



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**14<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Friday, March 7, 2003**

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**The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Hay River North)

**Mr. Charles Dent**

(Frame Lake)

**Mrs. Jane Groenewegen**

(Hay River South)

**Mr. David Krutko**

(Mackenzie Delta)

**Mr. Leon Lafferty**

(North Slave)

**Ms. Sandy Lee**

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Friday, March 7, 2003****Members Present**

Honourable Roger Allen, Honourable Jim Antoine, Mr. Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. McLeod, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Nitah, Honourable Jake Ootes, Mr. Roland, Honourable Vince Steen

**ITEM 1: PRAYER**

-- Prayer

**DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Krutko):** Saturday 8, 2003, is International Women's Day. Yesterday in the Great Hall, the Status of Women Council of the NWT recognized and honoured women in the Northwest Territories who are dedicated and work hard to improve the lives of women and families in their community. These women are, by their actions, positive role models for all of us and especially for our youth. The five winners of the 2003 Wise Women Awards are: Lena Anikina of Tuktoyaktuk; Edith Squirrel of Fort Providence; Florencia Dacanay of Yellowknife; Janet Grandjambe of Fort Good Hope; and, Lesley Paulette of Fort Smith.

Congratulations from the Members of the Legislative Assembly. Congratulations.

---Applause

Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements.

**ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS****Minister's Statement 32-14(6): Deh Cho Bridge Act**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, later this afternoon I will introduce a bill entitled the Deh Cho Bridge Act.

As I know the Members of this Legislature appreciate that the partnership proposal to build a bridge over the Mackenzie River at Fort Providence is a new departure for the Government of the Northwest Territories. A private party, the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation, has offered to raise the capital, design, build, operate and maintain a substantial piece of highway infrastructure. In return, the government will pay the corporation for the bridge over a 35-year period, largely from toll revenues collected from the traffic crossing the bridge and savings from discontinued ferry operations and the winter ice crossing.

Under the proposed arrangement, Mr. Speaker, the private partner will perform many of the functions normally performed by the Department of Transportation under the authority of the Public Highways Act. The Deh Cho Bridge Act is a piece of enabling legislation that will authorize the Minister of Transportation, on behalf of the government, to enter into the proposed agreement with a private party who will act as a full and equal partner with government for the term of the agreement. Without the provisions described in the act, the Minister does not have the authority to commit the government to the contemplated partnership agreement.

Mr. Speaker, in anticipation of the present negotiations coming to a successful conclusion, I am introducing this bill to put the

necessary authority in place so that when negotiations are concluded our government can enter into a binding agreement with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation.

This bill authorizes the Minister of Transportation to collect tolls from vehicles crossing the bridge. Toll revenue is an essential element of the corporation's proposal and will determine the financial viability of the project. Importantly, it is the Minister on behalf of government, not the private partner, who will set and collect the tolls. In the public interest, it is the Minister and the government, accountable to this elected Legislative Assembly, that retain control over the toll charges and their collection.

As I said in the beginning, Mr. Speaker, the Deh Cho Bridge partnership is something entirely new to the NWT. I think private/public partnerships have significant potential as a vehicle for advancing other important public projects. Building a bridge over the Mackenzie River will be one outstanding achievement by itself. Achieving it through a successful partnership with the Fort Providence Combined Alliance will be a second accomplishment.

I hope the Deh Cho Bridge Act, as the enabling instrument for a private/public partnership, may prove the template for many more similarly successful ventures in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Dent.

**ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS****Member's Statement On Remarks On International Women's Day**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Tomorrow, as you have noted, March 8<sup>th</sup>, is International Women's Day, a day to recognize the accomplishments of women and to reflect on the challenges that still lie ahead for them. For over 90 years, International Women's Day has been a symbol of women's efforts to shape a better world, Mr. Speaker. In 1977, the United Nations passed a resolution to officially recognize International Women's Day. Unfortunately, there are still far too many challenges ahead for women, with family violence and violence against women among the biggest. I commend Minister Allen for announcing last week his department's commitment to bring forward legislation I have long called for, that of the Family Violence Prevention Act for the June sitting of this Assembly.

In circumstances of family violence, this sort of legislation will more often allow women to stay in their homes, in their home communities, where they have support networks. It will give the

police another tool to combat family violence that is long overdue.

In my constituency, Mr. Speaker, there's a women's shelter called Alison McAteer House. In spite of our public declarations in support of zero tolerance for violence, shelters like Alison McAteer House are too busy all the time. They, like the other shelters in the NWT, still turn women and children away because they are full. I would like to give my heartfelt thanks to those frontline workers who deal with victims of violence and who work to support them at shelters like Alison McAteer House.

Mr. Speaker, we have a number of great organizations in the North that work to improve women's lives including the Native Women's Association, the Status of Women Council of the NWT, the Centre for Northern Families, the YWCA, and, as I mentioned, Alison McAteer House and the shelters in outlying communities. They can all be recognized.

Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to extend my congratulations to the Status of Women Council and the Wise Women Awards program. It is important that we celebrate and recognize those women who have been leaders in their communities and in the North. I would especially like to congratulate the recipients of the Wise Women Awards. It's unfortunate that a former constituent Florencia "Flory" Dacanay passed away this past December before being awarded that recognition. Flory's husband, Angel, was in the Great Hall to accept the award on her behalf. Mr. Speaker, she was a woman devoted and dedicated to improving the lives of those who came into contact with her and she will be missed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Roland.

#### **Member's Statement On Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Hockey Tournament**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this being Friday, I would like to take a light hearted approach to my Member's statement today and speak about the IRC or the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Native Hockey Tournament that was held in Inuvik in the previous weekend. Mr. Speaker, there were a number of teams from communities from the Western Arctic region: Holman, Paulatuk, Sachs, Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk, Fort McPherson and Aklavik. In the A division, the victors were Northwind, out of Inuvik and BeauDel Posse also out of Inuvik. and third place was EGT, that's Eddie Gruben's Transport out of Tuktoyaktuk. In B division the winners were Tuktoyaktuk, Fort McPherson came in second and Wietzel Solar Bears out of Inuvik came in third. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that the Inuvik Old Dogs of this year weren't able to defend their championship, Mr. Speaker. The old legs and lungs were not quite able to hold back the tide of the youthful, energetic opposition.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, we didn't go down with out a fight. Mind you we didn't fight, we were unable to, but we were able to put up a good rush and in our first game we tied 2-2 against Holman; in the second game, we tied 3-3 and, unfortunately, in our third game, the youthful crew from Fort McPherson beat us 4-3 in a very close game that went back and forth. So I must hand it to the Old Dogs, we went out, we tried and,

unfortunately, our legs and lungs weren't there this year. Our team leader said that in training camp this summer, we are going to get back to work and lose some pounds and try to pick up some speed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' Statements. Mr. Delorey.

#### **Member's Statement On Awareness Of Exploitation Of Women During International Women's Week**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I ask today to bring recognition to International Women's Week being held this week, and, in particular, International Women's Day being celebrated throughout the world, March 8<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Speaker, the Canadian theme for this year's International Women's Day is worldwide women surfing the digital revolution. With the advent of the World Wide Web, Mr. Speaker, It has opened up a whole new world of digital communication for people throughout the world.

While the Internet has brought important social and economic benefits with it, we must be very careful of the risk it poses to women. Mr. Speaker, I have spoken in the House of the need for stricter regulations against the use of pornography on the Internet. Currently, Mr. Speaker, there are over 300,000 pornographic Web sites on the Internet. Mr. Speaker, I believe very strongly that sexual exploitation of women must end. Our society has made some strides towards this goal but far more has to be done. Mr. Speaker, our society appears to have become desensitized to graphic images and that is very disturbing, Mr. Speaker. We need to stand up, Mr. Speaker, and make the point known that sexual exploitation of women cannot be tolerated.

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of International Women's Week, I would like to publicly thank all the people who are diligently working to eradicate sexual exploitation of women in our society. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' Statements. Ms. Lee.

#### **Member's Statement On RCMP Training Ineligible For Student Financial Assistance**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to speak about the student financial assistance policy that currently makes students attending the RCMP training academy ineligible for grants or loans. I have discussed the matter with the Minister and the rationale he has given me is that it is because this program is not recognized as a post-secondary institution. I wish to advise him that I have information that suggests otherwise and I would urge the Minister to reconsider this unfair and irrational treatment.

Mr. Speaker, on the Web site of the RCMP, I find the following and I quote, "The training academy is a designated post-secondary institution in the province of Saskatchewan. The training academy has been certified as an educational institution for the purpose of the Income Tax Act since January 1997." Therefore, incoming cadets are eligible to receive student loans and/or have their loan payments suspended while attending the cadet training program.

Mr. Speaker, another reason for ineligibility given by the Minister is that the RCMP pays for the full training cost. Once again, this is not entirely correct and I would like the Minister to reconsider this position as well. I find other information on the RCMP Web site, Mr. Speaker, and I quote, "Cadets coming to the training academy are responsible for their own expenditures. It is recommended that cadets budget a sufficient amount for the purchase of academic supplies, uniform items, foot wear, equipment, maintenance supplies and spending money during their stay." A recent survey of the cadets indicated that they spend an average of \$4,600, which includes a trip home while at the training academy.

Mr. Speaker, the important point is that the student financial assistance is designed to help students obtain post-secondary education and the program should make an effort to include legitimate pursuits in that way and not to find ways to exclude post-secondary education.

Mr. Speaker, I have pursued this a lot in this session and the Minister has stated over and over and over for ineligibility because the rest of Canada does not recognize it. However, on this one, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that we have information that suggests that this is a post-secondary education and I urge the Minister to revisit it and change the policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Nitah.

#### **Member's Statement On New Metis Health Benefits**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this morning I would like to speak about the new Metis Health Benefits Act that we passed yesterday, which makes the Northwest Territories the first jurisdiction in Canada to recognize Métis health benefits 100 percent. This is the first jurisdiction in Canada to recognize that the Constitution recognizes Métis as aboriginal people at the same level as status Indians and Inuit. The Métis people are very happy that this bill passed in this House, and are happy with this government for having the strength and dignity to give them that aboriginal right.

On a related note, the Métis Nation opened their office here yesterday in Yellowknife to represent the Métis from the South Slave in their claims process. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to make a small adjustment, it is a policy, not a bill. The policy states that any Métis who needs medical coverage will be paid 100 percent by this government only if they cannot access other insurance, such as that provided by an employer. So just a message for the Métis people in the Northwest Territories, starting April 1<sup>st</sup>, 100 percent of your medical expenses will be covered. I would like to congratulate the Minister of Health and Social Services and the Government of the Northwest Territories for taking the leadership role in getting this done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Handley.

#### **Member's Statement On Recognition Of The "Snow King" Anthony Foliot**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, this morning is one of the coldest we've seen this winter in Yellowknife. It is a very appropriate day to acknowledge the spirit and enthusiasm for winter shown by one of my constituents and his cheerful band of volunteers. I'm speaking of none other than Anthony Foliot, the widely proclaimed Snow King of the North. Needless to say, I am very proud to be the MLA for the only constituency in the Northwest Territories with a reigning monarch. The people of Yellowknife wholeheartedly welcomed back the Snow King after he took off a couple of years from his construction of the only snow castle in the Northwest Territories. This year the castle is bigger and more impressive than ever, with real castle-like turrets and clear ice windows. Last Friday evening, I had the pleasure, in spite of minus 37 degree temperatures, to attend the official opening of the 2003 series snow castle along with a huge crowd of visitors including our mayor from Yellowknife and our Premier.

The Snow King's festival will run every weekend in March with a new activity planned for each week. Admission to the castle and festivities is free, and the entertainment is sure to be great. Mr. Foliot and his volunteers and the corporate sponsors deserve a big thank you from all of us. The king and his volunteers put in hundreds of hours so they could challenge and enjoy winter. While many of us hunker down by the wood stove, wishing winter would end and the sun would come back, they are out there working and enjoying themselves and dreaming of the enjoyment they bring to many visitors, and they do this with generosity straight from the heart. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Steen.

#### **Member's Statement On Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Hockey Tournament**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my statement will follow along the lines of my honourable colleague from Inuvik Boot Lake. Mr. Speaker, last weekend was a great weekend for hockey fans in the Beaufort-Delta area. A number of hockey teams in my riding of Nunakput took part in the annual IRC hockey tournament, including a team from Holman. Mr. Speaker, after a number of annual attempts, I am told Inuvik hockey teams finally managed to limit the Gruben's Transport's team to only third place in the event. However, in the B event, it was Tuktoyaktuk in first place, as usual, by a score of 7-5.

Mr. Speaker, speaking to the individual awards in the A division, top score went to Kelly Ovayyak of E. Gruben's Transport of Tuktoyaktuk. In the B event, top score went to Daniel Nogasak of Tuktoyaktuk. Most valuable player was Sandy Adams of Tuktoyaktuk and top defence, Albert Banksland of Holman.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate all the players for their efforts in sportsmanship and I wish to acknowledge time and effort the organizers put into making this a successful event year after year. Of course, we must not forget the kindly sponsors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Member's Statement On Recognition Of GNWT Long Service Award Recipients From Hay River South**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I stand to recognize a number of government employees who have reached a milestone in their careers. On February 19<sup>th</sup> in Hay River, the government paid tribute to 27 employees for their record of long service with the GNWT.

Mr. Speaker, we often take for granted the work of these people. Their professionalism contributes to the building and makeup of our communities. They teach our children in the schools; they run our offices; they maintain our highways; work with adults, youth and victims of the justice system. They keep government facilities and infrastructure in order. These are the people who work for the residents of the Northwest Territories, both day and night, all year long and some of these employees have been performing these duties for many, many years.

Today, I would like to recognize several Hay River South constituents who have achieved long service status with the Government of the Northwest Territories.

In the Department of Justice with five years: Joel Bowker, Darren Dragon, Brenda McAllister, Glen Pangborne, Orrell Sheets; with 10 years of service: Jacqueline Haley; with 15 years of service, Larry Dragon, Robert Haley, Robert Seeley, Raymond Simon; and 25 years of service, Bertha Calvin.

In Education, Culture and Employment with 30 years of service, Alison Kilgour.

With the South Slave Divisional Education Council with five years of service, Sandra Wilkie; with 15 years of service, Darrel Budgell, Doris Camsell, Gerrard Carrol, Linda Gallagher, Brent Kaulback, Dorothy Lirette; with 25 years in our education service in Hay River, Carol Grimm.

In the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development with 30 years of service, Al Helmer.

Mr. Speaker, I salute these people and thank them for all of their dedicated support and service to the Government of the Northwest Territories for contribution to a strong, dependable workforce, which goes towards what makes our communities and territories what they are today and particularly, in Hay River, in my opinion, a very wonderful place to work and live. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Lafferty.

**Member's Statement On Deferral Of The GNWT Harmonization Initiative**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House, I introduced a motion to scrap the harmonization initiative. This motion was defeated, but I think there are some valid concerns that need to be addressed. We learned yesterday in the House that, to date, over \$400,000 has been spent on this initiative. Obviously a significant amount of time and energy has gone into this. Yet, there still

remain unanswered questions. I think it would be wise to defer the implementation of this initiative until more answers are known. One of the rules of harmonization is to have an income cut-off, so as to provide an incentive for individuals to go out and work.

Mr. Speaker, I think the reality is that work is not something that most people avoid. As my colleague from Tu Nedhe pointed out, the problem is that in a lot of small communities, there is no work available. By creating new categories of what is considered income, like bingo, babysitting, child tax, craft sales, we are penalizing people. Mr. Speaker, by considering these activities as a source of income, we are turning cultural activities and innocent pastimes into burdens. Mr. Speaker, where do we draw the line? If a child finds a quarter on the road, are we going to take a percentage of it?

---Interjection

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House the Minister stated that approximately 2,200 households will be affected by this initiative. Earlier he stated that 1,823 households will see a change in their rent due to harmonization and 40 percent of these households will see an increase in their rent. Mr. Speaker, throughout this session, I am finding out that just basing rent on pay stubs overlooks how many people live in the home and need to be supported by the income earned. I also raised concern how rent and income support are going to be addressed on a month-to-month basis. This makes it hard for people to plan and it looks like it's easy to foresee that arrears will be created quickly. Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of issues that need to be dealt with.

Mr. Speaker, the way I see harmonization is like these two Ministers are going on a long trip. They see the gas gauge going up and down. They don't know how much gas is in the tank. Some Ministers and Members on this side are saying go ahead and a minority of us on this side of the House are saying pull over, check your gas tank. I urge the Ministers and Members in this House to defer this strategy until we know where we are going to end up. The numbers are out there, the households are known. Just take the time to make sure we are heading in the right direction. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Braden.

**Member's Statement On Mining Contribution To The Northern Economy**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like today to take a minute to look at what is happening in our backyards and the remote part of this country in the mining industry. Mr. Speaker, we continue to see through the Con and Giant gold properties, production in the neighbourhood of 120 ounces of gold a year and diamonds that are now valued at about half a billion dollars a year. Mr. Speaker, these are significant developments. They are driving our economy causing the NWT to be a leader in Canada and economic growth. We've also seen a number of significant things in and around the diamond industry as we look at this fast maturing industry in the Canadian mineral field. We saw in the last few months, the approval by 52 countries of the Kimberly Process, which will help secure the confidence in the market through an

international certification process. We've seen training programs, many of them fostered by and supported by this government. We've got used to some new corporate names in our communities, Mr. Speaker, names like Sirius and Arslanian. We are just getting used to those and new names are coming in. We are going to be getting used to names like Beny -Sofer and Sons, Rosy Blue, E. Schreiber Inc., Backes and Strauss, Laurelton and one that is rather familiar to us, Tiffany's.

Mr. Speaker, we are seeing what was a promising part of our economy with dozens of people employed in the sorting, cutting and polishing field. This will mean hundreds of people in the very near future. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to just take a minute to acknowledge what is going on here. This weekend and next week in Toronto takes place Canada's major national mining program, the Prospectors' and Developers' Association of Canada. This is where the risk-takers, the diggers and the people who put their fortunes at risk looking for minerals gather to see what is going on, and I wish them all the best in the future here in the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Bell.

#### **Member's Statement On Reporting On GNWT Procurement Policies**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity today to again raise the issue of the Government of the Northwest Territories' procurement policies and its tendering. Again, I guess this is coming up as it usually does because we've seen more sole-sourcing with southern firms on several occasions, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned before in this House, the need, as I saw it, for a statutory officer of this House that would report on procurement and would let us know which departments were adhering to our procurement policies and which ones weren't, that would provide an annual report that would give us a scorecard for departments, help them improve and help Members scrutinize the activities of this government.

I think it would do another thing, Mr. Speaker. I think it would allow for an investigation of contract awards. Oftentimes when contractors are unsuccessful and try to get some information on the awarding of a bid or an RFP, one of the problems they run up against is the government insists that much of the information as to why the award was given to somebody else is something they can't discuss and is private and would somehow negatively impact the other firm that was successful. In many cases, this is a legitimate point and a legitimate concern, but an independent statutory officer of the House could certainly be provided with this information, make an objective decision and report back. I think that would alleviate much of our concern.

We know why we don't want to see southern firms get sole-sources and bypass the tendering process, cutting out northern firms. I think we've all talked many times about the loss of our tax revenues, the loss of transfer payments if jobs are not here in the North and don't stay in the North. But another reason for doing this, Mr. Speaker, is the transfer of technology and a lack of it if we sole-source. We used the Cuff example, Mr. Speaker. We are all very well aware of the Cuff report, a review of our health care system. We relied on a southern expert to come up here. The department made the case that there really was no one in the North who was qualified to take on a work of this magnitude, probably a legitimate case, a legitimate point,

but, Mr. Speaker, I think we all realize now there never will be if we don't force southern firms to partner up with northern firms to develop capacity and to, in fact, transfer some of this technology to the North. We talked a lot about capacity building, but this is one concrete way to address this. Mr. Speaker, I would like to see unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? You have unanimous consent, Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. When we talk about transfer of technology, it's something that we are most familiar with in a global context and we look at countries who have been very successful at achieving this and others who haven't. We use the example of Korea and the auto industry. Much of the technology that they have perfected and developed was through agreements and partnerships with the big three auto makers in the States. They, in fact, insisted that there be something left behind in their country and there be a real transfer of technology. Other countries like Mexico have been less successful. Countries have been able to operate factories and get access to cheap Mexican labour, but not really leave anything behind. If you look at the difference, Mr. Speaker -- and many economists have studied this -- the difference is in government policy and a commitment to this transfer of technology. I think that's something that is lacking in this government. It's something I would like to see improved and a good step towards that would be the creation of a statutory office that would look at procurement for this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, once again I want to stand up in the House and voice my concerns about the harmonization initiative. This issue has...

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** ...motion on the harmonization which you are bringing forth later today, so it may be inappropriate for you to speak to that issue since you do have a motion on the orders for today. You can speak around it, but don't speak about it.

**MR. MCLEOD:** I will cancel my Member's statement.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Colleagues, I would like to direct your attention to the presence in the visitors' gallery of Warrant Officer Yancy Savard, who has with him Junior Rangers from Nunavut who are here competing in the air rifle competition among the three territories. I would like to welcome you to the Legislative Assembly.

---Applause

Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mrs. Groenewegen.

#### **ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Mr. Speaker, this week I had the opportunity to see us as legislators through the eyes of Pages

and I would just like to thank two Hay River residents for paging in the Assembly this week, Claire MacDonald and Jullian Groenewegen. Thank you.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Delorey.

#### ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

##### Question 180-14(6): Summer Student Employment Program

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today my questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Mr. Speaker, it is often spoken in this House about the need for maximizing northern employment and how we, as a government, must continue to encourage our northern educated youth to return to the North to seek gainful employment. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment to explain to this House exactly what the process is for northern post-secondary students applying to the Government of the Northwest Territories for summer employment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

##### Return To Question 180-14(6): Summer Student Employment Program

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will do my best. The responsibility for summer employment is really the responsibility of the Executive, Mr. Speaker, under the Premier. However, I will do my best to answer the question if I can. The process would be to submit applications to the specific departments. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

##### Supplementary To Question 180-14(6): Summer Student Employment Program

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's recently come to my attention that a new directive was issued to government departments that if our northern post-secondary students are not registered on the government's Northwise Web site, they will not be eligible for summer employment with the Government of the Northwest Territories. Would the Minister confirm for this House that indeed is the new government's policy on summer student employment with the GNWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

##### Further Return To Question 180-14(6): Summer Student Employment Program

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not familiar because I am not the Minister, as I said, responsible for summer employment and that question would have to be answered by the Minister responsible. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

##### Supplementary To Question 180-14(6): Summer Student Employment Program

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was under the impression that the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment is in charge of maximizing northern employment and summer employment programs. If he is not the Minister, I would ask that he direct the question to whoever is in charge of that.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

##### Further Return To Question 180-14(6): Summer Student Employment Program

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That question definitely has to be answered by the Minister of the Executive. If that policy was issued, that policy would have to come from that particular department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

##### Supplementary To Question 180-14(6): Summer Student Employment Program

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will have to try to get on the list again and ask the appropriate Minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Roland.

##### Question 181-14(6): Funding For Recreation Events

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement I talked about the IRC tournament. Important events in many communities are related to sports events and things of that nature. So I have a question for the Minister responsible for sport and recreation under MACA, Minister Steen. Before I do that, I would also like to recognize the efforts of individuals who have to do a lot of fundraising to put these events on, especially in the case of the IRC tournament, Mr. Donnie Hendrick and his wife, and Forrest Day and Shauna Kaglik who really put on a great event. There were so many others as well, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Minister is what type of funding is available for these types of events through our government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

##### Return To Question 181-14(6): Funding For Recreation Events

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, under our sports and recreation program funding, MACA has \$825,000 for events such as the recent event in Inuvik. This is divided up into communities. As well, there is some funding for regional recreation associations or organizations. As an example, Mr. Speaker, Inuvik would receive, under this program, \$43,000. Should there be a non-government organization that would request funding, the request would be deferred to the community that the organization is presently resident in. As another example, Mr. Speaker, Sachs Harbour would receive \$28,000 and Fort McPherson would receive \$32,000. Some of this is based on population numbers and

that's why there is a difference in the amount allocated to each community.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary To Question 181-14(6): Funding For Recreation Events**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So the Minister is giving some numbers out there. That funding is transferred to municipalities and if non-government organizations wanted to get some of that money, they would make a request to their municipal council or hamlet council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of MACA, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return To Question 181-14(6): Funding For Recreation Events**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's correct, Mr. Speaker. In most communities, the sports events are organized by the municipalities anyway, but in the larger communities it's obvious that some of those sporting events are organized and, to some degree, sponsored by the business sector. So they would then have to apply to the local community for some of the funding that the community receives. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary To Question 181-14(6): Funding For Recreation Events**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister, for the record, just state if there is any other funding that non-government organizations can apply for in that area, sport and recreation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of MACA, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return To Question 181-14(6): Funding For Recreation Events**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the only other government funding that may be available would be if they approach the regional sports organizations. For instance, if there is a regional hockey organization, they may be able to approach them for some of the funding if that is the type of activity they are having. Other than that, we don't have a program specific for non-government organizations.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Ms. Lee.

**Question 182-14(6): Institutions Eligible For Student Financial Assistance**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. It's following up on the Member's statement that I made. Mr. Speaker, I could add to my statement that I am speaking on behalf of a constituent who was schooled here and who has lived and worked here all of his life, or almost all of his life, and he was very disappointed when he was accepted to the RCMP academy only to be told that he couldn't get any student assistance because this program was not recognized. Mr. Speaker, in my statement, I gave the Minister evidence to suggest that there are other jurisdictions in Canada which recognize this institution as post-secondary education. So is

the Minister willing to reconsider this position as soon as possible? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return To Question 182-14(6): Institutions Eligible For Student Financial Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NWT follows the Canada student loan guidelines and those guidelines don't recognize the RCMP cadet training institute as a post-secondary institute for the purposes of student financial assistance. For that reason, we do not recognize the academy, Mr. Speaker. That has been the case all along, where we have gone by the guidelines provided by the Canada student loans list that are provided. That is the reason for it. Ms. Lee has presented some information that we can certainly take a look at, however, the traditional way we have gone is to ensure that it follows Canada's student loan guidelines. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have to ask the Minister to try to get out from under the albatross of the Canada student loan guidelines that he seems to be blinded by. Mr. Speaker, the Minister should be concerned about fair treatment and equality for students. God knows, the government has been talking for years about the need to train Northerners and we need RCMP officers. We would like to have them coming from the Territories. We have a student who was accepted, who meets all the criteria and he's just going to say no because it doesn't qualify.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** It's pretty hard to hear the Member's question and if you allow her time, you might have a chance to get the question without...Order!

---Interjection

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Could you ask the question, Ms. Lee?

**Supplementary To Question 182-14(6): Institutions Eligible For Student Financial Assistance**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the Minister to, for once, do his job, open his eyes, read the stuff?

---Interjection

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 182-14(6): Institutions Eligible For Student Financial Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do wear glasses and if I take them off, I have a hard time seeing out of my right eye. I am also deaf in my left ear.

---Laughter

Mr. Speaker, I take this job very seriously, I really do. To suggest that I am not doing my job is insulting to me. That's the Member's opinion and that's fine with me, but, Mr. Speaker, I mentioned to the Member that she brought some information to the Table and I would be most prepared to look at that.

However, we need guidelines to go by, Mr. Speaker, because there are always certain areas we can say this should be considered, that should be considered. We will consider that, but we do have to adhere to certain guidelines. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, maybe I should qualify that, Mr. Speaker. He may be doing a great job in other areas, but when it comes to student financial assistance, he has really been blinded. He's had a board decision that should consider his policy. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, in seriousness, this is talking about people's lives. Would the Minister consider...

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Excuse me, Ms. Lee. I don't think it's fair to the Member that people are trying to pressure the Member into making a question. It's not fair. Could we get some order in this House? It's getting a little hard to hear the question and also we should allow her to make her question. Ms. Lee, your question, please.

**Supplementary To Question 182-14(6): Institutions Eligible For Student Financial Assistance**

**MS. LEE:** Mr. Speaker, would the Minister give full due and fair consideration to this latest information that suggests that this institution should be included for post-secondary education?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 182-14(6): Institutions Eligible For Student Financial Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have made a lot of improvements for students over the last three years. I think I should state that. It's important to put that before the public. The honourable Member is raising a very good point in this specific situation that naturally we want to do what we can for all students in the Territories that attend certain institutions. There are cases where it falls outside of the guidelines, but we certainly will look at the possibility of what circumstances would lead us to say, yes, we can recognize that institution. We will always do that, Mr. Speaker. So I will take the information that the Member has and we will look at the institution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary To Question 182-14(6): Institutions Eligible For Student Financial Assistance**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the other things that the Minister has suggested is because there is no cost involved in going into an RCMP training academy, there should be no need for loans and grants. But I have provided the Minister with information that suggests that there are lots of other expenses and this particular person has to take a leave of absence to go to the school which would be a loss of wages. So would the Minister consider looking at the expenses and see what the government can do to help with that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 182-14(6): Institutions Eligible For Student Financial Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are always interested in improving our student financial assistance programs, Mr. Speaker. The information the Member has referred to, we will certainly take that into consideration and any other information that the Member can provide to us would be very helpful. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Mr. Speaker, I have to disagree with the Member from Yellowknife. The Minister does have funding for cops, bingo cops. I would like to ask the Minister, if you could read the second bullet of the departmental vision statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Mr. Ootes.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Member just referred to me having money for bingo cops. I find that insulting, Mr. Speaker, to refer to people who do good jobs in our communities and on a point of order under Rule 23(i) that states the Member will be called to order if the Member speaks disrespectfully in the Assembly of a Member, as well as under 23(k), where he uses abusive or insulting language of a nature that likely creates disorder, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Mr. Ootes, I don't believe the Member was referring directly to you in the statement. He was talking about policing in general with regards to training. I think you may be offended, but I do not see your point of order. Mr. Ootes.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe the Member, by the entrance he's making, is speaking about employees of this government and I don't accept that as an appropriate way to speak about our employees. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You do not have a point of order. I did not hear any Members or individuals. The words I heard was training for bingo police. There was no reference. I would caution the Member with regard to his oral question and there is no point of order. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if I have offended the Minister, I apologize for that. I would like to ask him to read the second bullet of the departmental vision statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is no question there, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Nitah.

**Question 183-14(6): Declarations Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can I get the Minister to tell us what his department's understanding of the second bullet of the departmental vision statement is? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return To Question 183-14(6): Declarations Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the mission statement here, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary To Question 183-14(6): Declarations Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do have the vision statement of the department and the second bullet says: "...a community where people who respect learning as a means to provide shelter, to feed and clothe themselves, to maintain their health, to live with a sense of dignity and respect, and live in harmony with the land and members of their community." Mr. Speaker, where is the dignity when the department encourages clientele on the income support program to inform his employees and other members of the community, other clientele of that department, when they make money outside of the income support? Where is the dignity in that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 183-14(6): Declarations Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Mr. Speaker, the question is somewhat hypothetical in my mind. The income support program, if that is what the Member is referring to, is a very good program. It provides support to a lot of people in this territory. It's one of the best in the country and we have very good people doing work in this area, Mr. Speaker, that really do their best to provide a service to people, provide income to people, so they can ensure that they have some livelihood. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary To Question 183-14(6): Declarations Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this program where people tell other people when they make money... For example, Mr. Speaker, when the client tells the staff of the Minister, who is delivering this program, that another client of that program has won bingo, does that staff member investigate that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 183-14(6): Declarations Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Mr. Speaker, if the Member can bring me a specific case, then maybe I can deal with that, but he's being very hypothetical about his illustrations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary To Question 183-14(6): Declarations Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is it staff policy to investigate when someone else informs him of earnings outside of the income support program of income support clientele? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 183-14(6): Declarations Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The process for applying for income support, Mr. Speaker, is for the client to come into the office to apply for income support and there's usually a procedure that's followed to ask what income was received the previous month and that determines the amount of income for the individual. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Mr. McLeod.

**Question 184-14(6): Treatment Of Public Housing Clients**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Roger Allen. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, the Minister indicated that all housing clients are treated the same by himself and the department. I would like to ask the Minister if he could expand on that. Could he clarify what he meant by that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Return To Question 184-14(6): Treatment Of Public Housing Clients**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Currently, public housing tenants who are in public housing through the NWT Housing Corporation have their income based on rent geared to income. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 184-14(6): Treatment Of Public Housing Clients**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister if he could tell me if there is any commitment by the Housing Corporation to aboriginal people for aboriginal housing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 184-14(6): Treatment Of Public Housing Clients**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are committed to a fair process. We are committed to Aboriginals. We are committed to non-Aboriginals. Mr. Speaker, I may verify that by stating in this House that each year it costs this government \$35 million to support public housing while, on a pro forma basis, we only collect between \$2.7 million and \$2.9 million on rent recoveries. So that indicates to this House very clearly that we are committed to providing adequate housing to

all residents of the NWT and we will continue to do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 184-14(6): Treatment Of Public Housing Clients**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I hear no mention of the federal transfer agreement that we have with the federal government that clearly states we should be providing affordable housing to aboriginal people of the NWT. Can the Minister tell me if that document exists? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 184-14(6): Treatment Of Public Housing Clients**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Accordingly, we do have a social housing agreement with the federal government. It's built into our business plans and I am not sure when the last agreement was signed, but during my tenure as the Minister, we did sign another subsequent agreement called the affordable housing agreement. There are several processes we have concurred with, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 184-14(6): Treatment Of Public Housing Clients**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister if he would table that document in this House. It's information that's relevant to an initiative that his department is spearheading that's supposed to be very harmonic, but I think is out of tune at this point. Would the Minister table that document?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 184-14(6): Treatment Of Public Housing Clients**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If it's not already tabled, I am prepared to table the social housing agreement. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Delorey.

**Question 185-14(6): Summer Student Employment Guidelines**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will address my question to the honourable Premier and it's to do with our youth going to post-secondary education in the South and how they come back to the North and gain employment with the Government of the Northwest Territories. I would like to know from the Premier, if there is a set of guidelines in place, what the proper process is for students to apply for employment with the Government of the Northwest Territories.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Premier of the NWT, Mr. Kakfwi.

**Return To Question 185-14(6): Summer Student Employment Guidelines**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Mr. Speaker, the northern student employment program is one that is designed to provide our students with suitable and relevant summer employment within the government. We are giving priority to hiring status from May to August every year within the affirmative action policy. The students are contacted starting in December. Advertising is done through papers and the Web site. We encourage students to register with us. We provide information on the different employment subsidies, and support that we give to non-government employers. So this program has been going on for some time. We, as I said, provide contact with students through a Web site, newspapers, TV and government communications. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary To Question 185-14(6): Summer Student Employment Guidelines**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's come to my attention that there has been a directive issued to government departments that if northern post-secondary students are not registered on the GNWT's Northwise Web site that they will not be eligible for summer employment with the Government of the Northwest Territories. Could the Premier please confirm to this House if that indeed is a government policy now for summer students? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Mr. Premier.

**Further Return To Question 185-14(6): Summer Student Employment Guidelines**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's not essential for students to register. Students can go about it in whatever way they want to contact the government to indicate their interest in getting employment. They can undertake that initiative entirely on their own. We provide this service and we encourage them to register so we can know who they are and what interests they have and try to help them as much as we can. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary To Question 185-14(6): Summer Student Employment Guidelines**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am taking it from that answer that there was no such directive issued. I would like to make sure the Premier checks with his departments to ensure that that is not a policy. If there is a directive put out there, it's going to be very hard for students to get employment. Upon receiving this information, I had my constituency assistant do an unofficial survey of 10 students from Hay River who are attending universities in the South and they had heard nothing of this. Nothing had been communicated to them about a policy for the GNWT. I guess I will have to ask the Premier to make sure he checks with the department and if that is a policy, then how are we going to inform our students? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Mr. Premier.

**Further Return To Question 185-14(6): Summer Student Employment Guidelines**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, all students are encouraged and supported in their initiative to find summer employment, both with the government and with the private sector. This government will continue to try to find ways to support that, to facilitate it, but it is, as far as I know, not essential for them to register with us in order to gain employment with us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary To Question 185-14(6): Summer Student Employment Guidelines**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just ask the Premier, Mr. Speaker, if he would check into this and if that directive is out there in any of his departments that he will have that directive withdrawn? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Mr. Premier.

**Further Return To Question 185-14(6): Summer Student Employment Guidelines**

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the Member is correct and there is a perception problem, then we will correct that.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Roland.

**Question 186-14(6): Federal Sport And Recreation Funding**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question will be directed to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs in the area of sport and recreation. Mr. Speaker, during the committee review of his budget, I believe there was some reference to some federal funding that could be accessed by our government in the area of sport and recreation. I would like to get more detail from the Minister if that funding is made available to our government and to organizations throughout the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

**Return To Question 186-14(6): Federal Sport And Recreation Funding**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member for the question. Mr. Speaker, we just recently signed an agreement with the federal government for federal funding for sports and recreation activities. Under this program, for this fiscal year, we have funding and a portion of that funding would be directed to the NWT Excel program. Under that program, we will be contributing \$20,000 towards the Western Canadian Ski Championships to be held here in Yellowknife in March. This would be 10,000 federal dollars and \$10,000 from the NWT for sports and recreation. Our partner in that particular program, Mr. Speaker, is the NWT ski division and the Yellowknife Ski Club. Future plans for this program, Mr. Speaker, could include the same type of contributions for other regions and for other sports activities as well.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary To Question 186-14(6): Federal Sport And Recreation Funding**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's good news indeed. So how would communities and regions be able to find out more information about this program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of MACA, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return To Question 186-14(6): Federal Sport And Recreation Funding**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, MACA is getting the information to the communities through our sport and recreation people, but we also have a number of sports activities that are already taking place this year other than this one which helps to bring the word out to communities. For instance we have a program called multi-sports camps, which is presently being undertaken by our partners, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Aboriginal Sports Circle and NWT Hockey Association. Under that program, there is approximately \$25,000 for an aboriginal hockey camp in Aklavik, Tuktoyaktuk, Deline, Fort Good Hope and Rae in January. Traditional games camps will be held in Fort McPherson February 28<sup>th</sup> to March 1<sup>st</sup> and funding support will be provided to camps in 2003, a winter sports camp organized at Yellowknife schools. As well, there is an event at the Education Week launch at the K'alemi Dene School in Ndilo. Everybody is aware of those programs taking place anyway. That's how we are getting the word out. Plus, we are making sure that all the community sports and recreation organizations or the hamlets or the bands will be given the information that this funding is available and these programs are on stream. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Nitah.

**Question 187-14(6): Consultation On New Housing Initiatives**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation. Mr. Speaker, I want to read the vision statement of the NWT Housing Corporation. "The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is committed to working in partnership with communities and aboriginal groups to assist them to become responsible for their own choices in housing. While working together, all community residents are provided with opportunities for homes that support a healthy, secure, independent and dignified lifestyle." Mr. Speaker, this new housing initiative lacks dignity. When introducing these new housing initiatives, has the Housing Corporation worked in partnership with communities and aboriginal organizations through a consultation process? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Return To Question 187-14(6): Consultation On New Housing Initiatives**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we have. We have done that over the last four years. We have done it through a number of processes. As the Member would be aware, we have developed the universal partner agreement model that engages the local aboriginal community, as well as

the LHOs and the communities themselves. We have, as well, aboriginal and community self-government models. We have worked with several communities through the empowerment process. So we have worked with them at some length. Some have progressed faster than others. That we will respect. Not all communities should be treated equally. We have 33 different communities and we have been working with almost everyone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary To Question 187-14(6): Consultation On New Housing Initiatives**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NWT Housing Corporation is currently reviewing and trying to introduce new rental scales. I am wondering if those new rent scales have been communicated through a consultation process with communities and aboriginal organizations in the Northwest Territories. When was it done, Mr. Speaker?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 187-14(6): Consultation On New Housing Initiatives**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that from the chronology of events commencing in 1997, there has been a consultation process carried through right up until now. Our responsibility as Ministers is to guide the procedural direction of trying to have the communities informed. We have done that and I have tabled the list of agencies and organizations we have consulted since 1997. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary To Question 187-14(6): Consultation On New Housing Initiatives**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have the consultation lists. Mr. Speaker, Clem Paul, president of the North Slave Metis Alliance; Chief Peter Liske is going under chief of Ndilo; Paul Harrington is not the president of the South Slave Metis Tribal Council; Chief Don Balsillie is no longer the chief in Fort Resolution; Chief Jim Schaefer is no longer the chief in Fort Smith; the community of Lutsel'e has not been consulted according to this list; and, I am sure if I look further there are other players in here that are no longer in those positions. I ask the Minister, since we've done these consultations, some of these guys are not in these positions. Have there been any changes to the information that was provided to these people when they were in their positions of leadership? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 187-14(6): Consultation On New Housing Initiatives**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With all due respect, I understand, yes. Leadership does change quite constantly in the NWT. Those were the leaders of the day that were consulted on the harmonization policy. Mr. Speaker, that was a requirement of us through the questions. I believe we

have manifested the method as to how we have communicated as per that requirement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary To Question 187-14(6): Consultation On New Housing Initiatives**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the recent statement saying partnership, respect, dignity; all I am asking the Minister is, has the information changed since the time when the corporation went to the communities and met with the leadership and consulted with them on harmonization? Has the information changed since, if we are looking at introducing the harmonization this coming April 1<sup>st</sup>? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 187-14(6): Consultation On New Housing Initiatives**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** No, the modules have not changed since it was reintroduced in the 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly. What we were mandated to do was consult with the leaders of the day, take the information we had and ensure that those leaders were in support. Whether they were in support or not, the intention was to provide them with the information so they could make informed decisions as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Lafferty.

**Question 188-14(6): GNWT Harmonization Initiative**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, the Honourable Jake Ootes. As I mentioned yesterday, one of my biggest concerns with harmonization is we'd be creating arrears for people. For example, if a person is on income support and receives a sum of money, the next month their rent...

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Excuse me. I have to warn you that harmonization is coming up on the agenda under motions and we are not going to allow questions on that issue because it is on the orders of the day, so I will have to rule you out of order. Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Delorey.

---Ruled Out of Order

**Question 189-14(6): Funding For Emergency Preparedness**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't think it will come as any surprise in this House when I bring up the subject of emergency preparedness in the NWT and how we deal with emergencies. My questions today are for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, the Honourable Vince Steen. Mr. Speaker, in the past two years or so, I have been addressing with the Minister and the department the question of funding to prepare for emergencies in the Hay River area, through the Hay River Fire Department, and getting a response vehicle for them.

On March 4<sup>th</sup>, I just about fell off my chair when I heard about a press release with the heading "Preparing for Emergencies in the NWT Just Got a Whole Lot Easier." The federal

government is contributing \$130,000 to the region to enhance emergency preparedness. Ethel Blondin-Andrew, MP for the Western Arctic, made the announcement today. The money will go towards improving emergency communications in the community of Enterprise and assist in the creation of NWT emergency measures programs. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs how this \$130,000 is helping prepare for emergencies in the community of Enterprise. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

**Return To Question 189-14(6): Funding For Emergency Preparedness**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in relation to the federal news release and the amount of funding they gave towards joint emergency preparedness program recently, Mr. Speaker, that funding is actually under an agreement we have with the federal government for funding emergency preparedness program activities. In this particular case, this contribution from the federal government was actually committed in 2000-2001, but the federal government takes credit for their contributions a number of times. When they announce a program, they take credit for it and then when they actually issue the cheque, they take more credit for it. This cheque that they are talking about is for activities that this government did on their behalf in 2000-2001, but we don't receive funding from them for this until they go through our audited books. Then they announce it. So this activity is two years old and it was for the purpose of an emergency preparedness office position and we didn't get the full funding for that because we didn't have the position forwarded that year, we just got a portion of it. A portion of that funding is for \$7,200 for an emergency radio for Enterprise. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary To Question 189-14(6): Funding For Emergency Preparedness**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's great news. The money was spent two years ago and now our MP is making a grandiose announcement for the credit. The announcement went on to say that the territorial government has committed an equal share of funding towards these projects. How much money are we talking about? Are we talking about \$130,000 or are we talking about \$260,000? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of MACA, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return To Question 189-14(6): Funding For Emergency Preparedness**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The agreement requires us to 50/50, so it's \$260,000.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary To Question 189-14(6): Funding For Emergency Preparedness**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If it's \$260,000, I would like to get a breakdown of where this \$260,000 went. From the most I can gather here, from the amounts that went to

Enterprise and possibly funding a position, it adds up to roughly \$130,000. But if we are talking about \$260,000, where did the money go? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of MACA, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return To Question 189-14(6): Funding For Emergency Preparedness**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information. I will certainly get it for the Member. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary To Question 189-14(6): Funding For Emergency Preparedness**

**MR. DELOREY:** Just a little further clarification. Is this the same way for any announcement that we hear our MP make about contributions to the Territories in big amounts of money? Is this the general procedure? We've presented it two years ago and now they are making the big announcement and taking the credit for this. Is that normal procedure?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of MACA, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return To Question 189-14(6): Funding For Emergency Preparedness**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe I said at the start, this funding was spent by us on their behalf in 2000-2001, but they won't give us the funding until we have an audited statement showing how we spent it and that's what they wait for. Once they have that, they then announce that they will give you this funding.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Lafferty.

**Question 190-14(6): Classifications Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Honourable Jake Ootes, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. I would like to ask the Minister if he consulted with the aboriginal governments and the leaders out there when they were creating these new categories of what is considered income, like bingos, babysitting, child tax and craft sales? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return To Question 190-14(6): Classifications Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our income support program has been in place for many years and the system that was developed in the '80s and 1990s has had a few refinements over the past decade. But when I took over this department and responsibilities in this area, these were the regulations that were in place, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 190-14(6): Classifications Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister is very good at not answering questions. Did he consult with the aboriginal leaders and agencies that are out there before he made any decisions on how to change these categories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 190-14(6): Classifications Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I stated, the system we are administering today is a system that was in place when I took over. Therefore, the consultations, if any had taken place, would have been done by prior assemblies.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 190-14(6): Classifications Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. He is very good at not answering questions. I would like to ask him again. The new policies and decisions they have made on the new categories, which are new, did the Minister consult with the aboriginal leaders and agencies? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 190-14(6): Classifications Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Mr. Speaker, if the Member is speaking about the income support program, as it is today, that particular program, consultation had no doubt been the responsibility of previous Ministers. If the Member is speaking about a program change that is now before us, specifically harmonization, those consultations had taken place on an extensive basis, yes.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 190-14(6): Classifications Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't get the last part of the answer, but did he say he consulted with our leaders and agencies that were out there? Yes or no.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 190-14(6): Classifications Of Income For Income Support Purposes**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Member could be more specific as to what changes to what program he's speaking of. If he's speaking about the proposed changes where we are looking at harmonization, the Housing Corporation has tabled a list of individuals who were consulted, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, once again. Mr. Speaker, I will just read a little bit of the vision statement, the last paragraph: "By working...

---Interjection

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Are you making a point of order?

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, I am making a point of order on the Minister because he could speak to the harmonization and I can't. I am being restricted from asking questions on it, but he can speak to it. We are restricted on this side to deal with an issue that's before the House on a motion, but on that side, it seems that they are free to do what they want. I would like to ask that I get the last two supplementaries back.

---Laughter

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I think it must be a full moon. Mr. Lafferty, on your point of order, you do not have a point of order. The Minister was not speaking to the motion on the agenda. He was answering a question from a Member. I would like to caution everybody that any questions should not refer to the harmonization because it is a motion on the orders for today. There is going to be a motion to deal with that. So just to caution Members. Mr. Lafferty, you do not have a point of order. Mr. Nitah.

**Question 191-14(6): New Rent Scale Based On Income**

**MR. NITAH:** Mr. Speaker, the second paragraph of the vision statement of the NWT Housing Corporation states, "By working together, all community residents are provided with opportunities for homes that support a healthy, secure, independent and dignified lifestyle." Because of this new rent scale based on income that was not used today but will be introduced in April, resulting in month-to-month rent scale changes, could I ask the Minister where does that guarantee security when a person can't plan for three or four months down the road because they have to worry about the rent they are going to pay next month? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Mr. Nitah, your question is out of order. It is dealing with an item that is going to be coming forth by way of a motion. Your question is out of order. Mr. Lafferty.

---Ruled Out of Order

**Question 192-14(6): Rent Increases In Public Housing**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Honourable Roger Allen, Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. I would like to ask the Minister, in the last few months, have there been any increases in rents in the Territories?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Return To Question 192-14(6): Rent Increases In Public Housing**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If we are talking about public housing in the NWT, there's been status

quo. If you are talking about private rental markets, yes, there's been a drastic increase. We have been trying to deal with that in the context of other questions raised in the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 192-14(6): Rent Increases In Public Housing**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have information today. I got a fax saying there's been an increase in the of amount \$200 in the rental market in public housing in the last few months. Can the Minister tell me if that's the case in Rae-Edzo? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 192-14(6): Rent Increases In Public Housing**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will only talk to the process because it is a process question. Each public housing tenant is obligated to verify income once each month at the local housing association or local housing authority. From there, their rents are assessed based on their monthly income. That is part of the process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 192-14(6): Rent Increases In Public Housing**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister if he could get his department to go into my community of Rae-Edzo and see if the information I received is correct. There are notices. I have had access to two, one on income support and one on seniors where their rents are going to be increased by about \$200 a month. This is just an increase in rent. That's all it says on there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 192-14(6): Rent Increases In Public Housing**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There tends to be a misconception on the process. The letters were sent out to advise the tenant that there may be an increase or decrease. There is a form that we use to calculate the rent scales. It's just a formal letter to advise the tenant that they may be assessed. Since then, there's been some change in the way we are going to calculate those rents that's based on assessed rent scales. As I stated a number of times in the past, we will continue to work with the tenants to help them understand how their rents will be applied. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 192-14(6): Rent Increases In Public Housing**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister will say yes or no, if he would get his department to look into the situation in Rae? Yes or no.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 192-14(6): Rent Increases In Public Housing**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Mr. Speaker, under agreements with a majority of communities across the NWT, there are LHOs that have given proper training. We have provided them with all the necessary information and detailed packages, so they may work with the tenants. Specific to the Member's community, we have been there on one occasion and our senior staff continually travel to Rae to provide that level of advice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Mr. McLeod.

**Question 193-14(6): Conflict Declaration On Government Initiative**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Roger Allen. Earlier this week, Mr. Allen indicated that he had declared conflict on a certain initiative and he indicated that he approached the secretary to Cabinet to seek advice. I would like to ask the Minister if that is standard practice. Why did he go to the secretary to Cabinet for advice? Is she an expert in the field of conflict of interest, Mr. Speaker?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Return To Question 193-14(6): Conflict Declaration On Government Initiative**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I approached the Cabinet secretary office personally to ensure I was not in conflict because there were relatives who occupied public housing in my riding and I felt it was my duty to approach someone for advisement under the conflict of interest, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 193-14(6): Conflict Declaration On Government Initiative**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell us if the Conflict of Interest Commissioner ever came back with an opinion whether the Member was actually in conflict or not?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 193-14(6): Conflict Declaration On Government Initiative**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to reply because it is necessary that I do. The concern was raised with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner who advised that the Minister should refrain from participating in Cabinet

and FMB decisions regarding the harmonization initiative. The commissioner was also clear that once Cabinet and FMB had issued direction, the Minister who is responsible to implement that direction would not be in conflict. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 193-14(6): Conflict Declaration On Government Initiative**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for that information. That certainly clarifies some of the grey areas that we have been questioning. I would still like to know why the Minister decided to go to the secretary to Cabinet and not directly to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. It's the responsibility of each Member in this House to ensure they are not in conflict, not staff and opinions from staff. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 193-14(6): Conflict Declaration On Government Initiative**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Mr. Speaker, at the time I felt I was not in conflict in terms of my own personal interests. My approach to my Cabinet colleagues was to indicate that I had felt I was in conflict with the issue, the harmonization initiative, based on the facts I have given earlier. So I felt it was wise for me to approach the Cabinet secretary to guide me in the finality of this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Time for question period is over. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to Opening Address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions, Motion 7-14(6). Mr. McLeod.

**ITEM 16: MOTIONS**

**Motion 7-14(6): To Change The Implementation Date Of The Strategy To Harmonize Income Support And Social Housing, Defeated**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the harmonization strategy fails to meet the needs of seniors and students in the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS the strategy penalizes seniors who are forced to take in family members when there are no other accommodations available in the communities by adding the senior's pension income to the household calculations;

AND WHEREAS the complete lack of rental accommodations available in the small communities is not conducive to family members moving out of a senior's home;

AND WHEREAS the strategy continues to place the responsibility for rental remuneration with the head of the household, in many cases a senior on fixed income, rather than apportioning it among working members of the household;

AND WHEREAS some seniors on fixed incomes who have secured loans based on available income will have difficulty servicing their debt due to rent increases;

AND WHEREAS the harmonization will treat student financial assistance loans as income for purposes of calculating rent assessment in public housing;

AND WHEREAS there are still too many inequities and fundamental unfairness in calculating income for the purposes of income support and rental assessment in public housing;

AND WHEREAS further investigation and assessment of the impacts of the harmonization strategy on seniors, students and single parents is required;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave, that the implementation of the harmonization of income support and social housing strategy be scheduled to April 1, 2004. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Your motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this issue has been something that's really been discussed on a number of occasions in this House during the last couple of weeks. It's an initiative that was started by the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly. It was never a policy that we, as the 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly, have had much input on. We didn't initiate this harmonization strategy. We did not have the opportunity to debate it in this House. In fact, this initiative was only tabled yesterday after many requests and it's still considered to be a rolling draft. It's being compiled as we go.

Mr. Speaker, I am not convinced that proper consultation was going to take place. It's something we counted on the department to do and we've received a list of the different groups that were consulted and the list was tabled yesterday in this House. That list is very outdated. That consultation must have taken place at least four years ago. Most of the chiefs on the list are no longer there. It's something that really concerns me. In fact, when I try to find one name in that whole document that was from my riding, it was non-existent. There was nobody consulted in my riding. No wonder everyone is very upset and surprised at this whole initiative that's being brought forward. There is no consultation with aboriginal governments.

We are moving into negotiations for devolution. We are moving into negotiations for self-government, yet we don't have the decency to sit down with aboriginal governments and tell them we are going to initiate a new program for you. The Minister stated that the LHOs have been contacted and trained, so I followed up on that. It's true, they have been contacted. They have been trained, for one day. They had a one-day workshop for each LHO and most people are still not certain what they are supposed to be doing. They are not clear on what rent is supposed to be calculated. They are not clear about the mandate of this whole initiative.

It really concerns me that we are going to start calculating all income in the assessment of rent. When we ask for a list of what that means, spell it out, tell us what is going to be included as income. The Minister stated we are still working on it. This initiative is going to be implemented April 1<sup>st</sup>. We said we would train our staff in the communities to implement it. We

don't even have the information in this House as what is going to be calculated as income. That, to me, is really unfair. We don't know who is actually going to enforce this whole thing. There have been jokes in here about bingo cops and bingo police and all kinds of things, but that may be a reality. What's it going to cost? What is it going to cost to enforce this program? We don't know that either.

What about the information that now is confidential and restricted to income support workers? That information is going to be shared across the board. Is that not a violation of the client's confidentiality and privacy? Does that make it open season to view what is being requested in confidence?

There is no consideration in this whole initiative of the condition of the homes. Some homes in the communities are very rundown. Some homes have had the seniors living in the house for 30 years. Now they are expected to pay rent. In the next couple of years they are going to pay full rent, but the conditions have not improved. If we are going to start charging them for market rent, let's give them quality housing.

Where do you go if you don't want to live in public housing? In my riding, the majority of the units are public housing. If you are not happy with this initiative, what are your options? It's not the same. This is why there are opposing views on this because the larger centres say it's a good thing. Yellowknife, Hay River, maybe it is a good thing for them. They have options, we don't. We only have public housing. If we don't like it, where do we go? Seniors giving up their houses, we say we'll look after you, we'll take care of you, you are not going to pay rent. Now they are saying pay rent. Where does a senior go? We don't have the independent senior strategy in my communities. We never had any houses built under that. Maybe Inuvik or other larger centres have it. That doesn't apply to us. EDAP doesn't apply to us. It's really forcing us into a corner, Mr. Speaker. Our list for housing is growing.

On the reserve, we had one unit available last year. We had 25 families apply for it. We only get two houses a year. This year, the Minister has been able to target our communities as core need and that's helped, but with two units a year, it's very difficult to catch up. We will never catch up. We are falling behind. Some families are now going to have to calculate all rental income as part of the household calculations. I know in my riding I have houses that, for a three-bedroom house, we have 12 people in it. We are going to charge everybody who makes a dime in that house rent, when in fact most of them are sleeping on the floor. Is that fair? We have to remember that not all our people in public housing are income support clients. Most of the people are in public housing are in public housing because that's all there is. That's the reality of living in a small community. You are not in a position to choose whether you are want to live in an apartment or anywhere else. You have public housing and that's all you have. You are lucky if you get a unit, waiting on the list for two to three years.

What really bothers me is we seem to forget, as a government, that we have an obligation to the aboriginal people in the North. The Minister offended a lot of people in the North when he stated all people are treated the same. We have to start looking at our federal transfer agreements. We have to recognize that there is an obligation. We have to all be informed of that. I don't believe everybody is up to par when it comes to that information.

Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned about this initiative. It may be something that we need down the road. At this point, we don't have all the information. We are still trying to develop it as we go. We've spent five years on it. Only yesterday this document got tabled. We spent half a million dollars on it. Only yesterday this document was tabled and it's not a complete document. It needs work. We have to do a proper communications strategy. We have to do this right. We can't just put in a document that's incomplete and expect everybody to live with it.

Mr. Speaker, we need a free vote on this issue. The constituents in everybody's riding, especially the Minister's, have to know how they are representing the people in the North. Their constituents are phoning some of us on this side. They want to know why we can't have a free vote on it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** To the motion. Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also support the motion, as I have said the last few weeks and last year when it first came up in this House. There are too many unanswered questions. There are too many things that Ministers can't answer. I asked a question yesterday to the Minister. I asked what is going to happen when someone is going to receive a sum of money and the rent was increased and income support was denied? He didn't give me an answer. He didn't have the answer. Most of the time we ask questions, they have to refer to each other or just come up with long sentenced preambles. No answer. There are too many of those out there.

I am getting information from my communities where rents are going to be increased \$200 for seniors and for income support. They are basing everything on the income, but also they've increased the rent in the communities, which was not part of the harmonization. Now they are saying the cost of the home is now going to be \$200 more. The Minister from income support can't tell us exactly how he is going to deal with people's arrears that are going to accumulate from rent for an income support client who makes money. They don't even have the answer how they are going to deal with it. All they said is the Housing Minister is going to give it to my department.

Well, give us the details. They haven't given us the details how they are going to deal with the situation. They haven't given the details of how some of the other assessments are going to happen. They are coming to us in 2000 with numbers of 50 percent of clients who will be impacted will be on income support. Then you look at the numbers and you find out that only 38 percent will be impacted. Suddenly, you take out the seniors and the percentage gets lower. Harmonization is something where you put two and two together to make it click. It's not going to click if you don't even have the percentage you are going to work with and put them together. All we can do is fix the policies in housing so we have a fair rental scale, and fix income support so they deal with how they assess their income. Two different issues, they can still deal with it. You don't have to harmonize in your answers. How can you harmonize when you have to do the actual thing?

I am going to say I support this motion. There are too many question marks. You guys are going out there with a gas gauge that's going up and down. Your tail pipe is hanging low and you

don't even know where you are going to end up on the map. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** To the motion. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's quite obvious that I am standing up in support of this motion. Mr. Speaker, this harmonization initiative was flawed from start to finish. Actually, I don't see a finish, as Mr. Lafferty had indicated. There are lots of problems with this. It doesn't provide any dignity or respect for those clients who are in public housing and income support. It's definitely providing dignity and respect for those people on income support. It's intrusive to individuals and the decisions they have to make. I would argue that, Mr. Speaker, it goes against the fabric of our society and our communities. When you are forcing people to squeal on one another because of income support or through public housing rental scales on income, all income, every income, it's not good public policy, in my opinion. Mr. Speaker, it's these kinds of policies that stir bad relations between communities and this government, a policy that obviously was not well thought out, not communicated to our communities, to our frontline deliverers of our programs and services, our leaders, our people in public housing.

When a person doesn't know how much rent he's going to pay next month, how do you expect him to plan for that month? There's no security there. There's no partnership with aboriginal governments. These types of policies, when you don't provide options with these policies, the option I am talking about, Mr. Speaker, is where is the employment? Where is the employment in those communities? Where are the government jobs in those communities? When you ask them to go on income support and tell them to explain every last cent they got last month so we could charge them additional rent or a cheque to you this month based on your last month's income, there is no dignity there and there are no options there.

Yesterday, in Committee of the Whole, I got the Minister of RWED to identify all the positions of his department in each community. Ninety percent of those jobs are in regional centres or in Yellowknife. One or two jobs in communities. That's very much representative of the entire government. So when this government starts making policies that's going to make it difficult to live in those communities, what happens? People don't get off income support. Therefore, our statistics go down. They move to regional centres, they move outside of communities. That affects the financial relationship of this government in those communities. Transfer dollars based on population is a reality in this government and those communities, because a loss of population will get reduced transfer payments making it more difficult for those communities to deliver other programs and services. It also has a major impact on representation in this House. The Constitution of Canada states, and it's protected by a court decision in the NWT, that tells us how many people are in this House and representation. Now you see why there are only a few of us on this side of the House that represent a large number of communities in the NWT when there is a large group of MLAs representing three communities. The numbers are not there. The numbers are lopsided, to say the least.

These kinds of policies will contribute to that. The more people who leave our smaller communities and move into the capital of the Territories and regional centres, the less seats we will have in our smaller communities, more seats in this room, we will

see more of these policies that are incentive to the smaller communities. Even in the city, I am getting a lot of calls from people in the city. People are writing me letters saying how this is going to negatively impact them. Some of them are government employees. Their options are to quit and go on income support, quit and leave the city or leave the territory. Is this the kind of policy we want as a government, forcing people to quit their jobs and leave the North? This kind of policy doesn't encourage people to find short-term jobs in their communities and those types of jobs are the only type we seem to get in those communities, short-term seasonal jobs such as forestry and firefighting.

This policy obviously has not considered that. This policy is supposed to encourage employment. How can you encourage employment when as soon as you start working, you are going to get an increase in your rent?

So, Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues in this House to really look at this policy. It may be beneficial to maybe 60 percent of their constituency, but the other 40 percent will suffer. If that is the kind of government we are going to have and those kinds of decisions we are going to make based on those jobs, then we are in trouble. If 40 percent of the population is going to suffer, then that's not good policy, that's not good government. I think we should delay this by one year so we could have a closer look at it. Make some major adjustments and reintroduce it, if necessary, next year at this time by the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Let's give them that mandate. Let's not take the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly's mandate and something that was designed in 1995. Do you think it still works today?

I don't think so. I asked the Ministers questions on consultation. A lot of people who are consulted are no longer in those positions. The question is how much has changed in this policy since those people were consulted. If this is still a working draft, then I imagine there are changes that will be made and if we consulted on the colour white and we say we are going to introduce something that's white and by the time the introduction time comes and it's yellow, Mr. Speaker, then that's not what we consulted on.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Right.

**MR. NITAH:** Obviously this whole area right now is grey, Mr. Speaker. I suggest to my colleagues, let's support this motion. Let's delay it for a year and let's do the job right. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** To the motion. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand to speak in opposition of the motion, but it's with some reluctance and I am going to try to explain my position and reflect that what I am trying to do today is really in the best interest of my constituents here in the riding of Great Slave in Yellowknife. A year ago, when this new policy was brought forward -- actually more than a year ago -- I was in firm support of it. The thing that really appealed to me is two departments were actually going to combine their resources and their needs in the interest of improving service to clients and customers, in this case in the income support and the public housing area. One of the things that I found as an MLA is that low income people or those who have had some kind of disadvantage often have very common needs relating to their incomes, their housing needs and very often there are issues relating to justice, perhaps, or education

and health. A great barrier, Mr. Speaker, to these people getting by and improving their lives was within this government in a number of so-called stovepipes that were set up from one department to the other that kept people going back and forth from one voice mail or one appointment or one office to another.

So the whole idea of harmonizing these two departments, bringing them together on these very closely related social services was, I thought, not a great step forward but at least a good step forward. I was hoping that we would be able to see more, if you will, harmonization and amalgamation of services. It's somewhat disappointing that a year after this move was deferred, with the hope that we were going to be able to level out some of the bumps in it, take off some of the rough edges and improve some of the communication, we still obviously can't seem to achieve that. However, I still stand in support of the harmonization effort as proposed and just recently amended by the Minister.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about the impacts or at least the forecasted impacts, of this harmonization on tenants in Yellowknife and I'll be happy to make this paper available to anyone who would like to see it. It came to me a few days ago from the Housing Corporation and it talks about the impact of the new rent scale in Yellowknife, for a total of 259 housing units. The information suggests, Mr. Speaker, that 63 percent of those people will actually receive decreases in their rent. Now these were numbers that were put together as of last October, so things may have changed somewhat. I haven't seen or heard of any brand new information or numbers, Mr. Speaker, so I think I need to go on this; it is fairly recent. Let me give you a little bit of a breakdown.

Of 259 units, 192 are occupied by working families; 146 of those will see their rent decreased. That's three-quarters of those working families will see decreases in their rent. Half of the 30 units are occupied by students who will see decreases in their rent. Mr. Speaker, there is a third area that is defined here and that is for seniors and of the 37 units occupied by seniors, only three will see decreases. This is not entirely unexpected, Mr. Speaker, because in the interest of fairness -- which is really, I think, one of the underlying philosophies of this policy -- the departments wanted to redistribute some of the wealth that was going into this program. It's long been understood that there are a number of seniors who have good incomes, adequate incomes at least, who are paying nothing or next to nothing for their units; whereas, a neighbour might be a single mother, a student who is being forced to pay a whole bunch of money on a monthly basis because of her situation. So in the interest in fairness, I liked what this program wanted to do, which was balance the needs and the resources among our population and our government. So that's largely where it got my support.

Another indication, Mr. Speaker, that I should be supporting this, is that my phone and my e-mail has been largely quiet on this issue where people are complaining that they are going to be misused or abused by this. This is where I really have some sympathy and a large question in my mind about the kind of impact this is having here in Yellowknife, compared to what is going on with my colleagues in the smaller communities. The kinds of questions and issues that are being raised there seem to be dramatically different from what is going on here.

I have no explanation or information about that and it does point, Mr. Speaker -- and this is the last point I would like to make -- in that as much as I don't want to see this program deferred because it is going to help more people in my riding that it may harm or effect, I'm not pleased to see that we are continuing to tinker with, to design, to add new layers to subsidy programs, to welfare situations, to lifestyle inequities. Every time we try to do something or make an improvement somewhere for a deserving group of people who are at a disadvantage or disabled or cut out of the action somehow, we are creating yet another tier of inequity and inequality where people can say, with some justification, you are better off than I am because of this government's policies or approaches to things.

Government has a big responsibility, Mr. Speaker, to redistribute wealth, to provide safety nets and buffers for people who don't have the best and the biggest and all the opportunities that are afforded in this country. But the consequence of it is that we're leaving ourselves open to so many of these challenges, so many of these barriers. The idea that this program should be deferred for a year, Mr. Speaker, if it is approved or adopted, may have one hope that we will look back at the whole philosophy and what we are doing with these lifestyle supports, back-up, safety nets, whatever you want to call them. That is really where we should be looking to see whether or not this is in the best long-term interest of people in the NWT. I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate everyone listening and again, I say with some reluctance, and with a qualified answer, I will be not supporting this motion.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** To the motion. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in speaking to this motion, I am somewhat torn as well because I know, ever since the last Assembly, I have been a supporter, in theory, of harmonization. I think it is important that we have two branches of government that deal with people who are in economic need, and some people get treated better than others. We've heard a lot in this House about how seniors will suffer if we move forward with harmonization. One of the driving reasons for harmonization has been that, in many cases in the same community, seniors are being treated better than single mothers. I don't think it is right that this government says that we should treat kids in a lesser way than we do seniors.

I'm sure that most people wouldn't want to come out and say that sort of thing publicly but, unfortunately, the way the program is set up now, that is the way things happen in many of our communities. A single mom with kids living side by side with a senior, one approaching income support, one going to the Housing Corporation or to LHO for housing, even if they have the same income in that household, one gets treated differently than the other. That's not right, but I have to recognize that given the amount of criticism that has arisen from this program, there has obviously been a failure in the implementation process here. The government has failed very significantly in the communication process. The program has already been deferred once because the communications were proven to be inadequate. The last time this was tried, the people were getting less than three months' notice. They weren't being given the accurate information. We encouraged the government to defer the process and do it right the next time around. Unfortunately, given what we've heard in this House, Mr. Speaker, it is hard to see that they have done it right this time.

I think part of the problem may be in the approach. If we think back to the approach this government took when we were negotiating with other governments across Canada on the increases to the National Child Benefit, the important factor that all governments had to agree to was that no one would be worse off after the implementation of the National Child Benefit. With the approach that the government has taken to harmonization, the emphasis has been in their approach on cost neutrality. In other words, the government has not been prepared to put any more money into the programs, either one of them, in order to bring about this harmonization.

That's what is causing some of the problems here. Instead of saying one of our programs may be inadequate and in order to harmonize them we have to put more money into the pot to bring it up to the same level as another program, they said, oh no, we have to take money out of people's pockets to put into other people's pockets so that we can make everybody equal. I think that we are going to have to look at what has been proposed here. Although I certainly support the idea of harmonization, as I said in the beginning, I can't stand that in some instances we treat moms and kids who have the same income as seniors in a lesser way. That is not right. Kids have to be as important to us as our seniors. We can't let them not be treated as well.

So we need to find a way to harmonize the approach but we also need to take a really good look at whether or not we can afford to harmonize by taking money away from those who really can't afford it. So I hope the government will take a look at this. I do want to see harmonization, but I want to ensure that we don't wait until the last minute next time around. Let's start right now. Let's start today, tomorrow, to work at realigning the program. Let's start to recognize that it is going to cost us money to do the right thing here and then let's talk about how much money it is going to cost and where we are going to find that money. I think that it is important that we do the job right. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** To the motion. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as well, I am torn on this issue. As Members have stated in this Assembly, harmonization was born out of an initiative of the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Mr. Speaker, it might have been born out of the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly, but it would have been nurtured or malnourished, in a sense, in the 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly. It is an initiative that I think in principle is the right way to go for all residents in the Northwest Territories. But it also has to meet certain criteria and the message has to get out to individuals across the North, how they will be impacted.

I think that we've tried to put too much in one basket. We've tried to correct all the wrongs in one way and that is difficult to do. I have to hand it to the Ministers who have been involved in this at this time. They initially heard from the Members, they went back to the drawing board and tried to do a few things and as of just recently, made some more adjustments to try to address concerns of Members of this House. Mr. Speaker, I can agree in principle with what the government is trying to do, but I cannot agree with what might be put in place if this harmonization package goes ahead as is.

Mr. Speaker, I will point out some examples from my constituency of what happens. It's different from a constituency that has all public housing, whereas, in my

community, it's split. I have a large private market and there is public housing. Mr. Speaker, the income being calculated is going to take in a number of avenues such as sewing and selling of meat, which we traditional harvesters are still doing in my constituency. If we have somebody winning a bingo, then that will be taken into consideration. That individual goes back into the income support office and says I made some money, I've sold some meat or I made some sewing money or there is bingo.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think those are being evenly applied across the board and that is my concern as well for my constituency. For example, the Inuvik town council took over the lottery provisions within our act and they've taken care of bingos in the community, and the way they work that arrangement is that every organization holding a bingo has to record who has won that bingo. The town collects that information so that it knows who's won prizes from what organization's bingo. Well, income support staff go over to the town office and is given information on who's won bingo, whether it was two people winning \$100 or one person winning \$10,000. They take that information and apply it so when the individual comes back the next month, having won \$150 or \$200, to apply and the money has been spent wisely or unwisely, that reduces the amount of income they'll have from income support.

Now I agree with that in principle to some extent. Somebody winning \$1,000, \$2,000, \$5,000, or \$10,000, should be able to pay their own way for a number of months. I agree with that, but can we be told that that standard will be applied in all communities in the Northwest Territories? I don't believe that's so, Mr. Speaker. I know it's so in my constituency, but do they record that in any other community? Do they record who's won the bingo and provide that information to the income support office in that community? I don't believe so. I've talked to individuals in my community who are quite closely connected to how things work in the social area.

Another concern, Mr. Speaker, that I have is the fact that in trying to address the concerns of Members in this House, they're treating seniors differently again. Those that are in housing right now will remain at the current level but, as of April 1<sup>st</sup>, new seniors coming in will be brought in at a different level. I have a concern with that because as disjointed as the system is today, we're going to add another joint that puts it a little more out of sync, as I see it, Mr. Speaker. We should treat seniors across the board evenly. Is it going to be based on income? Is there going to be a certain amount that is going to be exempted before they start calculating rent? At least that is the way it is in housing and there is a certain amount of that for income support as well. So I think we need to look at how much we exempt but, by addressing it in two ways, saying that because a senior is in a housing unit before April 1<sup>st</sup>, he or she is going to be treated differently than somebody who comes into housing after April 1<sup>st</sup>, I have a concern with that. Even though we do have differences between seniors and single mothers, we are going to put another system in there that is going to put it a little further apart.

What is going to happen, Mr. Speaker, with students on student financial assistance right now, the system is if you are accepted to Arctic College programs, here in Yellowknife or Fort Smith, or in Inuvik, people in my constituency have to travel out of Inuvik. Right now, the policy is their housing unit can remain in their name and they're deducted \$32. When

they go out to school, a certain amount of the student financial assistance will be paid to Arctic College for the unit that they received in the program. Now we are going to put more emphasis on that income that is for student financial assistance and apply it to the rent back home. In some cases, there might be a slight drop, but there might be a bit of an increase if your partner or spouse gets a part-time job in that community. It is very disjointed right now and we need to somehow pull it together to make it a little bit more level.

That is why I say that, in principle, I agree with the harmonization initiative. But I've listened to the many questions raised and heard the responses, and some critical pieces of information are lacking. A lot of comments have been made about larger constituencies being well off, better than small communities. That's true to a certain degree because of the amount of resources in a larger community that is tax-based driven. However, Mr. Speaker, someone in my constituency who is in public housing right now, if they are evicted, they have to go the private market. The private market has no qualms about telling somebody you have to pay a certain amount. So an individual who used to pay rent at \$32, now pays rent at \$1,600. Where do they go?

They used to go to income support and say well I'm not in housing anymore and I need a place to stay and the government had this sort of check stop to say well, we can't let you be out in the cold, we're going to pay your full rent. Well, that has changed, Mr. Speaker, because right now anybody who has been in public housing that has been evicted from public housing for arrears, income support will only give them the amount of rent they were qualified for before. So if somebody qualified for public housing and is evicted and they were paying \$32 a month, income support says, okay, good, we'll give \$32 a month, now go find some accommodations. What happens after that, Mr. Speaker, is people start bunking with other family members, with friends, with just people in the community that will accept them for a night, so that they can have a warm place to sleep.

Mr. Speaker, we definitely have problems across the Territories. Even without any proposed changes, all members, I believe, have received a lot of calls regarding it. So on this harmonization initiative, as it stands, even with the amendments, I have difficulty supporting the harmonization initiative and feel there must be more work done to try to streamline some of the stuff. I believe it will be a reality, Mr. Speaker, and we can't keep going back to where we started before. We've had lots of time to try to put something together. It won't be acceptable to all groups, Mr. Speaker, but we are going to have to do something because the reality of the government, especially in the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly, is that if the financial picture stands as it is, we are going to be in big trouble and some changes are going to have to occur. I hope as a result of some of these comments, the people who are writing these policies and putting these things in place will hear and try to address the concerns being raised so that when it comes forward again, it is brought forward with accurate information.

Mr. Speaker, I remember being told about how seniors would receive a reduction, quite a large number, and I asked how a senior could receive a reduction when they don't pay any rent right now. Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult to try and make sense of this. I guess I'm coming from my constituents' perspective. If my constituents' bingo earnings are going to be calculated then I expect all constituencies across the North will

be treated the same and their residents' bingo earnings will be calculated. I don't accept that we are further setting seniors against one another. So I think that we need to do some more work on this and try to bring it back again.

Maybe as the motion states, not until April 1, 2004. Maybe that is the appropriate time. The new government will be looking at its realities and it will give staff time to clear the air on this one and come back with something that can be agreed to by a majority of the Members. So, Mr. Speaker, even though I am torn on this one, I will be supporting the motion and I will be encouraging both departments to try to come back with something that addresses the concerns being raised here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** To the motion. Mr. Delorey.

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to speak in support of this harmonization. I am not going to go through a whole bunch of figures as to why I am supporting it because I already did that in the House when it first came forward. I haven't heard anything in this House that has changed my mind about the figures. All I can speak on, Mr. Speaker, is how this program affects my riding. I'm not trying to sway anybody's vote on this harmonization, but I do want to make some comments in some areas of this initiative and I guess they pertain to how we spend our money and whether we are getting what we should for the money we are spending.

Am I in favour of public housing and having everybody in housing that's affordable? Definitely I am. Am I in favour of having 400 people in public housing and a waiting list of 1,200 because we can't afford to give that 1,200 some kind of help in public housing? No, I'm not. I would like to see a system put in place that can give more housing to people and I think that is what it is going to come down to. I hear rumours that the federal government is slowly pulling back, and maybe drastically, on the amount of money they are going to give us for public housing and what we can do with our money. So we have to come up with some initiatives that will give us the ability to satisfy more people and meet the needs of more people.

That may mean, Mr. Speaker, some people might have to pay a little bit. I know right now that there are inequities out there in the marketplace; we can look at seniors if we want. I mean, I know seniors that are living in public housing that are paying very little or nothing. I also know seniors that don't make very much money, Mr. Speaker, and I also know of seniors that are making a lot of money that aren't paying anything. Is that right? No, I don't think that is right. I think that we have to find a solution for that. As for the people that are saying it's being put to us at the last minute, it's not being put to us at the last minute. We've been hearing about his harmonization for a long time.

I have dealt with the seniors' society in Hay River, I have dealt with the town, I've looked at the numbers. I've got all the numbers for the Territories, actually. I have heard nothing that changes those numbers. I looked at the system. I would like to see a system in place that is going to deal with how we can provide more housing to more people. But to just kill this initiative, I don't think it is going to do anything for us. I think Mr. Bell put it right the other day when he said if we're dealing with the situation, do we want to give seniors free housing, then let's deal with that. If we think we can afford a system to give

seniors, single mothers, whatever group of people free housing, then let's deal with that and let's deal with that one issue. But I don't think that that is what this is about. It's about trying to find a system that everybody contributes to, and takes a little responsibility in, and helps out in it.

Now Mr. Speaker, another issue in this harmonization is, since 1997, government has been working for a way to come up with something that works a little more fairly for everybody. I just asked and got an answer from the Minister on how much money the departments have put into this initiative and he tells me, apart from the travel and all the staff from the Housing Corporation and Education, the time that they have put into it and the travel that they've done, it's half a million dollars. When this thing comes before the House, I'll be looking for some leadership. I will tell you, leadership to me is not sitting down and abstaining on a vote.

I think that this is a government initiative that they have spent half a million dollars on, not counting manpower, and I'm going to be looking to everybody in this House to vote on this initiative and it is going to speak very drastically. I don't think that we can afford to throw a half million dollars away and just say, throw it to the guys on the other side House to say whether this is a good deal or not, that was the governments' initiative, they spent a half a million dollars on this initiative. I want them voting on this because I don't want to hear whether this is a good deal or a bad deal. I want to see who is supporting this, who the leadership is on it. If the deal goes down, it will go down with everybody in the House; but if it is turned over to us to make this deal, I don't think there is much leadership in this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** To the motion. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you Mr. Speaker. I won't take a lot of time. I think my colleagues have covered many of the points. I would like to say though, that I think that if somebody is keeping track or somebody's trying to build the model or find the blue print for how to not roll out a government program, this has truly got to be it, Mr. Speaker. I think the philosophy of harmonizing the way two departments treat income for the purpose of housing, makes a lot of sense. Fundamentally, it's hard to argue with that. You may dispute whether or not income earned from traditional pursuits should be exempted; you may dispute whether or not income earned from lotteries should be exempted. It is hard to argue that two departments of this government shouldn't treat that the same way. But, Mr. Speaker, if things started out on the right track, it's obviously in a lot of trouble now. I think what is going to be interesting -- and Mr. Delorey has just put it to our government -- is to see how strongly this government feels about this program. This is an initiative that they've spent a lot of time and a lot of money developing. If there is an abstention en masse on that side of the House, it is a pretty clear indication to me that this thing is a dog.

Mr. Speaker, I have a number of concerns, however, with the way this thing has been rolled out and those concerns to this date haven't been dealt with. The government has decided to tinker with this thing at the last minute to try to garner some support. They've decided to grandfather some seniors, who are currently in public housing, and give them assurances that they won't see rent increases, but the crop of seniors we know will. I think in trying to deal with some of these issues, they've in fact made it worse, Mr. Speaker. I've always had a real

problem with this issue of deciding that somehow students and seniors will be treated differently than working families or anybody else. I really think this should be about making ends meet for everybody, treating everybody equally. It should be about a dignified standard of living. This shouldn't be some arbitrary age cut-off that decides whether or not you are going to have a smooth ride or a rough ride, Mr. Speaker. I think when we get into imposing those arbitrary cut-offs on the basis of age or occupation or anything, the quality is out the window and I have a real problem with that.

If you look at how the government has tried to sell this initiative, they've come forward, they've done a couple of different sets of numbers but they have indicated to us that -- I think the last time I saw a presentation -- 80-some percent of people will either see decreases or no increases. It seems that at first glance, Mr. Speaker, a compelling case for supporting something of this ilk. However, when you realize that the Minister from ECE has said folks on income support will see decreases, let's just think about that. If you're on income support and income support is paying your rent and you are going to see a decrease, does that mean income support is going to leave you with more money for other things such as clothing or food? No, it doesn't, Mr. Speaker, it simply means that income support will now have to give you fewer dollars each month in order to pay your rent. So the decreases by and large, will be to the benefit of the income support program, not the people on income support.

Let's think about the other 20 percent that we know may see increases. Well, if this is a cost neutral program, and 20 percent of the people are going to make up for those 80 percent who are seeing decreases, what are we talking about for those 20 percent? Now this may only be two or three constituents in my riding, I'll admit, Mr. Speaker. There isn't a lot of public housing in my riding. As Mr. Braden has indicated, this isn't an issue that I'm receiving a landslide of calls and e-mails on, but I have had several people call me, three or four, who have concerns about the program and have given me a document showing me that their rent may go from something like \$800 to \$1,300. This may be three or four people, Mr. Speaker, but as I've said all along, if we're going to talk about a graduated rent scale then we are going to talk about phasing-in rent increases to seniors. A \$50 a month maximum for the first year, \$50 second year, \$200, \$400, it goes up gradually.

It makes a lot of sense to phase something in, Mr. Speaker. Now, it may be the case that some of the families paying \$800 a month are paying too little and should see larger increases to make it more equitable. I don't know, I haven't gone through the numbers. But I do know something, it doesn't seem to me to make any sense to hit anybody, even if it is two or three people in my riding, with a \$500 a month rent increase. It seems wrong. I don't know why we can't phase in everybody who is going to see a rent increase. Why wouldn't we phase in all of those increases over a number of years? Now if we have to pay for that, if we want to maintain this cost neutrality, if we have to pay for that phase-in by also phasing in some of the decreases, then I say do it, Mr. Speaker.

I mean, many of the people seeing possible rent decreases may not be thrilled with that idea, but I would rather see some of the decreases frozen and/or a graduated decrease if that is going to allow us to phase-in some of the folks who have been calling me with the \$300 or \$500 a month rent increases. By and large, I can think of three right now; three of the calls that I

have received have been single moms with three, four, and in one case, I think five kids. Unfortunately, this program does assess your income, does take into account how much money you make each month, and two people living side by side making the same income will now be treated the same in terms of rent. But it doesn't take into account your expenses. It doesn't take into account whether you have two children or five children. If you have five children that's a lot of rubber boots, that's a lot of snow boots, it's a lot of food and it seems the reasonable thing to do would be to phase in rent increases.

As I said, I think the roll out on this thing has been terrible. We first heard anybody who makes under \$3,833 a month, the so-called low income cut off, which the Minister indicated was a national standard... I've looked quite hard on the Internet to try to find some recognition of this national standard and I wasn't able to find it. I did ask the Minister questions about it and he clarified that it was a number that had come from Housing. But, you know, many Members on this side of the House have asked for some information, the kind of high-quality information that you would need in order to make an intelligent decision about how this program would affect your constituents. We've received some preliminary information from the department and more and more information is slowly rolling out. As I've said, it looks like most people are going to not see rent increases but this late in the game, with only a month to go, my colleagues are right in suggesting that even though this thing has been in the works for months and years, a lot of this hard information is only coming out at the last few minutes.

So the philosophy makes sense to me. I absolutely don't want to see this program killed and this is a very difficult decision for me because I'm afraid that if in deferring the program for a year, to a new government, that might in effect kill it. But, Mr. Speaker, I see all kinds of problems with the way this has been rolled out. I have all kinds of concerns about that small 20 or lower percent who are receiving the increases on the backs of the 80 percent who will see decreases and really I think a lot of that is government money. So, Mr. Speaker, I guess, given the reservations I have about the how the program has been rolled out at this point, I would support a deferral in order to fix the program and phase in all residents, not just seniors and not just students but on the basis of need, Mr. Speaker, because I think that is the fundamental tenet of our income support program.

I think those are the kinds of underpinnings that have driven the development of this, and I think it has been missed because we've added on these little pieces, piece by piece, to try to take care of an interest group or try to take care of certain members of society. By and large, the people forgotten have been those in the middle and for me, it may not be a lot, but it is those two or three moms that have called me and have a number of children that are trying to make ends meet and are going to see a \$300, \$400, or \$500 a month rent increase that, I guess, I am unable, at this point, to stomach. I've asked the government to phase the program in. There has been no acknowledgement or no recognition that is something that needed to be done, other than a "we'll consider it, we'll look at it." That's the kind of commitment I would like to see from this government. If they were willing to phase in the program for all residents, not just seniors and students, I would be standing up here supporting this harmonization initiative right now, but that's not the case. I think it will be quite enlightening to see how the government feels this program has been developed and see how well thought out the government feels this program has been.

Mr. Delorey indicated it will be interesting to see how Cabinet shows leadership on this. Let's keep in mind this was a program that was developed by our government and had a very good start and a very good philosophy behind it. I think it was on the right track, something got lost somewhere and it's unfortunate. I will be interested to see how Cabinet votes on their initiative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** To the motion. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My comment will be very short. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in favour of this motion to defer. Mr. Speaker, I may be the only MLA – I don't know for sure – who does not have any social housing in her riding. As far as I am aware, we don't have social housing in my riding, so I am not speaking in response to any direct communication from my constituents. It may change after my statement today. Mr. Speaker, my position here is as a Member of this Legislature keeping in mind some other principles I would like to follow.

One is that it's not hard to be in favour of something that would streamline and improve a government policy. At the first look at this policy, it seemed reasonable to me. I was provided with information to show how this was going to improve. But one thing I am having problems with is the fact that a lot of Members who are asking legitimate questions with respect to this policy are not able to get this information. I, for one, value good information I get as a Member here and I have to support Members and I want to support Members who are searching for that information. I am astounded at the fact that half of questions that are being asked about this program have either been taken as notice or as something that would be replied to later on.

That is my second point. There is not a lot of "later ons" for the government to sort this out. This is supposed to come into effect on April 1<sup>st</sup>. We are going to be adjourning the session next week, and we will be going off in whatever direction, and this policy will come into effect, and I don't think it's fair if the Members aren't getting the kind of legitimate and detailed answers they want to get.

The other principle that supports my decision in this area is the fact that I don't agree that some seniors who are in public housing right now will be grandfathered, whereas those who get in on April 1<sup>st</sup> will not be. As much as I would like to see a program that is streamlined and improved, I don't agree with a system where there are different treatments for the same categories of people. That is the point I have been raising throughout the session the last three weeks, so this is a logical step for me to follow.

I have also been privy to communications that are coming from other people in Yellowknife who may not be in my riding but cases of single mothers or people with disabilities or students getting student financial assistance, there are just too many details that have to be worked out. It's prudent on the part of the government to work the details out and be in a position to answer some of these legitimate questions. So for two or three principles, as a Member of this Assembly who has the responsibility of looking after her own constituency, but to look at what's in the interests of the Territories, I will be supporting this motion so we can work out the gaps. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** To the motion. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this harmonization initiative I believe was undertaken with the best of intentions. Unfortunately, it began to encompass a lot of other different issues and got a little broader and it has become much more complicated now. As a regular Member, I found myself in a difficult situation. This will positively impact many of my constituents, it will negatively impact others. I think the harmonization initiative does need some more work. We did see some movement on the part of the government this week with the agreement to grandfather the seniors. So when you take the seniors out of the mix in Hay River, I still have a split between the people that it will help and those it will be difficult for. I think that the detail I am concerned about is more in how it's implemented. I believe in the philosophy. I believe in the concept, but how it's going to be implemented is still a concern to me.

I don't think it's right for us to absolve ourselves of responsibility by deferring it for an entire year. We just basically look like we are washing our hands of it for political reasons and I don't think that that shows very much leadership. So, Mr. Speaker, I am going to vote on this today to... I am not voting in favour of the motion to defer the harmonization initiative and I am going to hope that there is still an opportunity to look at some of these areas that are causing difficulty and to modify them, whether it's phase-ins or just cleaning it up, make it less onerous for certain individuals and for certain communities. I am hopeful that the government will look at some of those changes prior to implementation, but to defer it by a year and just wash our hands of it as a government I cannot support. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** To the motion. Mr. Kakfwi.

**HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I had initially asked Cabinet to consider abstaining on this motion mostly to show the type of leadership that would indicate we are prepared to consider in spite of the support we have for the initiative. We are concerned if even one MLA has concerns about any initiative we undertake. We were going to do that by abstaining, so we would indicate we are listening and we are concerned. We wanted to show the respect for the Members for the Deh Cho, Tu Nedhe, North Slave and other Members who were voicing some concerns about the way in which we were implementing and proceeding, but because the Member for Hay River had defined it differently, we no longer had the option to see it as a recommendation.

So we will vote and I am asking Cabinet now to vote against the motion.

Having said that, I want to indicate again to Members, we are listening and we are obligated to consider the issues that are raised here, the concerns that have been expressed by the MLAs in the smaller communities. It's unfortunate that the motion is no longer and can be seen as simply a recommendation. I can tell you that we accept there are some problems, concerns and issues there. We will commit to reviewing those to make sure that as we proceed with implementation, that we do it in a fair, clear and consistent way. So we will be voting against the motion. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** To the motion. Mr. Allen.

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to say that I do respect the opinions of all colleagues across

the hall because they are the ones who put me in this position to guide the significant changes over the last four years in reference to Housing.

I have tabled the document in the year 2000 called...(inaudible)...Profile. It also has a very large segment of the population in public housing. However, that did not stop me as a Member in this House to look at a number of educational approaches to help them make a transition away from public housing to private home ownership that would give them the freedom, the liberty to decide how they want to live. Harmonization has been a contentious issue. I am still of the belief that we have developed a fair process and, if I may, Mr. Speaker, speak as to some of the legal instruments we have developed here.

Certainly in the context of how we assess rents, how we have treated the clients and also how we have done rent calculations under the authority of the NWT Housing Act, we have been fair. We still need to look at how we have moved away from the social system. If I may speak to the economic instruments as well, I want to indicate to this House we have, on a pro forma basis, reduced the rent recoveries from \$3.7 million to roughly \$2.9 million. That indicates that we have made a concerted effort in that short time period to move people away, out of public housing into private home ownership. I believe our statistics indicate that strongly.

Mr. Speaker, in all fairness, we have given every community an allocation to deal with their housing situations. It's based on a needs analysis. We also have appropriated additional monies and developed an affordable housing strategy that addresses all housing issues, not just harmonization. Also, I have heard comments that concern me about the economics of each community and where we are going. Outside of Northern Stores, outside of co-ops, the NWT Housing Corporation through the local housing organizations, is a major employer in the small communities.

We have expended over \$35 million on local housing organizations across the NWT. Yes, that shows that we have a social obligation. We have been meeting those social obligations. In reference to communication, Mr. Speaker, we have done our homework. I must say we have taken an educated approach, much like my colleagues across the floor. We have communicated wisely and extensively with the communities, the leadership and with the standing committees who endorsed our initiative in January 2001. We began in February 2002 and as recently as January we have also complied with the recommendations of the Financial Management Board that we complete the impact analysis and also a requirement of a transfer of funds.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's difficult as a Minister to continue to defend a process that my colleagues say is marred, and to hear innuendoes as well saying we haven't been doing our homework. Also, our social commitment has been wide. We understand there is a social housing agreement. That social housing agreement will have funding starting to decline in the year 2004 with a completion date of 2038. So we need to look at other options.

We have modified and adopted, reconciled other housing programs that would put people into home ownership. I need to make reference to the small non-taxed-based communities...adapted the mortgage assistance programs to

those families who are in most need. Yes, every program we develop for this government is a subsidy program. Our intention is to help those clients who are severely impacted, which numbers only 110, move into alternative programs. I can assure the Members that harmonization is just one small piece of the equation. If we continue to support all the programs through subsidization, then it becomes certainly a very large concern, not only to ourselves as Ministers, but also it should be a concern to this Legislature and future ones.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to assure the Members that I, too, am sensitive to the needs of those who will be adversely impacted. I wanted to make a statement that we will work within the abilities of our programs to help those make that transition.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I have heard Members talking about the impacts and that there is a lack of information out there, but we also want to assure the tenants that we are going to give them a three-month transition period effective April 1<sup>st</sup>. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** To the motion. Mr. Ootes.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate this opportunity to speak to this extremely important initiative that the government is undertaking. Mr. Speaker, this has been a long time in coming. This dates back to the previous Legislature. Mr. Speaker, a lot of work has been done in this area, a lot of communication work has been done in this area. We had intended to bring this forward a year ago. At the request of the Members we delayed that implementation to April 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. It gave us the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to refine the programs and to do even more work on it and more work was done. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, we have had consultations with the standing committees on several occasions and a lot of questions were asked during those particular standing committee briefings with the social envelope committee. Mr. Speaker, I have to point out that in February, they issued a report. They reported to us that Members were pleased that this oft-delayed initiative is being implemented and believe the new system provides for the equitable treatment of all residents of social housing. They complement both our departments, Mr. Speaker, for our efforts in ensuring the development of equitable programs.

So, Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of work done in this area. The Housing Corporation has done a lot of work on their part to communicate with LHOs in turn with those people who are affected. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of groups that are affected by this, seniors, students, low income families and income support clients. Income support clients will not be affected adversely by this, Mr. Speaker. Low income families are the ones that benefit. Eighty percent of the low income families will benefit from this, Mr. Speaker, because they will see a reduction in their rent. It is designed for that. Students will see a change, Mr. Speaker, a change for the better. The intent of the program was to create equity and treat everyone in the same manner, Mr. Speaker, and to correct inconsistencies that are there between our department and the Housing Corporation in how we assess people for benefits. That is important. It's extremely important to address that. We've taken the initiative to do that.

There was confusion before. There were inconsistencies and inequities. We wanted to correct that, Mr. Speaker. What is the impact for the people out there? Mr. Speaker, a lot of people

are going to benefit from this as well and we cannot afford to delay. We can't afford to delay this, Mr. Speaker, because a lot of people who are going to benefit from this will not see those benefits if we delay the program and that is important too. We are listening to what the Members are saying and we will be sensitive to the needs of other people, but we do believe in what we have designed. We believe it is correct and we believe it is important for us to proceed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** To the motion. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all my colleagues for making their comments on this issue. This issue has been very hotly disputed behind closed doors. Everyone is taking positions. I am glad everyone has come out to put their positions on the table for everybody to see. We entered this motion onto the floor expecting Cabinet to abstain on this issue. It's really not even worth voting on it now because the numbers are not there anymore. Cabinet has changed their position. It's not surprising, Mr. Speaker. This has been the attitude with this government on small communities. One Member stands up for the larger centre, Cabinet changes their position.

Mr. Speaker, it's not what's good for one riding. Many people are looking at it from that standpoint. People want us to believe what's good for Yellowknife and what's good for Hay River is good for all. That's not true. We have different standards. This document is not complete. We have been asking for information. We are saying fix it before we put it on the table. Some people want to go ahead with a broken down vehicle that's not going to work. That's not going to serve my riding and it's not going to serve a lot of communities in the North.

Mr. Speaker, I think we demonstrated and everybody stated that we lost the intent of this initiative. The intent was to harmonize income support with housing, but we've throw a lot of different things here into the mix. We have to take a look at it again. Many seniors are contacting a number of us here in this House. Was he concerned that this government is changing its attitudes towards how they are treating seniors? They are concerned that next will be the fuel subsidy. Aboriginal people are contacting us and saying what about our rights, what about our treaty rights? We are choosing to ignore that. That really concerns me.

I can't agree that we have to forge ahead regardless. We don't know what the outcomes of this are going to be. We don't know what the fallout of this initiative is going to be. We should know that before we go ahead. We try to do that with every other initiative and that's all we are asking for in this case. Be fair. Let us take the time and defer it for a year, so that housing and income support Ministers can do their due diligence on this and fix it so they can bring it back, not just put it on the table because Cabinet put that position on the table and we can't change our mind. That's not fair. That's not consensus government. We need to have a free vote. If we want to abstain, then we need a free vote. Let every Minister on the other side show to their constituents what their position is. It's not fair to tie their hands, not on this initiative.

Mr. Speaker, all I can do is ask my colleagues to support this initiative. Let's take it back, let's fix it and bring it back to the table. I am going to ask, Mr. Speaker, that we have a recorded vote on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Member has requested a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

**Recorded Vote**

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mr. McLeod, Mr. Bell, Mr. Nitah, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. Roland.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** All those opposed, please stand.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mr. Braden, Mr. Steen, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Antoine, Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Handley, Mr. Allen, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** All those abstaining? All those for, six; against, 11; abstentions, zero. The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 16, motions. Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 15, notices of motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Member is seeking unanimous consent to go back to item 14, notices of motion. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent, Mr. Lafferty.

**REVERT TO ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION**

**Motion 8-14(6): To Modify The Strategy To Harmonize Income Support And Social Housing**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, March 10, 2003, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that the implementation of the harmonization of income support and social housing strategy be implemented in the tax-based communities only. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 15, notices of motion. Colleagues, at this time, I would like to recognize a visitor in the gallery, Mr. Clayton Gordon in the gallery, who is with APTN. Welcome to the House, Clayton.

---Applause

Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Mr. Miltenberger.

**ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS**

**Bill 12: Nursing Profession Act, Carried**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 12, Nursing Profession Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 12 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. Mr. Handley.

**Bill 13: Deh Cho Bridge Act, Carried**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 13, Deh Cho Bridge Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 13 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Mr. Allen.

**ITEM 18: SECOND READING OF BILLS**

**Bill 9: Youth Justice Statutes Amendment Act, Carried**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that Bill 9, Youth Justice Statutes Amendment Act, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill makes changes in terminology used in the Young Offenders Act to provide consistency with the new federal Youth Criminal Justice Act which will come into force on April 1, 2003. The bill also makes amendments correcting references to that terminology and several other statutes. The bill also replaces references in some statutes to the federal Young Offenders Act which will be repealed on April 1, 2003 with reference to the Youth Criminal Justice Act of Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 9 has had second reading and, accordingly, the bill stands before a committee. Item 18, second reading of bills. Mr. Miltenberger.

**Bill 10: An Act To Amend The Hospital Insurance And Health And Social Services Administration Act, Carried**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill continues the Hay River Community Health Board as a board of management called the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority and excludes its employees in the public service. The bill also consequentially amends the Public Service Act to reflect the status of its employees. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Question.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 10 has had second reading and, accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 3, Bill 4, Bill 11, committee reports 3-14(6), 4-14(6), 5-14(6), 8-14(6) and 9-14(6), with Mr. Delorey in the chair.

#### **ITEM 19: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS**

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. I'll call Committee of the Whole to order. We have a number of issues to consider. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Mr. Chairman, I'd like to recommend that we continue consideration of Bill 3 and committee reports 3-14(6), 4-14(6) and 5-14(6), first of all to deal with the Department of Finance and if we conclude that, to move into Public Works and Services.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Does the committee agree? Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that we report progress.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. It is not debatable. To the motion. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

The Chair will call a short break and come back and continue with Finance.

---SHORT RECESS

#### **Bill 3: Appropriation Act, 2003-2004**

##### **Department Of Finance**

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** I'll call Committee of the Whole back to order. We'll continue with the Department of Finance. Does the Minister wish to bring in any witnesses? Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Sergeant-at-Arms, bring the witnesses in, please.

For the record, Mr. Handley, could you introduce your witnesses, please.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, with me are Margaret Melhorn, deputy minister of Finance; and Bill Setchell, director of finance and administration for the Department of Finance. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Sorry about the wrong introduction, that was Mr. Handley, but the chair will now recognize Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to recognize my son, Denezeh. It is his birthday today. Happy birthday, Denezeh.

---Applause

And my nephew, Gerald. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly, guys. We're on directorate, general comments, Department of Finance. Are we ready for detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Detail.

##### **Detail**

##### **Directorate**

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** I'm hearing detail. On page 3-9, directorate, operations expense, total operations expense, \$1.282 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

##### **Treasury**

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** On page 3-11, treasury, operations expense, total operations expense, \$7.546 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

##### **Fiscal Policy**

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 3-15, fiscal policy, operations expense, total operations expense, \$808,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

##### **Bureau Of Statistics**

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 3-17, bureau of statistics, operations expense, total operations expense, \$885,000. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We know that from the Minister's opening comments -- I believe it's in his opening comments -- he's indicated that we spent some extra money in this area in order to try to address the shortcomings, as we see them, of the last census. I'm wondering if the Minister could update us on his success or progress to date in having the federal government look at those numbers and reassess the

census. Can he give us some sense of the headway that he's making?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, the work that we did in doing counts or census in communities identified about 4,800 people who were missed by the Stats Canada survey. We are in discussions with them, between the bureau of statistics and Stats Canada. We'll get a response back from them in late March on their interim numbers, and their final numbers in September. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Just to be clear, I think the Minister indicated 4000 people we've identified as the undercount. Can the Minister indicate if that's the accurate percentage that he was anticipating when he made his projections for this year's budget? I assume we've already accounted for some of this under coverage. Can the Minister tell me if we're on target there?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, yes, that's pretty well accurate. I think we had used the figure of 10.8 percent, and this works out pretty closely to that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Would it be fair to say, though, if we're just going to be conservative and cautious here, that we've made our calculations and projections and talked about the deficit we have going forward and the room we have on the debt wall with using this 10 percent under coverage, and using the assumptions from that? So if the federal government turns around and isn't willing to acknowledge that under coverage number, we're going to have to reassess. In fact, the picture that we've laid out now will be slightly worse, I would assume, if they don't accept our numbers and in fact push that down somewhat. Is that true?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, that's true. If, for whatever reason, Stats Canada disagreed with our numbers -- and we have no indication that they have any problem with them, but if they did -- then any percentage lower than ours would cost us money and we would really have to reassess where we're at, depending on what their numbers are. Again, I want to emphasize the numbers we get in March are preliminary numbers. They're not final until September. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Page 3-17, bureau of statistics, operations expense, total operations expense, \$885,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 3-18, information item, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 3-19, detail of work performed on behalf of others, total department, \$3,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 3-20, liquor commission revolving fund. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to bring up an issue that has been in the works for a long time. I have to answer to the questions being raised by my constituents, and it has to do with the questions that came up last year about the special licensing for Sunday opening. There have been lots of mistakes or misunderstanding about this. At the core of the issue is the fact that under the rules that the Liquor Board follows right now, they are allowed to give special permission to open operations on Sundays, but it's only for Grey Cup and whatever other cup falls on a Sunday. The point being, Mr. Chairman, that it's only for Super Bowl; sorry, Grey Cup and Super Bowl. The point being that there is a rule that allows it, but the rule doesn't make any sense. At least on two occasions the Minister made a commitment to look into this. The Minister has stated that he had communicated with the board. As far back as last fall, he gave a specific date on which the board was going to meet. So I wonder if the Minister could update the House as to what he has done to communicate it and what the response of the board has been. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I've spoken with the board about this. It's clearly within their mandate; they've considered the issue. They have decided that they will consider any special occasion request. It's not limited to Super Bowl or anything else. It has to be from a non-profit organization, and it has to be submitted to them two weeks in advance of whatever the event is. But they will look at each case, case by case. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the Minister's answer and I think that should address the concerns of the constituents. But I just want to make sure that this information is communicated to the public so that anyone who might be interested in applying for that consideration would know where to go, when to do it and how to do it and so on. I'm wondering if the Minister could communicate to the board to communicate about the board's decision in the normal way that they do about changing the regulations or anything like that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, yes, I'll do that.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Page 3-20, liquor commission revolving fund, information item.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 3-21, information item. We'll go back to 3-7, department summary. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Mr. Chairman, I realize it's only an information item, but I was wondering if I could ask a question about page 3-22.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. We'll go to 3-22, revenues, recoveries and transfer payments. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was noticing here on the corporate income tax line that it shows negative \$181.587 million. So it makes it look like we're paying back a lot of money this year. Can we get an explanation from the Minister as to why that's happening?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Minister Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I'll ask the deputy minister, Margaret Melhorn, to explain that.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Ms. Melhorn.

**MS. MELHORN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The negative income tax is actually a repayment of an overpayment that was received in the current fiscal year, 2002-2003, and that's as a result of the large income tax amount that we received in the 2001-2002 fiscal year. Finance Canada, which pays corporate income tax remittances on the basis of prior years, in fact had overpaid us for the 2002-2003 fiscal year and that overpayment will be recovered in the coming fiscal year.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Ms. Melhorn. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you. So this \$181 million is not being paid back to companies, it's actually being paid back to the Government of Canada. Is that correct?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ms. Melhorn.

**MS. MELHORN:** Yes, that is correct.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Ms. Melhorn. Further questions on revenues, recoveries and transfer payments? Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. Just on that same item, I'm wondering if there isn't some way that we could have a level of assurance when the federal government gives us money that they haven't done so in error, and we won't be penalized the very next year. I mean, \$181 million is obviously a lot of money and it's a large proportion of the amount of income tax that we receive in one year. So what sorts of safeties do we have in place? Obviously there are no guarantees, but it would be nice to know that the money you were getting from the federal government, and in fact budgeting on and planning your expenditures on, was something that was a little more solid than being able to be flipped to the tune of \$181 million in one fiscal year.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I'll answer it and then if it's still unclear, I'll get Ms. Melhorn to clarify. When we get

money, let's say from a large corporate tax payment, we know that the federal government is going to do a calculation on it and take back their share of it. We know that that won't happen until the following year. So in our budgeting we take that into consideration. For example, last year we didn't spend the whole \$400 million thinking that we were going to get to keep it all. So there is a year delay. I don't know that there's an easy way of fixing that, except for the fact that we know they're going to make that readjustment. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Okay, I didn't understand how this works. I thought that the federal government collected taxes from corporations on our behalf, as well as on their own behalf, and then remitted the portion to us that was entitled to us after making that calculation. So what really happens is that the corporation will file its income tax, pay that money all to us, and then the federal government takes its portion back. Is that right?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, as I understand it, the corporations pay the taxes collected by the federal government on our behalf. The federal government just pays us that whole amount, and then the following year they make adjustments to it. So I'll ask Ms. Melhorn to provide further clarification on it.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Ms. Melhorn.

**MS. MELHORN:** Thank you. What we're really looking at here is Finance Canada estimates our corporate taxes for a year, which they base on prior year's tax collections. The number is correct in that the payments go directly to the federal government who then remit the NWT share to the Government of the Northwest Territories. But they make installment payments over the course of the year, and those payments, as I mentioned, are estimates based on prior year collection. We don't have information about a given year's tax collections until the following year. So adjustments are made once we have actual data. In some cases if the actual collection data turns out to be correct, then no adjustment is required. If it turns out that the installment payments are too high, then the excess is recovered. If the installment payments are too low, then there is an adjustment paid to correct that.

We understand the adjustment process, so we take that into account in our budgeting. We knew that we were going to get an overpayment, and we also knew that that would have to be recovered in the following year. When I saw we knew we would get an overpayment and that based on our estimates of corporate taxes that would be paid in 2002-2003, we estimated that Finance Canada was overpaying us for the year then, accordingly, we budgeted for the adjustment in the following year.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Ms. Melhorn. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Okay, thank you. That clarifies the situation for me. I have a better understanding of it now. I guess our Finance department is well aware of this, and clearly when they come forward to us and talk to us about the money that we have to spend in a year, they're taking that into account. I've never been privy to any discussion that suggested we got a lump sum from the federal government, to be careful, we

recognize this was an overpayment so let's not spend it. But clearly they do take that into consideration so that's fine. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Just comments. Any more questions on revenues, recoveries and transfer payments? Hearing none, we'll go back to page 3-7, department summary, operations expense, total operations expense, \$10.521 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Does the committee agree that that concludes the review of the Department of Finance?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. I'd like to thank the Minister and his witnesses for appearing. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent. Does the committee agree to go on to Public Works and Services?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

#### **Department Of Public Works And Services**

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Okay, we'll go on to Public Works and Services. Does the Minister of Public Works and Services have any opening comments? Mr. Steen.

#### **Minister's Opening Comments**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to present the Department of Public Works and Services main estimates for the fiscal year 2003-2004. The estimates propose the department's operations and maintenance budget for 2003-2004 of \$44.2 million, and a capital acquisition plan of \$1.4 million. This is a 6.4 percent increase over the 2002-2003 main estimates.

These resources will be used to provide critical support services to departments in communities, including the operation and maintenance of infrastructure; participation of the safe water initiative; management of capital construction projects; safety and inspection services; leasing of government offices; provision of records management services; and, monitoring and intervention in northern national clinic communication proceedings.

The department also manages an additional \$72 million on behalf of its clients through a number of revolving funds, chargebacks and capital transfers.

Through the use of these funds, the department provides computer and data communication services for government offices throughout the territory, fuel services for 15 communities, and renovation and construction of critical territorial and community infrastructure. As other departments work to achieve government objectives by delivering direct services to our residents, Public Works and Services provides

necessary technical and professional support to the department.

Mr. Chairman, there are many examples of the kinds of public support Public Works and Services provides to departments as they work to achieve an appropriate balance between the expectations of our residents for high quality services, the practical constraints of operating in our northern environment and the limitations of our current budgets.

I would like to take a moment to mention a few of these services. The many successful building and infrastructure projects are often taken for granted, but I would like to mention a few today. The project to clean up an underground fuel spill at Thebacha Campus has been honoured with an award of excellence by the Consulting Engineers of Alberta. Recently completed buildings include the Inuvik Regional Health and Social Services Centre, the Young Offenders' Facility in Yellowknife and the expanded school in Holman, as well as a community office complex in Rae Lakes. There are also several important water projects going on throughout the NWT, including Rae-Edzo, Tulita and Fort McPherson. These are all important community and regional territorial facilities that will contribute in a positive way to achieving the government's long-term objectives. Public Works and Services is a vital part of the team responsible for delivering these projects.

Public Works and Services also provides information systems and communication services for use by the government. More and more the ability of the government to provide services to northern residents is dependent upon the availability of secure and reliable information and communication systems.

Another important role for this department is to be a key member of the GNWT team responsible for ensuring the quality of community drinking water. Working closely with the departments of Health and Social Services and Municipal and Community Affairs, Public Works and Services provides technical support for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of community water systems.

Finally, I would like to mention the provision of essential fuel services. Through the petroleum products revolving fund, Public Works and Services funds the provision of heating fuel and gasoline in communities where a commercial operation does not exist. This includes providing safe tank farms in these remote locations, as well as contracting with and training local fuel delivery agents to provide the services. These agents have an important function in their communities, and Public Works works with them to carry out this important service.

Mr. Chairman, Public Works and Services tries to be responsive to its many clients and to provide a high level of support to departments and to the people of the NWT. The budget that we are reviewing today will contribute to achieving this objective. Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening remarks. I would be happy to answer any questions members may have.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Steen. I'll call on the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Mr. Chairman, I'd like to move that we report progress.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** There is a motion on the floor. The motion is non-debatable. The Chair does not recognize a quorum. There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

The Chair will rise and report progress.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole? Mr. Delorey.

#### ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 3, Appropriation Act, 2003-2004, and would like to report to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is there a seconder to the motion? Mr. Braden seconds the motion. To the motion.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Question.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Question has been called. All those in favour? All those against? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, item 22, orders of the day.

#### ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mr. Speaker, a meeting of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight at 9:00 a.m. Monday morning. There will also be a meeting of the Social Programs at adjournment today.

Orders of the day for Monday, March 10, 2003:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion

15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills

16. Motions

8-14(6) - To Modify the Strategy to Harmonize Income Support and Social Housing

17. First Reading of Bills

- Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act

- Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act

18. Second Reading of Bills

- Bill 12, Nursing Profession Act

- Bill 13, Deh Cho Bridge Act

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

- Bill 3, Appropriation Act, 2003-2004

- Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Consumer Protection Act

- Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2002-2003

- Committee Report 3-14(6), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the Review of the Draft 2003-2004 Main Estimates

- Committee Report 4-14(6), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the Review of the Draft 2003-2004 Main Estimates

- Committee Report 5-14(6), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the Draft 2003-2004 Main Estimates

- Committee Report 6-14(6), Report on the Review of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Commissioner's 2001-2002 Annual Report

- Committee Report 8-14(6), Report on the Review of the "Report of the Auditor General to the NWT Legislative Assembly for 2000 and 2001"

- Committee Report 9-14(6), "One Land, Many Voices"; The Final Report of the Special Committee on the Review of the Official Languages Act

20. Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Territorial Parks Act

22. Orders of the Day

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Monday, March 10, 2003, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 2:00 p.m.



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