



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
**LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY**

2nd Session

Day 129

19th Assembly

HANSARD

Monday, October 31, 2022

Pages 4919 - 4952

The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker

Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.
(Mackenzie Delta)

Hon. Diane Archie

(Inuvik Boot Lake)
Deputy Premier
Minister of Infrastructure
Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation

Mr. Ronald Bonnetrouge

(Deh Cho)

Ms. Caitlin Cleveland

(Kam Lake)

Hon. Paulie Chinna

(Sahtu)
Minister responsible for Housing Northwest Territories
Minister responsible for Homelessness
Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board
Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

Hon. Caroline Cochrane

(Range Lake)
Premier
Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs
Minister responsible for the COVID-19 Coordinating Secretariat

Mr. Richard Edjericon

(Tu Nedhe-Willideh)

Hon. Julie Green

(Yellowknife Centre)
Minister of Health and Social Services
Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities
Minister responsible for Seniors

Mr. Jackie Jacobson

(Nunakput)

Mr. Rylund Johnson

(Yellowknife North)

Ms. Frieda Martselos

(Thebacha)

Ms. Katrina Nokleby

(Great Slave)

Mr. Kevin O'Reilly

(Frame Lake)

Ms. Lesa Semmler

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

Mr. Rocky Simpson

(Hay River South)

Hon. R.J. Simpson

(Hay River North)
Government House Leader
Minister of Education, Culture & Employment
Minister of Justice

Hon. Shane Thompson

(Nahendah)
Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources
Minister of Lands
Minister responsible for Youth

Hon. Caroline Wawzonek

(Yellowknife South)
Minister of Finance
Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, including responsibility for the Business Development and Investment Corporation
Minister responsible for the Status of Women

Ms. Jane Weyallon-Armstrong

(Monfwi)

Officers

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Tim Mercer

Deputy Clerks

Mr. Glen Rutland
Ms. Kim Wickens

Committee Clerks

Mr. Michael Ball
Ms. Jennifer Franki-Smith
Ms. Cynthia James

Law Clerks

Ms. Sheila MacPherson
Mr. Toby Kruger

Box 1320

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Tel: (867) 767-9010 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784

<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	4919
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	4919
Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism Update (Green)	4919
Update on Inuvik Airport Projects (Archie).....	4920
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	4920
Adult Support Workers (Rocky Simpson).....	4920
Suicide Prevention (Nokleby).....	4921
Cell Phone Service (Weyallon-Armstrong).....	4921
Forms of Financial Security (O'Reilly).....	4921
Northwest Territory Metis Nation Claim (Martselos)	4923
Halloween Safety (Johnson).....	4923
Recreation Programs for Youth (Jacobson).....	4924
ParticipACTION Community Challenge (Thompson).....	4924
Remembrance Day (Cochrane).....	4925
Halloween (Bonnetrouge)	4925
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	4926
ORAL QUESTIONS	4926
WRITTEN QUESTIONS	4938
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	4939
NOTICES OF MOTION	4939
Motion 67-19(2) – Appointment of Sergeant-at-Arms	4939
MOTIONS	4940
Motion 64-19(2) – Suicide Prevention.....	4940
Motion 65-19(2) – Referral of Tabled Document 681-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 26-19(2): Report on the Child and Family Services Act – Lifting Children, Youth and Families: An All of Territory Approach to Keeping Families Together, to Committee of the Whole	4944
Motion 66-19(2) - Referral of Tabled Document 694-19(2): Northwest Territories Coroner Service 2021-2022 Early Release of Suicide Data and Minister's Statement 264-19(2): Response to the NWT Chief Coroner's Report on Suicide, to Committee of the Whole	4945
NOTICES OF MOTION FOR THE FIRST READING OF BILLS	4915

Bill 65 – Builders Lien Act	4945
Bill 66 – An Act to Amend the Property Assessment and Taxation Act.....	4945
Bill 63 – An Act to Amend the Fire Prevention Act.....	4945
Bill 64 – An Act to Amend the Child Daycare Act.....	4945
FIRST READING OF BILLS	4945
Bill 60 – An Act to Amend the Petroleum Products and Carbon Tax Act	4945
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	4946
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	4952
ORDERS OF THE DAY	4952

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Monday, October 31, 2022****Members Present**

Hon. Diane Archie, Mr. Bonnetrouge, Hon. Paulie Chinna, Ms. Cleveland, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Hon. Julie Green, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Martselos, Ms. Nokleby, Mr. O'Reilly, Ms. Semmler, Hon. R.J. Simpson, Mr. Rocky Simpson, Hon. Shane Thompson, Hon. Caroline Wawzonek, Ms. Weyallon-Armstrong.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms. Lesa Semmler):
Welcome Members. Ministers' statements.
Minister of Health and Social Services.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 283-19(2):
CULTURAL SAFETY AND ANTI-RACISM
UPDATE**

HON. JULIE GREEN: Madam Speaker, over the last decade, the Department of Health and Social Services has been working on improving cultural safety for the Indigenous communities and peoples of the Northwest Territories. This critical work underpins everything the health and social services system does to redress the legacy of colonialism and anti-Indigenous racism that has so deeply affected Indigenous communities.

This fall, a distinct cultural safety and anti-racism division was established to create a system-wide environment where Indigenous peoples feel safe, respected, and free of racism and discrimination when accessing health and social services.

To reach this goal, all staff need a foundational understanding of the ways in which anti-Indigenous racism is experienced within health and social services. We know that racism creates barriers that prevent Indigenous peoples from seeking necessary healthcare. Racism is contributing to outcomes such as a shorter life expectancy and higher rates of suicide, mental health and addiction issues, as well as chronic diseases. We know that training all service providers about cultural safety and anti-racism is imperative.

Madam Speaker, the department launched mandatory training for all health and social services system staff and since June 2021,

240 staff have participated in the training sessions. The training takes place in-person over two days and is delivered by Indigenous guest speakers and a staff team that is primarily Indigenous.

Another significant initiative to improve client and community experience is the introduction of Indigenous patient advocates. Four senior Indigenous patient advocates have been hired and are completing orientation and training in preparation for the launch of the program later this year. The Indigenous patient advocates will work in NWT acute care facilities in Inuvik, Fort Smith, Hay River, and Yellowknife. Madam Speaker, they will support Indigenous clients to address their concerns, complaints, and questions, while bridging culture and language barriers.

Part of improving the relationship-based health and social services system in which cultural safety is included and valued is the design of a new social innovation project called the Baby Bundle. The Baby Bundle is available to all parents with children up to six months. The bundle contains clothing, toiletries, and a tote bag that turns into a backpack. The program has been in development for several years and tried out with parents in four regions to ensure it contains the right items. The bundle is combined with prenatal care and well-child visits. These visits are critical to improving health outcomes and positive early childhood development indicators for all children. This initiative also offers an opportunity for healthcare providers to build relationships with families, to engage in discussion and decision-making, and to share culture-centered approaches to welcoming a new child to the world. The program was launched the week before, and 600 Baby Bundles will be available across the NWT this year.

Madam Speaker, we are working to bring the NWT to the forefront of change and innovation in the way the health and social services system responds to the needs and priorities of Indigenous clients and helps them feel confident about cultural safety and comfort that results in improvements in health

outcomes for future generations. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Ministers' statements. Minister for Infrastructure.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 284-19(2):
UPDATE ON INUVIK AIRPORT PROJECTS

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Madam Speaker, making strategic infrastructure investments is a priority of 19th Legislative Assembly. Given our vast territory, airports are indeed strategic infrastructure to the North. Residents across the territory depend on air travel for the movement of goods and people, medevacs, search and rescue operations, forest fire response, and much more. Our airports also contribute to the economic and social well-being of Northwest Territories residents. The GNWT is making major improvements to Inuvik's Mike Zubko Airport, a key part of the territory's multi-modal transportation system. The improvements at this airport, I will speak about today, are the runway extension and civil infrastructure projects.

Madam Speaker, the civil infrastructure improvements will make the airport more resilient to the effects of climate change and help protect the permafrost below the airport. Plans to extend the runway by 3,000 feet, as well as upgrades to the lighting, navigational and military aircraft landing systems, it will support the Department of National Defence in meeting its obligations under the North American Aerospace Defence Command Treaty. Collaboration and partnership is an important part of how we do business in the North.

Madam Speaker. The GNWT is committed to maximizing employment and training opportunities for residents and businesses in the Beaufort Delta region. We have partnered on this project with Delta North Alliance Construction Incorporated, which is an Indigenous-owned and operated joint venture comprised of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Gwich'in Tribal Council, and EGT Northwind Limited.

In order to maximize local involvement, several work packages associated with the construction of the Inuvik Airport runway extension and civil infrastructure projects were created. In September 2021, a first work package for clearing and grubbing was awarded for \$1.7 million. This work began in January 2022 and is now substantially complete.

More recently, the GNWT and the Government of Canada reached an agreement with the

joint venture to advance additional work packages. A \$41.2 million contract for drainage, earthworks, and quarry material production, was awarded in July 2022. The joint venture started this construction work last month.

Madam Speaker, this is an important project, both for Inuvik and the Northwest Territories. Like many capital projects in the Northwest Territories and across the country, it has been impacted by inflation and market escalations due to supply chain issues that have increased project costs beyond the original budget.

Current projections for the project have identified a shortfall of approximately \$90 million and discussions with the GNWT and Canada continue to address this funding gap.

The GNWT will be responsible for a portion of the increased costs for the civil improvements.

We are working through these challenges with our partners, and the July agreement reached between the joint venture, the GNWT and Canada, is an example of how this collaborative approach allows us to advance this project.

The GNWT remains committed to doing all it can to see that this project is a success and benefits not just the people of Inuvik and the Beaufort Delta but the entire Northwest Territories. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Minister's statements. Members' statements. Member for Hay River South.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1249-19(2):
ADULT SUPPORT WORKERS

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, as we see the population of seniors and homelessness increase in Hay River and throughout the NWT, it is important we prepare our healthcare system to ensure trained personnel are in place to provide the health supports required.

Madam Speaker, we talk about keeping seniors in their homes and, as I stated previously, although an admirable expectation it is not realistic. This government expects to keep seniors in their homes, which may well work for those who have the financial resources, are healthy, mobile, and have family support. For those not in that position, there is a reliance on our understaffed health and home care services.

Unfortunately, home care does not provide 24/7 wraparound services thus placing that responsibility squarely on the shoulders of family. Madam Speaker, with increasing pressures on families just to keep up with the cost of living, it now requires two wage earners in the family to place food on the table while covering the necessities of life.

I have talked to seniors who do not want to place the additional responsibility of health and home care on their children who are already overburdened with the responsibilities that come with employment and raising a family.

Madam Speaker, we as government need to work towards identifying those gaps that currently exist within the system and fill them. We need to engage families, with their support identify solutions that will provide their loved ones with a quality of life each has earned. We must not forget that we are in a housing crisis and that there are persons who find themselves homeless and are falling through the cracks and, because of it, are not receiving proper care. To help them, we need to be out of our offices and on the street reaching out.

Madam Speaker, I recognize a pressing need in the community of Hay River for medical social workers, to take on the responsibility of supporting those who are vulnerable and require wraparound health, mental health, and a multiple of social care services. This work, as the Minister of health previously stated, is done off the corner of the desk of employees with other responsibilities and that is not acceptable. Our approach needs to change. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statements. Member for Great Slave.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1250-19(2):
SUICIDE PREVENTION

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, on October 3rd, the chief coroner released the 2021-2022 Early Release of Suicide Data Report to raise the alarm on the escalating rate of suicide in the territory. There had already been more suicides by September of this year than in any year total in the previous two decades.

Madam Speaker, Indigenous youth that identify as male were among the majority of those who turned to suicide due to the stress of their daily life. What does this say about the state of our territory and the kinds of resources, supports, and opportunities the government is providing for Indigenous young men to succeed and live healthy lives?

Madam Speaker, I have had the privilege of working with an Indigenous youth in my constituency. With his permission, I want to share a little of his story to acknowledge the difficulties he experiences and to honour the incredible strength and resilience he has shown to overcome these challenges.

Madam Speaker, this youth is intelligent, a determined student and a star athlete. He has the potential to be anything he wants in life yet he continuously faces barriers to his health, well-being, and dreams because he, as a youth, has lacked a stable home environment and financial resources. This is not his fault, Madam Speaker, but he is being punished for it.

When he reaches out for help, this youth faces a myriad of barriers that would be overwhelming for an adult to navigate let alone someone as young as 15. For example, what is for many a simple act of registering for an athletic tournament, for him is a series of "nos" to his funding requests because he is not eligible or does not qualify for financial support. Despite these disappointments, he always moves forward and finds ways to support his own aspirations, including through working hard at his part-time job while maintaining his studies.

Madam Speaker, it is important to understand the life experiences of this youth and those of so many other Indigenous male youths. Understanding these life experiences would allow the government to design programs and create resources that could provide critical supports to young Indigenous males throughout their lives. The time to support Indigenous male youth, and all youth, is now.

Madam Speaker, every statistic provided by the chief coroner is a person who was loved by their family and their community. So today I share, out of respect and care for them, and all youth in our territory. The youth are our future leaders and they deserve all the support we can give them to realize their dreams and potential. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Members' statements. Member for Monfwi.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1251-19(2):
CELL PHONE SERVICE

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Madam Speaker, it has been said in this House many times, and I stand up again, to stress that cell service is greatly needed on Highway No. 3 between Boundary Creek and Behchoko.

Madam Speaker, on Highway No. 3 there is very little shoulder on the side of the road to pull over if you need. This has been the cause of many fatal accidents. There is no room on the road to stop safely, and you are at major risk of being hit by oncoming traffic if you have to get out of your vehicle. Just this past weekend on Saturday, October 29th, we witnessed another accident - a small car collided with a truck carrying wood. It was dark; it was in an area without cell service. Luckily, Madam Speaker, this collision was not fatal. However, with wood spilled all over the entire highway, it was a major traffic hazard.

Madam Speaker, there was no ambulance, no RCMP on the scene, because there was no cell service to call for help. A young man was in shock. He was in pain and caught a ride back to Behchoko to the healthcare centre in Behchoko. It's shocking to hear, Madam Speaker, when the RCMP met the young man at the health centre, he was accused of leaving the scene.

To avoid all the unnecessary accidents which have taken so many lives and injured many others, leadership in the Tlicho region have been advocating to the Government of the Northwest Territories for years to establish cell service along Highway No. 3 and to make safety along this road a priority.

The Minister of Finance recognized previously in this House that the lack of cell coverage is a safety risk but, Madam Speaker, I am not seeing a capital budget that delivers more cell towers along Highway No. 3. Just this past summer in the news, an ultrafast electric vehicle charger will be available in Behchoko by 2024 at a cost of \$624,000. I am aware this is a federal government project.

Madam Speaker, we asked for cell service and outhouses; we got an electric vehicle charger for hybrid cars. Madam Speaker, it is very ironic that people in Behchoko do not drive electric cars. Madam Speaker, can I have unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

Madam Speaker, it is very ironic that people in Behchoko do not drive electric cars. People have enough struggle to find a house to live in. Not only that, with the high cost of living and low average income in the NWT people cannot afford it. Our region has been advocating for improvements in road safety and outhouses along our roadways, Highway No. 3 and Tlicho Highway, which the Government of the Northwest Territories has not been able to advance but they can build an electric vehicle

charger station. I will have questions for the Minister of Finance later today. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1252-19(2):
FORMS OF FINANCIAL SECURITY

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madame la Presidente. On October 21st, I volunteered for an interview with staff from Ernst & Young and the Department of Lands concerning a contract to consider whether GNWT should accept surety bonds as a form of financial security for environmental disturbances caused by industrial and commercial operations. I have raised concerns in this House in the past about this form of financial security and whether it is truly unconditional, irrevocable, and immediate.

Members may recall that for the first time in 2014, the GNWT accepted surety bonds backed by insurance companies for the Ekati Mine rather than irrevocable letters of credit from Canadian chartered banks, or cash. In the past, the federal government accepted some dubious forms of financial security, including promissory notes that were not guaranteed in any way, mining properties, and a hydro dam. Our government failed after devolution to ensure the public was protected from reclamation liabilities at Cantung, Cameron Hills and Prairie Creek. I have said it before, it's time that the Auditor General is called to help prevent further public liabilities.

This takes me back to surety bonds. It's not clear to me why the Department of Lands is focused on surety bonds for the convenience of the mining industry when so much other work is required to prevent further public liabilities. This work should include:

- Public reporting on the amount, form and expiry dates for financial security held by GNWT;
- Publicized reasons for decision when a Minister accepts anything other than cash for financial security;
- Making financial security mandatory, along with regularly-updated closure and reclamation plans and up-to-date financial security calculation tools;
- Prevention of perpetual care situations and industry-funded mechanisms to manage such sites;

- Restrictions on ministerial discretion to accept dodgy forms of financial security; and
- Development of legislation, policy, and capacity within GNWT to prevent further public liabilities.

I will have questions for the Minister of Lands later today on why our government is poised to accept surety bonds as an acceptable form of financial security. Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Members' statements. Member for Thebacha.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1253-19(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORY METIS NATION
CLAIM

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, today I'm going to speak about two major Indigenous government agreements residing within the Thebacha constituency.

First, Madam Speaker, the NWT Metis Nation has been negotiating with the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada, for at least 26 years, in an effort to eventually reach a final self-government agreement. I have spoken several times about this claim throughout this term, and there seems to have been little done in advancing, let alone finalizing this claim. I know the leadership of the NWT Metis Nation is keen on advancing this agreement as much as possible within the life of this Assembly. There is a concern among NWT Metis leadership about the lack of progress on these negotiations.

In addition, Madam Speaker, 2022 marks 20 years since Salt River First Nation's Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement was signed. Since that time, the agreement in its entirety has not been fully implemented by the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada. There are still sections of that agreement which remains outstanding and have not been settled in trilateral negotiations with the territorial and federal governments. Salt River wants to receive the same treatment as any other reserve in southern Canada. Negotiations on the details on funding for core infrastructure and the development of the Salt River Reserve is a primary goal for Salt River, and they remain hopeful to advance that before the end of the 19th Assembly. I will continue to push for the advancement of both the NWT Metis claim, along with the full implementation of the Salt River Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement.

Ultimately, Madam Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories has a tall order that it needs to fulfill because there are at least 15 self-government agreements or treaty land entitlement agreements that are concurrently working on. It appears that the resources of Executive and Indigenous Affairs may be spread too thin since they have several fronts they are negotiating on. I do have some suggestions that EIA ought to consider to help in this area.

For example, instead of working on all 15 claims at once, they should identify the claims closest to finalization, and focus on whatever the two or three those may be, and work to advance and finalize those within the life of one Assembly. Madam Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

In closing, Madam Speaker, I think Executive and Indigenous Affairs needs to manage its workload and expectations a little better so they can have a better track record on settling the many outstanding land claims and self-government agreements that exist within the Northwest Territories. I think Indigenous governments would be open to this so they can see more overall progress from the Government of the Northwest Territories to show for itself. I will have questions for the Premier at the appropriate time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Member for Yellowknife North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1254-19(2):
HALLOWEEN SAFETY

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would just like to wish everyone a Happy Halloween, including all the children going out trick or treating tonight, and ask everyone stay safe. And Madam Speaker, you know, no one's going to poison your Canadian or put any razor blades in it - that's all nonsense - but you know what people should watch out for? That's cars, Madam Speaker, because today is the most deadly day for pedestrians and children are three times more likely to get hit by a car today than any other day. So I just remind all drivers to slow down - the roads are slippery, watch out for children, do your best to avoid driving if there's a bunch of trick or treaters out there if you can.

And now speaking of driving, Madam Speaker, I am going to have questions for the Minister of Infrastructure on whether we could open that DMV for a few extra hours sometime. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1255-19(2):
SUICIDE PREVENTION

MS. CLEVELAND: Madam Speaker, we live in a time where we have outpaced our demand for mental health professionals. I get calls from constituents unable to put their names on waitlists for youth psychologists and concerned by the demand on in-school ones. But if our youth aren't speaking with professionals, then who are they speaking with?

Suicide is a common conversation among our youth. In the NWT, roughly 160 to 180 people use hospital services every year following suicide attempts. Some of these people are youth and some were brought in to emergency by their peers. In North America, 19 out of 20 suicide attempts will fail, but people who try and fail are 37 times more likely to succeed the second time. Each failed attempt is the gift of a second chance. We need to be ready and resourced for second chances. And if our youth are providing peer support, then we need to prepare them for supporting roles and, devastatingly at times, survivor roles.

A few weeks ago, I travelled to Iceland and had the privilege of listening to inspired young adults speak passionately about mental health and youth agency. But I wasn't listening to youth from Iceland. I was listening to Dene, Inuit, Gwich'in, and Metis youth from the Northwest Territories. Our youth are powerful, insightful, and inspired. So we don't need to look to other parts of the world for answers; we need to look down the street and pass the microphone to the voices we are losing.

Hope grows when we have conversations about our paths to a new day. For things to get better, we need to see the role we play in our own tomorrow and that comes with agency. To have agency means to have power in our own future.

I commend the community of Tuktoyaktuk who started the conversation about what next by passing the microphone to their youth and asking them what they needed; what they wanted. But what is this government's next step to pass the power to NWT youth, to empower them to share ideas and access funding themselves? To our youth, living another day takes courage and hanging on to an ounce of hope takes strength. It will get better and you are worth life. I will have questions about how this government is

empowering youth to have agency over their mental health. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1256-19(2):
RECREATION PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Today I want to talk about suicide prevention across our territory. I am bringing to the House to recognize and honour all the youth that we lost to suicide throughout the year. Madam Speaker, when we lose a youth, the whole community grieves and the whole region grieves together.

Madam Speaker, our youth face difficulties in life. We need to do more for the youth, for our communities to come together to heal and be healthy. Engaging with youth, our leaders ask them directly what do you want to see in a community? They told us exactly what they wanted. In trying our best to provide that and those opportunities for them, we hosted basketball tournaments, hockey tournaments, ping-pong tournaments, painting classes, and crafts and activities in our communities.

Madam Speaker, sports tournaments across the Delta should be started up again in our school system. Recreation should be available for all youth so we could have things to look forward to, positive outlets in life, gives us a chance to see our friends and strengthen the bonds in our community. Madam Speaker, there's a lot we can do for our youth but we have to do it. We can't just talk about it anymore. It could save a life, not just in my communities that I represent but across our territory.

Madam Speaker, I'd like to bring this topic to the NWTAC, Association of Communities, to work together with our government to make a path forward for our youth and our communities to make it healthier. Madam Speaker, working together for a better future of the Northwest Territories we have to come together to get that done and stop suicide. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1257-19(2):
PARTICIPATION COMMUNITY
CHALLENGE

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, on July 26 I received an email from the president and CEO of ParticipACTION informing me that the

community of Fort Simpson was crowned the NWT's most active community. In this email, they were proud to announce that the ParticipACTION Community Better Challenge concluded with Fort Simpson being crowned Northwest Territories' most active community - taking home a prize of \$15,000 to go toward local physical activities and sport initiative. The Community Better Challenge is a national physical activity initiative that encourages everyone in Canada to get active together throughout the month of June.

This year was the third edition of the challenge which saw more than 600,000 participants track over 500 million minutes throughout June. Madam Speaker, with the pandemic leading to further decline in national physical activity levels, the challenge provided a unique opportunity to help the country enjoy the benefits that of physical activity and sports provide, not only for our individual physical and mental health but also in building stronger, healthier, and more vibrant communities. Some of the highlights they advised me:

- Over 3,000 Northwest Territories participated representing nine communities.
- Together, Northwest Territories tracked over 2,838,000 physical activity minutes over the month of June. Fort Simpson tracked more than 1,527,000 physical activity minutes.
- \$9,000 in grants were given to 12 organizations in Northwest Territories with a focus on supporting organizations and events that promoted inclusivity and social connection for equity-deserving groups.

Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the residents of Fort Simpson for tracking over 50 percent of the NWT's time. To all the residents and organizations that were part of this event - well done, let's continue being active for the rest of the year. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Members' statements. Member for Range Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1258-19(2):
REMEMBRANCE DAY

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Today I will deliver my first of four Member's statements this week about Remembrance Day. Since this is the last session of the 19th Legislative Assembly we will get to commemorate the sacrifices made in the name of freedom, I wanted to take this

week to talk about a number of themes that I feel are important to recognize.

As many know, I am the daughter of a veteran of the Second World War. My father went off to war in the name of freedom, one of many Canadians who fought for the ability to have the freedoms and society that we have today.

Remembrance Day is a time to remember those who lost their lives, have been injured in the line of duty, those who struggle with the physical and mental wounds of combat, and the many families and communities that were left behind to pick up the pieces of their lives impacted by war. We remember all you have done and thank you for all the sacrifices you have made so Canadians can live in the country that we do. It's the ultimate debt that we cannot repay.

Madam Speaker, as the years go by, the impact and significance of the two world wars is left to textbooks and popular culture to teach current and future generations about what their parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents endured, so they could have the life they have today. While war and conflict continue to happen around the world to this day, the context to what it is happening is different than some of the more historical conflicts the world has experienced. That's why it's important we continue to honour this day.

Young people and future generations need to know why they have the freedoms they do today. We need to do our part to share our experiences and those of our family members who went away to war, and to honour the memories of those who did not come home. Madam Speaker, Lest we Forget. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1259-19(2):
HALLOWEEN

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, every year at this time our society celebrates a ghoulish tradition - Halloween night. All schools hold Halloween costume parties, games, and there's prizes for the scariest costumes. For the children, there is excitement going trick or treating from house to house to collect all sorts of candies. Parents, I warn you, it is for your kids. Equally excited are the adults who have their own entertainment night at local establishments.

Madam Speaker, that was the first time I saw a ghost going from one ditch and across to the

other ditch and back again and that was the whole length of the road; which reminds me, the man was in the hospital on Halloween for a series of medical tests - the last test had left his tummy upset. After making many false alarm trips to the bathroom, he decided that the fifth false trip would be his last and just stay in bed from now on. Then he had to go again, and this time it was the real deal and the bedsheets were covered in brown matter. This was very embarrassing for the man. So he jumped up, gathered up the bedsheets into a large ball and threw them out the nearest open hospital window.

A mixed martial arts fighter was walking to the hospital to visit an injured training partner when the ball of sheets landed on him. He started screaming, punching, and kicking his legs wildly as hard as he could, which left the soiled sheets in a tangled pile at his feet. As the fighter stood there staring down at the sheets, trying to work out what just happened, a hospital security guard, who just witnessed the whole incident, walked up and asked, are you okay? Still staring down at what just attacked him, the fighter replied, I think I just beat the crap out of a ghost. Have a Happy Halloween, everyone. Mahsi.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Great Slave.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I can't exactly see everyone but it's my understanding that Avery Parle and other members of the union are here visiting us today, so I would like to welcome and thank them for coming. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'd like to recognize -- oh, yeah, I can see them now. Julianne Fuller, the mother of one of the pages, and also Pierre Benoit Rondeau Chalifoux who is the chaperone for the pages. And I'd like to recognize two of the pages from Hay River that are here, Jackson Fuller and Francis Cook, and they're both from Ecole Boreale. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Recognition of visitors in the gallery. I too would like to welcome Julie Fuller. She used to be in Inuvik so past resident of Inuvik. Welcome. I'm in a different capacity today, so.

Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Acknowledgements. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 1259-19(2):
ADULT SUPPORT WORKERS

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Speaker, along with the number of adults on the street who are living with various health and addiction-related issues, we also have those with similar issues living in isolation with minimal or no supports. Madam Speaker, it is important medical social workers are available to those individuals who are requiring access to wraparound service. Therefore, Madam Speaker, can the Minister of health give us an idea of what wraparound health supports are available to assist the most vulnerable, which includes seniors, those living with disabilities, and those who are homeless? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member for the question. So adult services supports case management of people with disabilities, including those who may have addictions and mental health challenges. These positions aren't necessarily social workers, but they could be other professionals who are able to provide case management support. It's important to say, however, that this position does not exist at the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority. They don't have a medical social worker or an adult social worker at this time. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, with staffing issues facing our healthcare system, will the Minister confirm if her department has considered the need to establish, for smaller communities, a shared medical social worker position that would provide wrap around services. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Madam Speaker. The medical social workers work within the acute care settings and so at this time they are not in communities, and we don't have a plan to expand them there. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, one can point to lack of housing as a contributor to addictions as well as physical and mental health issues. Can the Minister confirm her department's

working relationship with the department of housing to address the connection between the lack of housing and health? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I would like to confirm for the Member that we, in fact, do see the connection between homelessness and health, and for that reason, we have been participating in the development of a homelessness strategy being led by the NWT Housing Corporation. We believe that homelessness requires a whole-of-government approach. It's not usually just one reason that a person is homeless or one kind of service, like a house that they need; they need a number of different services. And so we are able and willing to participate in improving services to homeless population and look forward to seeing the homeless strategy when it's available. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, it is clear from the Minister's answer in this House last Friday that she is committed to the placement of two medical social workers in Hay River. I would ask the Minister if the funding for the positions would be long-term and secure going forward. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I think that would be the intention, but I can't commit to this funding. What the process is, is that Hay River Health and Social Services Authority needs to make a business case for the medical social workers and then submit it during the regular business planning cycle. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Great Slave.

QUESTION 1260-19(2):
SUICIDE

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. According to Statistics Canada, the national suicide rates are higher among Indigenous people than the non-Indigenous population in Canada. The NWT Office of the Chief Coroner 2021-2022 Early Release of Suicide Data Report does not include any data on race or ethnicity, and the absence of this data does not allow the government to target supports and resources to those who really need it. So can the Minister of Justice explain whether or not the chief coroner tracks this data by race or ethnicity? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister responsible for Justice.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So the information is currently not tracked. The coroner's office does ask families for information about ethnicity but not all families provide that information. So it's not a full data set. But I can't commit that the coroner's office to do something, but we can have that discussion and look further into it. Thank you.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. He kind of answered my next question, which was could we commit to trying to track that data as clearly if we don't understand the -- or can't characterize the extent of the issue, then we wouldn't be able to come up with some good solutions. Given the overrepresentation of Indigenous men in our criminal justice system, which suicide prevention strategies are being used in our correctional facilities and rehabilitation programs? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So obviously the staff are the people who are in direct contact with inmates in correctional facilities and staff are -- they receive training in applied suicide intervention skills, so the assist training that's been discussed in this House before. They also receive mental health first aid training, and this year they've moved to the mental health first aid northern peoples edition training. The intake process at corrections includes screening for suicide and mental health issues. There are psychologists, counsellors, and traditional counsellors in the correctional facilities, depending on which facility you are in. And there are a number of different programs as well that incarcerated individuals can access. Thank you.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I'm glad to hear that those supports are in place for people while they're in the criminal justice system or within the facilities themselves. Can the Minister speak to what's given or offered to inmates after they've left the facility as far as mental health and wellness counselling or supports go? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So once someone is released from a correctional facility, they often have to check in with probation officers, and those probation officers can provide additional support, often things that are maybe not even necessarily in the policy manual. You know, when you're dealing with people in real life situations, you might be providing supports that are outside of what is normally provided. But we don't have, I mean aftercare I guess, in the Northwest

Territories for people who are coming out of jail. The move towards the therapeutic model at the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre is moving in that direction where we are trying to give people the skills they need while they are incarcerated, and then hopefully begin to provide assistance afterwards as well so that they don't get back on the same track so they can maintain the progress that they've made. Thank you.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I'm glad to hear the Minister speaking about a change in the way that we're approaching things. There's definitely a lack of aftercare for people that are released from our correctional facilities. Can the Minister speak to anything that has been done in the last year, so that's innovative or different to the Northwest Territories when it comes to our vulnerable Indigenous men? Has there been something within the correctional system that he can point to as a success. Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So one of the major things that has happened in the past -- or just over a year -- I guess a year and two days ago was the new Corrections Act came into force, and that act restructures our correctional system with more of a focus on rehabilitation as opposed to punishment. We are still, you know, in the process of implementing that Act. It has only been a year, and much of that was COVID times so we haven't quite gotten to the point where I think we want to. But there's a recognition that doing the same old thing doesn't work, and so we are trying to move in a direction where we -- while we have people in the facilities, that we work with them and we help them so that they don't wind up back in there again. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Thebacha.

QUESTION 1261-19(2):
NEGOTIATIONS AND SETTLING CLAIMS

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I know the Premier is a very compassionate leader when it comes to Indigenous issues. But when you have so many claims to work on and cannot concentrate on two or three that can be done in a single term, that's a problem. I would like to see at least one claim finalized within this term since we have only one year left. Does the Premier agree? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Honourable Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I agree that I'd like to see at least one claim settled within the term of this government. We have been focusing on the relationship building that was a little bit fractured in some of the Indigenous governments. We took a beating with COVID. We had a couple years that we couldn't meet in person, so that affected. But we have been listening, and we have been working, and we do feel that we're close with a number of them, although there's three parties to every table. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MS. MARTSELOS: Madam Speaker, I understand at negotiations there are too many opinions. Speaking with one voice is extremely important when at negotiations. I've been there and done that. I'm also very respectful of the Indigenous leadership in their meaningful negotiations, and we must be able to mediate conclusions to some of their outstanding issues to succeed. Does the Premier agree with that? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's hard to disagree with things that are philosophical in nature so absolutely I agree that, you know, we need to mediate some conclusions to some of the outstanding issues. When I began my term, when I was able to meet with Indigenous governments and talk to them, two of the largest outstanding issues were the core principals and interests and then the other one was the publishing the mandate. We did both. We heard that those were the major issues, and so we published our mandates and we took away the core principles and interests, and yet we're still having difficulties at the tables. So Madam Speaker, what I've come to realize is that there's many issues at those tables. And so when you deal with what you think is a major issues three more pop up. So we're trying the best we can, Madam Speaker, but we don't give up trying. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MS. MARTSELOS: Madam Speaker, the negotiating team that goes to these negotiations must have a mandate and needs to be able to call people to make decisions, otherwise meetings later on will be months away and decisions are never made. That is how the federal government operates. The territorial government needs to follow the same standards and process with meaningful decisions. Does the Premier agree with that? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Again, I absolutely agree with that. The thing is, Madam Speaker, it's really important to recognize, like I said, that it's not as easy as just one person making decisions. There's three parties. When I had first heard about the key principles and the interests, like I said we took them off the table. But that didn't stop things. The point is that whenever I hear of a major issue at the tables, and I do get regular updates on every table that's going on, if we're close and there's a standing issue, then I will try to negotiate with the department and find out what is going on. I'll talk to Cabinet, because they're Cabinet decisions, to see if we can be a little bit more flexible. And we have been flexible in this government, Madam Speaker. But any time that we're close or that a chief or Indigenous government reaches out to me, I do my best to try to see if we can unblock the obstacle on our side. However, like I said, that doesn't always work. But we keep trying the best we can do. And I am certain that all of these claims eventually will be settled. It's just a matter of when. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Final supplementary. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Madam Speaker, negotiations and implementations of claims is probably the hardest task of this government. The will of the leader to help mediate the process is crucial to the outcome. Does the Premier agree with that? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I absolutely agree with that. I know that Northerners want to see faster progress on the negotiations, and we continue to work towards that. However, Madam Speaker, it's really important that all Members realize that this is about the Indigenous governments. This is their future. So sometimes when we want to hurry things, it may be at the detriment of all of our governments. So I have a mandate to make sure that I take care of the public government, that I try to meet Indigenous governments, that I'm honest with Indigenous governments, and we have clarity in all of the agreements we sign. And we'll continue to do that as we go forward. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 1262-19(2):
FORMS OF FINANCIAL SECURITY

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madame la Presidente. My questions are for the Minister of Lands. The department seems to have placed top priority in our request from the mining industry to use surety bonds as an acceptable form of financial security. Ernst & Young has apparently been contracted to tell the government that surety bonds are good financial security. So can the Minister tell us how much this contract with Ernst & Young is going to cost and when a report is going to be finished? Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister of ENR.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Lands. Sorry.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Lands/ENR. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Ernst & Young have been contracted to do research on the use of surety bonds as a form of financial security, including how they were used in other jurisdictions. GNWT's position continues to be that security must provide GNWT with immediate, unconditional, and revokable access to the full amount of the security. The contract value is approximately \$230,000, and the report is expected to be available early in 2023. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madame la Presidente. I'm still trying to pick up my jaw because I couldn't find the contract anywhere in the OpenNWT contract website. But Madam Speaker, I think the fix is our government seems to be poised to accept surety bonds without a real plan to prevent further public liabilities like Cameron Hills and Mactung. So can the Minister tell us why his department has identified surety bonds as the top priority when it comes to financial security in preventing further public liabilities? Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I think me and the Member are going to probably have to agree to disagree on this. The research of security bonds is only one of several initiatives that the department has undertaken related to securities. The department's top priority is the development and implementation of regulations under the Public Lands Act which will include provisions for land restoration and security. Surety bond review has been planned and aligned with work under the Public Lands Act regulations. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madam la Presidente. I want to thank the Minister for that. Let's start with some easy stuff. Our government spent millions to develop some sort of a tracking system for financial security. That's good, but none of that information's been made public in an easily accessible form. Can the Minister tell us whether and when this government will actually post that information in a publicly accessible format, like a financial security data base, on a GNWT website? Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The public lands requires public reporting on all securities held, and the department is currently reviewing how best to make that information available to the public. Information on security is also available on the land and water board's public registry. This aligns with the top priority of the department to develop and implement the regulations under the Public Lands Act. We need to get this important piece of legislation in force. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Final supplementary. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madam la Presidente. I want to thank the Minister for that. Now look, you don't need the regulations to start reporting financial security now. You don't need the regulations; just start doing it. So I know that our government has a protocol with some Indigenous governments around co-development of lands and resources legislation and regulations, and I support that process. However, our government seems to have forgotten that it must ensure that the public has a say in the development of legislation and regulations. More than eight years after devolution, there's been very little, if anything, from GNWT on preventing further public liabilities. So can the Minister tell us whether there's actually a plan for new legislation, regulations, policy, and capacity to prevent further public liabilities? Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, again, I appreciate the Member asking these questions. Madam Speaker, multiple departments are currently working to implement the GNWT's approach to the management of contaminated sites. The action plan for the approach includes several items related to the prevention of public liabilities. This plan includes legislative and regulatory amendments as well as working with the land and water boards to update policies and procedures. Items have been

completed including updated closure, cost estimate, guidelines, and a new estimate tool for land use permit securities. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Monfwi.

QUESTION 1263-19(2):
CELL PHONE SERVICE

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, before I proceed I want to make some clarifications, a correction to one of the sentence that I made earlier when I said we witnessed another accident, and I would like to correct that. We came upon another accident. So that's for clarification. Thank you.

Madam Speaker, an expression of interest was issued by Finance in 2021 to address the lack of cell service on Highway No. 3. Can the Minister provide an update on what has been accomplished since this time, what is the status of work to improve cell service on Highway No. 3? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the expression of interest allowed for an opportunity to do some costing and to understand the potential costs of installing cell towers along the highway. With that information in hand, that was the position that we were able to then give, which I think they were spoken to the House, that it looks at notwithstanding the capital expenses, which are themselves significant, there would also be an operations and maintenance expense of \$500,000 approximately every year and no other known source of funding other than that of the GNWT. And so in knowing what the scale and size of those costs are, there has not been any change in the decision of not including that in this year's capital. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Madam Speaker, does the Government of the Northwest Territories have a plan to implement cell towers between Yellowknife and Behchoko and when will it be implemented?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. There is no plan to implement cell towers between here and Behchoko. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Government of the

Northwest Territories can install electric charging stations by 2024. Can the Minister commit to providing cell service between Yellowknife and Behchoko by 2024? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the vehicle charging stations, or the level 3 charging stations that are going in to Behchoko, are a project that is administered through the Northwest Territories Power Corporation. They apply to the GHG Emissions Fund, which is a largely federally-funded initiative. They then apply and are able to get funds through that program. And this is in response, Madam Speaker, to the fact that the federal government is making it mandatory by 2035 that there be zero -- 100 percent, zero percent emissions vehicles sales. So they'll be a period of time when vehicles can still run without that but any new vehicles are going to have to be zero emissions. So, Madam Speaker, we do need to have a plan at this point in time to be taking that seriously, to be ready for it, and that's what Northwest Territories Power Corporation is doing. The funds that might be available for any and all other capital project, Madam Speaker, would go through the usual capital planning process, the initiatives, and be aligned to the mandate of the government. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you. Can the Minister provide information on how many electric vehicles are on the road in NWT; how many people in Behchoko drive electric vehicles; how many people drive electric vehicle on Highway No. 3? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I'll work with my colleague, the Minister of Infrastructure, to see what information can be provided. I can say that research went out regarding what might be done to help encourage the use of electric vehicles. Having more charging stations was one of the recommendations that came with that research. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 1264-19(2):
MOTOR VEHICLE SERVICES

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. You know, I made a promise to keep asking about this for the life of my four years, and I'm

hopeful one day that someone in the future Assembly takes it up and continues to ask too. But my question for the Minister of Infrastructure is there any hope of the hours of the DMV being altered so they, you know, are possibly open at any time outside of the government's normal 9 to 5 business hours? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, and I appreciate the Member continuing to ask questions, but my answers are going to continue to be the same. The Department of Infrastructure is not considering opening the Yellowknife DMV on the weekends. This would have significant costs, Madam Speaker, to double-fill these positions and additional security on the weekends. It would require two extra people to work all times for safety reasons. We already currently provide five days a week, by appointment and walk-ins. Many services are also available online, Madam Speaker. The work-life balance for our staff is so important, and walk-ins, many of these services are available online. One of the things that I want to say is the work-life balance for our staff is important, and I'm not willing to make them work on the weekends. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I understand that there was just recently a customer service review done at the Department of Motor Vehicles, and this kind of has led to us keeping the appointment-style model. But I'm curious whether there is a plan to move any more services online for the DMV? Thank you.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, many services are currently made online and are accessible any time of the day, including Saturdays. For example, you can book driver examinations; you can print out your driver's abstract; you can renew your vehicle registration; renew your driver's licence - all on the website, Madam Speaker. We are also investing in changes to the DMV services website so that we can improve the user experience for existing online services. These are upgrades that are anticipated to roll out by the end of this fiscal year. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 1265-19(2):
YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, my first set of questions, if we get through a couple, are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

On October 20th, the department issued a communique identifying renewed plans for the youth advisory committee. I'm wondering if the Minister can tell the House how the department plans to use this committee to provide agency to NWT youth? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So the youth advisory committee is something that I was hoping to establish early on in the life of this government. That was derailed by COVID. So we have reestablished it -- or we are in the process of reestablishing it. Hopefully there will be a meeting in this calendar year. And the purpose of this youth advisory committee is so that I can hear directly from youth. I have lots of discussions with staff, I have discussions with members of the general public, with MLAs, but I don't have a lot of discussions with actual students in the actual education system, let alone from all of the regions. So what this youth advisory committee would be would be two members from each education body, and they would gather, and we would have discussions about initiatives that ECE is undertaking and about other issues that are affecting them as youth, and mental health issues I'm sure will be on that agenda at some point. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, does the Minister set the agenda for each of the meetings, or does the Minister work with the youth to set the agenda for the meeting? Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So as this committee has not even been struck yet, we don't have a process for setting agendas. But I would love to hear from youth and know what they want to talk about. I don't want to tell them what they're going to talk about; I'd like to hear from them. We will be putting forward items obviously, but I would love it if the youth would put forward some agenda items themselves. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, is this committee solely to talk about issues, or will there be opportunity for youth to drive change within their communities? So will this committee also come potentially with the power to change

policy, the power to change or provide recommendations to school boards, to communities, and will it come with funding? Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So this is still -- as I said, we have not even struck the committee yet. So I think it will evolve into something that -- well, my hope is that it will evolve into something that provides the Minister of the day with information so that when they're making decisions, they have that perspective. And so in that way, that very direct way, youth will be able to drive policy change at the departmental level. I can't speak to the education body level because this is a Ministers advisory committee. But I will be sharing those recommendations with all of the different education bodies. There won't be funding for the youth to, I guess put on programs or whatever they might do with the funding, but the idea is that the voice of the youth will be part of the discussion about what needs to change, and will influence those changes. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Great Slave.

QUESTION 1266-19(2):
FERTILITY TREATMENT

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, my questions are for the Minister responsible for Human Resources. I wanted to follow up on my questioning of last week around fertility treatments and subsequent benefit payments. So can the Minister speak to whether or not fertility treatments of any sort are covered by the GNWT's employee benefits plan? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, our benefits plan is that of the public service, and we really don't determine the benefits. We rely on what is covered for by them as the insurer. At this point, Madam Speaker, it is my understanding that that is not a coverage that is within that plan. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I do appreciate that that's the current situation, but given the number of emails that I've received since I spoke about this topic last week, there does definitely seem to be an interest and a need amongst members of the GNWT. So could the Minister speak to whether or not she's been approached about

including fertility treatments in the benefits package. Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, no, I can't say that I have been directly requested to look into this other than, of course, here on the floor of the House. And certainly in that regard I'm live to the fact that it's an issue. But, again, it would not necessarily be something that we would direct. It would be a matter that we'd be looking at alongside the insurer. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Given that I did some rough calculation or number crunching there around how this actually would benefit the territory from a population growth perspective, can the Minister commit to looking at the numbers and seeing whether or not the cost benefit analysis does show that providing fertility treatments in the Northwest Territories would actually be good for our bottom line? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I certainly do keep in mind that growing a population is a significant benefit with respect to the territorial formula of financing. I'm not sure I'm going to take the tabletop math necessarily right now and make policy on that, but I'll certainly go back and see if the department wants to speak to, you know -- I know there was a motion that has previously been on this floor about looking at population numbers, whether including infertility treatments in the benefit plans for public servants is going to get us there. Again, Madam Speaker, I'm not sure I'll be in a position to respond to a policy request on that basis alone but can see if there's any other information on might be happening at the national level with the benefits plan that is used by us for public service. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Final supplementary. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the Minister for that answer. I will state that even a partial benefit to allow for either subsidy of the IVF treatment itself or the benefit -- the medical travel benefits or the per diems, any little bit would help. I've recently been contacted by people where it's \$20,000, and both partners have underlying conditions. They're looking at 60 to \$70,000 in order to have a baby likely. So more of a comment. If the Minister wants to respond, that's fine. Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, we are live

to the cost. There's a lot of different potential treatments that people may find very costly, things that are deemed as nonessential or elective that may not be covered through healthcare and may not be covered through GNWT public service insurance or any other private benefits insurance of which many companies do offer that. So, you know, again, that is part of the process of evolving, what we look at in terms of our benefits. At the moment, Madam Speaker, it is not included. Again, we do keep an eye on what's happening nationally. We keep an eye in contact with our insurer to ensure that we remain competitive in that space. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1267-19(2):
CHILD AND YOUTH CARE COUNSELLOR
PROGRAM

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Madam Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services put together the Child and Youth Care Counsellor Program, and this is a program that came out of actually talking to youth and finding out what they wanted and really having that conversation about mental health and how to fill that need. Given where this program is at now, I'm wondering what kind of work Health and Social Services is doing to evaluate this program? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Madam Speaker, I'd like to redirect that to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So I've had a number of conversations with the Minister of health about this program. Our officials have been meeting with each other, and we both have met with the education bodies. And what the result of all of those meetings are is a review. We've expedited a review of the program. We are looking at making some changes this year to address some of the issues that have been identified and coming up with a new model, hope to be implemented in the upcoming school year. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I appreciate the Member's response. How will youth be involved in this conversation and this review that's taking place? We heard that there's been conversations with the school bodies themselves, but these don't often include youth representatives and include youth voices. So how are youth going to be empowered to partake in this conversation? Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So earlier we talked about the Ministers youth advisory committee that we are putting together, and that's going to be the perfect avenue to have these discussions. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, the reason I started this conversation by asking to speak to the Minister of Health and Social Services was because I wanted to find out if there was an avenue for funding for what youth are looking for in their communities potentially through there. So the department of health has their suicide prevention fund, and currently to access that fund, you have to be with an NGO, you have to be with an Indigenous government. There's a list of about four or five places -- or people, rather, that can access that. But youth specifically, as individuals, are not part of that. And what I'm looking for is a way that youth can access funding in order to realize what they would like in their communities. And so I'm wondering if there's no funding available through the youth advisory council, how the department then sees it possible for youth to access funding to do what they want to do in their communities. Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. And as part of the review, there will be discussions with youth. And as I said, we are looking at how we can amend this model going forward. And if there are, you know, recommendations that we do some of the things that the Member is talking about, then we can definitely explore that. However, I don't want to just say youth will have money to pursue different programs because they're students; they don't necessarily have the time; they don't necessarily have the expertise, the connections to, you know, develop and roll out programs. So to just give students money without any sort of a structure might not be the best approach. It's actually our job as government. We are supposed to come up with those solutions to support the youth. We don't want to tell them what to do, we want to work with them to figure out what they need to

do -- or what they need, and then we are the ones who develop and implement those programs. Thank you.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I guess I kind of respectfully disagree because if that was the case then we wouldn't have funds like the Suicide Prevention Fund who ask communities to decide what they want to do, and we do pass over the money. Youth in the territory really -- or around the world is considered 29 and under. And there's some pretty inspiring and empowered people under the age of 29. And I had the opportunity to sit and listen to quite a few of them who have a lot of ideas of how to help one another and how to provide that peer support. So as part of this conversation, will the Minister be speaking with the youth advisory committee about what they need to provide that peer support in a healthy way since really they're already doing it. Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think that's a great suggestion, and I'm happy to have that conversation with the youth advisory committee. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 1268-19(2):
HIGHWAY EMERGENCY VEHICLE
VISIBILITY

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I just had to send a message to the Minister of Infrastructure to confirm she remembered a conversation we had on the weekend.

Our highway system -- everybody here is, you know, drives the highway systems at one time or another. We know our highways are narrow. We know that, you know, we get blowing snow. We get dust. And one of the things that we see, you know, occasionally, and from time to time, is we see emergency vehicles assisting people on -- you know, on the highways. And so what I guess I'd like to ask the Minister is the Minister aware of safety issues related to the visibility of emergency vehicles using amber lights only? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I spent the weekend with the MLAs in Hay River, and we

had lots of discussions so I was a little bit worried about which discussion we had because there were plenty, but we did have a conversation on -- you know, on the concern of the tow trucks that are out on the highway and some of the Alberta regulations versus the Northwest Territories regulations. So, yes, I'm aware of that. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So I am pleased that the Minister was listening. Is the Minister aware of the use of combination of amber and blue lights for tow trucks in Saskatchewan and Alberta, and they use that to increase safety when they're responding to accidents? Thank you.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So the research concludes that the amber light is the most viable combination in low light conditions as well as bad weather, you know, which is often when tow operators are doing their most dangerous work. So, yes, we are aware. And that is something that we can perhaps look at. I'll leave it at that, and I'll see what other questions he has. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So she's hitting 50 for 50 so we'll see if she passes the exam. I'd like to ask the Minister does our current legislation allow for the combination of lights to be changed? For instance, if tow trucks wanted to go to amber -- a combination of amber/blue, is that possible within current legislation? Thank you.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, that's a really good question. You know, this is something -- if Alberta is switching the regulation, we need to determine whether this is a regulatory change or a legislative change. Once we determine that and we could be able to determine what time -- how long this takes to get done, whether we have to do some consultation or whether we have to do some committee work. We just need to dig a little further into whether it's legislative or regulatory. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I'll save the Minister some time. Yes, you have to change the regulations, and you have to change the act, and I would ask you to change the act and allow for changes in light combinations to be set in regulation, and I think that you do have some changes coming up the Motor Vehicles Act this -- you know, fairly soon, and I would ask the Minister to commit to trying to incorporate this in that -- in those changes. Thank you.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, that is correct. I do have another change coming up to the Public Highways Act, and if this is something that we need to bring forward to this House, then we can do it. The motor vehicle equipment regulation is the prohibition on the blue versus amber light. So this is something that we can look into. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1269-19(2):
SUICIDE PREVENTION

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

In June of this year, I asked the Minister a series of questions in regards to people who presented at our hospitals and healthcare centres with suicide attempts or suicide ideations. And the Minister committed to taking my comments and concerns and asks around the supports that are provided to people away and into account and considering them. And so I'm wondering what changes have occurred to supports or responses to suicide attempts at our healthcare centres and hospitals in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you for the question. We are reviewing the suicide risk assessment tool, which has been in place since 2019, which NTHSSA staff use when someone comes to the hospital with suicidal ideation or a suicide attempt. The policy runs to ten pages and talks about the ways in which staff need to respond, who needs to be involved, and what kind of a safety plan the patient leaves with. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, in June I identified that safety plans don't always happen at health centres and hospitals when somebody presents with a suicide attempt. And so how does Health and Social Services now ensure that every suicide attempt receives a safety plan when they are at the hospital or the healthcare centre? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, this is the standard operating procedure, that a person leaves with a safety plan. I think that some of the confusion comes around having a standard diagnosis. Not everyone who comes in with

self-harm is recorded consistently in that way or with suicidal ideation. So they may not always fall into the category of the suicide risk assessment. So it depends on what kind of information is conveyed right at the beginning. But the safety plan is required. So if the Member knows of times that safety plans have not been given to people who have suicidal ideation or self-harm from suicide, then I encourage her to have them contact quality risk management. We're always interested in improving our services. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, one of the things that Health and Social Services introduced this year from headquarters are mental health subscription boxes. But these boxes, which I believe in September the theme of the box was suicide prevention, these boxes are not made available to people in healthcare centres or in hospitals. And so I'm wondering if that is a change that the Minister is willing to make? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I think it's fair to say that the youth subscription boxes have been more popular than we anticipated, so much so that we've made the resources available online to people who are not able to obtain one of the boxes. We are now evaluating the success of that program with a view to deciding how and when to expand it. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, might I start a new set of questions? Is that good?

DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are still at a follow up. Okay, oral questions. Member for Monfwi.

QUESTION 1270-19(2):
LUTSELK'E DENE FIRST NATION
CULTURAL CAMP

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is a question to the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

Madam Speaker, caribou is important to all the Indigenous people, you know, and it -- because it sustains us, and it -- for Tlicho people, it sustained us for thousands of years. And my people used to go out to the barren land for fall hunt. But since 2009, that has stopped, since that caribou restriction came into effect. My people, especially my elders, it is sad because many of my elders since 2009 have passed on, and many have never went back to barren land to go hunting since 2009 because of the caribou restriction in place.

Why? Why should we go back to barren land to go hunting? You know, I mean, we can't even go hunting so why should we go back to barren land? So many of the elders have that said that. So now it's good that, you know, Lutselk'e people they still practice -- they still carry on with their tradition of going hunting in barren land.

So I just wanted to ask the Minister -- it's good that I support that livelihood because my people never had a chance. My elders never had a chance to go back to go the barren lands since 2009, but slowly we're -- it's coming back. Our school just -- our Chief Jimmy Bruneau students went out to the barren land recently. So I really admire that. But I want to ask the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources if he will apologize to the Lutselk'e people, to Lutselk'e Dene First Nation. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Minister of ENR.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. I thank the Member for her beautiful Member's statement; I greatly appreciate that. In regards to the question, I've already told the Member from Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh and Member from Great Slave, I've reached out to the chief from Lutselk'e. We are right now having a conversation, and we're working together on this. So that's what I've made a commitment to and that's what I'm going to do. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister of ENR. It's going to be much easier once you're Minister of ENR/Lands. All right, Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: I want to ask the Minister how much did it cost to send in those helicopters to Lutselk'e and a SWAT team? Thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, they're officers, not a SWAT team. They were reacting to a tip and they went in there and they executed a warrant. This Member seems to want to make it sound illegal what the staff were doing. The staff did their job. As for the cost, the operational cost of how long it was, they waited an hour and 20 minutes before they even went into the camp. So we had to actually pay for that time as well. So if the Member wants to know, it's three hours. So whatever the operation of the helicopter time is, that's what it was. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Yes, I want to know the cost of sending, you know, helicopters. And -- okay, well SWAT team, ENR, they're like a SWAT team because, you know, they went in there. You watch it on the social media, you know, like harassing the elders and the young people in that -- a woman and child. So they are -- for me, I view them as a SWAT team. So thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I am going to have to disagree with the Member. She doesn't -- her definition of what is SWAT team is and what my definition of my officers that work for the Department of ENR do is totally different. So as I said, it was approximately three hours. So whatever the helicopter time was is what it was. But these are part of the jobs that we need to do. So as for the amount, it was three hours of what the cost is.

I just need to really stress with this mobile zone, she should reach out to her leadership and talk to the Wek'eezhii Renewable Resource Board, because they are the ones that work with us to develop this mobile zone. So if the Member doesn't want that mobile zone, she should really reach out to her leadership because I can tell you my conversations with her leadership and the Wek'eezhii Resource Board, they're very much about protecting the caribou in this. And as I said before, I've had a relationship with -- reached out to the chief from Lutselk'e, and we're working on something that where I will go in and meet with chief and council and elders to discuss this very topic. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: No, well I said SWAT team because it was retraumatizing for them in describing their experience with residential school and all that, and it was -- it was not a pleasant thing to see. So that's why I referred to them as a SWAT team. So that's just more of a comment. Thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I appreciate everybody has their own definition. But let's get it clear. It wasn't a SWAT team. There was two officers that came in, met with the people that were in the community. They came up. They waited an hour and 20 minutes before they even went and did their job. They worked with the people that were there. So as I said before, I am having a meeting with the chief and council and some elders in the community, and we are

having this very discussion about this. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1271-19(2):
NURSING BURSARIES

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, my questions are again for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

I questioned the Minister during this sitting in regards to bursaries for students who want to partake in the Aurora College nursing program, and I was happy to learn and to hear that Indigenous students and northern students are both open to access bursary programs for the Aurora College nursing program. So I'm wondering, though, if the Minister will allow southern students to access northern nursing bursaries to fill the remaining spots in the Aurora College nursing program to ensure that the Aurora College nursing program is fully subscribed every year. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, at this point, this is a brand new program, the bursaries actually are not going to be available to apply for until the winter of 2023, and at that point it will be possible to apply for them retroactively. So we don't have any information on the uptake to say whether it's possible to expand it to other populations. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, there are 30 spots every year available at the Aurora College nursing program. Every year there are Indigenous students who partake in it, and there are northern students who partake in it. Right now there are also people who are NWT residents who are not considered an Indigenous student or a northern student. They're a southern student because they have not lived more than half their life in the Northwest Territories. If there are spots still remaining in the nursing program, as in we have not met our max of 30 students, I'm wondering if Health and Social Services will take the necessary steps to expand their bursary program to ensure that every year we have a fully subscribed nursing program at Aurora College? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, it's worth noting

that this program is not only for registered nurses; it's also for people who are in allied professions including midwifery and physicians and so on. I find it impossible to make a commitment about extending the program without it ever having been introduced. But I do invite the Member to ask me about this again once it has been introduced. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, in a perfect world we would have 30 Indigenous students in the nursing program, or 30 Indigenous and northern students in the nursing program at Aurora College. So the budget ideally would allow us to max out the 30. So the budget really, in theory, is already there. So all I'm asking for is that we ensure that the Aurora College nursing program bursaries are fully subscribed every year to ensure that we have the biggest capacity of nurses, because as soon as we can say hey, we'll educate you in exchange for service, we have a guaranteed eight years of residency of these students. And if someone stays here for eight years, I find most often they'll stay here for a decade, or maybe two or three. That's fabulous. They meet somebody. They have families. They have friends. They make the North their home. So I'm wondering if the Minister will commit to please expanding the bursary program to students who are not northern or Indigenous students to fully subscribe the program? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the Member's passion for this. I am not going to change my answer. This program hasn't even launched, and the criteria -- the Member's asking for the criteria to be changed. We need to launch the program. And I invite her to come back to me with questions once it has been launched during the winter term. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Our time for oral questions has expired. Written questions. Member for Kam Lake.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 50-19(2): TREATING INFERTILITY

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

The Government of the Northwest Territories provides services to treat underlying medical conditions that cause infertility.

1. What medical conditions are approved?
2. I have constituents who have underlying medical conditions requiring treatment before fertility treatment is available, and it is not supported by the GNWT. So Who decides what conditions are recognized and which ones are not?
3. If a fertility specialist identifies a condition that needs to be addressed before in vitro fertilization treatment is possible, why does a Northwest Territories resident need a referral from a Northwest Territories physician? This is administratively burdensome and adds significant time to a process where timing very much matters. Will the Minister create a directive to medical travel to accept referrals from specialists outside of the territory rather than the current system that duplicates this process? And,
4. Given the question of equity of healthcare for birth givers, why are vasectomies and vasectomy reversals covered whereas fertility treatments for birth givers are not? Who decides what is medically necessary and what is not?

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Written questions. Member for Deh Cho.

WRITTEN QUESTION 51-19(2): HOUSING NORTHWEST TERRITORIES OFF-LOADING HOUSING UNITS TO FIRST NATIONS

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for Housing Northwest Territories:

1. Can the Minister explain the reason for offloading public housing units onto First Nations organizations?
2. As many are not high market communities, has the Minister explained the financial obligations and problems associated with being a landlord of public housing?
3. Treaty 11 of 1921 was to ensure free housing for First Nations peoples and hence First Nations housing was devolved to the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (now Housing Northwest Territories). Can the Minister provide an update on progress on this obligation? And,
4. The federal government's Rapid Housing Initiative states only 49 units for the

Northwest Territories. As these are 100 percent dollars, why is there such low application numbers for the Northwest Territories?

Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Replies to Commissioner's address. Petitions. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Report of standing and special committees. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for ITI.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 762-19(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES OIL AND GAS
ANNUAL REPORT 2021

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to table the following document: Northwest Territories Oil and Gas Annual Report 2021. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Tabling of documents. Minister of Justice.

TABLED DOCUMENT 763-19(2):
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE CORRECTIONS
SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Madam Speaker, I wish to table the following document: Department of Justice Corrections Service Annual Report 2021-2022. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Tabling of documents. Minister of Lands.

TABLED DOCUMENT 764-19(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES SURFACE
RIGHTS BOARD 2021-2022 ANNUAL
REPORT AND 2021-2022 AUDITED
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I wish to table the following document: Northwest Territories Surface Rights Board 2021-2022 Annual Report and the 2021-2022 Audited Financial Statements. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Tabling of documents. Member for Thebacha.

TABLED DOCUMENT 765-19(2):
19TH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SPECIAL
COMMITTEE ON TRANSITION MATTERS
TERMS OF REFERENCE

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I wish to table the terms of reference for the 19th Legislative Assembly Special Committee on Transition Matters. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Member for Thebacha.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 67-19(2):
APPOINTMENT OF SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I give notice that on Wednesday, November the 2nd, 2022, I will move the following motion:

Now therefore I move, second by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that Mr. Floyd Andrew Powder of Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, be recommended for appointment as sergeant-at-arms of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly by the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories has recommended by the Board of Management of the Legislative Assembly;

And further, that the Speaker be authorized to communicate the effective date of the appointment to the Commissioner;

And furthermore, that the Legislative Assembly expresses its gratitude to Mr. Brian Thagard for his many years of loyal and dedicated service.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Members, we're going to take a short ten-minute break.

---SHORT RECESS

Motions

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Kam Lake.

MOTION 64-19(2):
SUICIDE PREVENTION,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker,

WHEREAS there has been an alarming number of suicides in the Northwest Territories in 2022;

AND WHEREAS Tabled Document 649-19(2), the Office of the Chief Coroner 2021-2022

Early Release of Suicide Data Report, raised concerns about the 18 suicides so far in 2022;

AND WHEREAS the Office of the Chief Coroner did not wait until the end of the calendar year to provide data on suicide in the territory in order to elicit a territorial government response now;

AND WHEREAS the majority of those deaths by suicide is impacting youth and young adults in smaller communities;

AND WHEREAS a Department of Health and Social Services Community Suicide Prevention Fund is available by application and provides a maximum total \$225,000 each year to applicants throughout the territory;

AND WHEREAS communities facing these crises require coordinated support from the Government of the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS recreational opportunities are linked to better overall health and wellness, reduction of stress and depression, and resilience building against adverse situations in life;

AND WHEREAS many small communities severely lack recreational opportunities for youth which are sorely needed;

NOW THEREFORE I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that this Legislative Assembly calls upon the Government of the Northwest Territories to establish a suicide prevention fund of \$250,000 in each region and is expedited directly to communities in crises without application.

AND FURTHER, that the Government of the Northwest Territories create a coordinated, collaborative, multi-departmental suicide prevention team, to meet with communities in crises, to assist community leadership identify suicide prevention strategies and activities as well Government of the Northwest Territories funding that communities can access;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Government of the Northwest Territories subsidize all recreation fees in small communities and create new recreational activities for youth and young adults;

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

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, we put this together today to present to the government for immediate responses that the government is able to do to provide to communities across the Northwest Territories. We look to Tuktoyaktuk and the example that they set by sitting down and meeting with youth, and youth immediately called on actions that pertained to leaders in community, so being able to sit down and speak to role models and, more importantly, also spoke to activities that youth could immediately access to stay busy and find healthy ways to sit down together to -- we heard from the Member for Nunakput today, to be able to do volleyball and basketball and painting classes. This is what the youth of the Northwest Territories are asking for. These are the same things that the youth in the territory are asking for that we heard through the Standing Committee on Social Development when we specifically took time to sit down with youth and find out what youth want for healthy communities and healthy families. Youth asked for activities that they could do with their families that were healthy activities. So this motion speaks specifically to what our youth want and what our youth are asking for and are items that this government can put in place today, even before the 120 days is up. These are items that can be actioned today to save lives. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. To the motion. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's for me, I was really honoured to be able to second this motion because we've been hardest hit, I guess in the whole Beaufort Delta in my riding of Nunakput this last few months. And then our communities are stretched out enough in regards to try to provide service for our youth, and it's being put back towards the community. I really think that something like this will be really beneficial because there's so many hoops you have to jump through to access funds when something like this happens, and then I think being able to access it through the -- I guess the Hamlet of Tuk or the community corporations would be the best access to get these funds that's needed when something like this happens. We've been down this road, Madam Speaker, numerous times in my community.

Finally, you know, as leaders we look to working with our youth and, like, with our

mayor and our community corporation chair. We ask instead we brought forward our suggestions and we weren't even close on what they were asking for. So our mayor, our leadership, we went and we met with them and they brought things forward that they wanted, and we accessed funding through the two different pots of funding through our government that we have now and we're really thankful that we did get them to provide this service for our youth that was needed at the time. And I think that when you're put in situations like this, you're more reactive instead of proactive. And we were reactive. We have to be able to work with our youth, you know, our future leaders, our stars I guess, of the community and giving them support to be able to do what they want.

With this money too, like, you know, the funding that we're giving per region I think we could do a lot of good. And just by listening to the -- you know, a good leader will make everybody a leader around them instead of holding them back. We got a couple of young youth in my home community of Tuk are like that. They're young leaders that are really helping promote and uplifting. And I really -- I'm really thankful for them because it got us through this last probably three months have been really tough. But when you look back, I guess we're able to help - all 19 Members of this House.

I called, about two weeks ago I brought up this and I challenged every Member in this House to support what we're doing, to work together for our youth across our territory, sporting events with the schools, with MACA, you know, getting more into the communities, which we've been lacking because of COVID. But I think COVID's over now and we got to start really moving forward for the people and for our youth.

So if we work to this -- I mean work towards this, it's not going to be one -- it's just going to be able to help. It's not going to be able to fix it right away but we're able to help us help you in regards to the communities because like I said, our communities are really shortchanged already in regards to services that they provide because they tried to overextend themselves and all the staff, the hard work that they do. I think that if we work together to get this done. And while I have a chance, I want this as a recorded vote because it's so important to our youth across the territory.

And thank you, Madam Speaker. And I'd like to thank the mover for moving this and, you know, just thoughts and prayers for everybody across our territory that's hurting and still

grieving of all what we just been through these last months. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nunakput. To the motion. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I too wish to reiterate the comments of both my colleagues here. It is so important that we take action now on suicide prevention as it's well documented that suicide is contagious, and I think that, you know, we can look at the instances in my colleague's riding to know that is true.

I think one of the key things here that we really need to note is that we often speak about how Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations know what is best for their people, and so a key part of this motion that I support is the removal of the hoops or reporting or basically just the rigorous structure of process in order to get this money into Indigenous communities and other communities' hands so that they can spend the money where they best see fit under direction of the youth and others in their communities. I can't stress enough that this is probably one of the most important topics I think that we're tackling within this House.

There's a popular meme going around where it shows people fishing, people out of the river, and really the comment is well, why are we not looking upstream to find out why they're falling in the river to begin with, and to start building that bridge so we prevent people from ending up in the stream of addictions or homelessness. I think our youth are a hugely key important factor to that. And as I mentioned in my Member's statement, there's a huge gap there when it comes for supports for youth. I can only imagine trying to work hard to better myself only to, at every corner, face an obstacle.

I would not have had the fortitude at 16 years old to continue on myself if I hadn't had people pushing me. So I think that we're failing our youth in that we are not supporting them through this critical time in order to keep them out of the system. So I say that I strongly agree with my colleague's comments. I hope that there will be action now and not waiting 120 days on the report. There are items here that could be done immediately that I think will see some direct benefits. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. To the motion. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madame la Presidente. I don't think I really have much useful that I can add but I do want to thank the mover and the seconder for their leadership on this issue, for the work that went in to putting together this motion and bringing these issues forward for discussion in the House. Merci, Madam Speaker. I'll be supporting the motion.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. To the motion. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I too will support this motion. You know, it's always hard to talk about this because it affects, you know, not only the people in our communities and the territories but also family members as well. So, you know, anything we can do and this government can do, I think it's important. And I would hope that, you know, and I've said this before, is that, you know, we got to go back to remembering why we're here, and that's for the people of the Northwest Territories. That means for the youth, you know, for adults, for seniors. And they're all -- you know, there's that infliction. You know, it's not just related to youth; it's also related to other groups as well but we got to start somewhere. And where we start is in listening and not telling, you know, people what they need. And, you know, what I would hope is that in trying to get that out there is that, you know, we engage, you know, with the NGOs that are actually probably the closest to, you know, the youth in the communities. So, you know, there's lots of work and if we can save, you know, one life, you know, that's better than what's been happening. So I support the motion. I thank the mover and the seconder as well. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. To the motion. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I too will be supporting this motion because we've had several overdoses and suicides in Fort Smith in the last -- especially the last year, especially during the pandemic. And, you know, I also want to just question the fact that, you know, it's time for integrated services in all communities, especially when it comes to mental health issues. Mental health issues is a very delicate situation. A lot of us -- many of us, even as parents, don't understand sometimes. And, you know, and we don't realize that it is a very serious issue and, you know, many of us have had to deal with mental health issues. And I want to also, though -- you know, I know that for a fact that any time there was any mental health issues or issues dealing with death with overdose or

with suicide in my community, the department of health was in contact with myself and the people at the health centre and a crisis team was available for everybody involved. I want to acknowledge that. And I want to make sure that, you know, that we have to make sure that we start getting involved as a group, not only here but also in the community.

And, you know, the other part of all this, especially when it comes to drugs and alcohol, that the enforcement part has to also be looked at, okay. The drug dealers seem to thrive on our communities, and that's part of the problem. It's not only a mental health issue. It's making sure that our kids stay on healthy and that is part of the whole problem when it comes to mental health issues. And with that I will be supporting the motion. And I want to thank the colleagues that brought it forth. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. To the motion. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Yes, thank you, Madam Speaker. Yes, I will support this motion as well. Coming from small communities, and especially with fly-in communities, there's not much happening in those small communities but I know that many of those communities, especially in the small communities, they are doing their best. People are doing their best, trying to meet the needs of the young people or to work with the young people. But we lack a lot of programs and services. We lack a lot of resources in small communities that will help and work with the young people. Because even in my region, we have issues. You know, we have issues within two months -- within two months, we lost four young people, you know, with so many dreams and so many goals. And I do feel, my condolences is going out to -- well, my condolences is going out to the families, but there's young people left behind. There's parents that are left behind. Grandparents. And especially if there's kids involved, there's kids as young as two years old, as young as less than a year old that we're talking about. So it does affect everybody within -- it's not just the family members that it affects. It affects everybody in the community, just like what my colleagues said with the suicide. So yes, we are feeling what is happening in my communities. There's lots of issues and there's a lot of healing that needs to be done in small communities. And all this is related to drugs and alcohol. And how many of those suicide was related to drugs and alcohol? So that's the thing that we have to work with. And I'm very grateful to Tlicho government for doing their best. So what they're doing now is

through their healing path they're promoting, they're working with their members, because it's -- this is not just about now. It's for future generations as well because when we're at a meeting, we hear elders talking saying that young people are our future generations. They are our future leaders. So they keep saying that so we need to build on that and do something about it. If we are going to produce and if we're going to have these young people be our future leaders, then we need to start doing something about it. We need to take some actions and fight back against drugs and alcohol and, you know, work with our young people to heal.

Not only that, we have a lot of issues -- where I said we have a lot of issues, we have parents, grandparents, that are really frustrated. Some of the grandparents are expressing their frustration on social media. I see it on social media where they are frustrated with what's happening with their kids and while their grand kids are being neglected. And there are some parents that are expressing their frustration where their daughters -- especially when -- if it's a daughter, they're frustrated with the daughter that is abusing drugs and alcohol. And some of these young people are still -- even though they are aware the impact of FASD, yet still some are still abusing. So that will be -- we're not helping young people in that area. I feel like we're not helping young people in that area. Even though there was an education on it in the past but yet young people are still abusing while young mothers, you know, are pregnant. And so I hear from the parents and grandparents expressing frustration on that.

So with that in mind, Madam Speaker, that I will support this motion because I know it will help in the small communities, especially within the fly-in communities there's not much to do over there. And what we're doing, this prevention, it will help a lot of those people in the small communities. So that's why I do support this motion. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. To the motion. Question has been -- oh sorry, I didn't look over this side. Member for Yellowknife Centre, or Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I appreciate this motion. I think it's really important to talk about this area. I think that it helps to remove the stigma, and it helps connect people with the resources they need. There are a number of resources that have been mentioned by Members in their statements.

The important thing here is that we all have a role to play. We can be, as individuals, a mentor to someone who is struggling. We can be a leader in our communities. We can have a professional role in this. But we all have a role to play in ensuring that we hear what it is that people in crisis need and how it is that we can help them.

I want to say that I am not going to comment on the substance of the motion at this time. But I will say that the Community Suicide Prevention Fund has included applications that are by and for youth. There's no age limit on that fund. And the fund has now been spent for its annual allocation but it's my understanding that the department has been able to identify one-time additional funding to support proposals. I want to say that depending on what kind of shape the proposal is in, it can take less than a week for approval. So it's not an arduous process for applying for these funds.

I also want to say that all communities developed wellness plans, and they're online. Most of them were developed in 2018 and they are often youth-focused, written by youth. They're funded by the territorial government with money from Ottawa. Those plans are in the process of being renewed, and they would be a key place to hear from youth about their immediate and ongoing needs.

So with that, Madam Speaker, again I'd like to thank the Regular Members for bringing this motion forward, and they will receive a full response. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. To the motion. Member for Hay River North, Minister of Justice, Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. As this motion contains recommendations to the government, we will be abstaining. We don't make recommendations to ourselves and we don't want to stand in the way of this motion either. So we look forward to providing a full response within 120 days. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. To the motion. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues, not only for their support today but for their honest and candid conversations that we had in committee. Every single person in this room, I would say, knows somebody that they have lost or who is struggling right now. And so I want to thank the Members for sharing so

candidly together because those are very difficult conversations not only to have but to have with your work colleagues. And so I thank the Members for that very, very much.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to challenge everybody, and not only the people in this room, to reach out to someone that they haven't talked to in a while and to actually meaningfully see how that person is doing. Madam Speaker, I'd also like to request a recorded vote. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question has been called. A recorded vote has been called. All those in favour, please stand.

RECORDED VOTE

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): The Member for Kam Lake, the Member for Frame Lake, the Member for Nunakput, the Member for Yellowknife North, the Member for Monfwi, the Member for Great Slave, the Member for Deh Cho, the Member for Hay River South, the Member for Thebacha.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: All those opposed, please stand.

All those abstaining, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): The Member for Nahendeh, the Member for Yellowknife South, the Member for Sahtu, the Member for Range Lake, the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, the Member for Yellowknife Centre, the Member for Hay River North.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, the results of the recorded vote are nine in favour, no opposed, seven abstentions. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Motions. Member for Kam Lake.

MOTION 65-19(2):
REFERRAL OF TABLED DOCUMENT 681-19(2), GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE REPORT 26-19(2): REPORT ON THE CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT - LIFTING CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES: AN ALL OF TERRITORY APPROACH TO KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER, TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

WHEREAS Tabled Document 681-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 26-19(2): Report on the Child and Family Services Act – Lifting Children, Youth and Families: An All of Territory Approach to Keeping Families Together, has been tabled in this House;

NOW THEREFORE I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Tabled Document 681-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 26-19(2): Report on the Child and Family Services Act – Lifting Children, Youth and Families: An All of Territory Approach to Keeping Families Together, be referred to Committee of the Whole for consideration. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? All those abstaining? The motion is carried. Tabled Document 681-19(2) has been moved into Committee of the Whole for the consideration later today. Thank you.

---Carried

Motions. Member for Great Slave.

MOTION 66-19(2):
REFERRAL OF TABLED DOCUMENT 694-19(2): NORTHWEST TERRITORIES CORONER SERVICE 2021-2022 EARLY RELEASE OF SUICIDE DATA AND MINISTER'S STATEMENT 264-19(2): RESPONSE TO THE NWT CHIEF CORONER'S REPORT ON SUICIDE, TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,
CARRIED

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker,

WHEREAS Tabled Document 694-19(2), Northwest Territories Coroner Service 2021-2022 Early Release of Suicide Data has been tabled in this House;

NOW THEREFORE I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Kam Lake, that Tabled Document 694-19(2), Northwest Territories Coroner Service 2021-2022 Early Release of Suicide Data; and, Minister's Statement 264-19(2), Response to the NWT Chief Coroner's Report on Suicide, be referred to

Committee of the Whole for consideration. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? All those abstaining? The motion is carried. Tabled Document 694-19(2) and Minister's Statement 264-19(2) have been moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration later today. Thank you.

---Carried

Motions. Notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Minister for Justice.

Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

BILL 65:
BUILDERS LIEN ACT

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Madam Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, November 2nd, 2022, I will present Bill 65, Builders Lien Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Notice of motion for the first reading of bills. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

BILL 66:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE PROPERTY
ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION ACT

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I will give notice that on Wednesday, November 2nd, 2022, I'll present Bill 66, An Act to Amend the Property Assessment and Taxation Act, to be read for the first time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Notice of motion for the first reading of bills. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

BILL 67:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE FIRE
PREVENTION ACT

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I will give notice that on Wednesday, November 2nd, 2022, I will present Bill 67, An Act to Amend the Fire Prevention Act, to be read for the first time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Notice of motion for the first reading of bills. Minister of ECE.

BILL 68:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE CHILD DAYCARE
ACT

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Madam Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, November 2nd, 2022, I will present Bill 68, An Act to Amend the Child Daycare Act, be read for the first time. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Notice of motion for the first reading of bills. First reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 60:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE PETROLEUM
PRODUCTS AND CARBON TAX ACT

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Speaker, I wish to present to the House Bill 60, An Act to Amend the Petroleum Products and Carbon Tax Act, to be read for the first time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Pursuant to the Rule 8.2(3), Bill 60, an Act to Amend the Petroleum Products and Carbon Tax Act is deemed read for a first time and is now ready for second reading.

First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Bill 23, Bill 29, Bill 58, Bill 59, Tabled Document 723-19(2), Tabled Document 748-19(2), Tabled Document 748-19(2), with Member for Deh Cho in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

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

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Mr. Chair. Committee wishes to deal with Bill 58 and Bill 59.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mahsi, committee. We will take a short recess and resume with the first item. Mahsi.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Committee, we have agreed to consider Bill

58, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act. I will ask the sponsor of the bill, the Member for Hay River South, to introduce the bill.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm pleased to provide opening remarks on Bill 58, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act. This law is usually changed in the last year of every Assembly to update MLAs' pay and benefits and the names and borders of the NWT'S election ridings. These changes were suggested by independent commissions appointed by this Assembly. The bill also makes changes to how complaints against MLAs are handled and who sits on the Assembly's board of management. It also makes it clear who the employees of the Legislative Assembly work for.

If approved, the changes to how complaints against MLAs are handled will start right away. The other changes will start at the beginning of the next Legislative Assembly.

MLA pay is cut by \$4,000 a year. Members could earn this \$4,000 back by serving as the Premier, Speaker, or a Minister, or by serving on one or more committees. Regular Members who choose not to sit on any committees will be paid \$4,000 less each year.

The transition allowance that Members get when they leave office is not changed. These changes will start after the next election.

The name of the Deh Cho riding is changed to Dehcho for the next election.

Right now, when a complaint about an MLA is made, the Assembly's Integrity Commissioner can either dismiss it or send it to a public inquiry. Because a public inquiry can be expensive and take a lot of time, the bill gives the Integrity Commissioner two new options:

The Integrity Commissioner can try to resolve the complaint through mediation or other forms of alternative dispute resolution or decide that the Member has done something wrong and suggest a punishment to the Assembly without the need for a public inquiry.

Finally, the Integrity Commissioner will be able to fine a Member who does not fill out their conflict of interest paperwork on time each year.

These changes will start as soon as the bill is passed.

The Minister of Finance will automatically be one of the two Ministers who serve on the Assembly's board of management. If the

Speaker can't make a meeting, the deputy speaker will no longer be called on to chair the meeting. Instead, the board will pick one of its Members who is at the meeting to chair it.

The bill makes it clear that the employees of the Legislative Assembly work for the Speaker, not the Premier or Minister of Finance. This is to make sure that the Legislative Assembly employees can help MLAs and committees do their jobs, which include monitoring and sometimes criticizing the work of Cabinet and Ministers.

Finally, the bill replaces some outdated words and phrases with new ones that are easier to understand, without changing what they mean. In other words, they are housekeeping changes.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. This concludes my opening remarks on Bill 58. I am pleased to hear comments and to respond to any questions from committee. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mahsi. Member for Hay River South, would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Yes, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Member for Hay River South, please introduce your witnesses.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my left is Stephen Flanagan, legislative division, Department of Justice; and, to my right is Tim Mercer, clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mahsi. I will now open the floor to general comments on Bill 58, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act. Mr. Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm supportive of this legislation except for perhaps one section, which I'll comment on when we get there. But I wanted to talk about what I'm happy with the changes made to the Integrity Commissioner, and I just want to kind of summarize them for the public's notice.

So we used to have a process where when a complaint was referred to the Integrity Commissioner, and there's been a few times this Assembly, he was forced to either, you know, find that there was grounds and order a public hearing, which we had and which cost us a few hundred thousand dollars and was very

lengthy and complicated, or dismiss the complaint. There was kind of no middle ground, and I think many of us and the public and lots of people would have liked some sort of off-ramp. And so now we've amended it to give our Integrity Commissioner a few options. You know, he can refer the matter to some sort of alternative dispute resolution if that is appropriate; he can still order that public hearing if there are more facts and it's warranted; or he can right away, you know, after conducting an investigation, come out with a recommended penalty; or dismiss the complaint. So I think, you know, this is the way it's done in many other, if not all, jurisdictions, and I think giving that Integrity Commissioner a bit more authority of how to deal with complaints is a good step and is something I wish we had during this Assembly. But it's a good change. So I'm supportive of that. And I would like to thank all of our Members for the work that has gone into making these changes. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mahsi, Mr. Johnson. Are there any further comments? No more questions from the Member? Any further comments from committee?

Seeing none, does committee agree that there are no further general comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Agreed. Can we proceed to a clause by clause review of the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Agreed? Committee, we will defer the bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses. I will call the clauses in groups. Please turn to page 1 of the bill.

Clause 1, does committee agree?

---Clauses 1 through 28 inclusive approved

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Clause 29, does committee agree? Mr. Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I actually -- oh 29, sorry.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Yes, you may proceed.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wasn't aware 29 would be in here. This is the clause that is now changing all Members to be -- before they can sit in this House instead of swearing allegiance to Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, her heirs and successors

must now swear allegiance to His Majesty Charles III, King of Canada, his heirs and successors.

As I've stated before, I think this is an outdated oath and if people want to serve their government without swearing oath to the heirs and successors of our King, they should be able to do so. I will not be in support of this. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mahsi. Did the Member for Hay River South have any comments on this?

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will take that as a comment from the Member. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Okay. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Mr. Chair. In my first term, or last Assembly, I really didn't want to have to do this either. But it's actually enshrined in the Constitution of Canada, and it's not something that we can necessarily change ourselves unfortunately. But there are some Quebec members of their national assembly that are refusing to swear an oath of allegiance to the King. And it's going to be very interesting to see what happens with that because, as I understand it, the Quebec legislature can still somehow allow them to sit in the chamber, even if they haven't sworn this oath of allegiance.

But, yeah, one of the things that we did do in the last Assembly, and I guess I take some credit for that, is we did add in the Legislative Assembly Executive Council Act a requirement for an oath of loyalty, I think it's called, to people of the Northwest Territories and the treaties, to help I think kind of counterbalance this. And so that's what Members do now. And, yeah, I still have a lot of issues with this one, but I don't think there's much we can do in this House about it right now, unless we want to make Canada a republic, and that's where I would go. But thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mahsi, Mr. O'Reilly. Clause 29, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Agreed? Yeah, so we're good with it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Clause 30, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Clause 31, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Agreed. Committee, to the bill as a whole -- oh, Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Mr. Chair. So I believe I heard the sponsor of the bill say that there are parts of this bill that are going to come into force right away. And what's the mechanism for doing that? Because it just says here that it's going to be fixed by order of the Commissioner. So what's the mechanism by which parts of this bill are going to come into force right now or maybe on a sense later this week when the Commissioner's in the Chamber. How is that done, because it's not really in the bill itself anywhere. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The process is that the Speaker will request that the Commissioner to bring in the parts into force. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks, Mr. Chair. So I don't know, which parts of the bill, then, are immediately going to come into force? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will turn that over to Mr. Mercer. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mr. Mercer.

MR. MERCER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just looking for the exact sections here now but essentially the sections that will come into effect will be exclusively those that deal with the new complaint resolution powers of the Integrity Commissioner. And I believe those are found in section 23 of the bill primarily, which amends section 101 and 102 of the existing act. So those will come into effect immediately upon assent. It may take two or three days for the appropriate instruments to be drafted by the Department of Justice but will happen immediately after that. The remainder, some sections will come into force

in the run up to the election. But most of the sections, particularly those dealing with Member's compensation will come into force on the first day of the first sitting of the 20th Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mahsi for that. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and thanks for that. I just find this a really curious practice that why wouldn't that just be spelled out in section 31 of the bill? So it's just left to the discretion of the Speaker and/or the Commissioner as to which parts are brought into force? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah, I guess what happens is that the Speaker will ask the Commissioner to act on bringing these sections into force, and that's kind of the process that we follow. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mahsi for that. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, okay, thanks. Look, I don't want to prolong this; I just think it should be spelled out in the bill. I trust the Speaker and so on, but I just don't know why we don't write this stuff out in the bill itself as to which parts are going to come into force right away. But I do support bringing the changes to the mandate and the authority of the Integrity Commissioner into force right away, just for the record. And I want to thank the commission for their work in bringing forward a number of matters that are contained in the bill. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mahsi, Mr. O'Reilly. Committee, to the bill as a whole, does the committee agree that Bill 58, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Agreed. Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 58, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Agreed, mahsi. Thank you, Member for Hay River South and thank you to your witnesses. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. Mahsi.

Committee, we have agreed to consider Bill 59, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act. I will ask the sponsor of the bill, the Member for Hay River South, to introduce the bill.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I am pleased to speak to Bill 59: An Act to amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act. The bill proposes some changes to the act. These are being made on the recommendation of the chief electoral officer and the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedure. If passed, the changes will be in place for the next general election in 2023.

Some changes relate to the register of electors (voters list). If the bill is passed, Elections NWT will be able to share information from the voters list with municipalities running elections and the Electoral Boundaries Commission. 16- and 17-year-olds will be able to register with Elections NWT and automatically be added to the voters list on their 18th birthday. The bill will also allow emails to be kept as part of the voters list.

Finally, the CEO will be able to get information from public bodies to help keep the voters list current.

Other changes in the bill will mean that returning officers will no longer post the home address of candidates and official agents. Instead, they will post what community they live in.

The bill changes the start day of advance polling from 24 to 21 days before an election. The bill makes a number of changes to set deadlines based on business days rather than calendar days. This ensures all reporting deadlines fall on a regular business day.

In terms of polling stations, the bill makes some minor changes including removing the need for two electors to witness the count, requiring returning officers to report if they appoint a police officer to maintain security at a polling station, and allowing the CEO to provide direction on the use of cell phones at polling stations.

The bill creates an election rebate program which allows a candidate, who is acclaimed or receives 5 percent or more of the votes cast, to apply for a rebate of some of their personal money spent on their campaign. Candidates will not be able to get a rebate for any personal funds they contribute that is eligible for a tax rebate under tax laws.

The bill includes specific information that must be included in regulations if online voting is being used for absentee ballots.

That concludes my remarks on Bill 59. I am pleased to hear comments or respond to questions from committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Member for Hay River South, would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Member for Hay River South, please introduce your witnesses.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my left is Stephen Flanagan, legislative drafter. To my right is Glen Rutland, deputy clerk, House procedure and committees. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mahsi. I will now open the floor to general comments on Bill 59, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act.

Seeing no general comments from committee, is committee agreed that there are no further general comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Agreed. Can we proceed to a clause by clause review of the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Committee, we will defer the bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses. I will call the clauses in groups. Please turn to page 1 of the bill.

Clause 1, does committee agree?

---Clauses 1 through 10 inclusive approved

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Clause 11, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Clause 12, does committee agree? Mr. Johnson, was that on 11?

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What this clause is proposing is it is presently illegal to sell liquor on polling day in the NWT

according to this act. And in our infinite wisdom we're going to make it illegal to also sell cannabis on polling day. So instead of having one archaic and outdated law, we're going to have two. What was the point of legalizing cannabis if we're just going to close some random licensed premises? I can guarantee almost no one knows. I don't even know why we would be doing this. I think this is an absolutely ridiculous suggestion, and I am not in favour of it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mahsi. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I'll take that as a comment.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mr. Johnson. Clause 12, does committee agree?

---Clauses 11 through 32 inclusive approved

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Committee, to the bill as a whole, does committee agree that Bill 59, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act, is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mahsi, committee. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 59, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): Mahsi, Member for Hay River South, and mahsi to your witnesses. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. Mahsi. Member for Frame Lake.

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

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

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: May I have the report of Committee of the Whole. Member for Deh Cho.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. BONNETROUGE: Madam Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 58, Bill

59, and would like to report progress that Bills 58 and 59 are ready for third reading. And Madam Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Mahsi.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Do I have a seconder? Member for Frame Lake. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstentions?

---Carried.

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

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Tuesday, November 1st, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
5. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
6. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
7. Returns to Oral Questions
 - Oral Question 1163-19(2), Homelessness
 - Oral Question 1188-19(2), Memorandum of Understanding with the Canadian Red Cross
 - Oral Question 1246-19(2), Infertility Treatment
8. Acknowledgements
9. Oral Questions
10. Written Questions
11. Returns to Written Questions
12. Replies to the Commissioner's Address
13. Petitions
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Motions
17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
18. First Reading of Bills

- Bill 61, An Act to Amend the Ombud Act
- Bill 62, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act
- Bill 63, An Act to Amend the Official Languages Act
- Bill 64, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 3

19. Second Reading of Bills

- Bill 60, An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act

20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Bill 23, An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act
- Bill 29, Resource Royalty Information Disclosure Statute Amendment Act
- Tabled Document 723-19(2), 2023-2024 Capital Estimates
- Tabled Document 747-19(2), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2022-2023
- Tabled Document 748-19(2), Supplementary Expenditures (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2022-2023
- Tabled Document 681-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 26-19(2): Report on the Child and Family Services Act – Lifting Children, Youth and Families: An All of Territory Approach to Keeping Families Together
- Tabled Document 694-19(2): Northwest Territories Coroner Service 2021-2022 Early Release of Data
- Committee Report 36-19(2), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the 2020-2021 Public Accounts
- Minister's Statement 264-19(2), Response to the NWT Chief Coroner's Report on Suicide Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 58, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2

- Bill 59, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act

22. Orders of the Day

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, November 1st, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

