



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

5th Session

Day 84

17th Assembly

HANSARD

Tuesday, September 29, 2015

Pages 6481 – 6516

The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker

Hon. Jackie Jacobson
(Nunakput)

Hon. Glen Abernethy

(Great Slave)
Minister of Health and Social Services
Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities
Minister responsible for Seniors

Hon. Tom Beaulieu

(Tu Nedhe)
Minister of Human Resources
Minister of Transportation
Minister of Public Works and Services

Ms. Wendy Bisaro

(Frame Lake)

Mr. Frederick Blake

(Mackenzie Delta)

Mr. Robert Bouchard

(Hay River North)

Mr. Bob Bromley

(Weledeh)

Mr. Daryl Dolynny

(Range Lake)

Mrs. Jane Groenewegen

(Hay River South)

Mr. Robert Hawkins

(Yellowknife Centre)

Hon. Jackson Lafferty

(Monfwi)
Deputy Premier
Minister of Education, Culture and Employment
Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

Hon. Bob McLeod

(Yellowknife South)
Premier
Minister of Executive
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations
Minister responsible for Women

Hon. Robert C. McLeod

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)
Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs
Minister of Lands
Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation
Minister responsible for Youth

Mr. Kevin Menicoche

(Nahendeh)

Hon. J. Michael Miltenberger

(Thebacha)
Government House Leader
Minister of Finance
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources
Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation

Mr. Alfred Moses

(Inuvik Boot Lake)

Mr. Michael Nadli

(Deh Cho)

Hon. David Ramsay

(Kam Lake)
Minister of Justice
Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment
Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board

Mr. Norman Yakeleya

(Sahtu)

Officers

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Mr. Tim Mercer

Deputy Clerk

Mr. Doug Schauerte
Malinda Kellett
Rutland

Principal Clerk, Committees and Public Affairs

Mr. Michael Ball

Principal Clerk, Corporate and Interparliamentary Affairs

Ms. Gail Bennett

Committee Clerk Trainee

Mrs. Danielle Mager

Law Clerks

Ms. Sheila MacPherson
Ms.
Mr. Glen

Box 1320
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784
<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER..... 6481

MINISTERS' STATEMENTS..... 6485

221-17(5) – Sessional Statement (B. McLeod)..... 6485

222-17(5) – Honouring Fallen Police and Peace Officers (Ramsay)..... 6488

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS..... 6488

Dredging in the Hay River (Bouchard)..... 6488

Dredging in the Hay River (Groenewegen)..... 6489

Mackenzie Delta Ferry Services (Blake).....6489

Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway Contract Claim (Menicoche).....6490

Assessing Fiscal Performance and Accountability of the 17th Assembly (Dolynny).....6490

Student Financial Assistance Program (Bisaro).....6490

Consensus Government Communication Protocols (Bromley).....6491

Impact of Fiscal Restraint Policy on Public Service (Hawkins).....6491

Regional Economic Development and Diversity (Moses).....6492

Condolences to Family and Friends of Mary Rose Sabourin (Nadli).....6492

Condolences to Sahtu Residents Who Have Lost Loved Ones (Yakeleya).....6493

Condolences to Families and Friends of J.B. Rabesca and Mary Adelle Fatt (Beaulieu).....6493

RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS.....6493

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY.....6494

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....6495

ORAL QUESTIONS.....6495

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS.....6505

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS.....6506, 6508

NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS.....6508

Bill 68 – An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act, No. 2.....6508

CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS.....6508

REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE.....6515

ORDERS OF THE DAY.....6516

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Tuesday, September 29, 2015

Members Present

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

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Welcome back, colleagues. Before your point of privilege, I have opening remarks, Mr. Dolynny.

---Laughter

It's good to be back. Anyway, welcome back as we meet for this final sitting of the 17th Legislative Assembly.

I understand that you have a very busy schedule over the next two weeks and that you are all eager to begin your work. I will do what I can to assist you in my capacity as Speaker and only ask that you continue to work together respectfully, recognizing the dignity of this institution.

Now for one of my favourite duties, I would like to welcome the Pages we will have with us during this sitting. Pages will be joining us from Yellowknife, Mackenzie Delta, Hay River South, Tu Nedhe and Nahendeh. Welcome to the Assembly, one and all, and I hope you enjoy your time here.

When we lose loved ones in our small communities, the loss is felt by all. I would like to send sincere condolences to the following:

- Jack and Irene Akhiatak on the loss of their son, Alex Akhiatak;
- the Silastiak family and to Derek Panaktalok, Denise Cockney, Melissa Panaktalok and Andrew Avik on the loss of their father, Alvin Silastiak, who will be sadly missed;
- Sharon, Scarlett and Natasha Ruben on the loss of their mother, Lynn Ruben;
- John Sr., Don and Edna Gruben and family on the loss of their sister Darlene Grace Gruben;
- Willie Carpenter and family on the loss of Vernon Carpenter; and
- Jack Katayoak and family on the loss of Betty-Anne Kublumik.

God be with you all. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Finally, colleagues, it is my duty to advise the House that I have received the following message from the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories. It reads:

Dear Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise that I recommend to the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories the passage of

- Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2016-2017;
- Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2015-2016; and
- Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2015-2016

during the Fifth Session of the 17th Legislative Assembly.

Yours truly, George Tuccaro, Commissioner.

Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Dolynny, point of privilege.

POINT OF PRIVILEGE

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today on a point of privilege in response to an event that took place on September 2, 2015, in the Legislative Assembly's media room. On that date Premier McLeod and Finance Minister Michael Miltenberger called a press conference for which they announced: "The Government of the Northwest Territories will provide the Northwest Territories Power Corporation with up to \$29.7 million to prevent an increase to power rates for all NWT residents. This funding was required because of continued low water levels affecting the Snare and Bluefish hydro systems."

In an accompanying news release, Premier McLeod is also quoted as saying, "Our government doesn't believe it makes sense to pass these costs on to residents and has decided to cover them instead."

Mr. Speaker, it is this public announcement of funding that has yet to receive the authorization of the House to which I object. I seek your guidance as to whether the actions of the government in making this announcement constitutes a breach of privilege under Rule 20(1) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly which specifies that individually and as a House, Members are entitled to freedom from obstruction in relation to their duties as elected representatives. I also seek your guidance as to whether this action demonstrates contempt to this House by undermining the legitimate role the Legislative Assembly has in approving spending bills and for the guiding principles of consensus government.

Mr. Speaker, this is our first time back since the House was adjourned for the summer on June 4, 2015. I am raising this point of privilege now as this is the first opportunity I've had to bring this matter to the attention of the House. I am raising this point of privilege because I consider it to be a serious issue for all Members of this House. Therefore, I appreciate your patience as I set out the following facts in this matter.

On Monday, August 31, 2015, Members received a notification from the Minister of Finance advising that the GNWT had approved a significant sum of money to offset the increased cost of diesel for NTPC and notifying Members that the government would be bringing forth a request for supplementary appropriation to be considered in the upcoming session. This notification did not indicate that the government had planned for a press release to be held two days later to publicly announce this almost \$30 million NTPC funding subsidy.

I believe, as any reasonable person would, that it was intended as a courtesy notification to Members of the upcoming supplementary appropriation bill. Members were given no reason to anticipate that a public announcement of this funding would be made within two days of notice and prior to the consideration of the spending request in this House. As I personally attended the press conference, I want to make one point very clear. Other than a one-line reference written in the Premier's handout on press day, I wish to assure Members of this House that there was nothing said by either the Premier or Minister in their comments or in the GNWT news release of the fact that this almost \$30 million in funding had not yet been appropriated and could only be authorized by the Legislature. It's apparent the Premier must have forgotten to read that line.

I should note that this is not the first time this Cabinet has used this tactic, having made a surprise announcement on September 26, 2014, of a \$20 million subsidy to NTPC that was not included in the 2014-15 Main Estimates and also had not been approved by either special warrant or supplementary appropriation at the time of the announcement.

When this occurred last year, Members advised the Premier and Finance Minister of their displeasure over this premature announcement. As a result of discussions Members held with the Premier, I believed, as my colleagues, that Cabinet had understood that they had been a bit too hasty in their announcement. I also believed this was a one-off error in judgment that would not happen again. Clearly, I was wrong.

By publicly announcing unapproved funding as though it were a done deal, the Premier and Minister Miltenberger have led the NWT public to believe that with the government's simple blessing that funding is approved and in place. This creates a heightened public expectation of government expenditures relative to a sensitive political subject. This action obstructs the House and its Members in relation to their duties as elected representatives, making it especially difficult for Members to consider a supplementary appropriation request on its merits or to vote on it in accordance with their conscience and keeping with what we believe is in the best interest of the constituents.

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary appropriation bill is not a formality. To qualify the supplementary appropriation, a funding request must only be used for unforeseen expenditures and must meet one or more stringent attributes. It is a duty of the elected representatives of this House to ensure that government meets these tests before approving spending bills. This is not a rubber stamp process.

The fact that this Cabinet has seen fit to announce its spending initiative before satisfying those tests under scrutiny of the House demonstrates the contempt these Members have for the authority of the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I will await your due consideration and thoughtful judgment on this issue that is so integral to the work we do on behalf of all Northerners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. To the point of privilege, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to, of course, make the case that there is no point of privilege. What we are dealing with here is the fourth year of a drought. We are dealing with the circumstance of extreme weather that has put enormous potential burden on the people of the Northwest Territories at a time when the Assembly wasn't in session or wasn't with committee sitting. Yet, we had indicated clearly in the letter of August 31st that we would be bringing this forward for final decision in this House.

As the government, we are required to act in the best interests of the people of the Northwest Territories. In this case the question was, do we allow the rates to go up because the Public Utilities Board wanted to know what was happening with the charges with low water? Do we let the rates go up 24 percent, or do we intercede to protect the cost of living and protect Northerners from this extreme weather event?

As a government, we acted as a government should, in the best interests of the people of the Northwest Territories. We notified the committee; we honoured our protocols; and the Member, of course, has that final say here in this House in this session. If it's determined that we do not have the support of the House for that supplementary appropriation, then the money won't be spent and the rates will go up 24 percent. We'll have that discussion. We have nothing but the highest regard for the operating of this House, just as we have extreme responsibility as government, as legislators, to respond to critical events in a timely way, in a way that protects their interests and our interests, which is making sure that the cost of living doesn't go up so high that it makes life in the Northwest Territories unaffordable.

So, there was no impairment of freedom of speech. There was no attempt to obstruct the final decision of this House, which will be to vote on that particular amount of money, and the reason it was brought

forward in the interest of the people of the Northwest Territories by the government acting in a timely way at a time when there were no committees sitting, there was no opportunity to wait that long because we had to respond and reply. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I will allow debate on this point of privilege. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Actually, it's interesting that we are talking about this. It's not about the power and it's not about the rate increase. I think this is about the procedural step that Members feel denied. We shouldn't cloud the issue with whatever goodwill and intent was provided by the Minister and his argument based solely on the fact to shelter constituents would be an argument worth any opportunity to make time and time again.

Are we worried about why we did it or what method it was done by? I think the merits of why it was done perhaps says, yes, we had to find a way to ensure citizens were protected.

The crux of our Assembly is built around process, procedure and how we work together in the context of consensus government. That isn't necessarily written letter by letter, page by page throughout the Assembly. It's written in the ethics of how we do our business and how we relate with each other and how Cabinet members document that speaks about relationships.

I would say we should not cause ourselves to get caught up in why the action and the result it delivered. We should be asking ourselves what process was missed and how Members were perceived in that matter.

On that merit, Mr. Dolynny has a case by saying that Members were not informed through proper process. I give the government points for the initiative they were trying to tackle, yes. They deserve credit for that, but at the same time, I think Mr. Dolynny's argument should withstand any criticizing and look at what was really missed here: the relationship, the opportunity for the two groups to work together properly. Members on this side of the House feel like their rights have been denied. That's why Mr. Dolynny's argument should stand. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the point of privilege, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, rise in support of Mr. Dolynny's point of privilege. For four years we've governed ourselves as an Assembly sharing as much information as we can. Having that announcement in the media without prior Member or committee involvement is a huge oversight of the way we've been running. I really feel that there was a misapplication of guidelines and procedures that we govern ourselves by in this case.

I don't know why it is, but it seems to have happened more than once in the last month. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the point of privilege, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also rise in support of my colleague. I appreciate him bringing this forward and I will speak to this later in the House. Specifically to the point of privilege, this is a one-time benefit, this expenditure of dollars, when what is needed is lasting benefits.

Unfortunately, what we're dealing with here is a repeat. This was done last year, less than a year ago, and we raised the same issues then. Yet, here it is again. This is robbing the voice of duly elected people who were put in place to speak on behalf of our representatives in major decisions such as this.

Again, there are principles that we have in consensus government that demand that when there is a significant decision to be made, Cabinet or the government will involve all Members of the House. My concerns are, first of all, that it fails the principles of consensus government requiring input into any significant decisions, as I just said. Our fiscal status is indeed tentative, or weakly stable you could say, and sensitive to such large, unplanned expenditure. Therefore, this is a significant expenditure, and under our principles, we should have been consulted.

Secondly, it is inefficient and a poor use of scarce resources. A one-time expenditure benefit with essentially zero lasting benefits such as might come from more useful investments which could be discussed if Members of the House were provided with the opportunity to contribute to that discussion. Finally, it's a repeat concern, Mr. Speaker.

It's time to do something about this. The Minister said he was required to work in the best interests of people of the Northwest Territories. What does the Minister think our mandate is? Indeed, it is to work in the best interest of the Northwest Territories. We were prevented from having that opportunity by not being involved in that decision-making.

The Minister said it prevents a 24 percent increase in rates. Well, it might have prevented a 23 percent or 22 percent or a 21 percent with those other 1, 2 or 3 percent or 10 or 15 percent put into actions that would have lasting benefits. Without, again, the opportunity to contribute to the discussions, I think the Minister has failed that test.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the MLAs have put Cabinet on notice less than a year ago that such behaviour without committee input wasn't acceptable and that we needed to invest such dollars in a way that return much more than a momentary benefit, gone in a puff of global warming smoke.

I think there are many opportunities, solar, which the Minister is well aware and supportive of, where consumers' capital could have been put to work.

I will leave it at that and say we have the opportunity to provide 25 years of lasting benefits with guaranteed

equipment these days. Instead, we've provided that much benefit because our voices were restricted from participating in such a debate. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. To the point of privilege, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, am supportive of my colleague's point of privilege and I would like to thank Mr. Dolynny for bringing it forward.

My colleagues have made some very valid points. This is the second time this has occurred. A year and a half ago we went through the same situation where we were advised after the fact, or basically through the media, that the government intended to spend money. In both instances the way that it was stated, as Mr. Dolynny put it, the government has decided. It was decided well in advance of any money coming to the Assembly floor for verification. That basically removes any involvement of the Regular Members of this House from that decision because it has already been made by Cabinet.

The Minister stated there was no overt attempt to obstruct, but I have to disagree. It may not have been an overt attempt, but certainly the actions and the wording implied that there was an action taken to obstruct Regular Members from having a hand in the decision.

Realistically, when there is a statement made and the headline in the paper screams that the government is going to put \$20 million or \$30 million into power rates to reduce our cost of living and three months later the amount of money comes to the floor for discussion, what Regular Member is going to vote against that? We've been put into a corner. The way that this money was put out to the public without the knowledge of Regular Members backs us into a box and it makes us look like absolute idiots if we're going to say, "Sure, my residents would be happy to accept a 25 percent increase in electrical rates."

There was another statement by the Minister that the committee had been notified, and I have to challenge the Minister to provide committee with the documentation that notified us of this decision to spend \$30 million on lowering our water rates in advance of the headline that I saw in the paper,

So, Mr. Speaker, I do support the point of privilege and I look forward to your decision. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the point of privilege, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll also be speaking in support of my colleague's point of privilege.

This is an example of the end justifying the means, and I think we should not get into the detail of why we have had to make a decision about offsetting the cost to ratepayers and addressing the cost of living. I think that's another whole subject for another day.

We probably would have come to the same end decision. It's only about process, that's my concern. I mean, nobody can stand up here as a Regular Member of this Legislature and say that we would support a 24 percent hit on the ratepayers of the Northwest Territories. That certainly was something to be mitigated and something to be avoided. I mean, \$30 million is a very substantial amount of money in the work that we do around this table.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would support it and say that we would have probably come to the same conclusion, but the process was flawed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. To the point of privilege, Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, will support this point of privilege. I think the debate is not whether we are helping our residents and not seeing a 25 percent increase; I think it was how it was done and how it was rolled out, and communication has been broken down in our consensus government and this is just one example of it.

As Regular Members, we're finding out information after the fact. We're finding out information that's being discussed by Cabinet, by that side of the House, without communicating with us. The whole concept behind consensus government is that we're included in that information. If they're concerned about leakage of information, date stamp "confidential" on it. If we have issues with that then we have to get to that, but for us to find out this information through a press release is not appropriate.

Mr. Speaker there has to be communication from both sides and it does affect how this House works. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. To the point of privilege, the honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to state that this is not a point of privilege. Several Members have pointed to the lack of communication; there's notification. I have a copy of a letter that was sent August 31, 2015, advising committee of exactly that. The MLA for Range Lake referenced that in his notes, and a fundamental issue is how does government react in an emergency situation? We've known that we've been in drought conditions for four years, and everybody refers to how we did it last year. Well, the drought is still there, so the expectation is that we use the same process.

Now there are others saying you're backed into a corner. Well, I look at the fire program. We know that fires can be a problem every year, and now I guess we can put water in the same category.

We, as a government, felt it was very important that we had to respond to the PUB. We had two extensions and we were facing a third extension

where we had to make a decision one way or another. One way would be to have everybody in the Northwest Territories pay an extra 25 percent over a two-year period, including subsidizing the diesel consumption in Yellowknife, and we felt we gave notice to committee on August 31st and recognizing that it would be voted on here in this Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, we feel there is no point of privilege here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. To the point of privilege. I will allow Mr. Dolyunny to have closing remarks. Mr. Dolyunny.

MR. DOLYUNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank my colleagues and Cabinet for adding their remarks for debate.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that it may be of some use to you in considering this matter if I advise the House of other precedents that may apply to the situation at hand, especially with respect to government announcements or advertising initiatives which by being announced prematurely cause prejudice of future proceedings of the House and diminish the role of the Legislative Assembly in the eyes of its Members and the public we all serve.

For example, on October 10, 1989, Speaker John Fraser of the House of Commons rendered a decision regarding the Government of Canada's advertising with respect to the implementation of GST, which may have some relevance. The Speaker found there was strong argument that suggested the government actually tended to diminish the respect due to the House. This ruling also triggered a number of related rulings grappling with issues of government advertising and contempt of Parliament in the Quebec National Assembly. As well, the findings of Speaker Chris Stockwell of the Ontario Legislative Assembly on January 22, 1997, offer some interesting insights, particularly the finding of the government's unqualified claims, "convey the impression that the passage of the requisite legislation was not necessary or was a foregone conclusion, or that the Assembly and the Legislature had an inferior role in the legislative and law-making process."

As you ponder this question, Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to give consideration to one aspect of governance in the Northwest Territories which distinguishes our Legislative Assembly from most other Canadian jurisdictions. This is the guiding principles and process conventions of consensus government. These were adopted by the Members of the Assembly and signed by our Premier and by the chair of the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning.

Now, allow me to conclude as I reflect in particular on the principle which has been egregiously undermined by the actions of the Premier and Finance Minister: "Except under extraordinary circumstances, Members of the Legislative Assembly should be made aware of

and have the opportunity to discuss significant announcements, changes, consultations or initiatives before they are released to the public or introduced in the Legislative Assembly. The use of the element of surprise is inconsistent with consensus government."

Given that the Premier and Finance Minister have known for more than a year of the drought conditions, and in fact we heard today they've known for four years that these conditions have precipitated the impending request for supplementary funding, it is difficult to argue that this is an "extraordinary circumstance". If this does not amount to contempt of our consensus system of government, then I do not know what does.

I bow to your wisdom in this matter, Mr. Speaker, and I await your response. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. Colleagues, I'll take it under advisement and I'll get back to you later next week.

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

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 221-17(5): SESSIONAL STATEMENT

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this final opportunity to welcome Members back to the Legislative Assembly. This will be the last sitting of the 17th Legislative Assembly, and while our time together will soon be drawing to a close, the work that we began here does not end.

The successes we have achieved and the plans and strategies we have put into action – all of which depended on the input and support of Members – will continue, helping to shape the future of this territory according to the vision and priorities we first set out four years ago.

The 17th Legislative Assembly and Government of the Northwest Territories have been guided by a vision of strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits and responsibilities of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories.

That is an ambitious vision. It is also an enduring vision, a vision Northerners have shared for many years. It is an ambition that will take time and commitment to realize, certainly more time than the four-year life of any one government provides.

The goals and priorities Members established at the beginning of the 17th Assembly describe how we have worked towards our shared vision. Our priorities have been to build a strong and sustainable future, increase employment opportunities, strengthen and diversify our economy, address housing needs and ensure a fair and sustainable health care system.

Elections are an important time for revisiting our vision, priorities and plans. They are a time when citizens and candidates have an opportunity to participate in a broad and vigorous discussion about different visions and priorities for the future.

Elections are a time for us to take stock and ask important questions that will shape the decisions and actions of the next government – Do we have the right vision? Can it be improved? What else can we do to make it a reality? What are the challenges we will have to overcome to create the strong, prosperous and environmentally sustainable territory Northerners want? – which I believe we can have.

All of those questions must be left to the 18th Assembly to answer, but I would like to offer some observations on some of the challenges that the territory and the government will clearly be facing in coming years.

Few of these challenges will come as a surprise to anyone; they are the same ones that have shaped and constrained the decisions of past governments for many years: addressing the high cost of living – especially the cost of energy – growing the territorial economy, continuing efforts to grow the population, dealing with the infrastructure deficit, encouraging responsible resource development while protecting the land and environment, and dealing with the effects of climate change all while finding the money to fund government operations and invest in infrastructure across the territory.

These are complicated challenges that lie outside the direct control of government. Many are the result of global economic conditions and the effects of geography on our territory. Responding to them will require effective partnership with everybody that has a stake in a successful and prosperous Northwest Territories, including our government, the federal government, Aboriginal and community governments, business and industry, non-government organizations and individual citizens. Solving them means extending our planning horizon beyond the normal life of an Assembly, trying to understand what the next 10, 15 or 20 years hold and planning accordingly.

With this perspective in mind, aligning government spending to revenues will be one of the most important challenges for the next Assembly, a challenge with far-reaching implications.

The first thing to understand is that government revenues are closely tied to the size of the territorial economy and its growth prospects, which is in turn tied to resource development. The outlook for the Northwest Territories economy over the next five years is mixed, with some regions continuing to benefit from active resource projects while activity in other areas has slowed considerably or declined.

The picture for five to 15 years out does not look much better with current diamond mines all predicted to wind down. Projects currently being planned will

not be able to match existing ones for economic activity. Resource exploration in the territory continues to be limited, and bringing a new project into operation can take as much as 10 years.

Slow economic growth over this time period means a flat revenue outlook for the Government of the Northwest Territories for potentially the next 15 years, meaning less money to sustain government programs and services or infrastructure investment.

We want to change this outlook and need to act now to make the Northwest Territories a more attractive and competitive place to live and do business. For the resource sector this means continuing to invest in transportation and energy infrastructure that will aid exploration and improve project economics. It also means continuing to invest in efforts to grow the Northwest Territories population, including the high cost of living.

Investments of this nature will require an outlay of resources that will be difficult to come by so long as our revenue outlook is flat. Generating more revenue by raising taxes for our citizens or increasing royalties and corporate taxes will only increase the cost of living and discourage investment. That means our only option is to look internally for the resources, aligning our expenditures to our revenues so we are in a position to fund any new initiatives or capital investments.

These efforts need to be complemented by other actions to encourage responsible resource development, the single biggest sector of the territorial economy. Continuing to strengthen and refine our approach to responsible resource development and environmental protection is one example.

Outside of economics certainty is one of the biggest factors influencing resource development. Having a consistent and predictable approach to how our government makes land-use and resource development decisions ensures developers can make investment decisions with some degree of confidence. Continuing to refine and strengthen the regulatory system post-devolution reduces duplication and delays for developers and ensures stronger decisions grounded in northern priorities and values.

Continued progress in negotiating and implementing land, resource and self-government agreements in partnership with Aboriginal governments will also be critical. Settled agreements complemented by solid, collaboratively developed land-use plans will bring political certainty to our government and Aboriginal governments as well as economic certainty and opportunity to industry. With 144,000 square kilometres of mineral-rich land subject to interim land withdrawals for decades, settling outstanding claims will create new economic opportunities and revenue possibilities for ourselves and Aboriginal governments both.

We also need to continue efforts to diversify the economy and strengthen relationships with potential investors and markets outside the Northwest Territories. Bringing the message about the tourism and investment opportunities our territory offers to places like Asia and the United States continues to be important. That effort is paying off in increased Asian tourism and the recent visit to the Northwest Territories of His Excellency Luo Zhaohui, Ambassador of China to Canada. Our leadership of PNWER for the past year has increased the profile and awareness of the Northwest Territories among western governors and Premiers. That awareness will be further promoted when over 200 people come to Yellowknife for the PNWER winter meeting this November.

Mr. Speaker, this territory has tremendous potential. We have abundant natural resources and talented, hardworking people ready and able to turn the natural advantages the Northwest Territories enjoys into long-term prosperity for our children and their children. The work Members have done during this Assembly has been focused on creating a strong foundation for that future, based on the vision, goals and priorities we agreed to four years ago.

With the support and guidance of Members, we have signed formal agreements that strengthened our relationships with Aboriginal governments, brought in devolution and achieved two increases in the federal borrowing limit. With the Land Use and Sustainability Framework, Wildlife Act, transboundary water agreements and post-devolution work on resource development regulation, we continue to refine and strengthen our land and resources management regime.

We continue to work to increase employment opportunities, particularly in communities and regions, through decentralization and regional recruitment initiatives, earning recognition as one of the nation's top diversity employers and employers for young people two years in a row.

We have made strategic infrastructure investments in the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Line and the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway and continue to advance the Mackenzie Valley Highway and plan for the Tlicho winter road and a road into the mineral-rich Slave Geological Province. We have developed an Economic Opportunities Strategy and Mineral Development Strategy and are working on an Oil and Gas Strategy to guide us in the wise use of our resources.

We are addressing housing needs through implementation of Building for the Future, the strategic plan emerging from our shelter policy review, including improvements to public housing rents and a broader range of supports for homeowners and those wishing to transition to more permanent housing options.

We continue to invest in a fair and sustainable health care system by investing in strategies aimed at prevention and root causes like the Early Childhood Development Strategy, an Anti-Poverty Strategy, Addictions Strategy, Community Wellness Strategy, community safety strategies and others. We also continue to make progress on health system transformation that promises best care, best health for our residents in coming years.

All Members of this Assembly have played a critical role in this work and should share in the credit for these achievements. It could not have been done without the support, participation and input of Members, and I want to thank you all for your commitment to building a strong, prosperous and environmentally sustainable territory.

Our work as legislators in the 17th Assembly is coming to an end, Mr. Speaker, but the work of investing in our people, our economy and our environment continues. There are some challenges ahead, as I have indicated, but I am confident that the people of the Northwest Territories and the leaders they will choose for the next Assembly are up for the challenge. This Assembly has set the wheels in motion; it will now be up to the 18th Assembly to continue the work of creating a strong, sustainable North that is home to healthy, educated people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MOTION TO MOVE MINISTER'S STATEMENT 221-17(5) INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,
CARRIED

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Rule 36(3), I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that Minister's Statement 221-17(5) be moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister's Statement 221-17(5) has been moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration.

---Carried

Minister Ramsay.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 222-17(5):
HONOURING FALLEN POLICE AND
PEACE OFFICERS

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, each year on the last Sunday of September, Canada salutes the men and women who put their lives on the line every day in their role as police and peace officers.

In Yellowknife on September 27th, RCMP, peace officers, family members and the public came together to recognize and honour the loss of loved ones, friends and colleagues who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. Since the 1870s, 222 officers from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and its forerunner, the North West Mounted Police, have died across Canada. We owe each of them a profound and continuing debt of gratitude.

Police and peace officers include RCMP officers, correctional officers, highway patrol officers, territorial park officers and municipal enforcement officers. Our police and peace officers regularly work in difficult environments and in dangerous situations. In times of crisis, they respond quickly and without thought of personal danger.

As well as upholding the law, peace officers are mentors in our schools, coaches in our arenas and gymnasiums, and neighbours contributing in many ways to our communities.

The fallen officers recognized during the past year were RCMP Constable David Wynn of Alberta, Constable Daniel Woodall of the Edmonton police service, Transport Enforcement Officer Toni D. Kristinsson from BC, and Corrections Officer Rhonda Commodore from Manitoba Corrections Services.

We remember those 56 who have fallen in the Northwest Territories, including the sacrifices of Constable Christopher Worden and Parole Officer Louise Parteger who each lost their lives serving our citizens.

We have been working towards making communities safer and policing more effective in the Northwest Territories by building trust and improving relationships between law enforcement and those they serve.

We will continue to build these positive relations through community policing plans and working with community members on common goals and priorities. These relationships need to be continually nurtured. Great work has been accomplished in the past few years.

I know all the Members of this Assembly will want to be sure that the men and women who work hard and have dedicated their lives to public safety and public service know they have our sincere appreciation.

Selfless commitment, sacrifice and dedication; these qualities were exemplified by each officer we have lost. Every peace officer deserves to go home safely to their loved ones at the end of their shift. To those who didn't make it back, we will never forget you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DREDGING IN THE HAY RIVER

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Four years ago we were elected to this House. One of the first statements I made was about dredging of the Hay River and the requirement for this. This issue has been before this Assembly for more than a decade to look at Hay River dredging, and our government continues to ignore that. Our government keeps saying, federally it's a responsibility. Again, the Premier makes a statement about key infrastructure today, and he talks about a whole bunch of different highways, a whole bunch of road construction, which is also supposed to be a federal responsibility.

I'm getting very frustrated and it's very difficult to even speak in this House without getting called on a point of order on the language that I want to use.

This has become a crisis for the community of Hay River. We have veteran fishermen who are not going on the water because it's unsafe in the springtime to go there. Until the bigger ships take some of the sediment down, they're not willing to go out on the water. They're not creating a livelihood there.

We know that the hub of the North is Hay River. We know that this is key to the Northwest Territories to resupplying a whole bunch of the communities in the Northwest Territories. How can our government sit here for four years, for decades and ignore that concern?

We have all kinds of discussion about major infrastructure here and the dredging in Hay River is ignored. I've asked this Minister several times, along with the federal government, to deal with the dredging. I understand millions of dollars are the issue, but we write a \$12 million cheque when we have a cost overrun on a project, no problem. We need \$12 million for a key piece of infrastructure like the Hay River and we ignore it for more than a decade.

It's ludicrous that we haven't dealt with this problem.

We've been dealing with the Town of Hay River, with NTCL, the shipping company there. They're interested in being partners, but the GNWT is not interested in being partners. They want to just ignore it and tell us it's a federal responsibility. Our government needs to take responsibility for dredging in the Hay River area.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DREDGING IN THE HAY RIVER

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, I feel like putting my notes aside and following with the same passion as my colleague for Hay River North, but I'm

not feeling well today so I'm afraid it wouldn't come across with as much gusto.

I'm going to tag team with my colleague here today and reiterate again that Hay River is a transportation hub right on the south shore of Great Slave Lake and at the mouth of the Hay River itself. Once upon a time, the federal government met its responsibility for dredging, but that practice was discontinued in 1994. They sold all of their equipment. Since that time no one has taken up responsibility, even though the waterways have continued to be used. Our harbour is used by tug and barge operators, by the Canadian Coast Guard, by the commercial fishermen and by recreational boaters. Let's not forget, as my colleague for Hay River North has said before in this House, that the Hay River Flood Mitigation Committee has identified dredging as an option and a proactive approach to the annual threat of flooding in Hay River.

I can tell you what's happened in terms of dredging in the Hay River port since the federal program was discontinued more than 20 years ago. Nothing! Basically, we walked off a cliff. We went from annual dredging – annual dredging – to absolutely nothing. Meanwhile, responsibility for the dredging is passed around like a political football. That response no longer cuts it with the residents of Hay River. We need to see decisive action taken.

The town is looking to this government for some assistance. If I said it before, I'll say it again, it's affecting our people and it's affecting our industry, and even if it is not technically or hasn't technically been our responsibility, it's having real impacts on the people, the livelihoods and the supply chains out of Hay River.

Lack of action on this issue undermines the spirit and soul of our community. The harbour in Hay River is the lifeblood of why that community is there. We've continued to press for action, and we've talked about pushing and partnering with the federal government and about taking action as a territory, and we've talked about accessing funds from the National Disaster Mitigation Program. In the life of this Assembly alone, we'd hoped for a new federal plan in 2014, heard promises of territorial budget commitment, but this plan has still not come through and still the harbour hasn't been dealt with. The Department of Transportation's new 25-year plan barely even mentions dredging.

Hay River is the second largest community in the Northwest Territories. Surely it's time to do something. When it comes to question period, I'm going to ask questions but also throw in a few suggestions.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MACKENZIE DELTA FERRY SERVICES

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been receiving many concerns on the ferry services in my riding on the ferry landings to the Peel River, which are very soft from weeks of rain and high waters. Earlier this summer a fuel tanker had a puncture in its tank and thousands of litres spilled into the Peel River. This was due to the landings, soft landings, the gravel there, because of the high water and rain we've been receiving. For about three weeks solid we've had rain every day.

My constituents would like this government to construct something, whether it's solid landings made of concrete, rig mats, anything that would make these landings more safe for fuel trucks.

Also, the ferry schedule in Tsiigehtchic, which operates from 8 a.m. to 12 a.m. The last ferry service is 11 p.m. at the Inuvik landing, 11:25 at the Fort McPherson landing and 11:45 at the Tsiigehtchic landing. If you wanted to travel to Fort McPherson from Tsiigehtchic at 11:45 for the last ferry service, you'll be denied. So, in fact, the last service from Tsiigehtchic to Fort McPherson is actually 10:30.

A number of my constituents have had to overnight at the ferry landings due to the hours that are in place. We need to provide a better service for the residents of the Beaufort-Delta region.

I will have questions for the Minister later today. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INUVIK-TUKTOYAKTUK HIGHWAY CONTRACT CLAIM

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today dismayed by the sudden prospect of up to a \$32 million claim to the GNWT for the construction of the Inuvik-Tuk Highway. We're not talking about nickels and dimes. This is a massive potential expense that the GNWT has not kept Regular Members up to date properly.

The GNWT press release last Friday says the contract claims are a normal part of the process, but the amount of the claim is not normal.

This is a potential absolute blow for our small communities. If the GNWT picks up the tab for this kind of contract over-expenditure, it eats into the money available for other projects. That means essential community infrastructure projects in our small communities suffer. In Nahendeh alone, that kind of money could have been spent on a school for Trout Lake, the Fort Simpson Health Centre and Highway No. 7.

On a territorial level, the recent CBC News report states it would cost \$21 million for universal child

care. Imagine that was possible or could be possible, but these claims are interfering.

Without a doubt, the Inuvik-Tuk Highway has made big improvements in employment in the Inuvik and Beaufort-Delta region, contributing to our NWT economy, and the project promises vital all-weather road connections, but it is unacceptable that other projects throughout the NWT could suffer.

As the GNWT evaluates these claims and because we're so close to the election, Members must be regularly updated and there must be a full and fulsome debate here in the Legislative Assembly before any decisions are made.

I will be asking Cabinet to ensure that they do not proceed without consulting with Members or, and if needed, to discuss this fulsomely in the 18th Assembly. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ASSESSING FISCAL PERFORMANCE
AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE
17TH ASSEMBLY

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we approach the final days of the 17th Legislative Assembly, it's only fitting that we take the time to evaluate the fiscal performance and accountability of the McLeod government.

Some may say things are going well; others may posture that this post-devolution government has the worst performance record since the modern era of consensus system of government. No matter what one may think, it's about what you can measure. So, it's really about the numbers; it's about our operational spending; it's about our capital spending; it's about our limited revenue options; it's about our tax regime; it's about our debt and borrowing capacity; it's about growth in our public workforce; and finally, it's how we wrap all this information and report to the very people who give us their votes every four years.

Later today I have the privilege of tabling an extensive 14-page report, a report that was researched by the office of Range Lake and was fact checked by our very own legislative research staff, a report that talks about the numbers. Numbers don't lie, they don't hold prejudice, but they certainly tell a story, a story that I'll share over the next couple days in this House. This will be a story of fact, not fiction, a story that started 15 years ago and ends in dramatic fashion with a McLeod government cliff-hanger. So stay tuned as we hear this story might not end, that a gripping box office sequel is in the works with potentially many of the lead characters returning to the 18th legislative stage.

On top of all this excitement, we know that over the coming days various committees of this House will be tabling their transition reports as we pass the torch to

the future Assembly. These transition reports will also tell a story where many of the committees have found frustration or the lack of resolve on many of the issues that matter to all Northerners.

So, Mr. Speaker, no matter how you look at it, it's report card time. So brace for impact, because I can tell you right now, this could be a bumpy ride. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I find myself again having to address the House about problems in Education, Culture and Employment. Today I have to highlight shortcomings in the Student Financial Assistance program, unfortunately more than just one.

Over the summer I learned of two situations involving NWT residents, their desire to further their education and a Department of Education, Culture and Employment unwilling to adjust policies to accommodate them. Now, I realize and I accept that we have to have policies and that we have them for a reason, but they should not be so rigid as to defy logic.

Case number one: an NWT student at school in Alberta, a single mom with her children. At Christmastime she wished to return to the NWT to be with her family, and being with family at Christmas is apparently a policy that governs SFA travel for students. The student's children were provided airline tickets by their father and came back home for the Christmas holiday. The mom, of course, wanted to be with her family, her children at Christmas, but her request to Student Financial Assistance for travel funding was denied. The policy is that students with families can only travel at the beginning and the end of a school year, not at Christmas. The reason, because Education, Culture and Employment has a policy to keep families together. Single students can return at Christmas and at the beginning and the end of a school year, but not so students with dependents.

So this student, who could not afford a ticket to come home, spent Christmas by herself without the company of her kids and other family members. I struggle mightily, Mr. Speaker, to see the logic in the Student Financial Assistance decision in this case.

There are other options. The department has to think outside the box, has to provide some flexibility to their staff to make decisions in the best interest of the student and their family, and here's the solution for the Minister: put a dollar limit on student financial assistance travel per student or per family, allow the student to travel when they like, spending only to the predetermined limit. In the case I've described, it

would allow the mom to travel home at Christmas but then have to make some adjustment for her family's return travel at the end of the school year.

I said two cases, didn't I, Mr. Speaker? Well, case number two, stay tuned for more to come tomorrow. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CONSENSUS GOVERNMENT
COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What say we head out for coffee and a visit? Oops! Sorry. You have a role defined by this Assembly that you're required to discharge here in the House right now. In theory that applies to my colleagues and myself, too, but in practice it would appear that our presence here is superfluous as it's apparent that Cabinet neither requires nor welcomes our input into matters of state, that we are an annoyance to be swatted away like a mosquito, or we are to be best treated like mushrooms, kept in the dark and well fed. You get the idea.

Recent examples of this attitude towards Members on this side of the House exemplify the situation. First, the recent revelations of cost overruns on the Inuvik to Tuk Highway amounting to \$32 million estimated. Before the recent discovery of documents stating otherwise, we were told the project was moving along splendidly, on time and on budget. Clearly, this is not at all the case and hasn't been the case for some time.

The government had plenty of time and ample opportunity to keep us apprised of the situation, most recently during committee meetings leading up to this session, but they chose not to. They only came clean when they were forced to through an accidentally distributed document. I wonder if we would still be in the dark if that document had not come to light.

Then there is the Stanton Hospital P3 upgrade. Oh, wait. I just read in the newspaper that we're getting a whole new hospital with a whole new budget. That was news to me. I suspect it was news to all Regular MLAs not in the Cabinet loop. We have no plans for the old and sturdy building that will be vacated after renovations, or do we? Who am I to know?

Add to these \$50 million worth of diesel going up in smoke with a one-time momentary benefit, not a peep from Cabinet until the decision was done, timed just before the election and, of course, no opportunity for input from MLAs. All of this happening while we are in committee meetings to deal with these very subjects.

Cabinet had the opportunity and responsibility to inform, but again chose not to do so.

There appears to be clear and deliberate intent to bypass any involvement of MLAs in the decision-

making process that the principles of consensus government define and all of us are sworn to uphold.

It seems that we on this side of the House could make better use of our time by raising our caffeine levels. I expect that Cabinet will let us know if we take cream and sugar.

Mr. Speaker, I envy you your opportunity to fulfill the job for which you were elected and the support you receive from all Members of the House to do so. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
IMPACT OF FISCAL RESTRAINT POLICY
ON PUBLIC SERVICE

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As this Assembly rolls closer and closer to its final days, I can honestly say, "Thank goodness." The problem I see now is not watching the journey of the four years that have come and gone but it's what is in store for the next four years.

Take for instance when I returned to the House in 2007, only then we learned about the Roland government's butchering and contriving of cutting 135 jobs and \$135 million out of the budget of the day, not to mention the bridge surprise which, of course, all came out of nowhere.

So where did it come from? Well, the simple marching orders created by those in power around the Cabinet table in the absence of Members. So, decisions were made behind the scenes, the deed was planned and, rather, schemed or certainly plotted and pitched to returning Members under the context of fiscal accountability. So, in other words, they were looking for confederates in the cutting and slashing, not to forget also the blame.

I raise this not as a reminder of the past but, rather, days yet maybe to come. We must always continue to be relentless in our efforts to provide efficient and effective government, one that meets the challenges of our day and, at the same time, one that is responsive to the needs of the people by being relevant. But while this government struggles with this last statement, more often than not I continue to be nervous about what surprises they hold for us next. All of this while I hear over and over that this government's departments are drawing up lay-off lists to be rolled out in the next government, a plan to perhaps hit the Members early while they're largely unorganized and green.

The government most likely will deny it, and who would be shocked if they did? So, as their metal is tested today, I can only hope that they will have the courage of their convictions and be honest to whom we serve.

But the undeniable fact is, I've been talking to different members in the public service in different departments and they have all been saying the same things. These proposed lists for trimming are already drafted. So, if you're a young family out there trying to get ahead with your first mortgage, if you're a seasoned employee trying to reach your numbers for retirement, if you're someone planning a big holiday or one of those special purchases that you have that aligns with your hopes and dreams, I can honestly say be cautious about what steps you have and you're about to take because I certainly hope our government will show you the same respect and honesty you absolutely deserve. Thank you very much.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSITY

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I begin, I'd just like to welcome everybody back to the House. I hope everybody had a good summer. I can tell everyone is really eager to get right into the issues that affect the Northwest Territories here and our Northerners.

Earlier today we heard in our Premier's sessional statement that we do have a very slow economic growth, and now in order to be effective we need to acquire effective partnerships with everybody.

I think this is a great time for this government to embrace, focus and support other types of industry that we've ignored or haven't given them the full support to really grow our economy in the Northwest Territories. One in particular is tourism.

In Inuvik alone this summer, being there most of the summer, I did see that we had a significant number of tourists coming up the Dempster Highway, and when I look at some of the statistics, it was about 300 more people than last year who travelled up the Dempster Highway to Inuvik. In fact, more people are going up the Dempster all the way up to Inuvik then they were stopping at some of the Yukon tourism facilities.

Inuvik does have something to offer, something to give, but I think it goes beyond that. What's going on in Inuvik is we have a great stakeholders group that's doing some really great work for the region, for the community, and they're bringing in the numbers. They're meeting on a regular basis and they're helping our local businesses, our local tourist operators and some of our local community people getting jobs in the tourism industry. Some of the areas that they're working on developing are things around developing of packages and experiences around cultural practices, looking at developing a heritage festival. Sales went up in carving and other artwork. As I said, locals are being employed in the service

industry and more work is being done on things such as tourist training opportunities such as customer service, helping people pursue business licences that focus around tourism, and more importantly, I think they're trying to create something that's more sustainable not only during the summertime but all year round.

I will have questions later for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment on how we can help support our regional economic development community groups to increase our economic diversity throughout the Northwest Territories.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONDOLENCES TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF MARY ROSE SABOURIN

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] It is a sad occasion when I rise in this House to mark the passing of one of our esteemed elders. It is my privilege today to honour the late elder Mary Rose Sabourin, who passed away on September 16, 2015. She was 94 years old.

Mary Rose Sabourin was a valued elder of K'atliodeeche First Nation reserve who was loved by many people. Mary Rose took great pleasure in her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I want to send my heartfelt condolences to her family at this difficult time and thank them for giving me permission to honour their mother today.

Mary Rose was laid to rest in the Hay River Reserve cemetery after a church service held in Hay River at the Roman Catholic Our Lady of Assumption Church. Her daughter Angie Sabourin gave a touching eulogy for her mother at the service.

The seasons and life moves on. This is something we all must accept; however, whenever we mark the passing of an elder, I cannot help but reflect on the rich contribution that she has marked on our community. Mary Rose Sabourin was a special lady of great age and wisdom, and her loss is deeply felt.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONDOLENCES TO SAHTU RESIDENTS WHO HAVE LOST LOVED ONES

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to pay respect to the Sahtu people who have lost their loved ones and offer our sincere condolences. To lose one is a painful experience one goes through. Often our elders tell us that life is precious and we don't know when the Creator wants us back home in his kingdom. After all, we are his children in the end.

Life and death are two great mysteries that we wonder about in life. Where did we come from and

where are we going in between these two spectrums we call life, God's gift to us?

When someone we love with all our heart passes on, it brings all kinds of emotions, emotions we don't understand at times. Yet, we have them and it's difficult at times. Only with time we heal, it is said.

We need to learn from our cultural ways to properly help our communities and ourselves and to help our loved ones pass from this world to the next world with dignity and respect.

We pray for all the ones who have passed away since our last sitting in the Northwest Territories. Mahsi cho.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CONDOLENCES TO FAMILIES AND FRIENDS
OF J.B. RABESCA AND MARY ADELLE FATT

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to pay tribute to the late J.B. Rabesca. He was known as Tsená. He was an orphan of Lutselk'e.

Mr. Rabesca was born on June 1, 1922, and passed away June 3, 2015. He was 93 years old. The elder J.B. was born in Otto Portage, married to Mary-Louise in 1950 in Fort Resolution and later settled in Lutselk'e together to raise their nine children. He was a humble man who lived a traditional lifestyle. He loved to hunt and trap, passed down his teachings to his children and grandchildren and countless community members near and far.

J.B. is survived by his children Alec, Nora, Joe, Michael, Allan and Fredrick, and numerous grandchildren. He was predeceased by his wife, Mary-Louise; sons Eddie, Roger and Frank; grandson Rufus James and granddaughter Holly.

My sincere condolences go out to J.B.'s family and friends. He had a loving heart and always had kind words to say. He always spoke at all of the gatherings at Lutselk'e.

I'd also like to pay tribute to the late Mary Fatt of Lutselk'e. Mary Fatt was born on June 30, 1938, and passed away June 17, 2015, just before she turned 77. Mary Fatt was born in Kache and lived briefly in Yellowknife and Rocher River before settling down in Lutselk'e with her husband, Pierre, and their four children.

Mary was well known for her beautiful sewing, generosity and her traditional way of living. She loved her children and grandchildren very much and she was sure to make them moccasins, mitts and other traditional clothing to wear, and she was very fast at making them. She taught many people to sew, tan hides, make dry meat, dry fish and many other things. She was involved in many local events. She was crowned the berry picking champ.

Mary always shared her knowledge and would set aside whatever she was doing to help others. She would help raise her grandchildren and loved them dearly. Even though she was sick, she never complained about being in pain.

Mary is survived by her children, Larry, Maggie, Ron and Suzie, and numerous grandchildren and her husband, Pierre. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Mr. Ramsay

Returns to Oral Questions

RETURN TO ORAL QUESTION 863-17(5): SCIENTIFIC CONCLUSIONS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to oral question asked by Mr. Bromley on June 2, 2015, regarding scientific conclusions on climate change.

ITI is committed to environmentally responsible development of NWT natural resources to grow our economy for the benefit and prosperity of all NWT residents.

Every application to withdraw water in the NWT, including for hydraulic fracturing, is review on a case-by-case basis. Consideration will be given to the volume of available source water in the area as well as any cumulative impacts from other withdrawals in the region. Any water licence will set a limit on the amount of freshwater that can be withdrawn by source and used for the operation. Storage of contaminated water through underground disposal is one available option that would need to be approved.

Other options include recycling of wastewater and fracturing fluid flow-back, or disposal at an approved facility in Alberta or British Columbia as no such facility exists in the NWT. More information on specific cases of water usage and waste management related to hydraulic fracturing can be found on the Sahtu Land and Water Board public registry.

According to the application for Water Licence S14L1-003, submitted to the Sahtu Land and Water Board for the 2014-2019 EL470 Multi-Well Exploration Program, ConocoPhillips estimated a maximum annual water withdrawal volume of 348,490 cubic metres, or approximately 139 Olympic-size pools, as part of the water licence consolidation.

The National Oil Shale Association, United States, estimates that mean water consumption for shale oil production is 1.7 barrels of water per barrel of oil production. At oil production scenarios of 10,000, 20,000 and 50,000 barrels per day, the amount of water required annually would be approximately 740,000, 1.48 million, and 3.70 million cubic metres, respectively.

Federal delegation of authority for water management and approval of type “A” water licences has been transferred from the federal Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada to the Government of the Northwest Territories, Minister of ENR, while type “B” water licences are issued directly by land and water boards.

As part of the department’s commitment to environmentally sustainable and responsible development, I will rely on the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources and the expertise of ENR’s waters resources division for any detailed assessment of water quality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m very pleased to recognize my wife, Melody McLeod, the other half the McLeod government, and also two constituents, Jugjit More-Curran and John Curran. Welcome to the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. It’s always better to have the other half in here sometimes too. Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It’s an honour to recognize today in the House, Commanding Officer of “G” Division, Chief Superintendent Ron Smith, and also the officer in charge of criminal operations, Mike LeSage. I know they don’t get thanked enough, so I want to thank them for all the great police work they’ve done across the Northwest Territories. Most recently, with large seizures of illegal drugs and alcohol in communities across the territory. Thank you very much.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to recognize a constituent of the Great Slave riding in the gallery today, Mr. Kieron Testart. Thank you for being here.

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

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to recognize two Pages from Tsigehtchic. We have Jessica Andre and my daughter Davina here with us this week.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to recognize Andrew John Kenny from the Deline Got’ine Government. Andrew John has been an elder and a guide for me for the last 12 years in the Legislative Assembly, and I’d like to recognize his commitment and dedication to the Sahtu people.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you and to you, I’d like to welcome all members in the gallery here today, and we have some long-serving Northerners from Yellowknife here. We’ve got Gladys and Albert Eggenberger. Thanks for joining us here today. They’ve brought with them some friends all the way from Beaver Lodge, Alberta. We’re got Ed Brown and we’ve got Carolyn Morgan. Welcome to the proceedings. Thank you.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m very pleased to welcome two Frame Lake constituents, long-standing members of the city of Yellowknife. I call them, I think they’re builders of our community, Gladys and Albert Eggenberger. I’m very pleased to see you guys here, and welcome to your visitors as well.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I see that we have two of my constituents, although they’ve already been recognized, but they certainly deserve the credit and recognition once again. I’d like to recognize constituent Chief Superintendent Ron Smith and Superintendent Mike LeSage. They’re not only constituents, they’re both neighbours, so I feel very safe and very proud to have our RCMP members here in the gallery today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I’d like to welcome everybody here in the public gallery. Thank you for taking an interest in our proceedings.

Item 7, acknowledgements. Ms. Bisaro.

Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 23-17(5):
KIRIANNE ASHLEY – WINNER OF FRENCH
PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST
CONCOURS D’ART ORATOIRE

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to acknowledge Frame Lake constituent Ms. Kirianne Ashley, a Grade 12 French immersion student at Ecole Sir John Franklin High School.

Ms. Ashley recently won a national French public speaking contest known as Concours d’art oratoire. First prize was a \$32,000 scholarship to the University of Ottawa.

Kirianne was the first place winner at the territorial competition in the Late French Immersion category, and she went on to represent the NWT at the national finals in Ottawa last spring. It was there that she placed first in her category and won the scholarship.

Please join me in congratulating Kirianne Ashley on this very significant achievement.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Item 8, oral questions. Mr. Blake.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 877-17(5): MACKENZIE RIVER AND PEEL RIVER FERRY CROSSINGS

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In follow-up to my Member's statement, I'd like to ask the Minister of Transportation a few questions. The one thing I forgot to mention was not only do we have issues with the hours of operation in Tsiigehtchic but also the waiting time. Many constituents have to wait 10 minutes on each side, not to mention the actual other 10 to 15 minutes.

With that, my first question for the Minister is: When will the department develop and construct a permanent landing that can be used on both the Peel River and the Mackenzie River crossings?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The department works with the ferry operator to continue to try to improve the landings of both ferries at all times. There may be years when we have dumped a lot of gravel to try to secure and make the landings harder and so on and then they wash out. It is something that we constantly work at to try to make the ferry landings safe and even possible. We work on it all the time. So, if there is a permanent solution that is out there, we are also trying to find a permanent solution as well.

MR. BLAKE: Will the Minister change the hours of operation on the Mackenzie River from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. back to 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m., which would be the same as the Peel River ferry hours?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The hours of operation are something that we've worked with and we've heard from the community of Tsiigehtchic that they wanted the hours of operation moved to certain hours. We would work with the community. If the community recommended hours that everybody supports in the community that are affected, we would have no issue moving the hours around, as long as we're not adding hours outside of what we're allowed to do within the standards that we follow and the guidelines that we follow to operate the ferry.

At this time we're operating within the hours that we think the communities want. If the communities don't want those hours, then we will go back into discussions to perhaps change the hours to what the community would like to see.

MR. BLAKE: Earlier this summer the ferry in Tsiigehtchic started waiting on each side for 10

minutes, and the explanation that was given to my constituents was that the department was trying to save on fuel.

Will the Minister direct his department to ensure the Louis Cardinal Ferry is not waiting on each landing for 10 minutes to save on fuel?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The ferry sits for 10 minutes. That's the call of the captain. The captain makes that call. The captain makes the call, but he's given little opportunity to potential oncoming traffic. So just coming there and picking up vehicles and going back immediately, they sometimes are just missing vehicles by a little bit. If they have room on their ferry, they wait for 10 minutes to ensure that nobody is coming, and if no one comes then they will proceed, and if someone comes they will have benefitted from the ferry captain making the decision to wait for the time period that they do wait, which is 10 minutes, as the Member had indicated. Thank you.

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

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It seems that the captain makes up his own mind in many cases, because many times he picks up someone and leaves right away.

Will the Minister ensure that we have the same practice as we did in the past, which is whenever we had a full load they'd go to the other side? It was on demand in the past and many of my constituents would like that to be in place once again. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: We can talk to the ferry operator. The ferry operator and the department do discuss how the ferry should be running back and forth on a regular basis if it's deemed that the best way to continue to move back and forth was just based on demand by viewing the vehicles across or viewing vehicles at Tsiigehtchic, and that's the way the ferry is going to operate and that's something that we can discuss with the captain. So, with that, even when they do come across and they see that there are vehicles there, they still would be beneficial, and it's not, say, few, but beneficial to the travelling public for them to wait a while. But we can have those discussions with the ferry operator if the Member deems that that's what should happen. We will do that.

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

QUESTION 878-17(5): INUVIK TO TUKTOYAKTUK HIGHWAY CONTRACT CLAIM

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to ask some questions on my Member's statement on the Inuvik-Tuk Highway. I know that they're sensitive negotiations, so my experience will tell me that I've got to be pretty

general about my questions, so I will proceed that way.

Just in terms of why did the Minister of Transportation not advise Regular Members of the claims of the Inuvik-Tuk Highway in an expedient and timely manner? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have a legal contract with the operator. The operator has a process in the contract to make a claim. We then have to determine whether or not we think that is a valid claim, and we are going through the process. We were advised on August 19th that they had run into some issues and had indicated that they would be making a claim on the contract, and we started working with the contractor to see if they had a legitimate claim and how the claim would be broken down from year to year. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much. He didn't really speak to why he chose to not inform Regular Members for at least a couple of weeks afterwards. Nevertheless, how long does the Minister expect this process to take? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: We are working with the contractor right now and we've hired consultants to look at the contract, look at the claim, look at all of the cash flow, and it's going to take at least a couple more weeks from this point before we have all the information, all the facts in order for us to make a decision. I would say it's at least two weeks before we gather the data. How long we take to evaluate that depends on how much data we gather. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I'd like to ask the Minister, will he commit to providing regular updates to Members of this House and our Priorities and Planning committee as the claims are evaluated over the next couple of weeks? Mahsi.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Yesterday when we were meeting with Priorities and Planning, we committed that we would give the Regular Members updates on a weekly basis as we move through this process. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Of course, timing is an issue because we'll be heading to dissolution pretty soon. In fact, our sitting of this House ends, I believe, next Thursday.

I'd just like to ask the Minister, perhaps, how they will be proceeding should there be an acceptable claim. Because I believe, and I'm sure my colleagues will concur, that you need the consent of the Assembly. So, I'd like to ask him, how will he proceed? Can the ministry and the Cabinet defer any decision until the first sitting of the 18th Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Of course, we wish to evaluate the validity of the claim prior to dissolution of this Assembly; however, if that was to not happen, we'd have to follow the contract to see what provisions are in the contract right now and how much latitude we would have to be able to move forward with a claim and make sure that the work on the Inuvik-Tuk Highway would continue. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 879-17(5):
PROTOCOL FOR ADDRESSING
DEATHS IN THE SAHTU

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. In my Member's statement I talked about a community that has to deal with grief and loss.

I want to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment how many of our GNWT employees in our regions know about the protocol when there's an elder, a respective loved one or someone in our communities has passed away.

Do our employees know what is to be expected when something terrible like this has happened in our communities?

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. There is a protocol in place, a process that we obviously respect at the community level. We involve the elders whenever there's a grieving process. We work very closely, whether it be the school board, the agencies that deliver educational programs to our schools or to our community. There is an orientation for all staff to go through and how we can access the elders, the contacts in the community who are the experts in the community. So, that is information that is easily accessible for these personnel, the professionals that we employ to work with the community members, to work with the leadership and also the elders. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: Then I would ask the Minister if he would do a survey, conduct a test to see how well our employees respect our culture such as this type of situation, because I beg to differ from the Minister's experience or opinion as to how our employees are respecting our culture when something like this has happened in our communities.

I want to ask the Minister if he's willing to look at that in his department with all government employees, because I do not see that picture as the Minister has painted in the Northwest Territories.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I can only speak to Education, Culture and Employment programs that we deliver. What the Member is referring to is GNWT

professionals in the communities, and that could touch on various departments, more specifically with the Human Resources department.

Within my department, as I stated, there is ongoing dialogue with the school boards to deliver these orientations. So the teachers, the professionals, the support staff are fully engaged, fully aware of programs that are available to them such as the elders contact. This will be brought back to the school boards and also the support staff and the resource people at the community level that we have to seek if they are fully aware of the programs that exist. Those are areas where we heavily depend on community experts. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: I appreciate the Minister's willingness to look at school boards and school jurisdictions, but he's the Minister of Culture and I'm talking about culture in a general sense. Of all the Ministers here and the departments they hold, all government employees need to know. I'm looking at the focal point of the Minister of Culture to look at all this within our region, within our communities and within our culture. All employees should know about the protocol. When something like this, a respected elder has passed or something has happened in our community, all employees should know. This is not about programs and services. This is about building our relationships with the people we work with so they understand our culture and what needs to be looked upon, respected and honoured.

Again, I beg to differ from this government. When something like this happens in our community, there are some people who respect this and there are some people who are very ignorant of this.

I want to ask the Minister, how is this government, through the department of culture, going to respect our cultural ways in our communities?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Part of the cultural development and also supporting those areas obviously falls within the community and working with the community, especially the elders and how they can provide wisdom and knowledge. When it comes to a grieving process, obviously we are going through that process as well. We've gone through so many of them already in the communities. We have our staff working with the community leaders and community elders, counsellors.

Obviously, there is a respect for culture. At the end of the day, if there is a lack of awareness of the cultural perspective, a lack of respect, then we need to resolve that issue.

I'm glad the Member is raising the profile and I will be bringing that back to my department and working with the organizations that we work with. Mahsi.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly would endorse the Minister's commitment to bring this back to the region.

Would the Minister consider a strong cultural elders advisory group in the region to help our employees, help our people understand the reasons why we have these certain protocols and reasons why we do different ceremonies such as the grieving ceremony? It's a very powerful one. If we don't understand it, we become ignorant about it.

Would the Minister consider, through the department of culture, formulating an elders council in our region, like the Sahtu, to guide us in our daily work and situations we are facing from time to time?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: This is an area I need to discuss with my counterpart, Human Resources. We are dealing with personnel at the community level. It's not just the cultural values, cultural programs as the Member indicated, but we also deal with the personnel. Those are discussions we should be having with the two departments.

I will commit to the Member that I will be speaking to the HR department to see what could be done to improve our relationship we have with the current leadership and also the elders in the communities to make them more accessible and aware as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 880-17(5):
FEASIBILITY STUDY OF UNIVERSAL
AFFORDABLE DAYCARE PROGRAM

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to keep the Minister of ECE hopping today. On June 4, 2015, a feasibility study of universal affordable daycare was tabled in this House, and early childhood education and care provides multiple benefits to children, families and societies. Its documented outcomes have led rich jurisdictions and poor to enhance programming opportunities for young children. The NWT's Early Childhood Development Framework and associated action plan reflect global trends aimed at improving access to quality early childhood programs.

I would like to ask the Minister, does he feel now, given this feasibility study and action plan, that an affordable universal daycare system for the NWT is indeed feasible? Mahsi.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The tabling of the document, Universal Affordable Daycare Feasibility Study, in May and June 2015, is a comprehensive package that has been delivered to us. We had an outside consultant give us some feedback of an affordability nature. Obviously, this

area does create some challenges within my department within GNWT. When we talk about existing licenced child care spaces, obviously we would have to double that in the communities. This is information that was shared to us by consultants as well. Many communities are lacking infrastructure, as well, so we have to build on infrastructure and also double the training of early childhood educators in the communities. These are just some areas that are part of the feasibility report.

Also, the cost factor is upwards of an estimated \$17.4 million to initiate the feasibility of affordable daycare in the Northwest Territories. That is some information and feedback that we received from the consultants during the engagement. Mahsi.

MR. BROMLEY: Indeed, those are important factors that some of us have been speaking about for at least eight years. It's disappointing that more progress has not been made in this area as the benefits at all levels of family and society of a comprehensive universal affordable daycare system in the NWT would be far reaching. According to the study, the NWT's child care system is immature, more closely resembling a cottage industry than a universal service.

I am wondering: what are the barriers of moving forward with an affordable comprehensive universal daycare system for people of the NWT, recognizing that it may be costly but beneficial.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: It would all depend on the financial situation we are faced with today and also the 18th Assembly. If the 18th Assembly government, depending on their financial situation, feel that this is a priority for them, by all means.

We've done our homework. As Members passed a motion in the House, we've done our due diligence. We have the information. That will be part of a document for the 18th Assembly to consider if they wish to proceed with that. My department was tasked with doing a feasibility study and we've done that. We've provided that information. Now in the 18th Assembly the...(inaudible)...will be laid out for them. Mahsi.

MR. BROMLEY: I think Members of the House greatly appreciate the department and Mr. Lafferty taking on this study. It was a comprehensive piece of work. The conclusions note in the report that kindergarten assessments indicate that two out of five children are entering school with delays that will likely compromise their academic chances. No society can prosper when such a huge portion of its youngsters are left behind.

We've done the work, as the Minister says. It's apparent that the benefits of a universal daycare are huge. We have a study and an action plan. All we need now is some commitment on the part of government.

Just what are this government's plans to move this much needed program forward? How will they do that?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: It is the will of this Assembly to move that forward. The feasibility has been done. All the information has been provided. The 18th Assembly is the new government that is coming into play within the next couple of months. If it is seen as a priority for the 18th Assembly, then the groundwork has already been done, all the information. The fiscal situation, depending on the 18th Assembly, how they want to proceed with it.

This information, the feasibility study, all the groundwork that we've done will be laid, again, for the new Assembly coming into force within the next couple of months.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister. So, how is the pursuit of a system of universal affordable daycare being advanced in the transition reports being prepared for the 18th Assembly to assure that this opportunity is realized?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: As I stated earlier, if it's the wish of this Assembly to move this as far as the transition document, then it will be laid out for the 18th Assembly.

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

QUESTION 881-17(5):
SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL
TOURISM CENTRES

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In follow-up to my Member's statement earlier today in regard to some of our other industries that do provide revenues to our economy but have never been really given the strong support that they've needed up until, I guess, this government has really made some significant impacts into the marketing area.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Tourism, now that we've come to the end of the summer and we usually get an influx of tourists in the Northwest Territories, and winter is coming around the corner and we have our northern lights as a big factor, what kind of support is he giving to our regional centres to continue to promote tourism into the regional communities?

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have a very strong and capable team at Northwest Territories Tourism. We have dedicated staff at the regional level through ITI who provide support to tourism operators and the licensing aspect. We have seen numbers continue to increase, and the Member is correct; when we came into office almost four years ago, we increased the marketing budget for tourism,

and I believe that those efforts back then are now starting to pay dividends with the increased number of visitors from Asia, from the United States and domestically from here in Canada.

I know the Member spoke during his Member's statement about increased visitation in the Inuvik region. We're happy to see that. We have to continue to try to get funding out to the regions, and we have earmarked funding for the regions across the territory. We have the Northwest Territories Tourism annual general meeting coming up in November, and I think we're looking at this very positively, and our efforts also in Asia are paying tremendous dividends. If you look around here in Yellowknife, it's very evident the amount of tourists that you see on airplanes, at the airport, on the streets and in hotels. We're seeing a new hotel being constructed across the street from the Legislature, a couple of new restaurants, and expansion to the Explorer Hotel. All the signs are there that that investment four years ago is paying huge dividends for us here.

MR. MOSES: I know here in Yellowknife we always see a really high increase of tourism and a lot of the dollars, as the Minister mentioned, some of the new restaurants and hotels going up here in Yellowknife. However, when you take it to the regions, you see there are a lot of vacancies in some of the hotels, and the hotels not doing as good a business as the capital here.

I know we did give funding and marketing dollars out to all the ITI regional offices. Can I ask the Minister, did all the regional offices use up all those extra funds? I think it was in the amount of maybe about \$50,000 extra for each regional office. Did they all use up those marketing funds, and if not, would those funds be possibly used to create some kind of marketing strategy for the winter months?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I can get the information for the Member on the \$50,000 and how it was spent in each of our regions and where it went. I can provide that to him. We have to look back at the Economic Opportunities Strategy and our focus on diversifying the economy here in the Northwest Territories. Certainly, tourism is one area last year, I believe, it was somewhere near \$120 million to our economy here in the Northwest Territories. It has the opportunity, and I've said before in the House, to have an impact in every one of our communities across the territory, so it's important that we have the requisite funding.

We've seen some big successes, as well, in Aboriginal tourism, the cultural component. The Destination Deline is a good example of that effort. Our Aboriginal Tourism Champions Advisory Council was formed. These are folks who have experience in the cultural component and are helping us build the Aboriginal tourism product here in the Northwest Territories that we believe is going to bring in even more visitors to the Northwest Territories.

MR. MOSES: I understand with the Minister mentioning that in November we're going to be having our tourism AGM and we'll possibly be bringing in some of our regional community members who work in the tourism industry.

I wonder if the Minister would be looking at the projects that have been going on by the regions and looking at whether or not we will be increasing our marketing or our operation dollars for some of these tourism operators moving into the next fiscal year, if that's something that he'd be looking into at this AGM.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I believe we need to back what is working, and for the Northwest Territories, certainly Aurora is working, our Aboriginal tourism product is growing, and we believe that's going to work as well. So we have to continue to back what is being successful. I believe we have tremendous opportunity here in the Northwest Territories to market the products that we have to audiences around the world. The next government hopefully will continue on the same path this government has had, and that is to invest in marketing our tourism, our products. These things have to be marketed and nobody's going to do that for us. We have to get out there and look for partnerships. We've worked with Destination Canada, we've worked with TIAC, and we'll continue to seek out partnerships to promote the Northwest Territories both nationally and internationally.

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

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we get tourists up in the Northwest Territories here we want to give them a good experience, give them a taste of northern hospitality, and if there is not too much tourism opportunity in some of the regions during the winter months, it is a great opportunity to provide other training opportunities such as customer service, possibly getting other people to look at how to create a tourism business licence, do proposal writing, reports, those kinds of things of that nature, administrative work.

Would the Minister commit to possibly creating some kind of training opportunities manual for our tourism operators so that when the summertime comes around again and we get a high increase of tourism in the Northwest Territories, that we are ready to give our visitors a taste of our northern hospitality here in the Northwest Territories?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: We're not going to have a successful tourism industry here in the Northwest Territories unless we've got dedicated, trained front-line staff providing the services to the visiting public. It was highlighted in the Economic Opportunities Strategy the need for tourism training, and we're undertaking that. We've dedicated some funding for tourism-related training, and again, we're working with the Northwest Territories Tourism, our tour operators around the Northwest Territories to get this training in place and get as many folks trained in providing

quality customer service to the travelling public here in the NWT.

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

QUESTION 882-17(5):
TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF CANTUNG MINE

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. I'd like to ask the Minister some questions around a mine that straddles the Yukon/NWT border owned by Northern American Tungsten, and that's the Cantung Mine. It's reported that the Cantung Mine is going to be closing next month, at the end of October, and there is going to be a loss of jobs, certainly, when the mine closes. There's going to be a loss of resource revenues to us, and particularly my concern is that there's going to be a cost to the government environmentally.

My first question to the Minister is: It is my understanding that the Cantung Mine is now a responsibility of the NWT, whereas it's been federal jurisdiction up until devolution. So, I'd like to ask the Minister if that's correct.

Who has responsibility for the Cantung Mine? Did it come over to us as a responsibility to the NWT in devolution? Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are issues with the Cantung Mine. They've filed for creditor protection and there's a lot of work underway with the involved governments to work through the process of what that would mean to make sure that we protect our interests. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thank you. I didn't hear an answer to the question as to whose responsibility it is, and the Minister mentioned several governments. I guess I have to ask again, is the mine a responsibility of the NWT government or is it the responsibility of the federal government? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We're engaged in discussions with the Government of Canada over the potential that they could be filing for bankruptcy, and abandonment of the mine could lead to an agreement to transfer the mine to Canada.

MS. BISARO: If I heard the Minister correctly, then, if the mine does close permanently, because I understand this is a temporary closure, but if it closes permanently and they go bankrupt, they're some \$79 million in debt, from what I understand. I heard the Minister say that the mine will be transferred back to the federal government. I'd like to get him to confirm that.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The operative word at this point is it "could." There are court

proceedings that are underway; there's discussion between the governments as well as following through the process as it's laid out for this type of proceedings. That is part of the discussion that has to be resolved.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, I think I kind of heard the Minister tell me to hurry up and wait. Once the report is done, then we might maybe know whether or not we're going to be responsible for the mine.

So, if we are responsible for the mine, what financial security is in place now, either with us or with the federal government, to look after the mine once it's closed for us to reclaim the land and for us to do the environmental cleanup as required?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. The amount of security that's posted is \$11.6 million.

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

QUESTION 883-17(5):
IMPACT OF FISCAL RESTRAINT POLICY
ON PUBLIC SERVICE

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Minister of Finance about jobs. As I mentioned in my Member's statement today, my concerns are about public service jobs and fair and transparent notice.

I've been told by our program managers that they've not been filling positions and they've pulled some off the table during competition processes because deficits are growing and they're recognizing this both in the regular public service as well as in our authorities, which are ultimately a responsibility of the House.

Finally, the Members at large have seen the fiscal outlook, and frankly, many of us are certainly worried about where this government is taking us. I'd like to know, as well as many of the public servants I've been talking to who have been talking about the layoffs, that the lists have been drafted in the public service and multiple departments and I am just wondering what type of information is being provided to the public service employees that we employ here to provide programs and services in a transparent way, that this is a consideration or an option that is being evaluated as we're going into the upcoming budget with the new government. Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is getting way ahead of himself on this particular issue. There is going to be no budget that's done by this government. The only budget we're dealing with is the capital plan budget

before the House, and what we will be providing is a transitional document that encompasses a whole range of activities that Members are aware of, and the incoming government and Assembly then will make their own determination once they get their briefings. The fiscal forecasts, the issues and challenges before them and opportunities and decisions will be made to exactly what steps the 18th Assembly will take at that juncture. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, the new government hasn't taken over, so the operation of the present government in the context of finance is the responsibility of the present government and, furthermore, the responsibility of the Finance Minister. So when departments are drafting these potential lists for consideration for future governments, it's a responsibility of today at today's direction, which is ultimately the responsibility of this House, Mr. Speaker.

What type of transparency process is put into place as the government cobbles these options together? Ultimately, I am worried about fair, honest and transparent notice for the public service, and as I said in my Member's statement, if you're young and trying to start off your life or if you are a seasoned employee working to retirement, people need fair and honest notice.

What type of information and transparency is being given to the public service as the list is being cobbled together by departments? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Once again let me state for the record that the Member is getting way ahead of himself on these questions. There is nothing that's going to be decided by this government. There is transition planning in a whole range of areas that is going to be done.

As the Premier indicated in his statement, balancing our revenues and expenditures is a challenge of this government and will carry on as a challenge to the next government. When I do my fiscal update tomorrow, I will be making that same declaration. All we are doing is getting our transition documents ready and there will be no decisions made in the life of this government about what the 18th Assembly may decide to do in their wisdom. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: As we all know, time and time again, that budgets aren't drafted overnight. It takes many months and planning, Mr. Speaker, and many months and planning without Members that just show up on our desks before they need to be approved.

That said, the reality is the public service, the management, the bureaucracy, you name it, they've spent many months of planning. I am asking about what exercises are being drafted now for consideration going forward. Yes, these budget exercises may be the final ultimate decision of the 18th Assembly and when it rolls in, minus a couple of Members, it might be a reflection of what's here today.

The reality is the work is being done today, and that's what I'm asking.

What work is being done? What type of transparency is being conveyed to the public service as these lists are being cobbled? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We, as the government, are looking at how we make sure that our revenues and expenditures, on a going forward basis, stay the same, that our expenditures do not exceed our revenues and that we don't start borrowing money for programs that we anticipate and plan for what has been determined and demonstrated to be a flat economy with revenues going down. So, we have an obligation as we look to making sure that the 18th Assembly is provided with the best information possible, to pull together all that information for the consideration of the 18th Assembly.

I want to point out that it's anticipated at this juncture, given the lateness of this election, that we would be looking at an interim appropriation to allow the incoming Legislative Assembly the full time it needs to decide the path forward. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I gingerly put it on three occasions here in my Member's statement, or during my question statement that is, to frankly ask are layoffs happening and is that being considered. The Minister at no time took the opportunity to say that it isn't part of the evaluation process that will ultimately be decided by the 18th Assembly.

The Minister can deny it on the last one because he gets the last word, but the fact is, is the government looking at drafting layoff plans as part of the consideration going forward in the 18th Assembly? If the Minister says no, great, but the reality is I am hearing it throughout the department. If he says yes, I want to applaud him in his honesty and full transparency to the public service so they are fully aware of what may be coming, and they certainly deserve that.

Is the government looking towards, as an option, layoffs in the 18th Assembly and are they building those lists, cobbling names on pieces of paper department by department? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We have over 5,000 employees. Our human resources costs are the single biggest costs in the government.

As we look at ensuring our revenues and expenditures stay in sync, we are looking at all options where the money is spent. One of the ways we can make sure that we can protect programs and services and still manage the money on a go-forward basis.

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

QUESTION 884-17(5):
DREDGING IN THE HAY RIVER

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In follow-up to my Member's statement on dredging, I will have questions for the Minister of Transportation. Last session I asked the Minister to follow up with working on dredging.

I just wanted to ask the Minister, has he taken any steps to getting any closer to dredging of the Hay River? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Back in February, as the Member knows, I wrote a letter, sent a letter to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and asked that the federal government consider putting money into the port, dredging the port of Hay River, and indicated it was vital to the Territories for resupply of fuel and food to some of the communities. I did not get a response, so I'm not sure that I should be drafting another letter. I know that the public service Department of Transportation has been speaking to their counterparts about the issue, but it's clearly something that is a federal government responsibility that we don't feel we should be going into. Thank you.

MR. BOUCHARD: So, the question I have is: The Minister indicated he wrote a letter in February and we haven't followed up. We haven't had any other conversation with any other federal Minister responsible for the dredging of the Hay River. I just want to confirm that.

Has the Minister had any conversation with the federal government about the dredging since his letter of February? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I have not had a conversation with the federal government, the departments responsible for dredging the Hay River. Thank you.

MR. BOUCHARD: I guess I have concern with the priority of the Hay River dredging. It seems to be way low on the GNWT and Minister's mind. I'm wondering why the Department of Transportation just went through a whole process through Build Canada, through infrastructure funding and the Hay River dredging isn't on that agenda for the 10-year plan for the infrastructure under Build Canada in partnership with the GNWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The Building Canada is something that is cost shared 75 percent federal government, 25 percent GNWT for GNWT infrastructure. We did get one piece of federal infrastructure in the Build Canada Plan, which was removed by the federal government. We don't think it would be wise to add federal responsibility and request money from the Build Canada Plan and then

take over their responsibility with the money that we will be leveraging from our government. Thank you.

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

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister led me right into the question that I wanted to ask him. He talks about a federal responsibility versus 25 percent territorial.

In the discussion about infrastructure and the creation of new roads, wasn't that a federal responsibility? We are currently building roads in the Northwest Territories, new roads, and we are putting in 25 percent. Where is our at least 25 percent for dredging? Why are we diverting this issue of dredging? Yet, with other things when the federal government's responsibility is there, we are willing to put territorial money into it.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: We've had a transfer from the federal government. The federal government devolved the Department of Transportation to the GNWT. If we put in a part of the Building Canada Plan and put something in there that was actually federal responsibility, the federal government would remove it. So it would be foolish to go through that process of adding in a project that is clearly federal responsibility just to have the government remove it and we would have to plan on replacing that with something else. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 885-17(5):
DREDGING IN THE HAY RIVER

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very dismayed by the answers today from the Minister of Transportation. We are hearing that this is federal responsibility, yet the Minister wrote to the federal government and got no response and there was no follow-up. This government does not seem to care about dredging in Hay River. I don't care whose responsibility it is. Newsflash: They left 20 years ago; they're not coming back. Somebody has to be responsible.

I don't know why it has to stay a federal responsibility. Maybe the Minister can tell me that.

Why does it have to be a federal responsibility? Why can't it be a territorial responsibility? Why can't you put aside funds? I don't care if you contract it out. I don't care if you add it on to the marine division at the Department of Transportation. This needs to be done. Some way, somehow the river has to be dredged. A community is at stake here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Taking over federal responsibility may require us to create a department. There would be more discussion

rather than us just asking the federal government to step up with \$12 million to follow their responsibilities and dredge the Hay River. If we are going to start taking over or going into areas the federal government don't seem to wish to do or don't wish to spend their money on, then it would not be wise for GNWT to step in and start taking over federal responsibilities, pay for federal responsibilities.

This is a federal responsibility. We've written to them. We've asked them. They didn't respond. We've advised them we thought it was important, essential for us to provide supplies from Hay River to other communities. We have received no response. We don't feel that we should now take over their responsibilities. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: What's the alternative? If our government doesn't want to take over federal responsibility, what is the alternative? Just wait for the waterways or passageways to fill in with silt?

Could the Minister, for my benefit and the benefit of our constituents, please tell me why this must be designated as a federal responsibility? Even though it traditionally was, why does it today still need to be tagged as a federal responsibility? Why can't it be a territorial responsibility? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: It is a federal responsibility and the Department of Transportation is not in a position to take over areas that are federal responsibility. We can't just move in and start to fund areas that are a federal responsibility.

Right now we go through a process. When a department from the federal government is devolved to the Government of the Northwest Territories, or any government for that matter, there is a process. If that responsibility devolves from the GNWT, then it would become a GNWT responsibility and it would come with money and personnel. Just to go in and take over federal responsibility at our expense would not be something that this government could do, even if they wished to.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I still don't understand, from the Minister's explanation, why the dredging in Hay River has to be deemed a federal responsibility. I understand it traditionally was. I understand that the federal government vacated their responsibility with response to the dredging.

Is there some legal reason why we have to call that a federal responsibility? Why can't it be a territorial responsibility without going through some transfer or mandate and some transfer of funds? Why can't we just take it up and say we're going to take care of it? Why? What is the legal impediment? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Aside from their fiscal responsibility of spending money dredging the harbour, we don't have the legislation to take over areas. That particular area is now federal responsibility. Even if we had the money to go in and

dredge it once and go in and take the responsibility, this would be something that would continue.

It's important that we, as a government, continue to have discussions with the federal government, for them to step up and take care of their responsibility. I have written a letter to Fisheries and Oceans asking them to do it. No response. Our officials from Transportation have talked to Transport Canada about the issue and also with Fisheries and Oceans about the issue. We have no resolve on this. Thank you.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that the government does not want the fiscal and financial responsibility of dredging Hay River. Let me ask the Minister... Obviously, we are at a standoff. The feds are not responding to the request of anybody from this government about the dredging of Hay River.

Who is going to stop the territorial government if they go in there and dredge? I know we don't want to take on the fiscal responsibility. If we start dredging it, then that's our responsibility, but legally what is stopping us from dredging that harbour?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: We have not talked about moving in and starting to go into an area where the federal government is responsible. Currently, the federal government is going through elections. We can raise that with the federal government for them to take responsibility. If this Assembly decides we need to take over Fisheries and Oceans' responsibilities, then that's another discussion that would have to be had by all of us and the governments responsible, the federal government. I don't think that's a discussion we can have here and make a decision to dredge it once and then the problem is solved. It's an ongoing issue and the appropriate people have to step forward to do their jobs, not GNWT. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 886-17(5):
POPULATION GROWTH STRATEGY
FOR THE NWT

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to dredge up my Member's statement from June 3, 2015. I talked about putting more cash in Northerners' pockets. It's a known fact that the northern residents deduction was implemented to stimulate growth in the NWT by helping compensate for the high cost of living. Sadly, this initiative has not kept up with inflation, and with a paltry 10 percent increase in 2008 we are left wondering why the Finance Minister or Premier have failed to consider this specifically. I'm talking about the Population Growth Strategy. My questions today are for the Premier.

Can the Premier indicate if this government has examined and quantified the economic benefits for

the various levels of an increase to the northern residents deduction? If so, what are the results? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On June 26 and 27, 2012, a Northern Premiers Forum was held in Iqaluit where northern Premiers called on the federal government to increase the northern residents deduction and index it against the cost of living in the territories to help ensure that taxpayers in northern Canada pay a similar proportion of their income in federal tax as taxpayers in southern Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOLYNNY: I do appreciate the Premier indicating that, but I was asking about the quantified economic benefits. I don't think we heard that answer.

Has the Premier examined the possible adjustment in benefits of the northern residents deduction to northern employers in our workforce? If so, what are the results? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The northern Premiers' chair wrote to the three territorial Finance Ministers requesting that the Finance Ministers work together to develop an approach and a rationale for engaging the federal government to seek an increase in the northern residents deduction. They asked for a progress report by October 31, 2012, and a final report by January 31, 2013. So on October 31, 2012, on behalf of the three territorial Finance Ministers, Nunavut's Finance Minister provided the northern Premiers with a report and a possible work plan. The report noted that increasing the northern residents deduction would decrease personal income tax revenue for federal, territorial and some provincial governments and would only benefit high income northern taxpayers. In addition, support of six provinces whose northern residents also received the northern residents deduction would need to be reconfirmed if the Northwest Territories wished to pursue this initiative further. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOLYNNY: Again, it's painfully clear that you've had meetings with some of our northern colleagues. There have been some reports not knowing whether or not it had a full impact to the NWT economy, but the Premier did formally write to all federal election leaders and although the letter did not cite northern deduction per se, only one federal leader replied specific to this deduction.

Can the Premier formally indicate, aside from this single letter writing campaign that we have heard during this federal election, what formal collaborative lobbying efforts are in place to secure an increase to northern residents deductions as part of the Population Growth Strategy? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: On the basis of the final report, the three Premiers decided not to pursue it at that time because it recognizes that the northern

residents deduction reduces individual taxable income but also decreases the amount of tax that we collect. So, I think it would be something that if this Assembly felt it was important and that it would benefit other high income residents, northern residents, I suggest it would be put forward as part of the transition planning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've heard from many constituents that this is not dealing with just high income earners. Many people across the Northwest Territories felt that the northern residents deduction has lacked any vigour or rigor to deal with the issues of the day. They always say the squeaky wheel gets the grease.

To ensure there are no blurred lines here, what is the Premier prepared to do during this fiscal year and federal election to get the Government of Canada to increase northern residents deduction? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As I indicated, the Tax Collection Agreement between the Northwest Territories and Canada requires that both jurisdictions use the same definition of taxable income. So, a northern residents deduction increase would reduce federal and territorial personal income tax revenues. For example, in 2008 with the increase of the NRD to the maximum deduction at \$6,022.50, the cost to the GNWT is about \$800,000.

We are prepared, if this Assembly supports this, to make it part of the transitional process and also to write to the federal government, recognizing that they are in the middle of an election. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Time for oral questions has expired. Item 9, written questions. Item 10, returns to written questions. Item 11, replies to opening address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Moses.

Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

BILL 56:
MISCELLANEOUS STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT

BILL 62:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
CORONERS ACT

BILL 63:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT

BILL 64:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS ACT

BILL 59:
ESTATE ADMINISTRATION LAW
AMENDMENT ACT

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 56, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act; Bill 62, An Act to Amend the Coroners Act; Bill 63, An Act to Amend the Victims of Crime Act; Bill 64, An Act to Amend the Co-operative Associations Act, and wishes to report that Bills 56, 62, 63 and 64 are now ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

Further, Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 59, Estate Administration Law Amendment Act, and would like to report that Bill 59 is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole as amended and reprinted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

BILL 45:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT

BILL 49:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
DEH CHO BRIDGE ACT

BILL 60:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
MOTOR VEHICLES ACT, NO. 2

BILL 61:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
PUBLIC AIRPORTS ACT

BILL 65:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
SAFETY ACT

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure has reviewed the following bills: Bill 45, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act; Bill 49, An Act to Amend the Deh Cho Bridge Act; Bill 60, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act, No. 2; Bill 61, An Act to Amend the Public Airports Act; and Bill 65, An Act to Amend the Safety Act.

Mr. Speaker, the standing committee wishes to report that Bills 49, 60 and 61 are ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole and Bills 45 and 65 are amended and reprinted and ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 281-17(5):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
CAPITAL ESTIMATES, 2016-2017

TABLED DOCUMENT 282-17(5):
GNWT RESPONSE TO
COMMITTEE REPORT 16-17(5):
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE
2013-2014 PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents, entitled "Northwest Territorial Capital Estimates, 2016-2017" and "GNWT Response to CR 16-17(5): Report on the Review of the 2013-2014 Public Accounts."

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. R.C. McLeod.

TABLED DOCUMENT 283-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 774-17(5):
AGRICULTURAL STRATEGY

TABLED DOCUMENT 284-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 872-17(5):
STATUS OF CANTUNG MINE

TABLED DOCUMENT 285-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 818-17(5):
TRACK AND FIELD FACILITY
FOR FORT SIMPSON

TABLED DOCUMENT 286-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 875-17(5):
2015 NGO STABILIZATION FUND

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following four documents, entitled "Follow-up Letter for OQ 774-17(5): Agricultural Strategy;" "Follow-up Letter for OQ 872-17(5): Status on Cantung Mine;" "Follow-up Letter for OQ 818-17(5): Track and Field Facility for Fort Simpson;" and "Follow-up Letter for OQ 875-17(5): 2015 NGO Stabilization Fund." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 287-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 839-17(5):
INNOVATIVE GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES
RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

TABLED DOCUMENT 288-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 848-17(5):
HUMAN RESOURCES OPEN HOUSES

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following two documents, entitled "Follow-up Letter for OQ 839-17(5): Innovative GNWT Recruitment Process;" and "Follow-up Letter for OQ 848-17(5): Human Resources Open Houses." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 289-17(5):
PATHWAYS TO PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT –
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT REPORT FOR THE NWT
OIL AND GAS STRATEGY, SEPTEMBER 2015

TABLED DOCUMENT 290-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 762-17(5):
SUPPORTS FOR SEWING AND
BEADING CRAFTWORK

TABLED DOCUMENT 291-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 831-17(5):
BUSINESS INCENTIVE POLICY

TABLED DOCUMENT 292-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 833-17(5):
MOREL MUSHROOM HARVESTING CONCERNS

TABLED DOCUMENT 293-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 835-17(5):
MOREL MUSHROOM HARVEST

TABLED DOCUMENT 294-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 855-17(5):
RESPONSIBLE ENERGY EXPLORATION
AND DEVELOPMENT

TABLED DOCUMENT 295-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 864-17(5):
WATER SAFETY AND
HYDRAULIC FRACTURING

TABLED DOCUMENT 296-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 840-17(5):
ON-THE-LAND REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

TABLED DOCUMENT 297-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 868-17(5):
RCMP PRESENCE IN TSIIGEHTCHIC

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following nine documents, entitled "Oil and Gas Engagement Strategy Report – Pathways to Petroleum Development;" a "Follow-up Letter for OQ 762-17(5): Supports for Sewing and Beading Craftwork;" a "Follow-up Letter for OQ 831-17(5): Business Incentive Policy;" a "Follow-up Letter for OQ 833-17(5): Morel Mushroom Harvesting Concerns;" a "Follow-up Letter for OQ 835-17(5): Morel Mushroom Harvest;" a "Follow-up Letter for OQ 855-17(5): Responsible Energy Exploration and Development;" a "Follow-up Letter for OQ 864-17(5):

Water Safety and Hydraulic Fracturing;" a "Follow-up Letter for OQ 840-17(5): On-the-Land Rehabilitation Programs;" and a "Follow-up Letter for OQ 868-17(5): RCMP Presence in Tsiigehtchic." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 298-17(5):
GNWT RESPONSE TO MOTION 36-17(5):
WORKPLACE SAFETY AT
STANTON TERRITORIAL HOSPITAL

TABLED DOCUMENT 299-17(5):
GNWT RESPONSE TO
COMMITTEE REPORT 12-17(5):
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BILL 36:
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
PROFESSION ACT

TABLED DOCUMENT 300-17(5):
GNWT RESPONSE TO MOTION 39-17(5):
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
DEATH REVIEW COMMITTEE

TABLED DOCUMENT 301-17(5):
GNWT RESPONSE TO MOTION 40-17(5):
WELLNESS CENTRE AT
STANTON TERRITORIAL HOSPITAL

TABLED DOCUMENT 302-17(5):
GNWT RESPONSE TO
COMMITTEE REPORT 18-17(5):
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BILL 47:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT

TABLED DOCUMENT 303-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 813-17(5):
SAHTU HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
AUTHORITY VACANCIES

TABLED DOCUMENT 304-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR
ORAL QUESTION 871-17(5):
FORT PROVIDENCE HEALTH CARE

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following seven documents, entitled "GNWT Response to Motion 36-17(5): Workplace Safety at Stanton Territorial Hospital;" "GNWT Response to CR 12-17(5): Report on the Review of Bill 36: Health and Social Services Profession Act;" "GNWT Response to Motion 39-17(5), Domestic Violence Death Review Committee;" "GNWT Response to Motion 40-17(5), Wellness Centre at Stanton Territorial Hospital;" "GNWT Response to Committee Report 18-17(5), Report on the Review of Bill 47, An Act to Amend the Child and Family

Services Act;" a "Follow-up Letter for OQ 813-17(5): Health and Social Services Authority Vacancies;" and a "Follow-up Letter for OQ 871-17(5): Fort Providence Health Centre."

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 305-17(5):
GNWT RESPONSE TO
COMMITTEE REPORT 14-17(5):
REPORT ON THE 2014 REVIEW OF THE OFFICIAL
LANGUAGES ACT

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled "GNWT Response to Committee Report 14-17(5): Report on the 2014 Review of the Official Languages Act."

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 306-17(5):
RESPONSE TO PETITION 5-17(5):
FRACKING MORATORIUM PENDING
COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL REVIEW

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table a response to a petition provided by the Honourable David Ramsay, Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, in response to a petition tabled by Mr. Bob Bromley, Member for Weledeh, on June 2, 2015.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Mr. Abernethy.

Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

BILL 68:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT, NO. 2

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, October 1, 2015, I will move that Bill 68, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act, No. 2, be read for the first time.

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

MR. DOLYUNNY: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 14 on the order sheet, tabling of documents. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

Tabling of Documents (Reversion)

TABLED DOCUMENT 307-17(5):
MEASURING GOVERNMENT OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES FISCAL
PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a document, called "Measuring GNWT Fiscal Performance and Accountability."

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Minister's Statement 221-17(5), Sessional Statement; and Tabled Document 281-17(5), Capital Estimates, 2016-2017, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Madam Chair. We wish to proceed with opening comments on the capital estimates.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Okay. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): We'll proceed with general comments after a brief break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Good afternoon, committee. I'd like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Tabled Document 281-17(5), Capital Estimates, 2016-2017. We've also agreed to begin with general comments. Does the Minister of Finance wish to bring witnesses into the House? Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Before we bring witnesses in, committee, we're going to actually ask the Minister if he has opening comments. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I am here to present the Capital Estimates, 2016-2017 of the Government of the Northwest Territories. These estimates represent \$292 million in appropriations for government and \$28 million for community

infrastructure investments in the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

These estimates do not include appropriations for housing infrastructure proposed by the NWT Housing Corporation in 2016-2017, totalling \$22 million. The appropriation for these investments will be sought during review of the 2016-2017 Main Estimates by the 18th Legislative Assembly. The NWT Housing Corporation's proposed 2016-2017 Capital Plan, however, has been included in the estimates document as an information item for review and comment.

Including the proposed housing investment, the total planned infrastructure investment in 2016-2017 will be \$342 million.

Major highlights of these estimates include:

- \$91 million to seek appropriation authority to record the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link Project on the GNWT's balance sheet;
- \$69 million for highways and winter roads across the NWT. This includes funding for the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway and the first bundle of highway projects submitted under the new Building Canada Plan;
- \$60 million for health facility replacements, renovations and information system upgrades, including funding required for the renovation of the Stanton Territorial Hospital project;
- \$28 million to continue to contribute to community infrastructure needs;
- \$20 million to begin replacing the current air tanker fleet that support forest fire operations.

Members have expressed concerns over the lack of funding allocated to NWT schools in government capital plans. In response to these concerns, these estimates include \$400,000 to provide planning study funding for the J.H. Sissons and Mildred Hall school renovations in Yellowknife.

Looking ahead, the GNWT is facing the difficult challenge of maintaining existing assets, improving housing stock and meeting legislative requirements unless steps are taken to free up fiscal resources.

Regardless of this challenge, the GNWT will continue to ensure our limited capital funding is used to support the territory's essential infrastructure base so that programs and services can continue to be delivered, aim to make investments in strategic infrastructure that will better position the territory and all of Canada to maximize economic opportunities of the North, and to look at options to mitigate the impact of climate change.

I am prepared to review the details of the 2016-2017 Capital Estimates document. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. We'll try this again. Does the Minister have any witnesses he'd like to bring in the House?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): If I can get the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me Sandy Kalgutkar, deputy secretary to the FMB; Mr. Paul Guy, deputy minister, Public Works and Services; and Mr. Russ Neudorf, deputy minister of Transportation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Neudorf, Mr. Guy, Mr. Kalgutkar, welcome back to the House.

Committee, it is my pleasure to open up the floor now to general comments on Tabled Document 281-17(5), Capital Estimates, 2016-2017. With that, I'm calling general comments. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome to the Minister and his staff. I appreciate the opportunity to speak briefly in response to this document, the capital budget. I don't think it's any secret that our population is struggling with the cost of living and that infrastructure that addresses the cost of living is a priority for both our people and our Members here.

On that basis, I'm a little disappointed, as the Minister knows, at the lack of community energy projects that will address in a long-term, comprehensive, meaningful way the cost of energy, both heating and electricity, across the Northwest Territories. I'm very open to any other way that we can pursue those options, but I don't see it in the capital plan here. A big disappointment since we've been struggling with this for a long time, and although we've had a lot of money available, we haven't really done all that much with it and a lot of it is left being unspent.

I think some of the options we have are to pursue these through the Building Canada Fund, a decision we've chosen not to do. Instead, going off after very expensive highway projects that don't really address the cost of living very effectively within the communities themselves in the same way and in a way that's really needed.

I'm pleased that the fibre optic line is going ahead and making good progress. I'm disappointed that we weren't able to, I suppose, administratively find a way to spread that cost over a couple of fiscal years, but that didn't seem to be doable.

I think we've spoken lots about the Stanton Territorial Hospital. I don't have a clue what's going on there. I don't know what the budget is anymore for that

hospital and I'd appreciate learning anything more. I'm learning lots on the street, but I prefer to hear it from the Minister and at least have it confirmed and maybe learn what the budget is now for that project and what the implications are for the current structure both financially and in terms of serving our infrastructure needs.

In the area of education and child care, I think, again, we've discussed a little bit of the child care challenges we have. We're sort of a third world country, and despite the fact of us harping on this for a long time, there is still not much progress at all in that area and I don't see much reflected here. We know that Aurora College, again a perennial topic, speaking specifically about the Yellowknife Campus, I think the Minister is aware that we've done a couple of committee tours over the last two Assemblies of the Aurora College Yellowknife Campus and they've been eye-openers. I don't know if the Minister has had occasion to do that or not, but we were simply going down the hallway from office to office, so we'd have to move into somebody's office to allow people to get by in the hallway. Talk about a bunch of sardines squeezed into a tin can. So, I don't know how long we want to put that off. It's not even on the 20-year plan that I'm aware of. So, that's certainly a real gap and a real disappointment.

I'd just like to talk about a new subject and get this on the plan and that's a new school for Detah, replacing the Kaw Tay Whee School. In 1969 we put in a couple of portables and connected them, and eventually we put in a couple more portables in 1988 and did a little renovation to them so they could have a storeroom space and a little bit of shelving. That was done in '13-14. So, to date, they have four classrooms, and in speaking to the Minister, they have a junior kindergarten class, a kindergarten class and eight grades going to that four-room school. That somewhat old and dilapidated portable structures four-room school. The community is to the point where they are rightfully thinking they deserve better. So, I'd like to very much suggest that we get that on the list.

There are many good things in the budget that we're happy to see going forward, I'm happy to see going forward. I particularly appreciate the Minister's recognition of the need to get after the long overdue Mildred Hall and particularly J.H. Sissons renovations with planning studies for those two facilities, recognizing that some of the work that was done quite some time ago was not completed. So it's time to get after those. You know, in general our education budget for capital has been very, very modest year after year since we completed the Inuvik school, and so I think there's a bit of a catch-up to be done there.

I'm happy to see the work going forward in the Tu Nedhe...Nahendeh, sorry. Couple of the schools there, one constructed and some planning studies. I know those are overdue as well.

Mr. Chair, I think I'll leave it at that. I've highlighted a few areas. I don't think there are any surprises to the Minister, but I would welcome any comments and any suggestions on how we can get those things done that I don't see in the budget but would have liked to have seen. I'll leave it at that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. We'll allow the Minister to reply. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the Member's comments. In regards to the issue of lack of community energy projects, I think there's a number that have been put in, either in the community or through NTPC, if I could refer to Colville Lake, for example, or Lutselk'e, where we've got power purchase agreements. We spent hundreds of thousands of dollars taking a look at Deline. We've got biomass, albeit in our own buildings for the most part. We've promoted and are helping build an industry now.

I appreciate there's a need to do more. We have an expression of interest coming out, for example, for one megawatt, five megawatt, 10 megawatts of wind and/or solar in Yellowknife in the Snare system to see what the marketplace is telling us. So, I appreciate that the Member would like us to do more, and we are going to come forward. There are some big ticket items that we're going to have to manage. For example, putting in wind up between Inuvik and Tuk, which would probably be in the \$50 million range to do nine megawatts of power could have a dramatic impact on diesel consumption. So, it's not that there's a shortage of projects, it's more of a shortage of adequate resources to do them all.

The issue of the roads, I would suggest that if you had the Wrigley to Norman Wells portion of the road built, that would be a single great decrier of the cost of living up in the Sahtu. That type of connection is critical, I think. We have the same kind of challenge going through the Tlicho and then the road into the mines that would help prolong the mine life and add considerably to the continued economic good fortune when it comes to the diamond mines. So we would have to manage those as well.

There's a briefing on Stanton tonight at the rise of the House. But clearly, it's a \$350 million project that's going to proceed. It's going to get a new hospital. It's all good news. There's going to be increased services. It's going to demonstrate to you that it's going to come in on budget and on time the way it's structured. So, we'll spend the time that committee needs on that tonight.

The issue of child care, daycare, those types of things, that is a discussion to be had again. There's no money in the budget. The agreement, when we did the capital plan, was to make it as status quo as possible, recognizing that this is a very unique circumstance for the first time where the outgoing Assembly is doing the capital plan for the incoming Assembly for the first year, just because of the late

date of the election and the need to make sure we don't lose the building season. So, we've done our best to honour that direction, to keep it as status quo as possible.

The college campus, I agree, has been on the books for a long time. One of the discussions that has already come up is with the old Stanton Hospital, what's going to be the use for that, and we have to look at all options and that's a building that's still going to have some life left to it. One of the considerations may be that Yellowknife college campus is a potential.

The new school for Detah, we'll make note of that and I appreciate, and I haven't been there for a while but I have been to the school, it has seen better years. I appreciate the comments on Sissons and the comments on schools in Nahendeh. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Continuing on with general comments, I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Just in terms of the capital infrastructure that's planned for next year. Of course, I'm certainly pleased to see the investment into Highway No. 7, the resources that are going there. It's something that has been high on my agenda and will continue to be so. It's \$3 million a year, and certainly, it will help with that highway. Because I've always said, as part of our tourism plan, as well as to have a good solid highway, we can truly continue to sell the Deh Cho Trail which means coming in through Alberta and exiting through BC, or vice versa. It will be a boon to our economy.

I noted in transportation, as well, that we've got some chipsealing program, and residents of Fort Simpson and Fort Liard are very pleased to see additional chipsealing happening at about almost 20 kilometres per year, and we'd certainly like to see more, but I'll continue to press for that and hopefully the department and Cabinet is in concurrence.

As well, when I speak about highways and the Highway No. 1 investment is also in the budget and I'd like to push that highway north of Fort Simpson towards Wrigley be included in some of the upgrades and investments. That's another road, too, that definitely needs attention.

A couple of things that are sitting with P and P committee reviewing the infrastructure investment, it's certainly missing in the short term, the Fort Simpson Health Centre. It's slated for '22-23, but it was certainly bandied about that it would be in the '17-18 capital project. This whole term I have been speaking about it and it was red flagged and imminently being put in the capital plan along with the planning study. I kept asking every six months where the planning study was at. It's the government's own engineer's report that said this building is over 40 years old and needs to be replaced. I just don't see how we can continue to put it off. That is something that is high on my agenda. Hopefully we will get the planning study

concluded. In fact, Mr. Chair, with your assistance we found documentation that said that the planning study was indeed completed. Now they are saying it's not, but certainly I know we have lots of major infrastructure planned in the 18th Assembly. I believe and know that due to public interest this older hospital has to be completed, much like a priority of the government to do the Stanton. This one is a priority, so we will have a discussion at the appropriate time, but I would certainly like to see that moved up to '17-18 where it used to be.

I am also pleased to see the investment and Trout Lake's concurrence about retrofitting the Trout Lake School expansion and make full use of the building for the schooling needs. This is one of the few communities in the North with a growing population. There are a lot of young people moving back with young children. In fact, I think there are 18 to 21 students in Trout Lake. It definitely needs expansion of the school. You can't do it in a one-room schoolhouse. With their concurrence about renovating the existing school, they are going to lose their community centre. That is a focal point to Trout Lake. It is used six days a week. I would like to speak about that. You are going to need a replacement community hall.

As well, there is a much needed seniors home built in Fort Liard this year. I know it was supposed to be completed this year, but they had a late start. I don't know if the Minister can comment on that. We will see the completion in 2016 definitely.

Another way that our capital projects help our communities is with Cabinet's concurrence and agreement with negotiated contracts with proximity communities and local businesses. I'm glad we do have this policy. It's really, really needed. I'm glad that Cabinet continues to work with that to develop our local base, our local capacity and the merging small businesses in the small communities that do need the type of support of a negotiated contact, with the concurrence of our current leadership meeting the bands and municipalities. It is beneficial to the communities when the work can be local and we are generating income. I have made the case in the past where we have given contracts to BC companies and they were bringing in their own fuel, bringing in their own men and we generated revenue through taxation. If these people aren't living and working in the North, then we're not generating revenue from giving it to a southern company. I'm a strong supporter of the negotiated contract. Our capital investment is stimulating our economy and I'm supportive of it and urge Cabinet to continue to do that.

Those are my comments, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. For a reply, we'll go to Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just note and thank the Member for his

comments and evidencing his pleasure and being pleased with Highway No. 7, Trout Lake chipsealing, Highway No. 1 north of Wrigley needing work but still thankful for the work on Highway No. 1 and Trout Lake and the fact that he likes the way that contracts can be used to stimulate the economy.

With regard to the community hall, that's a possible gas tax project the community could look at where they have capital money.

The seniors home is a housing issue. I don't have detail to speak to that, but I would assume the intent would be to get it done. If they started late, they want to finish strong next year.

With regard to the Fort Simpson Health Centre, there's been a lot of work underway. There are studies that have been done and they have sorted out the land and making sure... I will maybe ask Mr. Guy to talk about the land issue. There were burial sites, but there's been work that's been agreed to. We are looking at the whole process being done by fall 2016, which would allow us to then determine specifically if it can be reasserted into the red flag process.

Mr. Chairman, if I could just ask the deputy to talk to the land issue. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I will go to Deputy Minister Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As we had proceeded with this project, there were challenges finding a site. We had looked at the location of the existing health centre and other sites in the community until we were able to come to agreement on the Deh Cho Hall site, which is what we are proceeding with now.

As part of that work, we have done the ground penetrating radar study and confirmed the locations of any potential gravesites and working with the community to address those through the planning study process.

In terms of the planning study, lots of work has occurred over July and August. The first phase of the planning study will be completed by February 2016, which is the needs assessment, operational plan, functional program. That's going to build on all the work that was previously done in 2011-12 to bring it up to the current standard based on the work that was done on a number of other health centres and work planned since then.

The schematic design and full phase 2 of the planning study will be completed by the fall of 2016, so the project can be brought forward by the department for consideration in the future capital plans. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Menicoche, you have a few minutes left on the clock. I will let you have that opportunity.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. The construction of the Fort Simpson Health Centre is

certainly a priority for the community. The department is right; acquisition of the land was of primary importance. I do concur it did take some time. I know the red flag is a priority of the government, and like I said, I'm upset it was bumped up five years as opposed to including it into the capital plan sooner, like they were just talking about. Having it in 2022-23 doesn't give me any comfort. Sometimes when they put plans in black and white they get stuck there without somebody following up on it. Let's take this document and put it in '17-18. Just to do that would be a big win and create lots of certainty in the residents of Fort Simpson replacing our aging infrastructure. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. I will treat that as a final comment. You can talk more about it when we get into the activity structure. Continuing on with general comments, I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My comments are similar to those of my colleagues, but I'd like to make a number of comments on this budget. I think I have to start with the Stanton Hospital Project. I look at the Minister's opening comments and he talks about funding for the renovation of the Stanton Territorial Hospital Project. According to the newspaper a week or so ago, it's a brand new building and I thought I heard the Minister, in response to Mr. Bromley, state that we're going to have a new hospital. So, I'm totally confused now.

I'm thoroughly looking forward to the briefing, which the Minister said we're having at the rise of the House. I look forward to finding out whether or not we are again getting information through the paper that we should be getting through the Minister. But I'd appreciate a confirmation as to whether this project is a new stand-alone building or a renovation of the old building. I think the Minister mentioned that the old building might be used for Aurora College. so we have conflicting messages big time here.

I also want to state, and I've expressed these to the Minister in a couple of messages, but this Stanton project is a P3 project and it has the potential to run off the rails and to put us into a greater financial hole to that than which we think we are in already, and I would like to state that I fervently hope that this project goes well, but I keep being advised from constituents of projects across the country that are P3 projects, especially health P3 projects, hospitals or health centres, which are fraught with all kinds of pitfalls. You know, we keep getting assured that we have this in place, we have that in place, we've got a policy, we're doing this, we're doing that, but we still end up with financial overruns, financial expenditures which are not expected, and this project, I think it's been labeled the largest project that this government has ever done or is going to do. It's one that's going to require extreme monitoring, and I just hope that we are not just saying yeah, yeah, yeah, we know about

the possibilities for error, but that we are seriously expecting and monitoring for errors and ensuring that they don't happen. It's one thing to say yes, it might happen, but it's another to really look at it and make sure that we do everything properly so that we don't get ourselves into hot water.

I am disappointed in the capital budget. The community infrastructure listed in the budget is \$28 million. It's been \$28 million for probably as many years as I've been here, and in that time communities have accepted and taken on more and more community infrastructure, and yet the funding for them to either build new infrastructure or keep the old infrastructure running has stayed the same and it's well beyond the time that community infrastructure funding increased. I keep hearing that, yes, maybe there's been a study and maybe it's going to increase, but there's no evidence of that in the '16-17 Capital Budget and the government needs to seriously think about an increase in infrastructure funding for communities in the '17-18 Capital Budget.

I am very pleased to see the planning study money for the two schools in Yellowknife. I'm very pleased to hear the Minister confirm that in his opening remarks, but in general, I support Mr. Bromley's position that the capital funding for education infrastructure has been woefully inadequate over many years and we have schools everywhere that either need replacement and/or need refurbishing; they need a mid-life retrofit and they're just not in the capital plan. We struggled big time to get these two projects and get planning money in the budget for these two projects and yet these two schools have been both kicking around the capital plan for about 10 years and there are many other schools in other communities that are in the same boat. They're looking for a replacement; they're looking for a retrofit and they're not there. So, the government has to do a better job of analyzing the education infrastructure needs and making sure it gets into the capital plan.

I am pleased to see that there is money in the budget for an extended care facility. It's not going to be in the hospital. So, I'm very pleased to see that we are planning to provide some kind of a facility for extended care. I'm given to understand that it is possible with the Aven's proposal that the department, Health and Social Services, will be talking to Avens about potentially combining with Avens to run an extended care facility, and that's great news. I think if that can work, it's certainly going to assist Avens with their proposal for their expansion project, and Lord knows we need more rooms for seniors. We definitely need more capacity for seniors, whether it's assisted living or extended care or just supported living.

I'm concerned about housing. I know that we're not approving an expense in this budget, but the proposed housing expenditures are listed in this capital budget and there is a need to look again at the housing that we provide in all of our communities, but

particularly in Yellowknife. We don't have enough public housing units across our territory. I realize that the federal money is decreasing, but we have a population that is struggling and it goes to the cost of living, among other things, and this government somehow has to start recognizing that we need more public housing units or we need to assist people with their housing costs somehow. We've made a few steps in that direction, but it's not enough and there needs to be an analysis of the housing units that we are providing, how it fits with the needs in each and every community. I think that's done quite regularly, but we don't see any change in the number of units in each community and we have to increase the housing units in every community in the territory. But again, more specifically for me, in Yellowknife.

I find that this capital plan has too much of an emphasis in the Transportation department and I realize that that has to do with the Build Canada Plan, but there are other opportunities in the Build Canada Plan for different projects. The government has chosen to put all of the Building Canada Plan funding into transportation and into roads and we have to make a change to that. There's an opportunity to use Build Canada Plan funds for energy projects, and the government is choosing not to do that, even though Members have stated the need for energy projects for quite some time.

I am disappointed that this budget has not got any concrete expenditure for a power project. Our power costs are admittedly high, and everybody you talk to says the power costs are the biggest expense that we have, the biggest impact on our cost of living, and yet in the eight years that I've been here we have not had a project that will effectively reduce the cost of power over the long term. We have lots of subsidies, but subsidies run out and we need to start putting projects into our capital plan that are going to affect our power production and our power costs to the individual.

Lastly, I just want to make a comment on a couple of health centres. The Simpson Health Centre, I support the need for the Simpson Health Centre to be brought back onto a decent timeline. The information that we received in our presentation was that it was scheduled for the year '22-23, when a planning study was mostly done last year and it was scheduled for '17-18 in the information from our capital plan last year, this current capital plan. Same thing with the Tulita health centre. Apparently the planning was mostly done and it also, in this capital plan, has been pushed to the year '22-23. Both of these projects need to be brought back to fiscal year '17-18 and the next capital plan. We need some commitment from the government that the next capital plan will include these two projects.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I'll allow Minister Miltenberger a reply.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regards to Stanton, the plan, as we will

lay out tonight in detail, is going to be for a new hospital with the old hospital being designated for some other use in the coming years.

In regard to the \$28 million for communities, what we have done is protected that money from any reductions, recognizing that it is a critical need and that as we manage our money and look at balancing our expenditures and revenues, that's one area that was deemed to be in need of protection. I appreciate the Member's comments both about the planning studies and the extended care facility planned for somewhere in Yellowknife.

In regards to the schools in the list, or the better job on schools, in my recollection, in my time there have been cycles where there have been years of schools being fixed and now we're in a health centre renovation phase, plus trying to do housing, plus trying to do some schools, and we have, as I would remind Members, a \$3 billion infrastructure deficit and the total budget this year, I think, with carry-overs and such was \$300 million. So, we're all challenged to try to meet the demand as best we can. The challenge for housing, of course, as Minister McLeod has pointed out numerous times, I think they've taken out over \$6 million so far out of the CMHC funding and that number's going to get bigger faster in the coming years.

With the issue of too much emphasis on roads, we pointed out, I think, when we've met previously, that there are options being looked at as a way to free up more cash in the capital plan through the Build Canada and deal with the roads differently where a lot of the work is basic ongoing maintenance and upgrades. So, we've touched on that with committee and will continue to have that discussion.

The cost of power is too high, we appreciate that. That was one of the big reasons we put the \$29 million down, that we didn't want to see an additional 20-something percent increase. We agree, as well, that we in Yellowknife need to pick up our distribution capacity, which is one of the reasons why we're looking at an expression of interest for one megawatt, five megawatts and 10 megawatts of wind and/or solar in Yellowknife in the Snare system. We're also doing a resiliency study and we're revisiting some of our transmission options just to see if there are any other opportunities and we're going to continue to invest in the thermal communities, as well, to look at the price of power. Once again, that's going to require strategic investments and the borrowing of money in a manageable, carefully thought out way to allow us to address some of those pressing issues.

The issue of the support for the Simpson Health Centre, I appreciate the Member's comments as I am sure does the Member for Nahendeh. So, that would conclude my response. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Continuing on with the general comments, I have Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a few comments, nothing in particular, just mostly some internal thoughts. For the most part, I think going forward a lot of the projects that have been identified in some respects have materialized over the course of the last couple of years and I think it's clear that lacking major natural resource development projects, aside from the mines that we have, this government has to try in some way to invigorate the economy and that's in investments and infrastructure. So, with that, at the community level there have been some efforts in terms of trying to empower local governments to come up with at least their own finance, and there have been transfers of more monetary tools in terms of the gas tax. So it enables communities to try to at least put more effort into local planning and also incentives to try and identify some projects down the road, but it also creates the opportunity for collaboration between local governments and also the territorial government. But, in some respects, too, I think we all need to be reminded that even though there's always momentum to download and empower communities, we cannot lose the thought that the government's still responsible to provide services and programs to local communities, especially residents. So, we need to remind ourselves that once in a while communities will want to partnership, but at the same time government still has an obligation to provide those services.

I think the thing that strikes me the most is just the cost of living and how it is that we're trying to address that fundamental challenge that's making life, in terms of community living, very challenging for families, single parents, students, elderly and disabled persons. The high cost of living is a big challenge. It's amazing how our local people can endure the challenges of being unemployed. We have 50 percent unemployment rates in the communities and it's a big challenge, so this government has to, in some respects a lot of the time, step up and assist people.

For the most part, I think there are opportunities. One opportunity that we experienced this summer was a natural phenomenon. We saw the forest fires basically decimate some areas in the NWT, and then almost as a residual effect we had the growth of mushrooms. These wild little plants created opportunities for employment, opportunities for some commercial enterprise. But it exemplifies how such a small little vegetable plant could have a big impact on government, especially for opportunities. It's something that's renewable and sustainable. It's very, very complementary to the subsistence economy that we have in communities, so it worked in some respects. Some people call it a lot of hype, but in the final analysis it was something good that happened and we need to try and learn from that.

Next to that is tourism. I think there have been a lot of efforts in terms of promoting tourism. It's important for us to maintain the facilities, especially the campgrounds that we have locally in some

communities and to ensure that the highways are very good so that tourists do keep coming back up north and spending their money up here in the NWT.

Closely related to that, of course, is we have in the riding, at least in the South Slave, the potential of a wood pellet mill that is dawning and it's getting closer to reality. It's cause for excitement. It's cause for hope and optimism. I would like to ensure that local communities continue to be involved. There are some communities that are standing by with their forest management agreement. They're trying to make this work and trying to make this successful. I think government needs to be involved with that. Whether this government is going to continue with the Biomass Strategy is something that has yet to be determined. Perhaps we could be informed in terms of whether it's going to continue.

The other thing that kind of strikes me is there was a decision to close down the treatment centre, and we realized that this government is doing all it can to try and provide a service to people who are struggling with alcohol and substance abuse and we send them down south when in fact we need to build capacities and we need to revisit that idea that we need to house our own treatment centre up here in the NWT and ensure that we also assist people.

Those are just some comments that I wanted to share. Going forward, I think this government needs to continue in terms of ensuring that there's work along with communities to cooperate on infrastructure projects.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. We'll go to Minister Miltenberger for a reply.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We fully agree with the Member about the need for the government, especially in the smaller communities but across the economy as a whole, the territory as a whole, especially given the fact that we're now into a second recession in the last eight years, to use our infrastructure dollars to help stimulate the economy. We did that in 2007. We borrowed to our limit to make sure that we had as much infrastructure go into the ground as possible, and I think we did over a million dollars in a few years. We still see that as a critical way forward, especially infrastructure that is going to help create the conditions for economic growth. We are very aware of the concern and appreciate the Member's reminder about not just downloading if you are going to work with communities, but make sure that they have the resources to do the job. This whole Assembly has been built on the issue of trying to deal with the cost of living. We've been able to make some inroads, but there are still a lot of things to do, especially on the energy side.

More mushrooms, I agree; for a little piece of fungus, they are like gold. Changes to the Forest Management Act are coming up. ITI has done a very fine job on the promotion side and managing working

with the communities and the folks who want to get into the business, so I think that's been a very good success story.

The tourism promotion was raised, as well, in the House earlier by Mr. Moses. We've seen a growth in tourism and the need to pay close attention to that. On wood pellets, we've spent millions of dollars ourselves and the federal government working with Mr. Mapes and communities to get this to the point where it's at. They now have the land sorted out and the actual mill should be starting construction before winter.

We fully intend, as a government, to continue with the Biomass Strategy. It's a long-term energy plan that should have a long, long future. It's a renewable energy source, so it should have a long future in the North.

With regard to the treatment centre, we don't have a lot of notes on that one, but the Minister of Health will be able to have that discussion when he comes to the table here in the next few days. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. I will turn it over to Ms. Bisaro.

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

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): I will ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort our witnesses out of the Chamber. I will now rise and report progress. Thank you, committee.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 21, report of Committee of the Whole. Mr. Dolyunny.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 281-17(5), Capital Estimates, 2016-2017, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. Do I have a seconder? Mr. Beaulieu.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Wednesday, September 30, 2015, 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
 - Bill 48, An Act to Amend the Mental Health Act
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Minister's Statement 221-17(5), Sessional Statement
 - Tabled Document 281-17(5), Capital Estimates, 2016-2017
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

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

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:29 p.m.