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The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

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(Yellowknife South)
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	2867
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	2869
173-19(2) – Update on Community Access Program (Archie).....	2869
174-19(2) – Senior Citizens Month and World Elder Abuse Awareness Day June 15 (Green)	2869
175-19(2) – Community Housing Support Program (Chinna).....	2870
176-19(2) – Mining Week 2021 and Initiatives (Wawzonek)	2871
177-19(2) – Dene National Memorial Walk (Cochrane).....	2872
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	2872
Current Events and End of Session (Jacobson).....	2872
Graduation in Hay River (Rocky Simpson)	2873
2021 Graduating Class (Semmler)	2873
Intimate Partner Violence (Nokleby).....	2874
Graduation and Session Reflections (Martselos)	2874
Staffing Appeal Process (Johnson)	2874
Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (O'Reilly).....	2875
Northwest Territories Art Sector (Cleveland).....	2876
Eulogy for Stephen Squirrel (Thompson)	2876
ORAL QUESTIONS	2877
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	2888
MOTIONS	2889
Motion 37-19(2) – Creation of a Northwest Territories Food Security Strategy	2889
Motion 38-19(2) – Extended Adjournment of the House to October 14, 2021	2891
FIRST READING OF BILLS	2891
Bill 35 – Supplementary Appropriations Act (Operations Expenditures), No.1, 2021-2022	2891
SECOND READING OF BILLS	2891
Bill 33 – National Indigenous Peoples Day Act.....	2891
Bill 35 - Supplementary Appropriations Act (Operations Expenditures), No.1, 2021-2022	2892
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	2892
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	2904
THIRD READING OF BILLS	2904

Bill 25 – An Act to Amend the Education Act.....	2904
Bill 35 - Supplementary Appropriations Act (Operations Expenditures), No.1, 2021-2022.....	2904
ORDERS OF THE DAY	2905

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Friday, June 4, 2021****Members Present**

Hon. Diane Archie, Hon. Frederick Blake Jr., Mr. Bonnetrouge, Hon. Paulie Chinna, Ms. Cleveland, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Hon. Julie Green, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Martselos, Ms. Nokleby, Mr. O'Reilly, Ms. Semmler, Hon. R.J. Simpson, Hon. Shane Thompson, Hon. Caroline Wawzonek

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Good morning, colleagues. The Member for Monfwi has asked to address the Chamber, and I will give the floor to the Member. Member for Monfwi.

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker -- [Translation] Masi, Mr. Speaker. Today is a special day; it's a huge day. Yesterday as I spoke, I spoke in my language. The reason I said it, I said it in my language. Today we have Mary Rose here in the audience from CKLB. I spoke with her, and they report on everything that we say and do in this House. When we represent the people, we need to talk for them, and we relay those concerns to the government.

Yesterday, as I spoke in my language, I spoke in my language yesterday on the radio. But today I will speak in English. The languages are all equal. Today, as we meet here, I will be announcing a special report. I want to say to all the MLAs and the people of Northwest Territories, and also to the Tlicho Region, my people, I want to talk to them. As I stand here, I will read my statement. I will now speak in my language. Masi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation Ends]

Mr. Speaker, we've experienced a challenging year and a half from COVID-19 here in the Northwest Territories, in Canada, and also around the world. We have lost something dear and today we face a normal full of unanswered questions. And then, Mr. Speaker, comes devastating news last week from the former Kamloops Indian Residential School - news of a mass grave containing the bodies of at least 215 Indigenous children.

Mr. Speaker, challenging times like this tend to focus on person's thoughts, on what really matters. It gets you thinking about family, how very precious family is, and about the community and how precious that is. And this leads, naturally, to thoughts about your own life and what have you done with your time on earth that you've been given by Our Creator.

Mr. Speaker, that applies to me. That includes reflecting back on my 16 years - five terms as a Member of this Legislative Assembly. Mr. Speaker, when I walked into this building in June 2005, my oldest son, Jade, was only 12 years old. Today, Mr. Speaker, my son, Jade, is 28 years old with a son on his own and a family on his own. My youngest Ty was only just born when I became a MLA. Now he is 16, studying for his driver's licence.

Mr. Speaker, we take our oath of office as a MLA. We sign on to a demanding parallel of life - an existence away from home, removed loved ones, and away from family. Mr. Speaker, while I sat in this chamber, my five kids grew up around me. During my 16 years here, I've missed so much childhood while they were growing up - so their rites of passage. Of course, not just for me, Mr. Speaker. How many babies first words, first steps, birthdays, soccer tournaments, laughers, cuts, tears of each of us - missed because of our duties as MLAs.

But, Mr. Speaker, on the flip side, there's always a -- it has also been a wonderful 16 years serving here in this Legislative Assembly, in this House. I've visited just about every community in the Northwest Territories, just every part of Canada as a Minister, and then later as a Speaker, travelled to promote NWT internationally.

Mr. Speaker, when I was approached 16 years ago to first run as a MLA for Monfwi Region, it was at prompting of the elders. Now, those same elders, at least the new generation of them, have approached me again. This time, Mr. Speaker, they're asking me to come home back to my region, back to the Tlicho. They want me to take what I have learned here and put it to work within the Tlicho government system.

As tradition demands, I consulted with my family. My family, which stood by me in my journey as a MLA, as a Minister, and also as a Speaker. My family says the elders' right. It's time for a new direction. It's time to go home.

For that reason, Mr. Speaker, today I am giving notice to this House, to the Tlicho people, the NWT as a whole, that I will be resigning my post as a MLA for Monfwi effective today, Friday, June 4th, 2021.

In doing so, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say a big masi cho to the Tlicho communities and the people, for the privilege of representing them for the past 16 years, for the past five terms. I'm humbled by the trust they placed in me. It makes a personal sacrifice more worth it. I love the Tlicho people and the communities. For their sake, I would do it all over again.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to masi cho to my former assistant Morgan McPherson who dedicated almost ten years to helping me in various elected roles. Without her, Mr. Speaker, I would have been lost. Thank you, Morgan, for your dedication and commitment, for being a friend that I could always count on. For that, masi cho.

Another constituent assistant, Mr. Speaker, is Richard Charlo. He has been my voice, my eyes and ears, in the Tlicho Region when it came to constituent issues. Thank you, Richard, for your enthusiasm, for your cheerfulness, hard work, and your dedication these past several years.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say masi cho to my family - my father, my sisters, brothers, aunties and uncles, for supporting me and encouraging me as I struggled to make a difference for my Tlicho people and my communities. During my 16 years here, I have lost so many close family. First my mother, 2014; then a year later, my grandma cho. Then just last year, my brother Troy. And this year, my loving auntie Therese. Their death made it more difficult in trying times but my family's love and support kept me going.

Mr. Speaker, that brings me to my immediate family. If I had an amount of success as a politician, it's them I have to thank. They get the credit. My son Jade, his wife Jessie, our grandson Aries. My daughter Cheyenne, my daughter Sahara, my daughter Dene, and our youngest Ty. Without their constant love and understanding, I'd be nothing. Then, Mr. Speaker, there is a super woman I married - Diane Marie Lafferty. In every challenge, every time, every defeat, she has been there by my side. Through every trying times, absence, every inconvenient business trip, every sitting of this Assembly, she was there covering me with the kids, reminding them of my love. If I have accomplished anything in life, it's on account of my love Diane. If my path leads to success, it will be entirely because of her.

Mr. Speaker, finally, I want to thank this institution - the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, and all their Members, past and present, I have had opportunity and privilege to serve with. Elected office is a true honour - a high calling. I will be grateful for the rest of my life for being given this opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I will miss this chamber, the excitement, the debates as well. But new excitement beckons from outside this building, outside the city. They call me.

Mr. Speaker, it's been a blast. Mr. Speaker, good luck to all my colleagues around the room here. Continue to be the voice of the North. Do not forget who elected you. It's the people that you serve. It's their voice that should be heard in this House. So make a difference for NWT.

Masi cho and God bless.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Mr. Clerk, please note the Member's decision to resign on the record of the Legislative Assembly. The Member for Monfwi's seat is now vacant.

Mr. Lafferty, before you leave the chamber, I want to thank you for your 16 years of service to the Tlicho people, the residents of the Northwest Territories and to the Legislative Assembly. You have served as a regular MLA, Member of the Executive also known as Cabinet, and as Speaker.

Throughout your time in the Assembly, you have been a champion for the Indigenous languages. Mr. Lafferty, you were the longest serving Member in the 19th Assembly. You have served as part of four Assemblies, first being elected by by-election in the 15th in 2005. In the 16th and 17th Assemblies, you served as Deputy Premier, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Minister of Justice, and the Minister responsible for Official Languages and for the Worker's Safety and Compensation Commission. In the 18th Assembly, you served as our Speaker. And it is in this chair where you left a legacy.

Your leadership reinvigorated the Assembly's use of Indigenous languages, expanding interpretation services, your use of the Tlicho language in this chamber every day while in the Speaker's chair set an example for those who follow you.

On a personal note, it has been a pleasure serving with you the last ten years. I still remember the 'good ol' days' when we used to travel --

---Laughter

-- and our trip to Fairbanks to visit the University of Fairbanks to see how they teach the Gwich'in and Inupiaq languages so that we can adopt those teachings in our education system.

Mahsi cho, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors. Colleagues, we will take a short recess. Please join us in the Great Hall to say our farewell to Mr. Lafferty. Mahsi.

---Applause

---Recess

MR. SPEAKER: Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Infrastructure.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 173-19(2): UPDATE ON COMMUNITY ACCESS PROGRAM

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to update Members and the public on the Community Access Program administered by the Department of Infrastructure.

The Community Access Program provides contribution funding to communities across the Northwest Territories for the construction and rehabilitation of transportation and marine infrastructure. The program is application-based with a bi-annual intake of proposals. These projects support the development of a strong northern workforce through construction activities, economic and training opportunities. Mr. Speaker, our regional superintendents work closely with the communities to support projects that meet local priorities. I am pleased to report that communities take advantage of opportunity.

In 2019-2020, there were 22 projects were supported across all five regions. This resulted in over \$1 million invested into transportation and marine infrastructure. Projects ranged from building and maintaining ice roads, community trails and access roads, to completing necessary marine facility upgrades. In addition to employment, the construction and maintenance of these projects provided valuable work experience in the operation of heavy equipment, modern road construction and environmental protection techniques, and project management.

Mr. Speaker, the benefits of this program extend beyond the construction phase. These trail and dock projects improve quality of life for residents by increasing access for on-the-land activities like harvesting and educational programming, allowing for more convenient community and regional road transportation access for residents, and furthering economic activity like tourism. There is also a sense of community pride and accomplishment that comes along with delivering and completing these community-based priority projects.

The Community Access Program provides funding for construction projects to meet specific community needs such as: access roads to hunting, fishing, wood harvesting and community recreational areas; trails connecting to the community for walking, hiking and traditional activities; docks and wharfs to

support boating and marine activities, harvesting, and recreational uses; also winter and access to granular sources.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Infrastructure is doing its part to support the 19th Legislative Assembly's goal of increasing economic and training opportunities across the Northwest Territories through this Community Access Program. We have seen great uptake in communities, and we are continuing to work closely with leaders to identify future projects to be considered under the Community Access Program in 2021-2022. Quyananni, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 174-19(2): SENIOR CITIZENS MONTH AND WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY JUNE 15

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, June is the month when we make a special point of acknowledging and celebrating seniors for their contributions to our families and communities. Seniors are valued members of NWT communities and they contribute by working, volunteering, and passing on knowledge and traditions through teachings, stories, and ceremonies. Seniors also sit on advisory councils and engage with governments and non-government organizations helping to develop strategy and policy. Seniors fulfill many vital roles within our society that enhances our quality of life. The NWT's population of seniors continues to grow. Our task is to work together to ensure we provide quality of life for them as they age.

Mr. Speaker, most seniors want to remain in their own homes or communities. We must ensure services and supports are available to them, including home and community care services, accessible and affordable housing, and transportation and supports for their caregivers to enable them to continue to age in place with dignity.

We are implementing recommendations from the Home and Community Care Review based on the Department's response to the review that was tabled at this time last year. We are implementing a comprehensive and internationally recognized system of assessment of vulnerable persons within home care programs early next year. This change will allow us to improve areas of service that have been identified as being inconsistent or inadequate.

This year, we are also expanding hours that home care services are available in Hay River, Behchoko and Inuvik. We will expand hours in additional communities over time. We are also engaging

Indigenous governments to improve the responsiveness of home and community care program to the needs of Indigenous residents.

Mr. Speaker, when seniors are no longer able to stay in their homes with the support of home care, we must ensure that our long-term care facilities can provide quality care for them. We have updated our bed projections and determined we will require fewer beds than previously anticipated.

The department has engaged with stakeholders in Hay River and the Beaufort Delta Region to discuss the new projections. We have shared our plans and received feedback from community partners on how we can enhance services in home care and work with other government partners to enhance aging in place.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories has a mandate commitment to support seniors and as one, I am personally invested in. The department is collaborating with the departments of Education, Culture and Employment, Municipal and Community Affairs, and the NWT Housing Corporation to help advance this mandate work. Together, we can ensure seniors continue to get the services and programs they require in their communities. We are also developing a Northwest Territories Seniors Strategy that will reflect a whole-of-government approach and assist in coordinating programs and services for seniors.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I recognize World Elder Abuse Awareness Day comes up on June 15th. We acknowledge that seniors are a vulnerable sector in society and can be at high risk for abuse and neglect.

To help address this prevalent issue, the department provides funding each year to the NWT Seniors Society which is specifically directed towards supporting the Network to Prevent Abuse of Older Adults. The NWT Seniors Society has taken the lead on elder abuse initiatives by providing awareness workshops in a number of communities and by providing the toll-free seniors information line. Furthermore, this fall we will be launching an elder abuse awareness campaign and planning is underway to increase training for GNWT staff to identify signs of elder abuse.

Mr. Speaker, we see where gaps exist in the services our government must provide to ensure seniors have good quality of life through the stages of aging, and we are working to address them to ensure seniors are able to enjoy comfortable and dignified lives in the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 175-19(2):
COMMUNITY HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every community in the Northwest Territories is different and has different needs and priorities. I am pleased to say that our Community Housing Support Program recognizes these differences and puts the priorities of local people right in the center of the planning process.

We recognize the local people that have clearest understanding of their needs and often of the best solutions. For this reason, the Housing Corporation works in partnership with Indigenous governments and community agencies to develop an innovative community-driven housing projects of their own design. This helps ensure local priorities are met with a variety of support options such as grants and other contributions such as -- may also be in the form of policy and program design, material packages, technical expertise, land management, or surplus units when appropriate.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken about this program in the past in the Legislative Assembly and would like to provide an update today. Previously, I spoke about this program adding affordable housing in Salt River First Nations, implementing a repair program in Fort Good Hope, and a log project in Colville Lake among other successes.

Today I would like to note even more recent successes for this program. The K'atlodeeche First Nation has used the Community Housing Support Program to implement a repair program for homes in the community. Programs like this give the community the ability to locally prioritize any repair work they want to get done.

Mr. Speaker, the hamlet of Aklavik has used funding through this program to connect to biomass heating systems. Innovative, forward-thinking, locally-driven projects like this are why we believe this program is very valuable to the communities across the NWT.

In Inuvik, the Community Housing Support Program has been accessed by Teepee Housing in order to renovate multiple buildings. Being able to modernize affordable housing units is another example of the program being used to turn local ambition into reality.

Mr. Speaker, one of my priorities as Minister is partnership, and this program is a great example of how by listening to each other and working together, we can make progress towards many of

our shared goals. We all look forward to seeing these new projects being provided in accordance with community aspirations and recommendations.

I look forward to speaking about the Community Housing Support Program in later sitting of this Legislative Assembly, sharing even more success stories. I also want to acknowledge and thank the hard work of the staff of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation for implementing this program and being able to develop a community-driven program and their aspects. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 176-19(2):
MINING WEEK 2021 AND INITIATIVES

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, today's mineral resource industry in the NWT is innovative, collaborative, environmentally conscious, and has the highest standards of safety. It collaborates with the GNWT and with Indigenous communities to enhance resources for capacity building and supports Indigenous participation in, and benefits received from, the mining industry.

The resource sector directly employs over 3,000 people in the Northwest Territories and contributes over \$800 million in spending each year. It accounts for nearly a third of the Northwest Territories' gross domestic product. A healthy and vibrant mineral resource exploration and development sector is critical for the Northwest Territories, its people, and our future prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment has a mandate item to increase resource exploration and development, and I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge some of the initiatives underway to support this anchor industry.

As with other industries, mineral resource exploration has experienced a downturn in activity and investment over the last year. The department has provided mineral tenure support and has acted as a liaison for industry with the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer to ensure the industry was able to continue its planning and operations during the pandemic.

The Work Credit Program provided a one-year one-time relief on work requirements for 189 mineral claims in 2020-2021. We also provided a one-year deferral of mineral lease rent payments for mineral tenure interest holders. This enabled 39 clients, with a total of 548 leases, to defer payments until 2021-2022.

We continue to hear concerns from industry, and in response I am pleased to announce that mineral tenure relief will also be available in 2021-2022. This will provide additional relief for those claim holders that are unable to work their claims as the pandemic continues.

The Mining Incentive Program was also adjusted in 2020-2021 to accommodate the impacts of the global pandemic. Most of these changes are being continued for the 2021-2022 year. Changes implemented include: An increase to the maximum funding of corporate projects to 60 percent of eligible expenses, to a maximum of \$240,000; Northwest Territories expenses related to self-isolation, expediting, and program logistics are eligible for MIP funding; and, the reporting deadline has been further extended for some projects that were significantly delayed due to the pandemic.

As of January 2021, 12 prospector and seven corporate 2020-2021 projects were funded in the North Slave, South Slave, and Sahtu Regions for a total of \$1,094,000. From its launch in 2014 to 2018, the Mining Incentive Program directly leveraged \$11.8 million in company and prospector exploration spending in the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, there are some bright lights on the horizon in mineral resource development. After a tumultuous 2020, the Ekati Mine has reopened under the new ownership of Arctic Canadian Diamond Company, and recalled its workers. Gahcho Kue, under De Beers Canada and Mountain Province Diamonds, continues operation and has established itself as one of the top diamond mines in the world. In December 2020, a 157.4 carat diamond was discovered at this mine. Cheetah Resources and Rare Earth Minerals Projects at the Nechalacho site is in the demonstration phase as it advances to be the first rare earth mine in Canada with innovative environmental standards, comprehensive training programs, and strong partnerships with the Indigenous groups in the area. The anticipated outputs are extremely promising, with the potential for a multi-generational operation providing materials for the clean energy economy.

As well, in the past few weeks, Arctic Star has confirmed five kimberlites discovered around Lac de Gras on its Diagrass diamond project, concluding its spring exploration. Their ongoing activities will include assessing diamond content and the ongoing testing of targets.

Mr. Speaker, this is exciting news and only scratches the surface of the Northwest Territories mineral potential. There is a wealth of resources in the North, and as new projects successfully move into production, we can expect increased

exploration and renewed investor interest in Northwest Territories mineral resources.

In anticipation of this, the established Polar Bear Diamonds trademark has a new, polished look as it works to reintroduce branded Polar Bear Diamonds into the global marketplace. A 2018 review determined that the brand remains highly recognizable in the market, and reflects a unique, authentic, and ethically-sourced product.

We will be highlighting some of these recent successes and continue to further build public awareness and interest in the sector during this year's Northwest Territories Mining Week in July. I look forward to sharing the plans for what will remain a largely virtual program this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Honourable Premier.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 177-19(2):
DENE NATIONAL MEMORIAL WALK

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Speaker, today, Northwest Territories residents will come together to march through the streets of Yellowknife to honour the 215 Indigenous children found at the Kamloops Indian Residential School last week. This is an important opportunity for all of us as residents of the Northwest Territories to come together and show our support for people during this difficult time. It has brought to the surface painful memories for many, and with the strength of the community we will get through this, together.

In a show of solidarity, two Members of Cabinet and two regular Members of the 19th Legislative Assembly will be attending the memorial walk, fire feeding, and water ceremonies.

I want to thank the Dene Nation for organizing this memorial. It's important that we all stand together as a territory for those whose lives were impacted by the residential school system, and those who never came home. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, honourable Premier. Ministers' statements. Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CURRENT EVENTS AND END OF SESSION

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to thank what Madam Premier just brought up about the Dene Nation walk for the 215 that we

lost there in Kamloops. Our thoughts and prayers are with them from Nunakput. And, you know, as a third generation survivor as yourself, myself, Diane and Paulie, we're all in residential school in Inuvik and it's just like a sister- and brotherhood, you know, when you see them. It's a special thing, that bond you have with them. And we'll get through it. And we're still standing.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to -- let people, you know, up since the last month for the flooding and, you know, from Jean Marie River to Simpson everything, our thoughts and prayers are with them and hope everything works out. I know our government will work hard to get you where you have to get to get your lives sorted out. I know it's a mess now but we'll get -- you'll get through it. And I know our government is there for you.

Mr. Speaker, also, again yesterday I brought up my graduates and, you know, I'm really excited for them, and I'd really like to make sure that graduation day, be safe, make sure you're letting your parents know what's happening. And I'm pretty proud of them for Nunakput.

Mr. Speaker, also people hunting and fishing back home because winter just doesn't want to let go. And people are out fishing in Husky Lake and hunting on the coast right now, getting our geese for the summer and that, and harvesting so just be safe. In Ulukhaktok, they're hunting on the floe edge for ducks so just be safe out there and look forward to seeing everybody.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank our frontline staff, all the hard work that they're doing in our small communities and thank them for all the hard work that they do.

For all those who lost loved ones this past few months, again, Mr. Speaker, thoughts and prayers for you and all your families. And to the Members, you know, it's -- summer's coming and spend a little bit of time with your family and enjoy it, and look forward to seeing my family here shortly. To my constituents, have a safe spring. And when summer starts, fishing and whaling will be safe and God bless you all. And thank the mayor and councils in our communities for all what they do for us in our community corps and the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation. Thank you for what you do for our communities.

And I'd like to just say to Mr. Lafferty, who left the House today. 16 years service, he did so much for the Tlicho people and I'm proud to call him a colleague of mine. And he's been not only a colleague but a good friend and a big support of Nunakput, and I know his future endeavors, whatever he's going to do, he's going to do a good job. I just want to thank him for his service and a lot

of good memories with that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Members' statements. Member for Hay River South.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GRADUATION IN HAY RIVER

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate each of those students from Hay River, Enterprise and Katlodeeche First Nation who are graduating from Ecole Boreale, Diamond Jenness Secondary School, Chief Sunrise Education Centre and Aurora College. I know that each of these graduates will not forget the year they graduated, nor will they forget the unique events of the COVID-19 pandemic surrounding their graduation. Nor will they forget that they are posed to be the last to ride a school bus in Hay River.

Mr. Speaker, we all appreciate and the bounds of commitment, sacrifice, and hard work these students put in to achieve their status as graduates. These students started their educational journey as young children and now have finished as young adults. That chapter has now closed, and it is time to take that next step, whether it is to further their education, join the work force, or, pending travel restrictions, travel the world. It is only the beginning of life's journey.

Mr. Speaker, the only advice I would offer each student is show respect and compassion for others, always be open to new ideas; and, most importantly, follow your dreams and your passions. This is your time.

Mr. Speaker, for the graduates to achieve the success each celebrates today, we must recognize the parents, caregivers, family, and those teachers who supported and encouraged them to succeed. One day, each graduate will look back and understand the importance of this achievement and hopefully convey that importance to their children and others.

I will also ask each student, as they walk across the stage to accept their diploma, to remember and never forget the suffering of those young students who were taken from their homes and now lay in unmarked graves.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I congratulate the graduates of 2021 and wish them all success for the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Members' statements. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON 2021 GRADUATING CLASS

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the East Three Secondary graduating class of 2021, and all the graduates of Class 2021 in the Northwest Territories on achieving this milestone through a pandemic, as they had to spend their entire final school year under COVID restrictions. I wish you luck on the next chapter of your lives.

I would also like to congratulate the college, university, and trade students from my community and the Northwest Territories who will or have graduated this year. Like I said, the pandemic has put a real twist on learning not just in the Northwest Territories but the entire country and possibly the world.

Mr. Speaker, you know, I'm very afraid of how this will be in the future. Our students have missed many days of school. Our attendance rates are lower than they have been, and this was already a problem. I just wish that, you know, that when we move forward after with all the restrictions that there is going to be a plan in place, Mr. Speaker, for our students to be able to be supported to be caught up so that this last 15 months was not a waste of their schooling, because we all know that moving forward, you know, you want to move on with your students, you want to move on with your classes, you want to graduate, you have future goals. I'm sure these grade 12 students have future goals but are all going to be put on hold whether or not they can attend university, whether or not they can, you know -- these are all things that we're going to be facing in the fall. So I just wanted to recognize that and congratulate all the hard work of all the students in the Northwest Territories, right from all the little junior kindergartens right up to our post-secondary.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize that June is National Indigenous History Month, and Saturday is the 37th year of the Inuvialuit Final Agreement when it was signed, and there will be some COVID-restricted celebrations going on in my community, and I'm sure throughout the Inuvialuit Region. So I just wanted to recognize and hope to be -- to make it home to celebrate with them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Members' statements. Member for Great Slave.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, according to StatsCan's 2019 Family Violence Report, the Northwest Territories has the second-highest rate of all types of family and domestic violence amongst Canadian territories and provinces. Many Northerners have experienced or know someone who has been a victim of domestic violence. The NWT also has the highest rates of sexual violence in the country. Females comprise the majority of those experiencing sexual violence and males represent the majority of perpetrators. Family-related sexual violence is more than five times higher for women and girls than men and boys.

In the Northwest Territories, the rate of family violence reported to the police in 2019 was 9.9 times the national rate and was the second highest in Canada only to Nunavut. We also saw a 28 percent increase in the rate of intimate-partner violence in the Northwest Territories from 2018 to 2019, and I can only imagine that due to the stress from the pandemic, this rate is continuing to rise. Family violence is a crime. While many vital supports are in place, I believe we could take it one step further by adopting Clare's Law in the NWT.

Clare's Law provides people who feel at risk of domestic violence a way to access information about their partners so they can make informed choices about their safety. Clare's Law is named after a young woman in England, Clare Wood, who was murdered by her ex-partner who had a history of intimate-partner violence and was known to the police. Clare's Law has been adopted by many provinces in Canada, and most recently came into effect in Alberta.

Clare's Law, generally known as the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, provides several ways for police officers to disclose a person's history of abusive behaviour to those who may be at risk. It is intended to reduce intimate-partner violence and could prove a useful tool here towards increasing safety for our people.

In the NWT, domestic violence situations are compounded by the remote location and lack of services in many of our communities; unaffordable, substandard housing; socioeconomic conditions; and a harsh climate where mental health issues, like Seasonal Affective Disorder, are aggravated. When I think of myself and the women I know in the North, it's rare to know someone who hasn't experienced some form of family or domestic partner violence. It is unacceptable that this has become the norm in the Northwest Territories therefore I urge this government to work harder on improving this situation for our people and they can

start by adopting Clare's Law. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Members' statements. Member for Thebacha.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
GRADUATION AND SESSION REFLECTIONS

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to take a moment and wish all the graduates from PWK High School in Fort Smith a big congratulations for concluding their high school studies. I was not able to attend the grad ceremony in person due to our session taking place here at the legislature. I did send some remarks which were read at the ceremony last Thursday. I want to thank all the parents, the teachers, the families and friends of the students, and the entire community for helping our students achieve their goals.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to wish all the graduates of Aurora College Thebacha Campus, and all the colleges in the North, a big congratulations as well. The convocation ceremonies this year will include graduates from both the class of 2020 and 2021. I know these last 15 months have been difficult. But these challenges will only make them stronger before the better. I wish all graduates of both schools all the best with their future endeavors.

I want to thank the staff for their resilience knowing that we are now the headquarters of the future polytechnic university. And I want to welcome all future students who attend school in Fort Smith.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge and thank all front line and essential workers, teachers, and of course all of my amazing constituents of Fort Smith. I wish all the Indigenous leaders and the municipal governments, and all the peoples of the Northwest Territories, a safe and great summer. I want to wish a safe summer for all my colleagues and for you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Members' statement. Member for Yellowknife North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
STAFFING APPEAL PROCESS

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I bring up my concerns about human resources today, I want to acknowledge that the vast majority of GNWT hiring is fair, it succeeds in getting the best candidate for the job, and that our HR staff are hard-working and do care about increasing -- creating an inclusive public service.

Human resources is not an easy profession, and I thank the staff for their work. However, Mr. Speaker, as an MLA, people don't complain to me about successful hiring. They come to me with HR processes that fail. And, Mr. Speaker, our human resources program must be about building trust. It must be about building trust within the public service, and to the public, that we continually run a fair, open, and transparent process.

Mr. Speaker, I have some suggestions on how we can improve HR processes.

Mr. Speaker, we have to stop advertising jobs for less than one week. When a job is posted on a Friday and closed on a Monday, it is sending a message that we already know who we're intending to hire, and we're not giving the public a fair chance to apply on it.

Mr. Speaker, we need to stop coming up with excuses on why we want to screen people out. HR looks for key words and doesn't use common sense when looking at the descriptions. Mr. Speaker, I've heard all sorts of complaints from people. And instead of saying they have human resource experience in the process, they said they managed a team and HR applied the process too strictly. It's as if they are training people to speak in bureaucratic doublespeak because they know that's how the GNWT operates.

Next, Mr. Speaker, please stop using the STAR interview technique, especially for P1s. The STAR technique, which requires a person to first talk about a situation, then a task, then an action, and then a result, and if you fail to do that in that precise order, you do not get full scored on that question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this is not how people talk. It is a way that we all have to learn how to interview for government jobs. How about we set up our interviews for people, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, people have stopped appealing HR jobs because they know there is no point to it. This week in the House, the Minister admitted that the appeals process is not about competencies. It is not about reviewing the job description. It is about making sure the collective bargaining and the processes are followed.

Mr. Speaker, consistent complaints have been made that the staffing appeals process leads to no hope of getting a clear answer of why you did not get the job. I'll have questions for the Minister. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PRINCE OF WALES NORTHERN HERITAGE CENTRE

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. The Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, now, that's the old English name for the museum or heritage centre, has been the NWT's flagship cultural showcase and artifact repository since opening in 1979. Its mandate has been established through various strategies and reviews, most recently formalized in the culture inherent strategic framework 2015 to 2025. That framework clearly states that the centre's central role in, quote, "safeguarding the heritage", end of quote, of the Northwest Territories through object and records preservation, maintenance of an archive, the mounting of exhibits in collaboration with other heritage organizations and centres. The museum's physical ability to carry out those tasks has been questioned in reviews of the state of the facility, the most recent in 2018. That assessment identified a large array of physical deficiencies, including the -- impeding the museum's ability to fulfill its mandate functions. Key deficiencies include the lack of an elevator or adequate storage space, poor heating and air conditioning hampering artifact preservation, lack of space for teaching, for hosting travelling exhibits, and poor energy efficiency. Last summer, there was a flooding of the basement that luckily did not result in major damage. Some of us have had tours of the facility and can attest firsthand to the shortcomings and immediate need for expansion and remediation.

Most recently, the department has embarked upon a, quote, "analysis of charging admission to the museum, an analysis of current revenue streams, and the identification of potential sources of revenue", end of quote. With no significant action on the physical defects and the ten-year strategic framework approaching its end, the narrow focus on revenue seems a wasted effort. We need to roll all this work up, stop studying the problems, and act. We can't even do something as basic as changing the name of this facility to reflect its northern reality.

A recently completed tourism 2025 road map to recovery clearly states that when COVID-19 travel restrictions are lifted, we need to concentrate on product development activities. To me, that's exactly what the museum also represents for visitors. We need to start making those investments in this facility now. I'll have questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment on the future of the museum, how we can give it a modern name, and protect our heritage for future generations while ensuring tourists have something more to do and learn. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ART SECTOR

MS. CLEVELAND: Mr. Speaker, our ability to foster art preservation, creation, celebration, and sales is key to our territory's success. Art is far more than a thing of beauty. It connects people to themselves, one another, and tradition. Art is vital to our well-being and our shared and individual histories.

According to the NWT art's website, there are 912 registered artists across the territory. The pre-COVID estimated economic value of NWT arts is a mere \$7.2 million. Comparably, the Yukon arts generated \$12.9 million and, inspirationally, BC generated \$2.6 billion.

In the last year, social media has become a primary marketplace for independent artists promoting and selling arts, and we saw the work of many global artists go the 'good kind of viral'. But we have not capitalized on the potential of art in the Northwest Territories. Not for locals, tourists, or the masses looking to purchase online. Our need for arts infrastructure in the NWT is huge. Artists need physical and virtual spaces for creative development, collaboration, celebration, and sales, and I am concerned the GNWT is not taking this repetitive call to action from the arts community seriously as there is still no plan to develop and fund these spaces. In other jurisdictions, the agency that promotes the arts operates independently from the government. Independent art councils are provided core government funding and then held accountable to secure added funds from federal and private sources to grow the arts community. In other jurisdictions, these independent arts councils partner with Indigenous stakeholders, implement youth programs, school programs, artist residencies, and mentorship opportunities, manage art collections, conduct art research - the list is exponential and so is the opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

The GNWT currently spends \$2.8 million on various investments to the arts community through marketing, film, and entrepreneur funding through ITI and grants for performers, arts organizations, and the NWT Arts Council through ECE. And just like you can't put Baby in a corner, Mr. Speaker, you can't put the arts in a bureaucratic box. The arts need the creative space to grow, evolve and empower. It needs fluidity and autonomy from the government.

Mr. Speaker, the NWT is not meeting its full potential to grow the arts, and art isn't just about

sales. Art promotes intellectual, emotional and spiritual enrichment. It is a healer, a mental health tool, a historian, a dreamer, and placing value in art is reconciliation in action, Mr. Speaker. If the government really wants the NWT arts sector to soar, it needs to be prepared to let it fly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
EULOGY FOR STEPHEN SQUIRREL

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before I do the eulogy for Steven Squirrel, I'd just like to thank -- congratulate the grads from Echo Dene and Fort Simpson and I will hopefully be able to go in there and join their celebration next week. So I look forward to that with Echo Dene and Fort Simpson as well.

Mr. Speaker, Steven Squirrel was born in Fort Simpson on Tuesday, June 1st, 1954. He was the only child to his parents of the late Victor Squirrel and the late Corrine Grossetete. Unfortunately, his father Victor passed away when he was a young boy. A few years later, his mother -- his mother met Franklin Grossetete and they had additional six kids - Gerald, Michael, Robert, Allan, Darlene and Ronald. Corrine and Franklin raised Steven and his six siblings in Fort Simpson.

When Steve was a young man, he met his wife, Loretta Ann, in Wrigley and Fort Simpson. After a few years, they were married on September 7th, 1979. Together, they had -- raised five children - Brett, Jacinda, Jonathan, Courtney, and Stephanie.

Steve was the best husband and father to his family and for -- his wife and children could ever ask for. They had the privilege growing up watching their father work hard each day, not only for his family but the community he loved and cherished.

Steve was always known as a generally friendly person who dropped what he was doing to help any way he could. He worked for many years with the Village of Fort Simpson as the water treatment plant operator. Very dedicated, 47 plus years to the Village of Fort Simpson, ensuring that they all had clean drinking water and the community's waterlines were taken care of.

When he first looked at retirement, he was excited to do other things. However, about a week later, I saw him at the bank with his work clothes on. I asked him what special project was he working on. With a little smile, he said the water plant. I asked what he meant. And he said he is back at work for

the community. This was Steve - always caring about the people.

The family want to thank the following: The Fort Simpson Health Centre, YK Stanton staff, LKFN, and many community and family members that have been there for them during this difficult time. He will be sadly missed by all. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nahendeh. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and community at this time. Members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the galley. Acknowledgements. Oral questions. Member for Great Slave.

Oral Questions

ORAL QUESTION 766-19(2): INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

Mr. Speaker, in my statement, I was talking about a law that's been enacted in other parts of our country, and I'm curious to know, does the Minister know if there are any such laws or regulations around -- sorry, that are in place in the NWT, and if so, could she elaborate on what they are? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at this time, to my knowledge, there is no equivalent legislation in the Northwest Territories akin to the Clare's Law system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm curious to know what the Minister's take is on a law such as Clare's Law. I know that the Minister in her prior life was a criminal defense lawyer so I know she has a lot of experience in this area, as well has done a lot in her volunteering time with women's groups. So I'm curious to know what her thoughts are on a law like Clare's Law and would it work for us here in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, of course we sort of shed our past lives a little bit as Ministers. So, you know -- but I can speak to the issue from the perspective as a Minister responsible for the Status of Women. And certainly I know the Member appreciates, this is an area that it involves

obviously the Minister of Justice. It would involve potentially Health and Social Services as they do work with women's shelters as well as other ministries across the government.

The challenge with a proposal such as a Clare's Law, which certainly could well fall within my responsibility to promote, is to strike the balance between empowering women by giving them the information -- women or others, to empower them with information about an abuser or a potential abuser or potential situation, while at the same time not putting the onus on a victim of violence or their family to be the ones that have to go and seek out the information and to not then allow others to say, well, if you had the information, you ought to have acted differently. So there's a lot of policy issues at play. But at the same time, the fact of having the question of what we can do to fundamentally empower women in those situations is really the discussion to be had. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Minister's response. It's so easy to get caught up sort of in a black and white idea of things and then every time I have a great idea and I go talk to someone, I realize the multitude of reasons why it potentially isn't going to work. And so we always have to find that middle path so I do appreciate that.

I know, again, that this is probably likely in other departments as well but I'd like for the Minister to maybe speak a little bit around family shelters or intimate-partner shelters. It's my understanding we only have those in Yellowknife. And perhaps maybe the Minister could speak to how she is working with the staff and others to establish safe places for families and women and children in communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate having a sense of where some questions go because it gives a chance for those of us working multi-departmentally to have some conversations and thanks to the folks at Health and Social Services, I can note there are in fact five territorial family violence shelters across different regions of the Northwest Territories. And I'm also pleased to note that given that these are territorial resources, that travel can be provided for women and children who live in communities outside of one with a shelter and no one should ever think that not having a shelter in their community would take away the opportunity to travel. It certainly makes it harder, Mr. Speaker, but I want to encourage that there are resources to support people who need to use those resources.

On a similar note, Mr. Speaker, we have recently filled the position of a family violence coordinator

which will help support further development and coordination in this area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was going to leave my last question to sort of mull over what the Minister had responded and then ask her something based on that. So instead I'm just going to get in some favour with my colleague here from Thebacha and ask her, is that position a position in Yellowknife, or is it one that's been located outside of the capital? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't have that as a confirmed. I expect it is likely a Yellowknife position, Mr. Speaker, although, again, I'm not entirely certain. It is joining in the sense of being a coordinator position and one that certainly will have to work interdepartmentally with a lot of departments and will certainly be expected to be coordinating work across the regions. Again, I'll have to confirm but that's the expectation I have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

ORAL QUESTION 767-19(2):
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES – NWT AND NUNAVUT CHAMBER
OF MINES WORKING GROUP

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. I'd like to follow up on questions I had yesterday about the GNWT-Chamber of Mines COVID-19 recovery working group.

Mr. Speaker, I raised the issue of how these notes from these meetings seem to show that our government is helping the Chamber of Mines draft correspondence, and I want to cite a couple of examples.

On page 14 of the document I tabled a couple of days ago, this is in a June 23rd meeting, this is a direct quote, Mr. Speaker, "GNWT is willing to assist in the editing of the letter from industry if that would help".

From the context of that quote, Mr. Speaker, the letter appears to be going to the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board, and it's a request for relief from monitoring requirements for environmental licences and permits. And, of course, when Alberta did this during the pandemic, there was a lot of issues. Mr. Speaker, there's another place where an individual's actually named as assisting with the

editing of letters. Can the Minister explain why our staff are helping the chamber of mines edit letters to co-management bodies? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Colleagues, please keep the preamble short; just ask the questions. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: I would gladly defer the question to another Minister, Mr. Speaker.

---Laughter

Minister, thank you, and thank you for that question. Mr. Speaker, I know the Member mentioned the idea of context, and challenge of having minutes to work off of, and I acknowledge the Member is working off of minutes that have been redacted, is that, in fact, you don't necessarily have the full context. I have gone back to the department and specifically ask about this.

I would agree that I certainly was concerned to read that there might be inappropriate assistance happening. I was reassured, and I'm happy to be reassured, that again in the context -- the context of the meetings, that I was not at, is that in fact, they are -- they were meetings in the context of developing pandemic relief and pandemic assistance. This of course being back right early after the lockdown in June of 2020, so when the situation of identifying ways of relief and recovery was really very fresh and very new. And so what in fact was occurring and what may not be reflected in fulsome notes in terms of meeting minutes is that when the industry is writing to the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board or other co-management boards, the purpose and goal, from the perspective of the department, is to ensure that they know what exactly the position is that's being taken, that they understand the issues that are being faced, that they can engage with other departments in fact if we need to be formulating a position to respond, and may well be able to give some advice, which may or may not ever be taken by the Chamber of Mines but to be able to say, you know, look, you're going down a path that simply is unlikely to bear fruit or you're going down a path, you know, where we may be able to -- we would have to go back and make our own response to, so. That, as I understand, is the context of what occurred but, again, I appreciate, I have followed up with the department about this. And there's a line between supporting industry, any industry supporting any outside body and certainly doing that in the context of still maintaining our independence and the role that we have as government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for confirming that

assistance is provided in drafting letters by the Chamber of Mines.

There's another set of minutes from July the 15th, and I want to read a direct quote, Mr. Speaker: "GNWT will discuss interim land withdrawals and how they can be addressed to facilitate mining activities."

Mr. Speaker, this would appear -- and this is GNWT -- this is not ITI. It appears to be a whole-of-government approach. I'd like the Minister to explain how this GNWT work on allowing mining activities and land withdrawals is consistent with our priorities and Cabinet's mandate to settle and implement Indigenous land rights. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to say this again very clearly on behalf of my own responsibility in the areas of the department that any statement about the government's position on land withdrawals on anything that is multi-departmental, that doesn't come from a single official like this. It has to be multi-departmental. It has to be whole-of-government. So, yes, this is, again, minutes which is reflective of the ITI department's staff that were attending minutes. And I, again, went back to them to say let's be very clear that when we attend these meetings, we don't -- we have to always be there mindful of the role and the position that is taken by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

I am reminded, of course, that land withdrawals are not only about necessarily lands being withdrawn for the purposes of Indigenous land negotiations and land settlements. There may well be a variety of other withdrawals taking place for protected areas, parks for example. And the purpose and the context here was in fact to be discussing that whole of process for all land withdrawals and all different types of land withdrawals and to be able to raise -- to be able to raise it in the perspective of industry with our colleagues at -- across the different departments of the Government of the Northwest Territories so that we can engage as a government internally on the kinds of discussions and the kind of balance that needs to be taking place within this -- within the territory of all the various interests at hand.

But, again, the position, it should never be -- it should be very clear from what I hope I've said yesterday and today that there is one position and it's taken on behalf of the government and that receiving stakeholder ideas, impressions, and reactions is but one part of what formulates the position of the government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Thanks to the Minister for that. I think she needs to talk to her staff about getting the whole-of-government position correct.

But, Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister was trying to compare the Business Advisory Council to this Chamber of Mines working group. And the Business Advisory Council has a public terms of reference. It's multi-stakeholder. There's a web page that the department keeps where the correspondence and recommendations from the council are publicly available. And I'm just wondering if the Minister can make a commitment to ensure that the -- or post the un-redacted meeting summaries from this working group to a similar page so that we can have a little bit more transparency here, Mr. Speaker, and make sure the public understands what's actually happening in this working group, and Regular MLAs as well. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the items that were redacted were redacted in keeping with the ATIPP process, the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Many of those redactions were in fact mandatory. They are not discretionary. If it is information that pertains to another individual, and there's been a name -- a person that is named alongside other information, such as their place of employment, then that is I believe -- and I'm not the ATIPP coordinator here, Mr. Speaker, but I believe that that would then be mandatory. So other elements may be discretionary. Had I known back in I guess April or March when these initial requests were being made, I may have been able to assist with some of the more discretionary elements. But even then, they're discretionary to apply the conditions of ATIPP to documents such as -- well, to any document that's going out under ATIPP. So I can certainly go back. There's probably some elements in there that we could un-redact. There's a lot that I would prefer to un-redact, to give a better sense of the context, to give a better sense of the understanding of the work that was happening. And I'll go back and do that and we'll see if we can perhaps table something that has more information. But, again, I am not the ATIPP coordinator. The point is to have a person that does this so that there's consistency when there's ATIPP redactions taking place. I'm happy to try and get more information out about the work that's been done. As I said yesterday, there's good reason for these organizations to meet and the work that they engage in should be well known. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Short supplementary. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that very helpful and long answer. And I look forward to a much greater transparency on these meetings. But, you know, Mr. Speaker, if these meetings were actually happening in almost any other jurisdiction in Canada, they would be regulated under lobbyists registration or lobbyists legislation. Mr. Speaker, we are one of two jurisdictions in Canada that does not have lobbyist legislation. And I think that's increasingly important, especially in the post-evolution world where we have responsibilities for billions of dollars of resources. So can the Minister tell me whether our government is prepared to bring forward a bill legislation for lobbyist registration in the Northwest Territories? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that that type of legislation would necessarily fall under ITI.

The idea of having some sort of registered -- the idea of having some sort of public awareness, I see certainly no harm from that from the perspective of the -- as the ITI minister. In my view, Mr. Speaker, it would be beneficial for everyone in the industry to know of the work that is going on, to know of the extent of the efforts by officials, as well as by my office, to meet across the board with different industries, different stakeholders, individual businesses, all the different regions. Having that and having people know the efforts that we go into to do that engagement, in my view is only helpful. The kind of meetings we have should be known, and I certainly don't see any harm in that. Again, Mr. Speaker, that's probably not to take this suggestion forward, it's probably not one that would fall under ITI necessarily. But, again, I've certainly given some reasons why that would potentially be to the benefit of ITI. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

ORAL QUESTION 768-19(2):
HAY RIVER SCHOOL BUS SERVICE

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to go back and question the Minister of Education on the Hay River student busing. This is a major issue for our community with over 500 students and some having to travel up to 25 kilometers one way just to get to school.

Mr. Speaker, I have provided the Minister several days to come up with approximately \$70,000 to assist the Hay River District Education Authority to continue student busing. Therefore, I'd ask the Minister if he has a cheque for me to take back and drop off to the Hay River District Educational

Authority, or that he at least has a promise that funding is forthcoming. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister responsible for ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated last time, if this was as easy as cutting a cheque we wouldn't be here. This issue would be dealt with. The fact is we have an education system that is built on equality, not on -- not about being equitable; it's about being equal, so. And if I pay for busing in Hay River, I'd have to pay for busing in Fort Smith, and Yellowknife, in Inuvik, in Simpson. It doesn't matter if the communities need or not; we have to give them the money. I am working towards an equitable system where money goes where it's needed but currently, we have an equal system. So that being said, I don't have a cheque. However, clearly, people want the Minister to be accountable. You know, it might not be how our legislation is set up, but that's what people want. So I'm seeing what else I can do. I'm working with the department who has reached out to the superintendent of the district education council to try and ensure that we do get students bused to school so they can actually show up in school and learn. I assume that, you know, at the upcoming DEC meeting that the superintendent will have done this work on ways to possibly make this happen and bring forward some, you know, reasonable and cost effective solutions for the education council to mull over and hopefully approve. But failing that, I'm also going to offer the services of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to the Hay River DEA to help them perhaps look at the books again and figure out if there's a way to move things around, although I know that is not a palatable option. There's a reason we're in this position, and it's because, you know, they've done that over and over again, year after year after year, and just don't see what other program they should cut in order to -- in order to have busing. So short answer, no. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's seven Cabinet Members on the other side and if we divide \$70,000 by seven, we've got only \$10,000 from each department. So maybe you can get some help there.

Mr. Speaker, the community of Hay River has seen a decline in student enrolment in the last several years; however, we still have over 500 students and if the South Slave Divisional Education Council is not going to advocate for Hay River and find the funds for busing, then -- and then continue to -- continue cutting of staff and programs and services is no answer, because that's kind of the answer the authority has been getting.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister if, again, if he will consider having the Hay River District Education Authority operate outside and independent of the South Slave Divisional Education Council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, I have limited tools at my disposal to remedy this. But some regulatory changes is one of those tools and splitting the Hay River DEA from the South Slave DEC could be done through regulation. So I've asked the department to look into that process, what the costs would be, you know, how we could go about it. Ideally we want everyone to work together. I mean, it's a simple solution. This is a -- there isn't a nuclear option, you know, for a very simple problem. But I have started looking into that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think he answered my question number 3 there, that there is a process and he's working through it.

So I'll go to question number 4 here, and, Mr. Speaker, a move such as this would require dividing the current funding between the South Slave Divisional Education Council and the Hay River District Education Authority. So, Mr. Speaker, based on the current South Slave Divisional Education Council budget and the number of student enrolments in Hay River, can the Minister confirm what the split would be and what impact would it have on this -- both the South Slave Divisional Education Council and the Hay River District Education Authority? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And it would be a lot of work, for one thing. There would have to be consultation with the education authority and obviously the district education council. The district education authority would have to make it very clear that this is what they wanted, and I haven't received that -- you know, there's been no resolution passed by the authority that I'm aware of. But the Hay River DEA comprises of about 42 percent of the student population of the south slave. So -- but probably close to \$10 million that goes to the SSDEC would then be removed and allocated to a new DEA, a standalone DEA if that's what happened. There would also be a transfer of funds for administration. So there would be probably around a \$400,000 reduction in administration funds to the South Slave EDC. And the way they work their funding, I think this year they're also transferring about half a million dollars from the Hay River DEA's budget to the DEC. So they might be close to about a million dollars less in funding to the DEC. So there's some significant impacts all around. And like I said, it's a simple problem. It's a simple solution. I think that the

parties can get together, look at the numbers. If \$70,000 doesn't work, well, I'm sure that we can move some numbers around. It doesn't have to be \$70,000. Maybe it's \$50,000. Maybe you get it down to \$30,000. Like, it's not an impossible task. We just need everyone to get around the table and do what's best for the students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And it might be a hundred thousand. But, Mr. Speaker, there's a simple solution to it, but we have to push the fact that students may be without busing, and, you know, as part of, you know, our responsibility to make sure that students have access to an education and to get to school. And, you know, it's -- we can say that if we pay for Hay River, we've got to pay for everybody. But that's not a bad thing either if it's allowing students to go to school. So, you know, what I would encourage the Minister is to push the council and the education authority and meet with them and hopefully they'll come up with a solution fairly quickly, because this also impacts businesses in Hay River. You know, we'll have a business that provides busing services. They're going to have no work. Their drivers are going to have no work. You know, and it just goes on and on so I think -- and you know, it may be small, but it is important to Hay River. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No question.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, taken as a comment. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

ORAL QUESTION 769-19(2): STAFFING APPEAL PROCESS

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Finance. I want to begin by focusing on the staffing appeals process. And I've read the staffing appeals process guidelines a couple times, and as far as I can tell, they are so narrow that the vast majority of applicants don't even have access to an appeal. So my first question is, what percentage of people who apply on GNWT jobs are eligible for an appeal? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister responsible for Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think I've heard what percentage of people who apply. Mr. Speaker, I can say any employees of the GNWT who apply would certainly be eligible to file an appeal. So there's a hundred percent of someone who's already an employee. Obviously not everyone would necessarily self-disclosed as being an employee at

the time that they make an appeal or make an application. Similarly, Mr. Speaker, anyone who has staffing priority under the Affirmative Action Policy also has a right of appeal. And, again, it's not necessarily obvious that everyone would self-identify as being a candidate under the Affirmative Action Policy. So it's difficult to necessarily to say exactly the percentage of applicants who would necessarily have that right of appeal if they aren't self-identifying as such.

What I can say as well, though, Mr. Speaker, in 2021, 16.5 percent of all applicants who applied on positions with the GNWT's, to our knowledge, were eligible to appeal. Just knowing that there's some limitation depending on people's self-disclosure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So of those 16.5 percent of people who applied for GNWT jobs who were eligible to appeal, when I look and try to figure out exactly what the grounds of an appeal could be or within the process, I have a hard time let alone those people who just didn't get a job, Mr. Speaker. So my question for the Minister of Finance is what information is provided to an unsuccessful candidate who would be eligible for appeal, at 16.5 percent, to help them formulate and understand the grounds of an appeal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, an unsuccessful candidate eligible for appeal is able -- would be provided with the staffing appeals information guide, the staffing appeals brochure, and the staffing appeals application. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to note while I wasn't here back in 2018, at the time then standing committee had provided some recommendations to the Department of Finance to improve those materials, and I understand in some inquiries here that indeed some materials have been made more plain language and there has been an effort to at least -- to improve the nature of the information that's being provided to those eligible to lodge an appeal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, and the Minister is correct. In 2018, the Standing Committee on Government Operations recommended that some plain language documents would be provided. And I'm glad to hear that committee recommendation has been followed through with. So thank you to the department for that.

Mr. Speaker, when I was looking for the last major analysis on the GNWT's human resources practices, I had to go back 20 years to Grant Thorne, a law office, and the consultants then found that the appeal process is perceived as not

conducive to an independent and fair hearing and it leads to a finding -- and it does not lead to a finding of greater openness, transparency or independence. Mr. Speaker, I tend to agree with that 20-year-old analysis of our staffing appeals process. And to my view, not much has changed.

My question for the Minister of Finance is has the GNWT ever had its process independently reviewed to determine if it is procedurally fair? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in hearing the Member's statement, I have been trying to go back to just see if, in fact, something has happened. Obviously, I have not been here for a particularly long time. To my best knowledge, I don't know that there's been a recent complete overall or complete review of the process of human resources. Certainly, part of the work that's happening right now with respect to the Indigenous recruitment retention framework as a significant framework that's meant to apply to all departments and be a major part of human resources work, that that doesn't entail and involve a review of the processes of human resources to ensure that some of the -- some of the tension points and pinch points that I know the Member has already raised do not become barriers and are not barriers. So, again -- and although I'm not -- and I will say too, though, that the appeals process does involve staffing review officers who are independent from the human resources team. So, you know, while again simply put, no, there's not been a thorough or complete review in my time or in my recent awareness. There are some efforts underway to continually improve that process, the human resources process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the 2019-2020, the most recent public service annual report, 82 of the 82 appeals that were filed were denied, Mr. Speaker. Previously, the department has used this to say there's no problems with the staffing process; it's working out just fine; all the appeals, you know, are denied. Mr. Speaker, I would say that this is a fundamental problem with the appeals process in -- and people are giving up hope on appealing if there's no hope of actually being successful, regardless of whether an independent officer is reviewing it.

So furthermore, Mr. Speaker, the end of the appeals process is sometimes, you know, the job competition goes out, sometimes it's just even if you are successful, a notation that, you know, perhaps some processes were not followed. I actually am not aware of anyone who is -- after going through a successful appeal, which there were none last year, been offered the job.

So my question for the Minister of Finance, has anyone who has ever appealed a decision actually been after -- actually been offered the job once appealed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't have the complete history of all hiring. I can say in 2017-2018, and I suspect the Member has this information already, as it went through to the last committee review. But that it was at around 1 percent and that 2018-2019, again, that it was five of 71 where the appeals were upheld. As far whether those individuals go on to get employment or choose to get employment or choose to seek further employment with the government, I can't say. That's not necessarily a stat that would even be possible to garner, again not knowing whether or not the individual themselves may want to self-identify.

But, Mr. Speaker, you know, I certainly don't take the view that just because we've had, you know, no successful appeals means that the process itself is perfect. I've certainly dealt with many questions in the House over the last year and a half about human resources and certainly get a lots of inquiries to my office about the work of human resources. There is a lot going on right now in human resources to ensure that it is modern, to ensure that it is responsive, to ensure that it is contextual to the Northwest Territories and to the fact that we are a 50 percent Indigenous Canadian community in the Northwest Territories. So I appreciate the Member's opening remarks, acknowledging that there's good people doing work. There are good people doing work. And there is always room for improvement, and we're getting there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

ORAL QUESTION 770-19(2):
NWT ARTS COUNCIL

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Would the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment support the NWT Arts Council as an independent arts organization? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the Member for Frame Lake asked these questions not long ago, I gave the answer that I would look in to the viability of creating an independent arm's length arts organization in the

territory, and that is still the plan. We are going to look into this, what would it look like, what would it cost, and what could it do. So we're beginning that work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm wondering about timelines. I like to have timelines. So since the department recognizes that the 181.5 million federal dollars flowing to the Canada Arts Council -- for the arts, sorry, is not accessible to the territorial government, when will the department commit to reviewing the organizational structure for the NWT arts so that we can make it an arm's length organization. So I know they're looking into it right now. We've just come off of almost two years of the department reviewing an arts strategy. So I'm wondering what kind of timeline are they working towards.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So the work to determine when that happens is underway. We are going to do a full review of arts funding programs across the territory. This isn't something that can be done in isolation, just creating an arts council. We need to take stock of what we're doing, how much are we spending, and how effective is it, and how can it be improved by the creation of something like an arm's length arts council. So that work is happening over the coming years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if the Department of Education, Culture and Employment has the capacity to complete this work during the length of the 19th Assembly? Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Depending on what you prioritize, you can get a lot done in the next couple years. That being said, there is a lot of work that, like I just mentioned, we want to do in conjunction with this. And that is reviewing the programs that we have, how effective they are, determining if there's better places we could put our money, and one of those things we're going to look at is the arts council and what it could look like in the future. So I'd like to say that we could just get it done, but I also want to make sure that we research it, we look at what's happening in other jurisdictions, and then we do something that's right for the territory given our specific circumstances, because I don't want to create an organization that is set up to fail. I don't want to create an organization that is going to be very costly and not produce results. So we have to do all of this work before just moving ahead with something. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake

ORAL QUESTION 771-19(2):
INCOME ASSISTANCE EMERGENCY
ALLOWANCE

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Sometimes I don't say enough good things about my colleagues across the floor. So I want to congratulate the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment for increasing income assistance for some of our residents in the flood-impacted communities. I think that was a really good move on the part of his department. But I'd like to know which communities are receiving the top-up. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister responsible for ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the income assistance regulations, the department can issue an emergency allowance to income assistance clients when there is an emergency. And in this instance, there -- the emergency allowance was issued to income assistance clients in Fort Simpson and zones 1, 2, and 3 in Fort Good Hope. There are no income assistance clients in Jean Marie River, otherwise we would have supported them as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Thanks very much to the Minister for that forward-looking work by his department. I'm just wondering, were these payments like one-time payments or are they going to be ongoing in some way? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The emergency payments are one time and so they were issued when the emergency occurred, and, you know, if you look at, like somewhere like Aklavik, it's my understanding that there hasn't been flood damage and power outages the way there has been in places like Jean Marie and Fort Simpson, and so the benefits haven't been issued there. But if that were to change, then I'm sure the director of income assistance would issue those benefits accordingly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister again for his response. I know that our colleagues on the other side have made commitments that we're going to get people back into their homes in time before winter, and so what kind of discretion is there recognizing that people -- some people are probably going to be out of their homes for a number of months. What kind of discretion is there to continue these top-up payments over a period of time and what sort of criteria would be used to trigger that action? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So as I stated, they are the one-time emergency payments. So if there is a flood and the power goes out, someone loses all the food in their refrigerator. This is a one-time payment to help them buy food and things like that. So there is no plan to continue these one-time payments. And as for additional flood relief, that is a different department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Thebacha.

ORAL QUESTION 772-19(2):
HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, I wasn't going to ask any questions but just listening to some of the comments here today, I'm going to go back to my questions that I asked the Minister of human resources the other day.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell us if she is aware of the unspoken practice and culture within the human resources wherein hiring staff will brown- and blacklist potential applicants and existing employees from advancing within the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Minister responsible for Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, no, this is not -- there is not a blanket practice as what is described by the Member. Mr. Speaker, I -- this is a human system of 5,000 people strong. It is populated by wonderful people who work across the public service, great people in human resources. Does that mean that every single process and every single time at every single hiring is -- produces the end result that every person wants it to? Well, the end result is that some people don't get jobs. What we want is to have a process that is clear, transparent, accessible, and that is the purpose of human resources. That's the goal. That's what we are working towards. And as I said earlier, always recognize that continually in human nature, there will be opportunities to do better and to improve the systems that we're in, and it is my intention to oversee that and to see that we achieve that goal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, you know, listening to the comments in the room, you know, it surprises me that -- I'm not saying that all human resource staff are negligent. I think we have to look at the superintendents of each region. I think we've got to see where the direction comes from and a direction to go through. So with that, Mr. Speaker,

does the Minister recognize that the hiring staff have sometimes been retaliated against certain individuals based on the applicant's or employee's association with certain people whom hiring staff doesn't like or like, know, or like personally? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, there's no place for retaliation in the human resources processes of the -- in the Government of the Northwest Territories. I believe that my office is very accessible, and I hope that it is. I've had many MLAs reach out to me and individuals who often felt that they wanted to raise a concern that they couldn't raise somewhere else. I hope that that continues. There is no place for retaliation. There's no place for that kind of favoritism. And if there's an opportunity to speak to someone to work through something to identify an issue to confirm if there's been something that's not according to that process and according to these practices, then we will do our best to find that out and to work it through so that it does not have a place in the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, I hear the Ministers saying there's accessibility. Accessibility is extremely hard, okay. Sure, the MLAs have accessibility. But what about the poor person on the street? Do they have accessibility to actually say what they actually felt when they went for an interview and is refused again, over and over? Can the Minister tell whether staff incompetence or employee insubordination may be part of the problems relating to broader human issues in the Government of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to try to be helpful and not repeat my answers but the simple fact is I'm back to the same response I gave at the beginning, that there are wonderful public servants and good people in human resources doing their very best to make sure that their processes are fair and that they are modern and that they are in keeping with the best practices of human resources processes anywhere else in Canada or the world.

Now, when I say about accessibility, I certainly have heard from individual employees direct to me. I have certainly heard from my own constituents direct to me. And, you know -- and in each case, if it's a constituency or if it's an MLA matter, what I am able to then do is see that the background and the process that was followed, identify if in fact there's an area where maybe we could do better, be more clear, to offer better information, to offer more, you know, plain language information, if there's more we could do to offer supports with resumé writing, with interview preparation, understanding why, you know, an interview was

graded mainly the way it was. All of those are tools, skills, things that we can continue to do on top of which we have and I -- you know, again, the Indigenous recruitment and retention framework is going to be a very different way of governing the process of human resources in the Government of the Northwest Territories. We have training programs that continually roll out. And in addition to all of that, it's been made plainly obvious to me that, in fact, you know, there's other pinch points that we need to be looking at. That's the job of human resources and headquarters here is to continue to do that and to look again and again at what it is that we have, what it is that we use, what is it that's on offer - can we modernize?

Mr. Speaker, that's been -- I believe been a consistent message I've tried to put forward as the Minister responsible. It's the message I'm going to continue to put forward as the Minister responsible. And in the interim, when there are times when someone feels that the process hasn't been properly applied, I encourage people to reach out to their MLA, to reach out to me, to reach out to their union. That's why we have all of these systems here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate my question from the other day because I think that we have to keep focused on what we want to make change on within this government. Between 2016 and 2020, there was a total of 303 appeals to human resource hiring decisions; however, only 17 of those appeals were upheld. And all appeals all together were denied in 2019-2020. Does the Minister believe these statistics are fair and not indicative of broader issues within the appeal process in human resources? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier, I don't necessarily take the view that the appeals process, the number of appeals nor the success of appeals, necessarily gives us a lot of clear information that I can then apply to the staffing process itself. Mr. Speaker, I spent many years working in the criminal justice system where there were often appeals, and they were not always very successful. And it doesn't necessarily tie back to what's happening in the appeal court represents what should be happening at the front end. I don't know that it's much different here. What's happening at the appeals and staffing process doesn't necessarily tell me what I need to fix or change within the hiring processes of the human resources approach. There may well be a better way of running the appeals. There may well be a better opportunity to be more engaging but right now under the appeals process that we have, it's fairly strict. It's fairly narrow. It looks at process. It looks at where the rules follow, those of Collective Agreements, the Affirmative Action Policy applied,

and in general, because those are procedural I'm not necessarily surprised that, in fact, the answer is yes, that the procedures are being followed.

Now this is reflected in the Public Service Act as well, so Mr. Speaker, we're doing what is in the act. We're doing what we have the authority to do. You know, if there's a different philosophical approach to hiring, which is what people -- I think really the issue to be getting at is there a different approach to hiring. That's when we get into the recruitment and retention framework as one solution. We're only just at the point we're being ready to start to roll that out and to bring it to committee to consider. Will it be the panacea; will it be the end all and be all? Probably not. But it will be a significant new tool that we'll have in the toolbox for human resources.

I have ten more minutes left. Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to not have to continually stand up and talk about human resources. I'm happy to do it. The process is being improved continually, and there's good people there working on it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

ORAL QUESTION 773-19(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ARTS PROGRAM

MS. CLEVELAND: I was just very impressed by the capacity of my colleague to keep talking.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of ITI. I'd like to know how is the value of art sales generated through the NWT arts program tracked. For example, are website analogs tracked and reported, and does the NWT Arts Program currently plan to expand to an e-commerce based platform? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, you've seen nothing yet in my capacity to speak. Now I get to talk about arts.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to art sales and art sales tracking, so at the moment I can say art sales aren't tracked by the NWT Arts Program in terms of the dollar value per sales or number of sales had. Again, you know, again, this is one where there's a number of individual artists across the Northwest Territories, some in collectives, some selling on their own, some selling, I know, under various social media channel.

And this is not an opportunity, this is not an area where the government is able to track those individual sales through -- again, certainly not through the arts program. I would say, though, a bit of a plug in terms of generating broadly more sales in the area that there is right now a workshop series being developed for artists to learn about all the different ways that they can be selling their art, whether it's direct to consumer or retailers or online. That is expected to be ready for this summer. So tracking of course is important. But, really, we do recognize that we want to get our numbers up and improve the sales of the incredible arts product we have in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very excited about that program. And I'd like to offer, as a Member of standing committee that will be going into communities, to take any of that information into communities with me and I think that MLAs can be a really good resource to get information out on that.

So I guess I'm wondering, too, does ITI know who the primary markets are for NWT arts and who they're trying to attract to purchase more NWT art and who's already paying attention? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as of the moment -- well, the arts program does work with partners across Canada. They are working also internationally at this point. There's been showcases of NWT arts products at the WAG, in Edmonton, and internationally at the British Museum. So there's quite a lot happening in the recent couple of years to try to promote and increase awareness of the incredible arts that we have here.

That said, the demographic information that we have is that at this time, a majority of the artwork is still being sold here within the Northwest Territories. I mean, I can look around the room here and see a number of people wearing, whether it's clothing or jewelry or otherwise. So we all know the value of the arts product that is in the Northwest Territories but it is clear that we still need to get that message out more broadly beyond the borders of the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate that and I appreciate the work that is being done by ITI. I do, however, think that ITI needs to understand, and I'm sure that they do, that the cost of web sites is very expensive. And also sometimes technology gets the best of us, Mr. Speaker. And so I think that expanding into an e-commerce type platform for NWT arts brings people together to that site where people are already being brought to, in order to not only showcase artists but then be able to say, 'hey,

look at that person and what can I purchase from Tanya Larson that's already on that website?' How can I get there? And so I think that being able to capitalize on people's desire to -- you know, instant gratification - buy right away. I think we're missing out on a big opportunity. And so I'd like to ask the Minister to please explore an e-commerce platform for NWT arts. Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, you know, would be remiss not to acknowledge that, of course, the Department of ECE has a shared responsibility over the arts. With respect to e-commerce, I can say that the challenge here -- one of the challenges here, far apart from the technology alone, is, of course, then are we at risk of displacing those who may not wish to be part of the GNWT process? Would we be at risk where we are creating a situation where we're influencing or, you know, creating a market place that isn't fully fair and accessible to all? So there are some challenges in an online platform that is administered or run by the government. I think part of the bigger challenge, is it the role of government to create the market, to create the economy, or is it the role of government to enable and facilitate that kind of work happening within the arts community in the Northwest Territories. So I know when there's questions earlier about an arts council, I'm obviously paying attention keenly as well. ECE may be the lead but, again, we're taking a whole-of-government view here. We're going to certainly all be conscious and be aware of what work we can do together to support the arts community so that they can get their products out there, whether it's through a government-enabled website or through their own methodologies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary, Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think that there's some great precedent already within ITI. We have the fur program which works quite well and has been very successful. My last question for the Minister, then, is would the Minister of ITI, given that they do have the film commission and they do have support for entrepreneurs of the arts, would they support an independent arm's length council? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Well, so, again, Mr. Speaker, this is an -- the area of the arts, it's an area with joint responsibility between ECE and ITI. So it's not a simple question that I have the opportunity to say yes or no to. It's a question to which there needs to be discussion between us, between the two departments, as well as with the various councils and commissions that already exist. The arts program, the film commission for example. You know, and determining what it is that

the community would benefit most from. I can say I've had inquiries to my office under ITI from members of the arts community in this regard so there certainly seems to be some buzz happening within the community around better and new ways to organize and to promote the arts in the Northwest Territories. And I'm sure that we will continue to have those conversations internally as well as with the external partners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

ORAL QUESTION 774-19(2):
HAY RIVER HOMELESS SHELTER

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about night shelters for homeless, and I'd like to I guess ask the Minister of Housing and the Minister responsible for Homelessness is that in Hay River, we had a shelter this last winter, but as of March 31st, it's no longer operational. And so I'd ask the Minister if her department has been in discussions with anyone in Hay River to deliver that service for this coming winter because, you know, we might be in spring but winter's going to be here fairly soon. So I just want to get ahead of the game here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister responsible for Homelessness.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Housing Corporation provides the homelessness initiatives during the winter months. I'm not too sure of the date that the shelter would be open again in the fall. I will have to get back to the Member with that specific date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The shelter was funded by Housing last winter. So I ask the Minister is there ongoing funding, is there funding that's earmarked for shelter for Hay River for this year, or is it -- or are you looking for a proposal to make it happen? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the beginning of this Assembly, there was a lot of, you know, concern about Hay River and looking at what we had experienced during COVID-19 and recognizing the most vulnerable at the ground level. There was a lot of advocacy from Hay River to establish a homeless shelter. So with that, we ended up working with one of the nonprofit organizations and opened up a homeless shelter in Hay River. Just to answer the question, yes, we will be continuing those efforts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's a number of federal government units, I think that are becoming available or that are available in Hay River, and I ask the Minister if she's willing to look at those units and possibly securing one and -- you know, with four bedrooms at least, and making that available to a nonprofit group to provide shelter this winter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the efforts with the RCMP units that we are currently constructing and the agreement that we do have, the RCMP units are issued to be completed next year but we do have a delivery throughout the Northwest Territories, and there is questions about what are they going to be doing with the federal units that are available in the specific communities. So the Housing Corporation has been in contact with the federal government as well in looking at future programming that we can offer at the community level and recognizing that -- that we do have nonprofit organizations in Hay River. This is a key for us, for the Housing Corporation that we would be able to work in partnership with this organization and hopefully be able to establish specific programming that we would be able to work with those -- work with those individuals as well.

But not only that, I also wanted to recognize that we do have other outreach as well, too, in looking at food delivery that is in the community. Like, I'm not too sure about that specific, but we're trying to work in conjunction in the community of Hay River to making sure that we do acknowledge and work with the homeless population. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd ask the Minister, you know, to be proactive in this, and maybe her department is, and, you know, have somebody from, you know, her district office reach out to the Department of Health, people there, like, the Hay River health centre, and some of the other groups and the mayor, I guess, and, you know, it has to be a meeting that has to take place to talk about this issue, and, you know, and to come to some resolve here before winter. So, you know, everybody talks about it but nobody makes the first move, and, you know, I've been trying to put the bug in everybody's ear to make this happen. So I'm hoping that the department can maybe, you know, take a lead on it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, that bug is in my ear. And I have been working with departments as well too and I will keep the

Member informed as we go forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, our time for oral questions has expired. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Replies to Commissioner's address. Petitions. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Reports of standing and special committees. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Finance.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 429-19(2):
INTER-ACTIVITY TRANSFERS EXCEEDING
\$250,000 FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 1 TO MARCH
31, 2021

TABLED DOCUMENT 430-19(2):
PROJECT CHARTER FOR GOVERNMENT OF
THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES – NWT &
NUNAVUT CHAMBER OF MINES COVID
RECOVERY WORKING GROUP

TABLED DOCUMENT 431-19(2):
FUNDING SUPPORT FOR AIRLINES

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following three documents: "Inter-Activity Transfers Exceeding \$250,000 for the period of April 1st to March 31st, 2021;" "Project Charter for GNWT-Chamber of Mines COVID Recovery Working Group;" and "Funding Support for Airlines." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Government House Leader.

TABLED DOCUMENT 432-19(2):
PLAIN LANGUAGES SUMMARY FOR BILL 33,
NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY ACT

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: "Plain Language Summary for Bill 33, National Indigenous Peoples Day Act." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

TABLED DOCUMENT 433-19(2):
2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES EQUAL PAY
COMMISSIONER

TABLED DOCUMENT 434-19(2):
ADDRESSING THE GENDER WAGE GAP,
PROACTIVE PAY, AND EQUITY LEGISLATION, A
PUBLICATION OF THE PAY EQUITY DIVISION
OF THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION

TABLED DOCUMENT 435-19(2):
ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSION, 2021
TERMS OF REFERENCE

TABLED DOCUMENT 436-19(2):
SUMMARY OF MEMBERS ABSENCES OF THE
PERIOD FEBRUARY 3, 2021 TO MAY 26, 2021

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Government House Leader. Tabling of documents. Colleagues, pursuant to Section 40.23-2 of the Public Service Act, I wish to table the "2019-2020 Annual Report of the Equal Pay Commissioner for the Northwest Territories." I also wish to table a document, provided for information purposes, by the Equal Pay Commissioner entitled "Addressing the Gender Wage Gap, Proactive Pay, and Equity Legislation, a publication of the Pay Equity Division of the Canadian Human Rights Commission". Tabling of documents.

Members, I wish to table the "Terms of Reference for the Electoral Boundaries Commission 2021." Thank you. Tabling of documents.

Colleagues, pursuant to Section 5 of the Indemnities, Allowances and Expenses Regulations of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I wish to table the "Summary of Members' Absences for the period February 3rd, 2021 to May 26, 2021." Thank you. Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Motions. Member for Frame Lake.

Motions

MOTION 37-19(2):
CREATION OF A NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
FOOD SECURITY STRATEGY,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. WHEREAS this 19th Assembly agreed in its priorities to increase food security through locally produced, harvested, and affordable food;

WHEREAS the Northwest Territories has the second highest level of food security in Canada as defined by Statistics Canada;

WHEREAS in a 2018 survey of Northwest Territories residents, 23 percent were worried about not having enough food -- money for food and in some communities, it was greater than 50 percent;

AND WHEREAS the Northwest Territories' food system is extremely fragile and dependent on global markets, which the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the forefront, including our reliance on imported food; near complete dependence on corporately-owned grocery stores to feed residents; critical dependence on winter roads, trucking

industry, and aviation sector to re-supply communities; unknown food storage in community-based freezers, fridges, and pantries; our unlimited -- or our uncertain and limited food supply chains and lack of systemic incentives that encourage territorial food solutions; whereas the federal government is yet to make the fundamental changes to the Nutrition North program that will best assist Northwest Territories residents with food security;

AND WHEREAS there are gaps in our current food security initiatives and the lack of coordination in current programs and services that cut across several departments; and whereas there is a need for a variety of programs, services, legislative and regulatory changes required to increase support for community and family renewable resource harvesting, availability of lands for agricultural purposes, support for small-scale food production; education and training in food production and storage and clear guidance for the preparation and retail of locally-produced products and more,

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that the Government of the Northwest Territories develop a Food Security Strategy by engaging Northwest Territories residents, harvesters, and agricultural producers, develop a coordinated and comprehensive approach to programs and services with specific targets, actions and timelines; and, further, that the Premier appoint a Minister responsible for Food Security to lead this work;

AND FURTHER, that the Food Security Strategy include the following:

The Government of the Northwest Territories prioritize the development of a Food Security Strategy based on lessons learned from community-based food security initiatives and to complete this strategy in 12 to 18 months;

The Government of the Northwest Territories begin interdepartmentally advancing food security by identifying principles for NWT food security over the next four months;

The Government of the Northwest Territories coordinate the income assistance review with the development of a Northwest Territories Food Security Strategy to ensure the most vulnerable residents have access to affordable and nutritious food;

The Government of the Northwest Territories review the effectiveness of all Government of the Northwest Territories food security funding programs as based on the principles for achieving Northwest Territories food security and to revise

program funding where necessary over six to 12 months;

The Government of the Northwest Territories implement community-based food security coordinators in the most food insecure communities in the Northwest Territories;

The Government of the Northwest Territories remove all of its legislative regulatory barriers over the next 12 months to facilitate regional sharing of harvested meat or other products -- other food products;

The Government of the Northwest Territories pilot an initiative immediately that improves the effectiveness of community-based freezers, kitchens, and food preparation and food -- food -- storage programs in the highest risk communities and use this experience to inform the development of the food security strategy;

The Government of the Northwest Territories develop and implement tracking of local food production, set specific targets to improve food security; and,

The Government of the Northwest Territories develop and implement a Northwest Territories food security website with email and phone contacts immediately so there is a clear point of contact in the Government of the Northwest Territories to track community concerns and advance initiatives; and, furthermore,

That the government respond to this motion within 120 days. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. It's been a long week. I'm not going to take up too much time, but I just -- I want to encourage all Members of the House to support this. I've heard a couple of concerns raised about this - how much is this going to cost. I would actually ask how much would it cost if we don't do this? We need to ensure that our residents have access to food, nutritious food, affordable food, not just now during this pandemic but into the future as well. So what's the cost of not doing this?

The other concern I guess that I've heard raised is that the government is already doing this work. Well, if that work is underway, it hasn't been communicated very well to this side of the House. What we have received is a rather long laundry list of initiatives that are underway that may increase food security, but what we really need is better coordination and leadership, and what we suggest here is that there be a Minister appointed to lead

this up, a Minister responsible for Food Security. So I would encourage all my colleagues to support this motion. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote. Thanks.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the priorities of this Assembly was to increase food security to locally produced, harvested, and affordable food. There was a number of mandate commitments made in there. And my experience as a Member is that that mandate item is presently the responsibility of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Health and Social Services, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the Department of Lands. And I've asked many questions about food security, and I've found it very difficult to try and get those departments to coordinate on the importance of this issue. And I asked this of the prior 19th Assembly. I think it's safe to say that all Members believe in food security, and we saw the fragility of our supply lines during COVID-19, and, really, we don't want to live in a territory where children go hungry because a hungry child can't be educated. It sets them up for the rest of their lives. So food security is a priority. And I believe that we've set out some clear and tangible solutions. We've perhaps asked for a couple of the timelines in the mandate to be kicked up a little faster and made this a bit more of a priority. But I'm happy to support this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Motion is in order. To the motion. Government House Leader.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, food security is a priority of this government. This Cabinet and the Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes food security as an issue that is foundationally important to the health and well-being of the people of the NWT.

The mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories includes a commitment to increase food security through locally produced, harvested, and affordable food. Work is advancing to address these aspects of food insecurity throughout the territory. As a result of this mandate, partner departments are collaborating to build common momentum and create tangible progress on food security associated with poverty, building the territorial agriculture and fisheries sector, supporting access to traditional foods, and creating the regulatory regime needed to support all of this.

While there is still much -- while there was much work already being done, we acknowledge that

there is still more to do, and we are committed to doing that work, and Cabinet fully supports the principles behind this motion; however, as this motion contains a recommendation to government, it is convention that Cabinet abstains from the vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Government House Leader. Motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. The Member's requested a recorded vote. All those in favour, please rise.

RECORDED VOTE

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Rutland): The Member for Frame Lake. The Member for Yellowknife North. The Member for Kam Lake. The Member for Hay River South. The Member for Thebacha.

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

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Rutland): The Member for Nahendeh. The Member for the Sahtu. The Member for Hay River North. The Member for Yellowknife South. The Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. There's also the recorded vote. Five in favour, zero opposed, five abstentions. Motion is carried.

---Carried

Motions. Member for Yellowknife North.

MOTION 38-19(2):
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE TO
OCTOBER 14, 2021,
CARRIED

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on Friday, June 14, 2021, it shall be adjourned until Thursday, October 14th, 2021; and, further, that any time prior to October 14th, 2021, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly that the public interest requires that this House should meet at an time during earlier than the adjournment, or at a time later than the scheduled resumption of the House, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as if it had

been duly adjourned to that time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Motions. Notices of motion for the first reading of bills. First reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 35:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES), NO. 1, 2021-
2022

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for the Sahtu, that Bill 35, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2021-2022 be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Motion is in order and non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried. Bill 35 has had first reading.

---Carried

Second reading of bills. First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Government House Leader.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 33:
NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY ACT

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that Bill 33, National Indigenous Peoples Day Act be read for a second time. This bill replaces the public holiday National Aboriginal Day held on June 21st of each year with the public holiday National Indigenous Peoples Day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Government House Leader. Motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. All those --

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any

abstentions? The motion is carried. Bill 33 has had second reading.

---Carried

Second reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

BILL 35:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES), NO. 1, 2021-
2022

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for the Sahtu, that Bill 35, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2021-2022, be read for the second time. This bill makes supplementary appropriations for the operations expenditures of the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried. Bill 35 has had second reading.

---Carried

Second reading of bills. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters.

Committee Report 15-19(2), Committee Report 16-19(2), Minister's Statement 161-19(2), Tabled Document 413-19(2) with Member for Hay River South in the chair.

Authority given to me as Speaker by Motion 1-19(2), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hours of adjournment to consider the business before the House with Member for Hay River South in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): I now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of the committee? Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Committee wishes to consider Committee Report 15-19(2), Committee Report 16-19(2), Minister's Statement 161-19(2), Tabled Document 413-19(2), and Mr. Chair, we'd like to consider the last two items together as one matter. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, committee. We will -- we'll take a short recess and resume with the first item.

---Short recess

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): I call the committee back in order. And committee, we have agreed to Committee Report 15-19(2), Report on the Review of the Auditor General's 2020 Audit of Early Childhood to Grade 12 Education in the Northwest Territories. I will go to the chair of the Standing Committee on Government Operations for any opening comments. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Chair, our report was read into the record so I do not have any substantive comments to add. But I would like to thank the committee for their work on this report and individual Members may have comments on the report and its recommendations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. I will now open the floor to general comments on Report 15-19(2) Report on the Review of the Auditor General's 2020 Audit of Early Childhood to Grade 12 Education in the Northwest Territories. Do any Members have general comments? I see no comments. Member for Thebacha.

COMMITTEE MOTION 134-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 15-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE AUDITOR
GENERAL'S 2020 AUDIT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
TO GRADE 12 EDUCATION IN THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES - PERFORMANCE
MEASURES, ACTION PLAN AND ANNUAL
REPORTING,
CARRIED

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Chair, I will go ahead with the committee motions. Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment develop performance measures for each area highlighted in the compliance audit and the corresponding Department of Education, Culture and Employment action plan to achieve specific outcomes and to report annually on these measures. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the

motion. Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member.

COMMITTEE MOTION 135-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 15-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE AUDITOR
GENERAL'S 2020 AUDIT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
TO GRADE 12 EDUCATION IN THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES – ANNUAL
REPORTING ON REVITALIZATION OF OFFICIAL
LANGUAGES,
CARRIED

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment report annually on each action related to revitalizing official languages, including on the oral proficiency assessment tools, the Indigenous language revitalization certification program, and the mentor apprentice program. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Do any Members have general comments? I see no comments. Comments, Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: We have to vote on it.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): I apologize for that. The motion is in order. To the motion. The motion is ordered. To the motion. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Thebacha.

COMMITTEE MOTION 136-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 15-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE AUDITOR
GENERAL'S 2020 AUDIT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
TO GRADE 12 EDUCATION IN THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES – INDIGENOUS
LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN HIRING,
CARRIED

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Chair, I move this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment include Indigenous language proficiency when hiring positions in the Indigenous Language and Education Secretariat. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Member for YK North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my knowledge, there are very few, if any, bilingual-required positions in the GNWT where the bilingual is an Indigenous language. There are a number of bilingual-required HR positions that are French. And I know there is a bilingual bonus for people who speak one of our official languages but I think, really, in the HR hiring process, especially for an area such as the Indigenous Languages and Education Secretariat, those Members who speak an Indigenous language are not getting the appropriate credit and additional scoring on priority on their applications within hiring. So that's what this motion intends to do. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Thebacha.

COMMITTEE MOTION 137-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 15-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE AUDITOR
GENERAL'S 2020 AUDIT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
TO GRADE 12 EDUCATION IN THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES – INCLUSIVE
SCHOOLING PRACTICES,
CARRIED

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment conduct greater oversight on inclusive schooling practices, including thorough spot checks on individualized learning plans and report annually on the outcome oriented performance measures. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Thebacha.

COMMITTEE MOTION 138-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 15-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE AUDITOR
GENERAL'S 2020 AUDIT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
TO GRADE 12 EDUCATION IN THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES – EQUITABLE
LEARNING EXPERIENCES,
CARRIED

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment bring forward a plan to better support schools in small communities to ensure students across the territories have an equitable learning experience, and, further, that the department work with district education authorities to minimize the impacts of differing school calendars on northern distance learning. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Thebacha.

COMMITTEE MOTION 139-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 15-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE AUDITOR
GENERAL'S 2020 AUDIT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
TO GRADE 12 EDUCATION IN THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES – GOVERNMENT
RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS,
CARRIED

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide a response to the recommendations contained in this report within 120 days. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, committee. Do you agree that you have concluded consideration of Committee Report 15-19(2)?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, committee. We have concluded consideration of Committee Report 15-19(2) Report on the Review of the Auditor General's 2020 Audit of Early Childhood to Grade 12 Education in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

Committee, we have agreed to consider Committee Report 16-19(2) Standing Committee on Social Development Report on Housing Phase One: Needs For NWT Homeowners and Private Landlords. I will go to the chair of the Standing Committee on Social Development for any opening -- any opening comments. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Our report was read into the record so I do not have any substantial comments to add. But I would like to thank committee for their work on this report, and individual Members may have comments on the report and its recommendations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. I will now open the floor to general comments on Committee Report 16-19(2). Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I just want to say very quickly that the committee -- I want to thank the committee for allowing me to sit in on a number of presentations that were conducted over about a two-week very intense period. So the committee's, in my opinion, done a very thorough job caring for members of the public on solutions to home ownership, and I want to compliment them on their hard work. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Seeing no further comment. Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 140-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 16-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON HOUSING PHASE ONE: NEEDS
FOR NWT HOMEOWNERS AND PRIVATE
LANDLORDS – ACCESS TO TITLED LAND,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories increase access to titled land to help homeowners and landlords meet financing and insurance obligations in the NWT communities. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion? Member for YK North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think we all recognize that my tenure in the GNWT is a bit of a Gordian Knot and given the competing Indigenous land rights, it is a -- one of the most difficult areas for our government to navigate. But the Housing Corp has requested all of its leases from the Department of Lands in fee simple. We've had problems where we have brought units into communities, and we can't actually find any land to put them to on. So the units just kind of sit there. And I know multiple people in communities who have wanted to build houses and finding land to build a house on can be extremely difficult. And I guess there's a lot of different ways that this can work, but I think specifically one of the barriers that people found was with having leases, it wasn't as easy to get mortgages; it wasn't as easy to get insurance. And I think the Department of Lands in having lots of leases to administer within community boundaries has really stepped into an area of best dealt with at the community level, land use regulations that, you know, administer things like bylaws or setbacks on properties are best dealt with by communities, and this is really an area I would like to see the GNWT get out of and give to communities.

Now, that's not always easy – it's easier said than done because different communities have different views of how they want land title to look. And, you know, I know a number of Indigenous communities have looked to things such as 99-year leases or different creative ways to get their communities access to land. But I guess to me, this motion is really speaking to that the current method is not working and we need to increase access to land to put houses on because our people cannot find land to live right now, Mr. Chair.

So I'm happy to see this motion. I know -- I think every single municipal election in Enterprise, they ask for their land. I know the City of Yellowknife,

every single election asks for its land within municipal boundaries. There's a lot of people asking for access to land to put houses on in this territory, and if we can make some progress on that in the life of this Assembly, we can make some progress on housing. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 141-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 16-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON HOUSING PHASE ONE: NEEDS
FOR NWT HOMEOWNERS AND PRIVATE
LANDLORDS – POLICY AND PROGRAM
BARRIERS,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories develop a policy and program barrier document and support Indigenous groups to overcome barriers to qualify for federal financing programs like ministerial loan guarantees. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 142-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 16-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON HOUSING PHASE ONE: NEEDS
FOR NWT HOMEOWNERS AND PRIVATE
LANDLORDS – ACCESS TO FINANCING,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories partner with the northern private sector nonprofit and

Indigenous governments to develop government lease agreements to support access to financing for the development of housing stock and programs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion? Member for YK North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe right now the Housing Corp rents about 200 units, and it rents it off of very large southern landlords. I propose that those lease agreements would be suited with Indigenous governments and non-profits or northern people in the private sector. So I know a number of Indigenous governments have wanted to take on housing, but the O&M proves a barrier. So the more that the GNWT can enter into long-term lease agreements with Indigenous governments, the more security they can have in O&M and taking over their housing for their citizens. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstention? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 143-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 16-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON HOUSING PHASE ONE: NEEDS
FOR NWT HOMEOWNERS AND PRIVATE
LANDLORDS – SUPPORTIVE RENTAL HOUSING
FOR VULNERABLE POPULATIONS,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories increase government funding and rental housing stock to provide supportive rental housing programs for vulnerable populations to have housing and onsite support to remain housed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 144-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 16-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON HOUSING PHASE ONE: NEEDS
FOR NWT HOMEOWNERS AND PRIVATE
LANDLORDS – PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE
PROGRAM FOR HOMEOWNERS,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories work with community partners to create an indeterminate community-based preventive maintenance program for homeowners. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 145-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 16-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON HOUSING PHASE ONE: NEEDS
FOR NWT HOMEOWNERS AND PRIVATE
LANDLORDS – NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
HOUSING CORPORATION REPAIR PROGRAM,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories expand and increase funding to the Northwest Territories House Housing Corporation repair program and decrease program eligibility requirements to reduce the future number of homes requiring major repairs and support solutions for existing homeowners. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion? Member for YK North.

MR. JOHNSON: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I know that in the nonmarket communities where people own their peoples, we've tried for years to, you know, kind of help them and build homes and I guess ultimately the reality is in a nonmarket community a house is depreciating asset, and we

have to kind of blur the lines between public and private housing in nonmarket communities. And committee heard from people that, you know, owning a house in a nonmarket community that there isn't government support. So I think from a pure housing standpoint, the government needs to look at every single house as an asset and every single house needs to be preserved. So whatever we can do to preserve houses. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 146-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 16-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON HOUSING PHASE ONE: NEEDS
FOR NWT HOMEOWNERS AND PRIVATE
LANDLORDS – HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAMS
WITH PERSON CENTERED CASE
MANAGEMENT,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories implement homeownership programs with persons-centered case management to navigate the complex northern housing environment, including mortgage financing, land tenure and affordable home insurance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 147-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 16-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON HOUSING PHASE ONE: NEEDS
FOR NWT HOMEOWNERS AND PRIVATE
LANDLORDS – INTERDEPARTMENTAL POLICY
BARRIERS FOR RENTAL ACCOMMODATION
ALLOWANCE

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories remove interdepartmental policy requirements creating barriers for applicants to receive the rental accommodation allowance, including requirements to be on the public housing waitlist and the payment of utility arrears. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion? Member for YK North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know the Minister has spoken to this in the House, and I understand the reality that it's cheaper for ECE to put people in public housing than give them the rental accommodation allowance, but you know, that's -- I think net overall, it is a -- it's more expensive to not have people housed, and we know there are about 900 people on our housing waitlist who are costing the government money by being in the shelter program, by being in transitional housing, by picking up the slack in other areas. So I think a whole-of-government approach is to get everyone housed. And one of the ways we can do that is to remove the requirement that people be on the public housing waitlist in order to obtain rental accommodation allowance. This also gives them more flexibility to move houses, to move throughout the territory for work opportunities.

And, lastly, I just want to point out, we've asked the Housing Corp for how long the waitlist is for public housing, and they can't give a clear answer because that waitlist is so obscured by people just simply being on it to receive income assistance. So we don't even have an accurate picture of the housing waitlist because a lot of people are simply on it because of this policy requirement. So I would encourage the government to do a whole-of-government approach and remove this requirement. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour. Opposed. Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 148-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 16-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON HOUSING PHASE ONE: NEEDS
FOR NWT HOMEOWNERS AND PRIVATE
LANDLORDS – RENTAL ALLOWANCE
PORTABILITY,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories allow rental allowance to be portable so people can choose where they want to live in housing that meets their needs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 149-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 16-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON HOUSING PHASE ONE: NEEDS
FOR NWT HOMEOWNERS AND PRIVATE
LANDLORDS – INTERDEPARTMENTAL POLICY
BARRIERS FOR HOMEOWNERS,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much. I've got a double up here so I'm going to... sorry, Mr. Chair, I appear to have a copy that is not -- give me a second. I've got a repeat of recommendations.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories remove interdepartmental policy barriers for homeowners, including requirements to be on the public housing waitlist and the payment of utility arrears. This also includes removing the policy barrier requiring applicants to sell their homes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE REPORT 150-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 16-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON HOUSING PHASE ONE: NEEDS
FOR NWT HOMEOWNERS AND PRIVATE
LANDLORDS – ACCESS TO HOMEOWNERS
INSURANCE,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories develop a program to help homeowners access insurance and work with homeowners to keep costs low. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Motion is in order. To the motion? Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So, yeah, I've raised this issue on the floor of the House several times now about the inability of even Yellowknife residents to get home insurance. And I'll give another example. I said -- charted this out before. We had home insurance with Aviva. We had some roof work done. Told the company about it. All of a sudden, they started to ask questions about our heating source. We've had a wood pellet boiler for five years. They decided to cut us off, cancel our policy because they didn't want to insure us anymore. So -- and I've had similar complaints from other residents in my riding about the inability to get home insurance in even Yellowknife so I can't imagine what it's like in small communities. I understand that the minister of Finance and her staff are looking at other options, including the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Corporation. You know, it would be better if we could actually get the private market to provide home insurance here. But if the private market is unwilling to do that, then we've got to look at other options and that may include a government insurance program. But I understand the Minister's having her staff talk to Saskatchewan Government Insurance Corporation about whether they're willing to enter the market here because we just can't -- the other parts of the market are not serving our needs. So I look forward to that work coming forward. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE REPORT 151-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 16-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON HOUSING PHASE ONE: NEEDS
FOR NWT HOMEOWNERS AND PRIVATE
LANDLORDS – HOME INSURANCE BENEFIT
ALLOWANCE,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories expand and develop the current home insurance benefit allowance to support future and existing homeowners. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE REPORT 152-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 16-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT ON HOUSING PHASE ONE: NEEDS
FOR NWT HOMEOWNERS AND PRIVATE
LANDLORDS – GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO
RECOMMENDATIONS,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide a response to the recommendations contained in this report within 120 days. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question's been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Thank you, committee. Do you agree that you have concluded consideration of Committee Report

16-19(2), Standing Committee on Social Development Report on Housing Phase One: Needs For NWT Homeowners and Private Landlords?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, committee. We have concluded our consideration of Committee Report 16-19(2) Standing Committee on Social Development on Housing Phase One: Needs for NWT Homeowners and Private Landlords. Thank you.

Committee, we have agreed to consider Minister's Statement 161-19(2), Emerging Stronger: COVID-19 Social Economic Recovery Plan, and Tabled Document 413-19(2), Emerging Stronger: Planning the NWT Social and Economic Recovery Together. I will now open the floor to general comments on Minister's Statement 161-19(2) and Tabled Document 413-19(2).

Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess I'd like to start by thanking Cabinet for the work that they did on Emerging Stronger and I will acknowledge that they did consult Regular MLAs, and I still think that it needs a lot more work.

The first point that I really want to make is that nowhere in the document or in the Premier's statement on the document, and I haven't done a real detailed look on the Executive website, but it's not clear how anybody's is to actually submit comments on it, or whether -- if there's going to be some place where comments might get compiled, whether the document is actually going to get revised in some way. So there's a whole communications consultation component that's totally missing. And I think the Premier said that they are interested in getting comments but there's no actual way to do that. And I've actually had one Yellowknife resident already point this out and make a complaint to me about this, so I'm sure there's others that feel the same way.

Some general comments as well, Mr. Chair, about the approach. It really is an incremental approach that really tries to tie economic renewal/recovery to the mandate, and I just think that we should be looking at something much more bold, fundamental changes. Here's an opportunity to help rebuild an economy to make it more sustainable and just. And what I see here, basically, Mr. Chair, is more of the same.

I would like to see broadband-made strategic infrastructure priority over the other big projects that this government continues to advocate and push for. I think the shortcomings with our broadband network were really shown during the pandemic,

and that should become the flagship infrastructure project that this government wishes to get resolved.

I will acknowledge that we did make some progress, actually, with our vulnerable populations in Yellowknife and Hay River, Fort Simpson, even in Inuvik. But I'm worried about sustaining those efforts, and I -- you know, even here in Yellowknife, I understand that the day shelters closed, that some other accommodation may not be available for vulnerable populations into the long-term future, so I want to see that support continue.

There's really nothing in the document about fiscal sustainability. There's the government renewal initiative discussed. I -- I'm not opposed to that. I think that there might be some useful changes that come out of it, but there's nothing on the revenue side. As I've said many times in this House, I would have expected to see something in this document about tax fairness and a new fiscal relationship with Ottawa. That's not in the document whatsoever.

We do need to build a more resilient self-reliant economy, acknowledge the climate emergency. There's discussion in here about a greater more sustainable economy, but no specifics. And there is some effort to support tourism. There's several portions of the document that do discuss tourism, but I think we have some tremendous opportunities with regard to remediation economy. The document, though, was very tentative in this regard, and we've yet to actually secure any federal investment in this area and that's because Cabinet continues to pitch the remediation economy piece or work on accelerating remediation work on contaminated sites here. The Cabinet continues to pitch this as some kind of industry bailout, and if I was the federal government I wouldn't invest in it either.

What you need to do is start to talk about direct partnerships with Indigenous governments, like the recent Great Bear Lake Remediation Governance Agreement, and empower Indigenous governments to go off and do some of this direct partnership work themselves with the federal government. That's not mentioned in here either, Mr. Chair.

One of the most troubling parts that I find in this document is there's -- the only mention of the arts and culture in here is a throwaway that the strategy is forthcoming. I wish that we could somehow capture some of the enthusiasm from our ITI Minister earlier in this day and put that into this document. It's nowhere to be found, Mr. Chair. That's the kind of enthusiasm that I'd expected to see in here in terms of building a more sustainable economy and diversifying our economy.

Mr. Chair, when I looked at the economic diversification section of the document, most of the

items that are listed there are about promoting mining. Mining's already a central part of our economy. I just fail to see how promoting more mining is going to diversify our economy. So I think that section really needs to be revised. If you want to have a section that talks about how you support mining, put it in a section talking about mining, but mining is not necessarily about diversifying our economy. Forestry could and should be part of that, with the price of lumber increasing exponentially. We do have some lumber mills that have been set up here and work periodically. Here's an opportunity to become more self-sufficient when it comes to wood that's used in building homes and renovations, energy conservation, retrofits on homes. Let's see something more in here about forestry potential. And that would help to diversify our economy.

There is, at the end, an appendix that starts to talk about timelines, a few specific actions, but, again, there's no funding identified in this document, Mr. Chair, and I think that's a real problem.

The other I think shortcoming in this document is that there's very little in here that really addresses the mental health crisis that's arisen during the pandemic, and I don't really sense any systemic approach to dealing with that in this document. And nothing on food security, Mr. Chair. Thank goodness we passed this motion earlier today, but virtually no mention whatsoever of food security in the document.

There is some reporting to be done in the document -- or through the document but it's not clear exactly what's going to be reported. Some key indicators, but nothing really about how the analysis is going to be undertaken on those key indicators, and more importantly, how that leads into a response or action by our government. So that needs to be improved as well.

I think that's my comments, Mr. Chair. But, once again, I would encourage our Cabinet colleagues to find a way to truly encourage public input to this document and set up a website, an email address, whatever, so that people can actually submit comments and that you can respond to them in a systemic and transparent fashion. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Any further comment? Member for YK North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Here's what CBC published in an analysis piece about this plan: Most of the plan is firmly focused on the government's own operations. For an economic recovery plan, it includes remarkably little discussion of the future of the economy.

This is what the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce had to say about the plan: The inclusion of vague action items like "seek to assist" the tourism, aviation, construction, hospitality and mining sectors to position for survival and eventual rebound fails to inspire confidence in our current government's ability to support the economy recovery for Yellowknife business community. The government has an obligation to do more than "seek" to support these critical industries. We need an actual plan with budgets and timelines.

Mr. Chair, I think this plan is a symptom of some systemic problems that I know all of this House are frustrated with. The government's communication has become so incredibly risk adverse that we can't even commit to assisting these industries. We have "to seek" to assist them. And there seems to be a fear of, you know, putting out a plan with clear targets and clear measurables and then not meeting them, as if that's the worst thing in the world. But I can tell you, Mr. Chair, that putting out a plan that basically says nothing, it just causes far more frustration.

And I think we're hamstrung by our own processes here. This week, we spent \$5,750,000 to support the tourism industry. That was a great news story. I'm happy to see that we did that. I don't understand why that number was not the first thing in this plan. There is no budgetary commitments in this plan. I know the reason for that is because we can't put firm budgetary commitments and plans that haven't gone through the financial management board and made it through this House for fear that at some point, the money may not actually go through the multiple levels of approval. But, Mr. Speaker, the people of NWT wanted more. The Members wanted more. I encourage this Cabinet to find a way to put budgetary commitments in new action plans. I don't know how you have to do that. But I'm frustrated by the continuation of plans and strategies that don't have budgetary commitments in them. And often the budgetary commitments come after but already, we've lost a bunch of political capital in putting out a plan without those firm commitments.

Mr. Speaker, there's a few other things I would have liked to see in the plan. The plan is still talking about the potential of an Indigenous procurement policy. I believe that ship has sailed, and we could have committed to an Indigenous procurement policy and set out what that was. I prefer a benchmark for how much money will go to Indigenous-owned businesses and dev corps.

I've heard the minister of ITI talk about this. I believe we're on our way but I just -- I don't see how we didn't use this plan to get a good news story of what some of the specifics were going to be there.

Mr. Chair, I could go through many other areas, and I'll try and be brief. We have a net metering cap on renewable energy in this territory. More and more of our communities are reaching their 20 percent threshold on renewable energy, and we literally will not allow them to use free federal government money to build more renewable energy. We need to get rid of the net metering cap if we are going to be serious about a green, resilient, and productive economy going forward.

Mr. Chair, the Yukon has a plan to have 4800 electric vehicles on the road by 2030. Despite owning almost a thousand vehicles, we don't have one single electric vehicle. Make a symbolic gesture on this area.

Mr. Chair, I think it would be remiss for the plan not to talk about mining, and I know we're working on this area but we need a plan to settle land claims or to get -- move forward on this. Right now, some of the best mining land in the territory is stuck in land withdrawals with no path to settle claims and no path to, you know, to commit to land use planning that builds consent in to how that land will be going -- move forward. We seem to be in the worst -- worst of both worlds in this area. And I can tell you that no one is happy. The industry's not happy. Indigenous governments aren't happen that we continue to not make progress at the tables and I feel hesitant to even talk about land withdrawals because it has become just so convoluted to actually figure out a path forward where we are going to give the land back and, you know, get consent built into our resource projects to be a world leader in this area.

Mr. Chair, I know that all of these things cost money and economic plans are costly, but I think there's a few things we probably could have done that were, you know -- didn't cost us anything.

On the nonprofit sector, one of their number one complaints, as Cabinet well knows, is the year-to-year scrambling for funding from multiple funding pools. I think in the last previously for the whole-of-government approach to look how we're funding our non-profits, bundle it up and give them some multiyear funding to get out of COVID-19.

Mr. Chair, many things in this plan are -- they're hindered by the same old problems. Getting many things done in this territory is like pulling teeth and, you know, no one is ever happy with whatever you do. But there will always be naysayers, and we can't aim to make everyone happy, but this really looks like a plan that was designed by committee, and I think it has just increased frustration. And I didn't want to see that, Mr. Chair. I think this session we've done some good work. I think there was more money passed, you know, \$750,000 for the poverty fund, but there's something

disconnected between being able to put budgetary figures and future commitments, policy change commitments into plans. I think departments are so caught up in a multilevel process that if there's a chance that we're not actually going to finish a project, we just can't confirm it, but we're not doing ourselves any favors.

I will echo my colleague's comments that there's no place for the public to submit their views as where we're going to go with the NWT future economy. I think I hear great ideas every day from my constituents and I know they are frustrated by a lot of government processes, and our government is the biggest barrier in many cases to getting things done. And I just believe we are moving at a glacial pace and it does not reflect the emergency we're in.

I know committee is planning a public briefing on this, and I'm sure I will have further questions but I think there's much work to do to really address the systemic problem of, you know, not being able to commit to things and not being able to take a risk. And, you know, if we fail, then that's fine. At least explain what the barrier was. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Any further comments? Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: I just want to make one short comment. You know, it's easy to listen and it's easy to criticize and sometimes I do it myself, you know, but a balanced approach to development and to social programs is reflected in this plan. I don't agree with everything in the plan. But, you know, from a business point of view and being in business for 50 years and strong -- with strong business background, I feel that a lot of things that are in here are good, not all of it is bad. The mineral -- the mineral part of our economy is extremely important. The hydro is extremely important. Mini hydros just wouldn't do it and, if we're going to move ahead, and I said that in several statements throughout this Assembly, and we have to look overall of what's best for the whole economy. Some of the smaller things, yes, those are good for the communities and community-based, but we still have to have economic growth in the larger economy and we -- you know, at one point in the last ten years that we had it, and because of different things that happened within that economy, including the pandemic and everything else, we have to have all the larger economic opportunities in order for us to sustain what we want in the social envelope. And everybody knows that. It's not science that we don't all know. And I just want to make sure that -- that we always create a balance, because that's the only way our people will move forward. That's the only way we're going to develop jobs to make sure that our people put food on the table. That's all they

want. Most ordinary people, that's all they want. And with that, thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the opportunity to speak to this document.

After a year, the NWT was expecting a gold plan to guide the NWT through economic recovery. The NWT expected a transformative document that would detail specific actions with creditable budget lines and timelines. Without these, it makes it difficult for our side of the House to hold the other side of the House accountable. Identifying broadly what sectors the government wanted to focus isn't enough. People want to know how the government is going to create an impact. And for example, what long-standing policy barriers the GNWT is prepared to change or let go of to create this transformational change for the people of the Northwest Territories.

Committee just read into the House the recommendations for the housing report. A lot of what was contained in there has been identified by previous Assemblies, previous nongovernment organizations, and so it -- really it comes down to what the government is prepared to listen to and what they're prepared to change in order to ultimately create change for the people of the Northwest Territories.

Specific to housing, Mr. Chair, housing was identified in the beginning of the pandemic as one of our biggest challenges in the Northwest Territories. Many Northerners live in overcrowded houses where communicable disease spreads quickly. The GNWT needs to quickly identify -- sorry, the GNWT also needed to quickly identify solutions for the -- to house the homeless. It did those things, and now they seem to be slipping away. We heard of challenges faced by the Arnica Inn earlier this week from MLA Johnson just here in the House. This government also has yet to produce the homelessness strategy that was committed to in the 18th Assembly. Housing doesn't only set Northerners up to participate in the economy, Mr. Chair, it also is an economy.

In regards to health care, during the pandemic we heard time and again how important resident health care workers were to the success of our territory, not only during the pandemic but also outside of a pandemic. We've heard reference in this House to policies that better support locum health care workers over resident health care workers. And we need to ensure that these are changed but they are not identified in the document. This document also does not address the specific recommendations

from the virtual care team to expand virtual care in the Northwest Territories.

In regards to procurement, Mr. Chair, economic recovery depends on our ability to get money for projects out the door, for businesses to be paid promptly, and to ensure dollars are getting to -- getting Northerners to work. We just passed the largest capital plan in the history of the NWT with \$450 million. But this economic recovery plan does not speak to how the GNWT is going to ensure the bulk of capital spending stays in the North, and this, we've heard time and time and again, is key to our economic success here in the Northwest Territories.

Unfortunately, with wording like "accelerate the review" of the GNWT procurement policies or "consider an Indigenous procurement policy," there's no tangible commitment made within this document.

In terms of remediation, Mr. Chair, that section has left me with far more answers than questions. Questions like what does reclamation or remediation economy actually look like in the Northwest Territories and what is the potential economic value compared to other economic drivers that are potentials for us in the Northwest Territories? How does the GNWT intend to work with the federal government to ensure remediation contracts not only go to northern companies but also local companies, especially when our remediation efforts are also so strongly tied to reconciliation. How specifically does the GNWT plan to support remediation and skill development within northern businesses and communities to capitalize on the reclamation economy?

Broadband infrastructure, as my colleagues have also referenced, internet is not just about entertainment. This pandemic has shown us that internet is very much about the economy. It's very much about education. The Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce estimated that one-day outage results in a GDP loss to the territory of \$4.75 million. But the problem is not only redundancy. It is equitable access to health information during a pandemic and also equitable access to education. The GNWT needs a costed plan with deliverables to get internet into all NWT households, including public housing.

Work force development. The GNWT was right to point out the difficulty with bringing in skilled workers. Many businesses still rely on out-of-territory workers as they simply cannot find the labour force to hire locally. What isn't addressed here is the inconsistencies businesses are having with exemptions from the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer. The GNWT needs to commit to standardized transparent exemptions so northern

businesses can keep their local workers employed as well and continue to bid on local northern projects with confidence.

Given our most lucrative resource is the people through federal transfer payments, I was surprised to see that this document did not mention immigration anywhere, especially given our need for skilled workers. The NWT needs to make our immigration rules competitive with other Canadian jurisdictions. Of course, we need to continue to build our own workforce and ensuring they are training and retraining skilled workers is key. But there is a lack of tutoring and educational resources for people who need support to pass the trades entrance exam, and solving this is not a deliverable in this document either.

Lastly, I wanted to speak to partnerships. Partnerships with Indigenous governments and organizations, community governments, and the non-for-profit and charitable sector. We've also heard this from my colleagues here today. During a crisis or a pandemic is when we place the most need on NGOs. Now is that time. The last year and bit has been that time. So this government does not need an advisory table to strengthen partnerships; it just needs to do it. NGOs want more money in block funding for frontline direct impact funding and they want less administrative burden to access those funds.

With that, Mr. Chair, thank you for -- I know it was a long week and I know I'm at the end of that long week. So, thank you to my colleagues for listening to me and I'd like to thank Cabinet for the time they have put in to this and for coming to our side of the House for some feedback.

I'd also like to acknowledge and thank the Premier for saying that this is a living document. But for it to be a living document, it needs a feedback loop from the people of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Seeing no more comments, committee, do you agree that you have concluded consideration of Minister's Statement 161-19(2), Emerging Stronger: COVID-19 Social and Economic Recovery Plan, and Tabled Document 413-19(2), Emerging Stronger: Planning the NWT's Social and Economic Recovery Together.

SOME HON MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, committee. We have concluded consideration of Minister's Statement 161-19(2) and Tabled Document 413-19(2). Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that the chair rise and report progress.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): There's a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and non-debatable. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress. Thank you.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Okay, may I please have the report of Committee of the Whole. Member for Hay River South

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Committee Report 15-19(2), Committee Report 16-19(2), Member's Statement 161-19(2), Tabled Document 413-19(2), and we would like to report that Committee Report 15-19(2), Committee Report 16-19(2), Member's Statement 161-19(2), and Tabled Document 413-19(2) are concluded with 19 motions carried. And, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Do we have a seconder. Member for Kam Lake. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Government of House Leader.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 25:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION ACT

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that Bill 25, An Act to amend the Education Act be read for the third time. And, Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Government House Leader's requesting a recorded vote. Motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour, please rise.

RECORDED VOTE

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Rutland): The Member for Hay River North. The Member for Kam Lake. The Member for Frame Lake. The

Member for Yellowknife North. The Member for Nahendeh. The Member for Sahtu. The Member for Hay River South. The Member for Thebacha. The Member for Yellowknife South. The Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please rise. All those abstaining, please rise. The results of the recorded vote, ten in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is carried. Bill 25 has had third reading.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

BILL 35:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATIONS ACT
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES), NO. 1, 2021-2022

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that Bill 35, Supplementary Appropriations Act (Operations Expenditures), Number 1, 2021-2022, be read for the third time. Mr. Speaker, I would request a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. The Minister's requested a recorded vote. Motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour, please rise.

RECORDED VOTE

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Rutland): The Member for Yellowknife South. The Member for Yellowknife Centre. The Member for Hay River South. The Member for Thebacha. The Member for Nahendeh. The Member for Sahtu. The Member for Hay River North. The Member for Kam Lake. The Member for Frame Lake. The Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please rise. All those abstaining, please rise. The results of the recorded vote, ten in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is carried. Bill 35 has had third reading.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Rutland):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Orders of the day for Thursday, October 14th, 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 the Commissioner's address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of committees on review of bills
13. Reports of standing and special committees
14. Tabling of documents
15. Notices of motion
16. Motions
17. Notices of motion for first reading of reading of bills
18. First reading of bills
19. Second reading of bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters.
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third reading of bills
23. Orders of the day

MR. SPEAKER: Colleagues, before we end the day, I just want to take a few moments to thank everyone who has made this sitting possible, especially our interpreters, mahsi cho. Our contractors who help us keep this place running smoothly. We couldn't do this work without you.

---Applause

I also want to thank each of you. I know this was not a long sitting but there were long days in committees, in the House, and together we were

able to get a lot done. I thank each of you for your hard work and dedication. You should be proud of the work you do here. I know I am proud to be a part of it.

Colleagues, this House will not sit again until the fall. But I know we will all be busy. The work of government and committees and all MLAs will continue so we can continue to serve our constituents and all residents of the territory.

Although we will remain busy in our roles as MLAs, regular Members, and Members of the Executive Council, I remind Members to take some time to take care of themselves and to enjoy the company of those closest to us. Our jobs require a great deal of sacrifice from our family and closest friends. Please take time to let them know how much we appreciate their efforts and sacrifice.

I know many people are looking forward to enjoying our beautiful northern summer. I certainly am. For those of you who will be travelling, please do so safely. For those of you who will be out on the land, please remember to do so with great respect for our natural environment. Recent news of travel exemptions that would allow travel to and from the Yukon is welcoming news, especially for the residents of my region in the Beaufort Delta and the northern-most communities in the territory. We can finally see some light at the end of the tunnel. With the expected update on the Emerging Wisely plan expected next week, we are looking forward to more good news. Although some restrictions may be easing, I would like to remind all Members and all residents to continue their safe hygiene practices and physical distancing and to follow all orders of the chief public health officer. We must all do our part to help keep the territories safe and to protect each other, especially our most vulnerable populations. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day. Oh, already, sorry.

This House stands adjourned until Thursday, October 14th, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

---Adjournment

The House adjourned at 12:21 p.m.

