typical type programming in other jurisdictions, as well, in the North. We are going to put a solid evaluation framework around this particular program to make sure that we can assess the on-the-land programs that are being delivered to make sure that as we move forward that any on-the-land program that we are supporting here in the Northwest Territories is providing positive benefits to the people of the Northwest Territories and to those individuals utilizing those services.

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

QUESTION 292-17(5):
JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address some further questions to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. The Minister knows that we have eight communities in the NWT who have Aboriginal Head Start programs.

I'd like to ask the Minister why he does not recognize how valuable these eight preschools are, why does he not recognize how successful they are, how much better prepared Aboriginal Head Start students are than non-Aboriginal Head Start kids when they get to kindergarten? Why does he not accept the value of the Aboriginal Head Start programs, work in concert with them, and offer the best possible programming for our four-year-olds?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Minister of Education, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. We do recognize the Aboriginal Head Start program.

MS. BISARO: I am very glad that the Minister knows those programs exist, and I hope he knows how valuable they are. I'd like to ask the Minister whether he knows how many four-year-olds live in each community where junior kindergarten will start in September of 2014.

Does the department know how many spaces will be needed in those 29 communities where junior kindergarten will be started? Has there been any analysis of the number of four-year-olds that exist in each community, and have they considered using the Aboriginal Head Start programs to offer junior kindergarten instead of starting a brand new program in those eight communities? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We did compile all that information. As I stated, junior kindergarten is not a fresh topic of discussion here. It has been discussed for a number of years now as part of the process we've been going through. Compiling all the information for 2014, 2015-16, 2016-17, I can gather the information for the Member. I don't have

it in front of me today, but I can gather the detailed information for the Member.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. I look forward to seeing that information. If the department has information on four-year-olds, I'd like to say to the Minister, there must be communities who have minimal number of four-year-olds. I look at information that I have which tells me that in 2012, we had, for instance, 12 zero to four-year-old children in Tsiigehtchic, 12 zero to four-year-olds in Wekweeti. Surely, if there was an Aboriginal Head Start program in a community that had 20 zero to four-year-olds, that's not very many kids at the age of four.

So, to the Minister, if he has all this information, why are they continuing to put junior kindergarten in every one of our 29 communities when it's not necessary in eight of them? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: With the evaluation assessment of junior kindergarten not only in our jurisdictions but other jurisdictions as well, we have been compiling all the information from the communities, 33 communities. It is necessary to have junior kindergarten, especially in those communities that don't have licenced early childhood programming. The Member is referring to communities that may not have licenced child care programming. So this is of value to them. This is a benefit to them to have optional programming. Then there's the Head Start program in the eight various communities we work with as well. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will try to make it short, but I want to say to the Minister, I am not saying don't implement junior kindergarten. To my colleagues, I am not saying that junior kindergarten should not go to small communities. I am saying we have communities where we have a program that is viable, that is successful and why are we forcing another junior kindergarten into those communities where we already have Aboriginal Head Start where it is active and viable and would be happy to take on more four-year-olds? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Again, we're not forcing them. It's an optional program for parents in the Northwest Territories in the 33 communities we are going to be servicing. This has been in discussion, the Early Childhood Development Framework, in an engagement with the parents, the educators and they want this to be an option so they can choose, the parents can choose. So we've done that. We've listened to them. We will be rolling out the program, but it's an optional program, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 9, written questions. Item 10, returns to written questions. Ms. Langlois.

Returns to Written Questions

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 10-17(5): TAX REVENUES IN THE 2014-2015 MAIN ESTIMATES

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Ms. Langlois): Mr. Speaker, I am in receipt of Return to Written Question 10-17(5) asked by Ms. Bisaro on February 20, 2014, to the Honourable J. Michael Miltenberger, Minister of Finance, regarding tax revenues in the 2014-2015 Main Estimates.

The 2014-15 budget amount for personal income tax is \$104.8 million and for corporate income tax is \$53.1 million. These amounts are found in the 2014-15 Main Estimates, Department of Finance, pages 5 to 9. As discussed in Committee of the Whole on February 28, 2014, the 2014-15 total revenues in the 2014-15 Main Estimates are \$38 million lower than those included in the fiscal framework presented to the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning in December 2013 due to decreases in the corporate and personal income tax forecasts.

The anticipated loss of \$30 million refers to income tax forecast beyond 2014-15, as noted in the 2014-15 budget address, page 3, second paragraph: "Both personal and corporate income tax revenue estimates for 2013-14 are lower than what was forecast in the 2013-14 budget, and beyond 2014-15 both personal and corporate income tax revenue forecasts have been reduced by a combined \$30 million."

The \$30 million downward revision in income tax forecasts is a result of downward revisions to 2013-14 income tax and changes to growth estimates going forward.

From the 2013-14 Main Estimates to the 2014-2015 Main Estimates the 2013-14 personal income tax forecast has been revised downward \$11 million from \$98.1 million to \$87.1 million and the 2013-14 corporate income tax forecast has been revised downward \$9 million from \$88 million to \$79 million.

On January 14, 2014, the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning was advised that the revenue forecast was being revised downward and were informed that the decline in 2013-14 personal income tax revenues would decrease the personal income forecasts beyond 2014-15 by an average of \$9 million annually and the corporate income tax forecasts by \$20 million annually.

Total revenues estimated for the fiscal year 2014-15 are \$1.845,501 billion as shown in the 2014-2015 Main Estimates, Summary of Revenues table, page vi.

To adjust for the anticipated revenue decreases, expenditures will be constrained through a combination of efforts on both the operating and capital budgets as a result of the reduced tax revenue forecast as well as the increased contribution to the Heritage Fund from 5 to 25 percent of resource revenues.

In 2014-15 a passive restraint target of \$6.8 million will limit growth in operating expenditures. Going forward, \$30 million in operating expenditure savings will be identified through the 2015-16 budget planning cycle. It is anticipated that this target can be achieved through a combination of limiting forced growth and re-profiling of existing resources for new initiatives.

The impact of the decrease in the revenue forecast on the capital budget was addressed in the fiscal framework by eliminating the escalation in capital planning in 2016-17, as indicated in the January 14, 2014, presentation to the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 13-17(5):
SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
AT AURORA COLLEGE

I'm also in receipt of a Return to Written Question 13-17(5) asked by Mr. Hawkins on February 24, 2014, to the Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, regarding the Social Work Program at Aurora College.

The Social Work Program is a recognized transferable program that is offered at Aurora College's Yellowknife Campus in partnership with the University of Regina. The program that is currently being offered is a diploma program. Although Mr. Hawkins' questions refer to extending the Social Work Program by one year, in fact, two additional years would be required in order for students to complete a degree program.

1. The cost of expanding the Social Work Program at Aurora College by one year so that three years of study toward a degree in social work are available in the NWT.

If the Social Work Program were extended, it should incorporate two additional years to allow the students in the program the potential to earn a degree. The cost estimates are provided with a view to adding two years to the program to 20 students per year. The total cost for adding two years to the Social Work Program is estimated between \$1.3 million and \$1.4 million. These numbers would include the costs for additional instructors, contract services, materials and supplies, additional classroom space, program funding, brokering fees and student housing.

2. The steps that would be required to expand the Social Work Program at Aurora College by one year.

Several steps would be required to expand program delivery to offer a Social Work degree including staffing instructor positions, identifying the host university courses, and realigning the sequencing of courses for two streams of students, those currently enrolled in the program and those entering the program. Any additional funding required would need to be identified and approved through the GNWT's business planning process.

3. The obstacles, if any other than funding, that would have to be overcome in order to expand the Social Work Program at Aurora College by one year.

One obstacle, other than funding, would be to secure additional classroom instruction space for year three and four programming. Another obstacle, assuming 20 students in each cohort year, would be the need to provide housing options for 40 additional students.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize the need for social workers in the North. We also acknowledge the need to increase the number of degree-granting programs in the NWT. Expanding the Social Work Program would be considered in the context of Aurora College's overall plan for program delivery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 73-17(5):
FEEDBACK FROM PUBLIC TO MLA BROMLEY
REGARDING MOTION REQUESTING
AUTHORITY TO EXTEND THE TERM
OF THE CURRENT ASSEMBLY

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table feedback that I received from the public with regard to the motion requesting authority to extend the term of the current Assembly. I believe there are about 25 responses here and I would stress that all are from individuals, private citizens, and should not be taken to represent the views of their employers or professional work life. Mahsi.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 74-17(5):
COMMUNITIES AND DIAMONDS: 2013 ANNUAL
REPORT OF THE GNWT UNDER THE BHP
BILLITON, DIAVIK AND DEBEERS
SOCIO-ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled "Communities and Diamonds: 2013 Annual Report of the GNWT Under the BHP Billiton, Diavik and

DeBeers Socio-economic Agreements.” Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 75-17(5):
AURORA COLLEGE ANNUAL REPORT,
2012-2013

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled “Aurora College Annual Report, 2012-2013.” Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Beaulieu.

TABLED DOCUMENT 76-17(5):
MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION'S REPORT TO
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR 2013 ON
THE TRANSPORTATION OF DANGEROUS
GOODS ACT, (1990)

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled “Minister of Transportation’s Report for the Legislative Assembly for 2013 on Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1990.” Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 77-17(5):
ARTICLE FROM THE TYEE, FEBRUARY 28,
2014: ALBERTA MOTHER FIGHTS FIVE
NEIGHBOURING FRACKED WELLS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table an article from the Tyee, the 28th of February 2014 issue, entitled “Alberta Mother Fights Five Neighbouring Fracked Wells,” subtitled Diana Daunheimer’s lawsuit follows years of policing industry in her own backyard. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Ms. Bisaro.

Motions

MOTION 18-17(5):
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE
TO MAY 28, 2014,
CARRIED

MS. BISARO: I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on March 13, 2014, it shall be adjourned until Wednesday, May 28, 2014;

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to May 28, 2014, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation

with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Motion is carried.

---Carried

Thank you, Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Mr. Lafferty.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 24:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ACT

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Student Financial Assistance Act to raise the maximum aggregate principal amount of all student loans that may be made by the Government of the Northwest Territories by \$5 million for the 2014-2015 and subsequent fiscal years. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 24 has had second reading and is referred to committee. Mr. Lafferty.

BILL 25:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
EDUCATION ACT

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, I move, second by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Education Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Education Act to provide the subject to regulation persons who are employed as superintendents are employed in the public service and makes corollary amendments to the Public Service Act to address the employment status of superintendents. This bill also clarifies the status of certain incumbent superintendents who

would otherwise be affected by this amendment. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 25 has had second reading and is referred to committee. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Item 21, report of Committee of the Whole.

Colleagues, we're going to take a 15-minute break.

---SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER: Item 22, third reading of bills. Madam Clerk, will you ascertain if Commissioner George L. Tuccaro is prepared to enter the Chamber?

COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Hon. George Tuccaro): Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly, good afternoon.

I look forward to attending the 2014 Arctic Winter Games in Fairbanks, Alaska, next week. I am already so proud of our Team NWT athletes and coaches in how they have performed during their trials to qualify for the Games, and in how I know they will conduct themselves with good sportsmanship as representatives and ambassadors for the Northwest Territories.

I would like to wish good luck to all of our athletes as they compete at the Arctic Winter Games. I will be one of their best cheerleaders.

We are embarking on an exciting and challenging time in the history of the Northwest Territories with the transfer of power and authorities from the Government of Canada to our own territorial government. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of many people, for the past several years, who have contributed to this historic achievement. We look forward to the fruits of your labour.

ASSENT TO BILLS

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I am pleased to assent to the following bills:

- Bill 4, Health Information Act;
- Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act;
- Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Medical Care Act;
- Bill 19, Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), 2014-2015;
- Bill 20, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 4, 2013-2014;

- Bill 21, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2014-2015;
- Bill 22, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 4, 2012-2013; and
- Bill 23, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 4, 2013-2014.

Thank you, merci beaucoup, mahsi cho, qunanani, koana.

MR. SPEAKER: Before we adjourn today, colleagues, I would like to commend the Assembly for the work you have completed during this session. I recognize the challenges you have all faced. Our spring budget sessions are usually longer and busier than most, and this was certainly no exception.

The work we do in the Assembly involves all of you at many levels: Ministers and their departments work against deadlines that are always too short; standing committees work long hours to fulfill their accountability role; and the public provides input in many different ways.

During this session, you have considered and passed into law one appropriation act, four supplementary appropriation acts and 13 other pieces of legislation. You have debated 12 motions and have considered three committee reports.

This is also an opportunity to thank all of the Pages who have helped us out during this long session. Thank you from all Members of the Assembly for the excellent job you do.

Before we leave, I would like to note two upcoming events. First, the Arctic Winter Games will take place in Fairbanks, Alaska, March 15th to 22nd. I know you all join me in sending best wishes to our youth taking part in this event.

I would also like to encourage all residents to observe the National Day of Healing and Reconciliation on Monday, May 26th. This is the day set aside by the 15th Legislative Assembly to acknowledge and support the collective healing and reconciliation process that continues across the Northwest Territories.

Colleagues, we began this sitting in the dark of winter and are concluding with a hint of spring in the air. I hope you have the opportunity to enjoy this season of carnivals, jamborees and spring hunts. Keep safe until we meet again in May. Spend some time with your families and the communities and I look forward to seeing you in the spring.

Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Ms. Langlois): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, orders of the day for Wednesday, May 28, 2014, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
 - Bill 18, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act
23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, May 28th, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 3:23 p.m.