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The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Monfwi)

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(Great Slave)

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, May 31, 2017****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Blake, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Ms. Green, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. McNeely, Hon. Alfred Moses, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. O'Reilly, Hon. Wally Schumann, Hon. Louis Sebert, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Testart, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Vanthuyne

The House met at 1:29 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty): Good afternoon, Members. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 185-18(2):
NWT APPRENTICESHIP, TRADES AND
OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATION STRATEGY
2017-2022

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories has made a commitment in its mandate to close the skills gap by strengthening the apprenticeship program. Later today, I will be tabling the Apprenticeship, Trades and Occupational Certification Strategy 2017-2022. Mr. Speaker, this five-year strategy outlines how the Government of the Northwest Territories will strengthen our apprenticeship and occupational certification program. Since the program began, there have been approximately 4,700 apprentices certified, and today there are more than 400 men and women employed in 27 occupations and 53 trades working in the Northwest Territories.

Building on the Skills 4 Success Strategy, we will increase skill levels through relevant education and training. There will be a stronger connection to the secondary education system through the Schools North Apprenticeship Program and Career and Technology Studies and to post-secondary education through programs offered by Aurora College. We will bridge education and employment gaps through targeted supports. We will be more closely connecting industry and employers with students and apprentices through the partnerships we have in education, training, and the Skills 4 Success Strategy. We will also be implementing incentives for employers to hire apprentices, and we will be encouraging target groups, like Indigenous residents and women, to consider a career in the trades.

Our partnerships are the key to everything we are able to accomplish, so we will grow the northern workforce through partnerships and collaboration. This involves working with the Apprenticeship, Trades and Occupation Certification Board, industry, education, and business partnerships, and streamlining sponsorship programs. Additionally, we will improve decision-making with relevant labour market information. We have the best information we have ever had, through the reports developed by the Conference Board of Canada, the Northwest Territories Labour Market Forecast and Needs Assessment, the Labour Market Information Resource and companion document, the Northwest Territories Jobs in Demand: 15-Year Forecast. This gives us comprehensive information on the jobs that will be needed in the coming years and allows us to target the education, training, and skills development programs to meet the labour market needs.

Mr. Speaker, over the next 15 years, it is forecasted that there will be more than 36,000 job openings in the Northwest Territories, and approximately 2,500 of those will be trades-related. Apprentices gain valuable training they can carry with them through their entire life, and do it through a unique form of education where they not only learn skills in an academic setting but also learn in a practical, work-based environment. The NWT Apprenticeship, Trades and Occupational Certification Strategy, aligned with the Skills 4 Success Strategy, provides a roadmap to plan our future. The many stakeholders and partners who provided valuable input and guidance into this strategy will be key to its success. This strategy would not have been possible without their in-depth knowledge, and it will allow us to build a future for the North together, to ensure our continued prosperity and competitiveness. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister of Justice.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 186-18(2):
UPDATE ON THE A NEW DAY PROGRAM

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to taking action on the crisis of family violence. Over the past year, I have heard several Members of this House stress the importance of the A New Day program for men who

use violence in intimate relationships. I am pleased to report to this Legislative Assembly that the Government of the Northwest Territories has reached an agreement with the John Howard Society to continue to provide this program in Yellowknife. There will be no service interruptions, and men will have walk-in registration at the office next door to the current program space.

Qualified counsellors will meet with men individually to prepare them to join weekly groups. These groups will run continuously, so men can start as soon as they are ready. If they need to take a break for any reason, they can quickly get back into the group. These minor changes to the scheduling do not affect the curriculum. They are based on the demonstrated need for drop-in groups and on the attendance trends that we saw in the pilot. Mr. Speaker, our commitment to do no harm requires us to make sure men are in programs that meet their needs. This is a specialized program for men with a particular risk profile. We know that men who progress farther in the A New Day program do better. We also know from our experience during the pilot that only a small number of men were able to do this. We have an obligation to improve our programs with evidence-based decisions. We will focus our efforts on supporting the men who are ready, when they are ready, in the hopes that we can help improve the chances that they are successful. The assessment process will be improved to include treatment plans with a counsellor who can help them access the services that are right for them. By improving the modular design of the program by adding flexibility to its delivery, we can help more men heal. This is an objective we all support.

The transition to a new provider will be smooth. The mission of the John Howard Society includes the prevention of crime and is well aligned with taking over the A New Day program. Already, they are making arrangements for counsellors to begin meeting with clients and start weekly groups. Again, all counsellors will be properly trained, possess appropriate cultural competencies, and be supported to ensure the program is delivered successfully. The Tree of Peace is still under contract until the end of June, to finish the last group and prepare men to enter the groups that will start in July. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge and thank the community partners who helped with the initial design of the pilot project. This pilot has given us a solid foundation and valuable experience we can employ in future program delivery. I would like to thank, in particular, the current contractor for the program, the Tree of Peace Friendship Centre, for their efforts and the dedication of their staff.

The men who have found success through A New Day have learned new skills to address the root

causes of their behaviour and done the hard work to heal themselves. They are better able to hold themselves and other men accountable for their violence. It is a challenging commitment, and we should commend and support anyone willing to do this work. We now face the challenge of implementing a program that improves outcomes and provides greater opportunities to offer this program throughout the Northwest Territories. I want to thank the John Howard Society for its commitment to work with our government in the continued delivery of the program. I am encouraged by the interest of potential partners here in Yellowknife and throughout the territories to find ways to deliver programs like A New Day.

Mr. Speaker, I am also encouraged by the commitment of this Legislative Assembly to address the crisis of family violence in our territory. I look forward to working with the cooperation and support of all Members of this Legislative Assembly as we take meaningful actions to end family violence in our territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Rule 36(3), I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that Minister's statement 186-18(2) be moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is noted. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question

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

---Carried

Minister's statement 186-18(2) has moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Ministers' statements. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 187-18(2):
DESIGNATED AUTHORITY COUNCIL TRAINING

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Speaker, our government made a commitment in its mandate to work in partnership with Aboriginal governments on a training program for First Nations governments with municipal-like responsibilities. I am very proud of the work that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has done to design and launch a training program to help improve the governance and management capacity of these governments. Mr. Speaker, in order to move this initiative forward, Municipal and Community Affairs, through the School of Community Government, has partnered

with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. Through this partnership, the department secured a \$180,000 federal contribution in 2016-2017 to fund the development of this training program.

The training program is made up of six governance workshops and the necessary support materials and documents. The workshops are designed to be delivered to First Nations governments with municipal-like responsibilities, including the nine designated authorities in our territory. The department is currently in discussions with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada in an effort to secure additional funding to support the delivery of this newly developed training to First Nations governments across the Northwest Territories. The training workshops that have been developed cover topics including roles and responsibilities, planning, financial responsibilities, programs and services, conflict and legal responsibilities, and working with councils. Municipal and Community Affairs identified topics for these workshops based on feedback from community governments through regular surveys conducted by the School of Community Government as well as the assessment of annual responses collected through the department's accountability framework.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that a successful pilot of the workshop and materials was hosted in Aklavik in March 2017. Municipal and Community Affairs has made the First Nations governance training available in a self-directed, self-paced online format, so councils and individual community government councillors can take the training as required. Mr. Speaker, in addition to this progressive work around the development of training modules, the department continues to collaborate with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada on the development of job descriptions for positions within the First Nations governments, performance appraisal resources, and council self-assessment tools. This work is part of the ongoing efforts Municipal and Community Affairs is undertaking to build capacity in all community governments across the Northwest Territories and to implement the recommendation of the Auditor General's 2016 report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TERRITORIAL CANNABIS LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to challenge the statement that has been made by the Minister of Justice that the cannabis

legislation as proposed by Ottawa has caught this government by surprise and has not allowed them to do the important work of consulting with our people and developing a legislative framework. I am going to share a timeline with this House. On September 30, 2015, while campaigning during the 2015 federal election before the Liberal party came to power, Justin Trudeau said that his party was committed to legalizing and regulating marijuana. He said controlling it would protect our kids and remove criminal elements from it, and he added at the time the Liberal party would "get started on that right away."

On April 20, 2016, Health Minister Jane Philpott announced the Liberal government will introduce legislation to legalize marijuana in the spring of 2017. Meanwhile, in Toronto, thousands attended the city's 4/20 pot rally at Yonge and Dundas Square. As marijuana dispensaries started popping up in anticipation of the legislation, a public opinion poll at this time showed 68 per cent of Canadians felt pot should be legal in Canada. On April 24, 2016, a spike in marijuana dispensaries in parts of Canada promoted calls for government to regulate the businesses. On May 26, 2016, Toronto Police conducted "Project Claudia," a large coordinated series of raids on 39 marijuana dispensaries. Officers had 90 people arrested and 257 charges were laid. On June 13, 2016, Attorney General Jody Wilson-Raybould announced the federal government would not decriminalize marijuana before legalizing it. She also said the Liberals would not support an opposition motion urging the government to immediately decriminalize simple pot possession. On June 23, 2016, Toronto Police Chief Mark Saunders announced his officers raided several marijuana dispensaries in the city, almost a month after Project Claudia. He said the businesses were operating illegally.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, there is a complete timeline at this point where we have a commitment from the federal government to issue legislation. I challenge the Minister that we haven't had time to properly consider this, nor that there has been discussion on the options available. Northerners need to know what the future is for legal cannabis in the Northwest Territories, so they are not unfairly taken advantage of by criminal penalties and so they can maintain their own autonomy around decisions that relate to their communities. Further, they can access new opportunities and not let them get gobbled up by southern markets. Mr. Speaker, this needs to happen now, and I hope the Minister takes it seriously. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
NUTRITION NORTH PROGRAM

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I spoke about Nutrition North. This will be my second part of speaking on this today. There is a continuous issue of limited access to proper nutrition in my riding. In my riding, there are two other communities, Jean Marie and Wrigley, that do not have stores. Mr. Speaker, as stated previously in this House, community members must rely on retailers from surrounding areas to get their supplies.

Mr. Speaker, the commute to the nearest retailers causes an additional cost for members of those communities, and it is not always possible due to transportation limitations such as river crossings. There are also members that do not have access to personal transportation. Mr. Speaker, the only way some individuals get their food and supplies is by relying on somebody who is going to Fort Simpson or Hay River. If that fails, there are no alternative means of getting the supplies and food they require. This not does not only put them at the disadvantage of obtaining their needs, but it also inhibits their independence. It should not be this difficult for any individual, let alone entire communities, to obtain their basic needs. A program for delivering food sources to these communities is urgently needed. Mr. Speaker, there is also a number of community members in my riding that obtain nutritional source traditionally. These members of the community tend to share their acquired nutritional resources with members in need. Some hunters are able to secure enough meat for their families for an entire year.

Mr. Speaker, there are also a number of small farms in my riding. One successful vegetable farm is in Fort Simpson. This farm was highly successful in root vegetables such as carrots, turnips, and potatoes, over 4,000 pounds. Unfortunately, they cannot access funds through the Nutrition North Program, which places a barrier to them and residents in my riding to get some subsidy for this food. Mr. Speaker, it would be great if this government could work with the federal government or just take over this program to build an NWT nutrition program that will help smaller and isolated communities. Later, I'll have questions for the Premier on this topic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ECOLE WILLIAM McDONALD SCHOOL
ACCESSIBILITY

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to share some good news today about an

important accessibility initiative being undertaken by school administrators in my constituency. The Yellowknife Education District No. 1 has recently secured funding through the Access 4 All Canada 150 Signature Initiative. The program provides funding to raise awareness and break down barriers for people living with disabilities. It does that by providing accessibility in our built environment, it corrects or improves accessibility of infrastructure for persons with disabilities. It aims particularly at improving the accessibility of public places and spaces, such as schools, libraries, and playgrounds.

Applying under the fund, YK1 has been approved to receive \$26,800 for the installation of two barrier-free doors at the main entrance and into the lunch area at Ecole William McDonald School. Access 4 All Canada projects also help to highlight accessibility issues, thank local community leaders for their continued support, and celebrate communities' achievements in making Canada a more accessible and inclusive nation. For projects taking place in schools, there are lesson plans, activities, projects, handouts, and tools for teachers to help students understand disability, access, and inclusion.

The program was launched in the fall of 2016 by the Rick Hansen Foundation. Of course, Mr. Hansen is well known as a good friend of the Northwest Territories through his previous trips here. The Canada 150 element of the program is supported by the Government of Canada. Construction will take place over the summer, and I look forward to attending the ribbon-cutting on these improvements this fall. I congratulate YK1 not only for securing these improvements but for taking this opportunity to expand student and public understanding through this model project. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Sahtu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
MAXIMIZING BENEFITS OF INFRASTRUCTURE
PROJECTS

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, my Member's statement is on the projects of Stanton Hospital and Norman Wells Health Centre. The Government of the Northwest Territories has a procurement process for capital projects, and these two particular projects are well under way, with a union participating on one job site. Training, employment, business opportunities, and supply are fundamental principles and elements of the procurement process. Maximizing and capitalization can be measured in a number of ways. As mentioned by the honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment earlier, there have been

approximately 4,700 apprentices certified, and today there are more than 400 men and women employed in 27 occupations. Later, I will have questions on that workforce and how many are going to be produced with the journeyman certification in my question and answer period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DESTINATION MARKETING

MR. VANTHUYNE: Mr. Speaker, we have all heard about the Northern Frontier Visitors Centre and its unfortunate necessary closure for reasons of building safety. The assignment of space at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre will be an effective fix, albeit temporary, for providing crucial information to visitors to Yellowknife. The attention drawn by the closure of the visitors' centre shows how important tourism has become in the capital and across the territory. Between the territorial government and the city, the visitors' centre received almost \$350,000 in funding each year from various pots. With tourism bringing in \$90 million in direct spending to Yellowknife alone, we realize that is money well invested. With support from CanNor, the City of Yellowknife has recently implemented its Destination Marketing Strategy that will focus resources and attention on aggressively marketing the capital city as a tourist destination.

Destination marketing will be able to coordinate all aspects of marketing the city and its facilities and services, drawing on all the city's resources and assets to attract visitors. Estimates are that increasing tourist traffic by just 10 per cent could mean as much as \$10 million to the city. The extra funding the city received for destination marketing won't last forever, Mr. Speaker. The City of Yellowknife has taken the tourism ball and is running with it, and this government should be working in support of our communities. How can we do that? Yellowknife and all NWT municipalities legislated under the CTV Act have asked the government to bring forward enabling legislation to allow them to institute a hotel levy. This will provide eligible municipalities with resources to grow and develop their local tourism economies as they see fit.

Here in the capital, it could help create infrastructure, potentially a project like a conference centre, which could help build momentum towards a more robust, active, healthy downtown core. This legislation is supported by the city, the NWT Association of Communities, the local hotel association, and NWT Tourism. Mr. Speaker, our communities want to develop their own tourism potential. Tourism has become an important new

part of a broader, diversified NWT economy. Yellowknife's window for destination marketing is now open, but it won't last forever. We should be working in support of our communities, making it possible for them to leverage resources to invest in their own economic futures. Mr. Speaker, let's enable our capital city to do just that. Later, I will have questions for the appropriate Minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PUBLIC HOUSING FOR SENIORS

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to commend the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation and her staff for their recent survey of residents on housing issues. The response rate of 10 per cent of households across the NWT is remarkable. It also speaks to the importance of finding solutions to chronic housing problems. I look forward to hearing the plan for addressing the housing needs respondents identified in the coming sitting.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to reflect on the need for social housing in Yellowknife. Here is a startling fact highlighted in the Voices on Housing report. While the population of the NWT has increased by just 1 per cent since 2004, there has been a 53 per cent increase in the population of people aged 60 years or older in the same period of time. It is a fact that government is unable to meet their housing needs. There are 344 public housing units in Yellowknife, and seniors occupy about a quarter of them. As well, the Housing Corporation supports non-profits that provide an additional 94 units. All told, there is currently not enough housing for about 10 per cent of Yellowknife's population age 60-plus. We know that because there are dozens of seniors on the public housing wait list. The wait to get into an independent living unit at Avens is six years. The public housing needs of single-parent families and single people who aren't seniors are even greater.

Mr. Speaker, the people who responded to the survey had some good ideas for creating more affordable housing in Yellowknife. There is significant interest in tiny houses and creating additional housing co-operatives like Borealis and Inukshuk, but people recognize that the availability of affordable land is an issue within the city. The Housing Corporation is interested in moving its public housing clients through the housing continuum, from rental to home ownership, to free up units, but the fact is only 20 families have opted for the corporation's home ownership plan in Yellowknife in the last 10 years. Many people live paycheque to paycheque, putting in doubt

affordability and all the additional costs that come with home ownership.

The bottom line here is that both levels of government need to invest in building additional energy-efficient housing to meet the needs of all residents of all ages. The GNWT has not made that commitment. The federal government has promised a paltry \$3.6 million a year over the next 10 years. The reality is that we have a long, long way to go. I will have questions for the Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HIGH COST OF PARTICIPATION AT YOUTH SPORT DEVELOPMENT CAMPS

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about our athletes who are selected to participate at the Canada Summer and Winter Games, National Aboriginal Indigenous Games, and National Aboriginal Hockey Championships. We are fortunate to have our athletes from the NWT participate at this level. As you know, Mr. Speaker, some of our very own have gone on to higher levels of competition, and we are very proud that we have supported them to get to the level that they are at. These Games teach our athletes fair play, responsibility, respect, just to name a few.

Mr. Speaker, potential athletes coming from the Mackenzie Delta who want to try out for any sport must make their way to a sport development camp, which is usually in Yellowknife. This means that our athletes have to drive or fly from either Aklavik, Tsiigehtchic, or Fort McPherson to Inuvik, continue flights on to Yellowknife, look for and pay for accommodation, meals, taxis, and, in most cases, registration. I speak for all athletes who have considered participating in any sporting activities, where there are no regional camps, where individuals have to make their own way to Yellowknife to take part in one of the many sport development camps. This, Mr. Speaker, is in the early stages, when teams are not yet selected, adding to the empty pockets of parents.

Mr. Speaker, we have excellent role models, high performance athletes in our regions, who fail to participate because of the out-of-pocket expenses that the parents have to front. Fundraising efforts are not that great in an economy with little or no jobs, and the cost of living is very high. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this concern has come to my office time and time again: parents looking for support in getting their children to Yellowknife to participate in sporting camps to be considered for Team NWT. My concern, Mr. Speaker, is that far too many times, these camps are held here in Yellowknife, where the athletes from the Mackenzie Delta, Nunakput, and Inuvik, and possibly Sahtu ridings, just can't afford the travel and extra costs associated with sport development camps.

What I would suggest is to have these camps in Inuvik, have your athletes from Yellowknife, Hay River, and Fort Smith regions come to Inuvik and pay the extra costs from their pockets and look for accommodations, etc. I am not talking about regional camps. I am talking about the sport development camps where the teams are actually chosen. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, you will see the high turnout with athletes from the Delta wanting to participate with little to no cost to the parents. Mr. Speaker, this could be taken into consideration, not so much with the Arctic Winter Games, because this is a success with funding provided right from the community level, to the territorials and to the games themselves, but more so with the summer and winter games, NAIG and NAHC. I would like to state once again, for future events coming such as Canada Winter Games, NAHC, and maybe there are other team NWT-oriented events that I did not mention, maybe curling, cross country skiing, etc.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Mackenzie Delta, I believe the Minister is giving a clear message. It has been over almost three minutes now, almost four minutes. I believe your statement is concluded. Masi. Members' statements. Member for Hay River North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON COMMERCIAL FISHERIES REVITALIZATION

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I haven't had a chance to get outside much in the past couple of weeks, but I am told that summer is finally here. That means that the commercial fishermen are heading back out on Great Slave Lake. It is only fitting that I make my sessional statement on the fishery. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, the Auditor General of Canada, or AG, released his report on the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. For those who don't know, all fish caught in the NWT that are sold across the border must be sold to Freshwater, which is a federal Crown corporation. It has a legislative monopoly on our export fish market.

When the corporation was established nearly 50 years ago, it was done so with the best of intentions. However, this month's Auditor General report confirmed what has been common

knowledge in Hay River for decades: that Freshwater is not serving the best interests of our fisherman. The AG found many weaknesses, significant deficiencies, and outright failures in the oversight, management, and operation of the corporation. Given some of the things I have heard, that is putting it lightly. Further, the report found that the corporation has no long-term strategic plan, and has exposed itself to considerable risks in a complex economic environment.

These conclusions are no surprise to anyone familiar with the fishing industry. The only surprise is that things have actually gotten worse since the AG released a similar report in 2010. The core purpose of Freshwater, according to its vision statement, is to maximize returns for fishers. However, it is the fishermen who have borne the fiscal costs of Freshwater's ineptitude. Mr. Speaker, if you would like to see a physical manifestation of Freshwater's failings, look at the fish plant they own in Hay River. It was once a brand-new building, stocked full of top-of-the-line equipment capable of processing fish. Now the building is an eyesore, gutted of its ability to process fish, and demoted through a receiving plant. Fish are now trucked from Hay River to Winnipeg to be processed.

Unsurprisingly, Manitoba is set to withdraw from the corporation this year, meaning only NWT fishers will be obliged to sell their fish to Freshwater. I am not convinced the corporation will last much beyond that. If it doesn't last, the situation for our fishermen will go from bad to worse. We are hitching our wagon to a dying horse, Mr. Speaker, and we need to do something about it quickly, or we will be failing our fishermen the same way Freshwater has been failing them for the past 50 years. I will have questions about what we are doing to strengthen our commercial fishing industry and finally allow our fisherman to be paid fairly for their work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Great Slave.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Ms. Nicole Enge. Nicole just finished her second year of political science at the University of Toronto, and she has been hired for the summer as one of our special project coordinators for the Executive Council offices here in the Legislative Assembly. Welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Lydia Bardak, who is an

advocate for people who live in need, and who is my constituent, and Nalini Naidoo, the economic development director for the city, who is sitting there, as well. She is also my constituent. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Sahtu.

MR. MCNEELY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. We are proud to acknowledge two Pages from the Chief T'Selehye School in Fort Good Hope: Ms. Patricia Mahamadiva and Adriana Laboucan, along with their chaperone, Melinda Laboucan. Good job in keeping us in order, and good job to Melinda for keeping the Pages in order, and sightseeing in this big city. I would also like to point out that Adriana Laboucan is one of the Sahtu Regional Heritage Fair winners. Her project was based on a pow-wow. Congratulations. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Range Lake.

MS. COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a member from a constituency from Range Lake, also the chair of the Montessori school, Mr. David Wasylciw. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again to recognize Mr. Fraser Oliver, Kam Lake constituent and president of the NWT Teachers' Association. I know he has been here every day so far this sitting, and eagerly awaiting the debate on Bill 16, which is today. I am sure he will be very pleased with our proceedings. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take this opportunity to recognize the director of economic development and communications for the City of Yellowknife, Nalini Naidoo. I also want to take this time to recognize the Pages from my riding: Riley Menard, Rae Panayi, and Mezan Daher, all from Sir John, and all residents of the Yellowknife North riding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. If we are missing anyone in the gallery, welcome to our proceedings. It is always great to have an audience. Masi. Item 6, acknowledgements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

Acknowledgments

ACKNOWLEDGMENT 22-18(2): RECOGNITION OF LYNDA KOE, ORDER OF THE NWT RECIPIENT

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute my constituent Lynda Koe for receiving the Order of the NWT yesterday. For almost 30 years, Ms. Koe has used her nursing skills to increase the quality of life for residents of Avens to meet the highest level of compassion, dignity, and respect. Her professionalism earned her accreditation from the Accreditation Council of Canada. Ms. Koe has played a key role in implementing specialized care in the dementia facility. She is approachable and respected by all as an advocate for residents' social and medical needs. Please join me in congratulating her. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Acknowledgements. Member for Sahtu.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT 23-18(2): CECE HODGSON-MCCAULEY – 95TH BIRTHDAY

MR. MCNEELY: Mahsi Mr. Speaker. Today, I pay tribute to Ms. Cece Hodgson-McCauley for her 95th birthday coming this Monday, June 5, 2017. Cece was born on June 5, 1922, on the Dease Arm on the famous Great Bear Lake. She is a residential school survivor, and began as the first founding chief of the Inuvik Dene Band. She also received the 2016 Inspire Award for Politics. Mr. Speaker, today Cece is a well-known columnist for NewsNorth paper, and an advocate for the Mackenzie Valley Highway. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 789-18(2): NUTRITION NORTH PROGRAM

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the past few days, I've used my Member's statements to talk about Nutrition North. As stated in my statements, this program is not working for my riding. To add to this, we have seen numerous reports and articles about the challenges this program faces across the North. Mr. Speaker, can the Premier inform this house which department is working with the federal government to make this program work better for small and isolated communities in the North? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Honourable Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs has been monitoring what the federal government has been doing with Nutrition North, and Health and Social Services provides nutritional education information on behalf of the federal government to the tune of about \$375,000 a year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Premier for his answer. Mr. Speaker, in previous sittings, we spoke about the potential of going to the federal government, and asking if we could take over this program. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister advise this House if he has had the opportunity to discuss this idea with the Minister or the Prime Minister in regards to Nutrition North?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I have had the opportunity to discuss Nutrition North with Minister Bennett on several occasions. We offered to take over the program if the accompanying money would be transferred with it. The federal government has been non-committal. They appear to prefer to deliver it themselves. They have had a number of reviews, and they even have their own advisory board, so it appears they will be in business for a while.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Premier for his answer. It is unfortunate the federal government is going to look after this program because it is hurting a number of northern communities, especially in my riding. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier work with his Ministers to come up with a plan that we can take to the federal government to address issues of communities who don't have stores or have challenges such as transportation and freight issues, or do not have stores at all if the federal government allows them to?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The Nutrition North appears to have one program which is a retailer food subsidy, where they provide subsidies to retailers that provide nutritious foods to the communities. Having said that, cost of living, food security, are all issues that are high-priority for our government, and we are always looking for ways to improve in those areas to reduce the cost of living, and also to make more nutritious foods available to the communities even if they are not included on the Nutrition North list of communities. Right now, there are now 15 Northwest Territories communities that are now included. We are prepared to work together to find a way to get the federal government to engage and invest, we would be pleased to do that as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Premier for hearing that. My big thing is,

my concern, I have two communities who do not have stores. They do not have access to food, so that is probably a big challenge for them. In regards to the residents that have commercial gardens, will the Premier work with the Minister of ITI to come up with a plan so that food can be subsidized so that they can sell their product to the residents of the NWT on a level playing field? In other words, look at the opportunity for Nutrition North to subsidize some of our local farmers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The federal government as I have said, only provides a retailers' food subsidy. Right now, they are not providing subsidies for other sources of food production. We did, as part of signing on to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement, we will be meeting, and are meeting with Agriculture Canada to find ways to develop agriculture in the Northwest Territories. Those that are interested in dairy, chicken, turkey, we will have to find other sources because of the fact that that is a closed door other than existing farmers, but we will be negotiating with Agriculture Canada to look at other forms of agriculture. As a government, we have developed a number of strategies to help improve in the area of food security. We have an agricultural strategy. We have a fishery strategy. We have a small-scale garden program where we now have, all communities of the North have small-scale community gardens.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

QUESTION 790-18(2):
COMMERCIAL FISHERIES REVITALIZATION

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we all know, this government recently released its Commercial Fisheries Revitalization Strategy. The execution of this plan is in its early stages. Part of the problem that we are facing is that the government does not have authority over the fishery, so we must wait on DFO to make the regulatory changes and the infrastructure investments that are needed to move things forward. I have a question for the Minister of Infrastructure: since this is a problem that we have to deal directly with Ottawa, how often are you meeting with your federal counterpart, the Minister of DFO, and specifically discussing issues related to these infrastructure investments and regulatory changes that are needed to get this fishery going? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since I obtained the portfolio, I have met with the Minister of DFO twice; once in November

of 2016 and once in March of 2017 of this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMPSON: I gave the Minister an opportunity to do that because I know he has been meeting with the Minister, and I know he has been pushing this in Ottawa, and I know he is working hard for Hay River to get this fishing strategy going. When it comes to talks with Freshwater, as you know in my statement, I outlined some of the problems with Freshwater. Where are we at the talks with Freshwater to get this fish plant either rebuilt, refurbished, or build one of our own?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As all Members are aware, in the Member's statement today that Freshwater Marketing Corp., its future is very uncertain, as the last person standing technically is the Northwest Territories. We are waiting for a ruling out of Manitoba, as it sounds like they are pulling out of the Freshwater Marketing Corporation, so that is 80 per cent of their market gone. How do we move this forward? We have been working with Freshwater to this point, and it has been very challenging, and with the situation that has arisen around the Manitoba thing, it has put a lot of things into question. The last time that I met with the Minister of DFO, we had an opportunity to talk about this stuff. We are talking about a range of opportunities that have been presented to us now with the possibility of Manitoba pulling out, and we are in discussions directly with the DFO office on this matter.

MR. SIMPSON: As we can tell from the Minister's answer, it is tough to deal with Freshwater. I mean, it is an organization in disarray. We need this fish plant. At what point is this government prepared to pull away from Freshwater and just build our own fish plant?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I am not sure if this is the time to be walking away from the table, just yet, because this is going to take a lot of resources to get this figured out and how to build something and get the processes and money in place to be able to build something like this. The challenge, like I say, is particularly around the resources, and I think we need to be engaged, which we are now, directly with the Minister's office on how we are going to move forward. Hopefully, we are going to be able to come to some solution between us and the federal government in the near future.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Processing fish is one part of the equation. The other part is marketing this fish ourselves or having the fishermen market it themselves, and part of the revitalization strategy is to build those markets,

whether they be in the territory, they be in Alberta, or overseas. What are we doing, what is the government doing, to create those markets now? The plan calls for getting out of Freshwater. That is what the plan calls for. We need those markets, so where are we? Do we have someone hired? Do we have markets developed in the South? Can I get an update on that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As everyone knows, the quota system being signed onto Freshwater Fish, 100 per cent of our fish goes to the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. We believed, as we went into revitalizing the fishing strategy, that there are market opportunities for us outside of Freshwater. Being that we are still signatory to the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation, we are still obliged to sell our fish to the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. We are looking at expanding our opportunities outside of that, but, before we can do that, as I said, we have got to figure out our relationship with the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation, and now we are dealing directly with the Minister of DFO on this situation. Hopefully, we can figure this out sooner rather than later and get on with the revitalization of the Great Slave fishery.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 791-18(2):
INSTITUTION OF A MUNICIPAL HOTEL LEVY

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I raised some points earlier about enabling the City of Yellowknife to possibly start a hotel levy. That would fall under the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, so my questions are for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs today. I just want to start, first of all, asking the Minister: there have been some recent changes as it relates to it. The Minister, herself, is relatively new to this portfolio. There is a new deputy minister, and there is a new senior administrator officer at the city, so I would just simply like to ask the Minister how the relationship between MACA and the City of Yellowknife is going so far, and are they working effectively together? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I am more than proud to report that the relationship between the City of Yellowknife and Municipal and Community Affairs is positive. Yes, it is true that we have a new deputy minister, but her experience has been many, many years working with community governments. She is not new to Municipal and Community Affairs nor new to

city governments, so she has a solid relationship with the City of Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. VANTHUYNE: That is good news and welcome news. I can attest to what the Minister described, as a former Yellowknife city councillor. The new deputy minister was an assistant deputy minister at the time, and we have always had a positive relationship with her at the City of Yellowknife. I spoke earlier about the city's intention. They want to introduce a hotel levy, and I am wondering if the Minister can describe the most recent analysis of that question of a hotel levy and what the department has learned.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has done a cross-jurisdictional analysis of hotel levies to see within other jurisdictions how they are presented, how they are run, what the costs look like, et cetera, so we have done that research. We are also working with the City of Yellowknife very closely. We have had over six meetings with them since October, developing a discussion paper that we will be bringing forward to other stakeholders.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you to the Minister for her reply and updating us on what we will term the discussion paper. I guess, if the discussion paper is sort of a next step towards this possible opportunity of a hotel levy, can the Minister describe to us maybe then what the next steps are and what the schedule might be towards actually developing potential legislation and when the municipalities might be in a better position to actually start a hotel levy?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Yes, we are meeting with the six municipalities during the summer, when session is over, to discuss the proposed changes that we are looking at. We have also realized that it is not only the municipalities that will be affected by this; it is also hotel operators and lodging operators that might be affected by it, as well. In trying to be as transparent and inclusive as possible, Municipal and Community Affairs is also reaching out to those operators to get their feedback on the proposed amendments.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These are all positive replies, and I am glad that the Minister is sharing them with us. I think this is good information that the public needs to hear. Then, just lastly and very simply, I would like to ask the Minister if there are some steps that she can let us know that the department is taking to support municipalities in marketing themselves as tourist

destinations, aside from the potential hotel levy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Diversifying our economy was one of the priorities identified within this Legislative Assembly, and so it is important that municipalities also look at diversifying their economies, as well. Tourism is a great opportunity within the Northwest Territories, as proven by our capital city and the City of Yellowknife, so I would recommend that all municipalities, towns, et cetera, contact the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment to find out what programs and services they have that they can actually access to support tourism within their municipalities.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 792-18(2):
ARSENIC TESTING AROUND YELLOWKNIFE

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Yesterday, the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources made a statement about arsenic monitoring in the Yellowknife area and how our government would improve coordination of its responses. This is good news and is a helpful response to concerns I raised earlier in this sitting. While it is good to hear that ENR staff have begun monitoring Kam Lake and Grace Lake, look around. Yellowknife is surrounded by small lakes. What plans does his department have for a systematic approach to sampling most if not all the lakes around Yellowknife, and would this include speciation to detect more harmful forms of arsenic? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said the other day, we have been conducting some sampling in Great Slave and the Yellowknife River, and we have also sampled some of the lakes. I mentioned Kam Lake, Grace Lake. We plan on sampling them again this summer. ENR, what we are doing is we are compiling some water quality information from water bodies in the Yellowknife area because there are a number of other governments, industry, and academics who have collected water samples, so what we are doing is we are working with them to compile all that information. If there are some lakes there that need to be sampled, then we can look at that, but I think step number one is to see what information we have from all the lakes and all the studies that have been going around the capital, and put that information together, and then decide on our next steps from there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you to the Minister for that response. I agree that a good first step is to compile what is out there. I am hoping that, in compiling that, we also look at speciation or the different forms of arsenic. Some are toxic and some are far less toxic. Sampling water in lakes is a good start, but we also need to think about sampling of sediments, soils, and fish. Does the Minister have any plans for a systematic sampling of sediments, soils, and fish around Yellowknife for arsenic in its various forms?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The quick answer is "yes," and I will explain. We are collaborating with the University of Alberta to study metals in large-bodied fish, including arsenic, from several high use and potentially impacted lakes in and around the Yellowknife area. We have taken some sampling in March of 2016 on Kam, Grace, Long, and Upper Martin Lakes, and it will occur during 2017 at Walsh and Banting Lakes. Existing sediment, soil, and fish data is also being compiled in the Yellowknife area. There are many entities, as the Member mentioned. Like the other governments, industries, and academics who have collected this type of information, again, we will work with those entities to compile a list of all the lakes that have been studied. If there are some that still need to be looked at, we can look at undertaking that.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you again to the Minister. It sounds like all of this information is going to get pulled together, and that is a good start. Of course, we have to also think about how this information is going to be shared with the public. Will the results on any health implications be simply posted on a website somewhere? What is the plan to make this information available to the public?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: As our information sharing protocol has improved, the reports and all information collected by ENR, we will share them with Health and Social Services after some analysis and review. Data collected by ENR will be posted on our website, and as mentioned, reports will be prepared and made public, as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Thank you again to the Minister. As people know, I attended the Giant Mine Oversight Board's public meeting on May 16th. One of the concerns raised was how information on water and soil arsenic contamination and any health-related or exposure warnings can be shared with tourists and visitors. We could do this through the Northern Frontier Visitors Centre, oops, we don't have that anymore. How does the Minister intend to share arsenic contamination information with tourists and visitors? Merci, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our information reports will be publicly available on our website. Any updates to the precautionary public health advisory will be made publicly by Health and Social Services. The office of the Chief Public Health Officer is examining the recent data for Kam and Grace Lakes, and will be updating the map to reflect more recent data on these lakes. The office of the Chief Public Health Officer is able to provide advice to agencies and community governments on possible messaging for residents and visitors.

For example, ITI worked with the office of the Chief Public Health Officer to develop signs for trail visitors along the Prospector Trail, which is a trail within the territorial park that is adjacent to Giant Mine. We are still continuing to have discussions with Canada regarding paths forward for an approach to legacy arsenic in the Yellowknife area, and information sharing with residents and visitors will be an element of these discussions.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 793-18(2):
YELLOWKNIFE SCHOOLS NEEDS
ASSESSMENT

MR. TESTART: Merci, Monsieur le President. [English translation not provided]. The Minister of Education is well aware that the addition of junior kindergarten has added increasing pressure on our schools here in Yellowknife. In my riding of Kam Lake, Ecole St. Joseph is nearing 95 per cent capacity. Yellowknife is currently assessed on the same level as everyone else, but has very different needs. Some of the schools have phantom classrooms, and the entire community is assessed as a whole rather than per district. I would like the Minister to tell me if he is willing to review the assessment for Yellowknife schools, and ensure that they are treated on an apples-to-apples analysis, and fairly, based on their needs. Merci.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, currently we have department staff that are working with the education authorities and the school staff to look at utilization rates, and to ensure that spaces that were developed when the school was made were actually being used for instructional time, and what other spaces aren't for instructional time. We are going through that review right now with schools in Yellowknife, currently. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: I am glad that the Minister is looking into this, but this isn't a new issue. I would

like the Minister to commit to a timeline if he can, today, on when we are going to have a sense of when this needs assessment work has been completed.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Currently there isn't a timeline set in place. Obviously, we have to make sure that we do have appropriate time to go through the schools, with the staff, and have that idea of which classrooms are used for instructional hours and other classrooms that might be used for storage or other areas of use that were put forth by the school and together, collectively, decide which classrooms should be used for instructional classrooms, and identify that utilization rate. I don't have a timeline, but I will make sure the department comes back with something. I will share that with the Member.

MR. TESTART: It is difficult to get a clear answer on timelines from this government. Alas, this, with the addition of junior kindergarten, we have 95 per cent capacity reached at St. Joseph School. What does the Minister propose to do to assist the Yellowknife Catholic school board to manage this capacity crunch?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: When we look at the utilization rates, we look at utilization rates as they pertain to communities, so the utilization rate here in Yellowknife isn't as high as it is by the school. Obviously, we look at school sharing. We are currently in discussions with YCS now, how we deal with that utilization rate and the high numbers that they are getting. We have schools across NWT that also are at certain levels that we need to have those discussions. However, the utilization rates haven't reached that peak within the Yellowknife schools, but we are in discussions with YCS on how we come up with solutions for that.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Merci, Monsieur le President. [English translation not provided.] We have 78 per cent for Yellowknife and 95 per cent for this one school. Clearly the Minister can see that there is a problem here. If we are going to keep pushing grades onto our school boards, we need to have some flexibility here so these schools can meet the needs of our families and our parents. I will ask again if, in the rollout of the new junior kindergarten funding in the fall, when these needs are assessed, will there be additional money provided to the schools to provide for temporary accommodations or retrofits to their facilities in order to accommodate these extra children? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I had mentioned, we are in those discussions

with YCS on how we deal with the situation. At those rates, we can't commit at that time. Yellowknife, as a whole, has some schools that have high utilization rates, but we also have schools that aren't meeting some of those high rates. We are trying to find a solution here in Yellowknife to accommodate all the students as well as staff.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

QUESTION 794-18(2):
MAXIMIZING BENEFITS OF INFRASTRUCTURE
PROJECTS

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize for fumbling on the last sentence of my statement earlier, but my questions today are to the Minister of Infrastructure. I understand the Stanton renewal project is one of the largest P3 projects undertaken by the GNWT. Can the Minister of Infrastructure tell me how much the project costs are being spent in the North, and if any northern companies are involved? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The successful proponent of this project is committed to make every effort to involve local and northern labour and goods and services in this project, and I am glad to update the House here today that within the project agreement \$70 million has been identified for local and northern businesses.

The numbers that I have got to date, to the end of May of this year, we have seen over \$24 million spent on local and northern companies, and at this time, 11 northern companies are fully engaged in major projects on the Stanton project to date, with more tenders yet to be coming out to finish up the building as it moves along. The range of work that has been done so far by local and northern businesses is drilling, blasting, water and sewer work, concrete production, waterproofing, elevator services, and such. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MCNEELY: It is good to see that the project is contributing to economic growth of our North. I have some questions on the labour side, the trades progression capitalization on experience to further the apprentice as mentioned by the honourable Minister for ECE earlier. We have 400 tradespeople that are currently working, and I imagine some of them are on this project. Can the Minister elaborate a little bit more on the training plan included in this project and how many trades we will see upon completion?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: We are working with a joint venture to get these exact figures for the Members of the House of how many northern workers, but as work progresses from day to day, labour amounts change. They fluctuate up and down on who is on site, but from everything that has been presented to me, there are roughly between 60 and 130 people that are working on site, given the scope of work that is going on, but there are also a number of people who work off-site, potentially up to 70 people around administration, designers, engineers, quality assurance, those sorts of things, Mr. Speaker. As far as apprenticeships go, we understand that there are approximately 15 apprentices that are working on site right now on this present project. We are going to work along with ECE and NAPEG to get the full scope of that, so I can have those numbers readily available as well.

MR. MCNEELY: I am glad to hear that number, 15, and if we can encourage those individuals to complete their apprentice and capitalize on their hours needed to complete their journeyman certification, those would be good targets for the project. My next question is: where is the project time, and where is the schedule now?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: In discussions with the joint venture on Stanton, the project is on schedule as projected. We expect to service commencement of the facility on November 30, 2018, and we work very closely with them on tracking this issue very closely going month to month with this project moving forward. We believe the project is about approximately 30 per cent complete right now.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seeing that we are at the benchmark of 30 per cent completion here, I will have further questions down the road when we are at 60 per cent. Mahsi.

---Laughter

MR. SPEAKER: More of a comment. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 795-18(2):
ELIGIBILITY FOR HOMEOWNERSHIP
PROGRAMS

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the NWT Housing Corporation. In the past, the Minister has stressed the belief that home ownership is the way for people to get housed without relying on public housing and to free up units for those who need them. Yet, with only 20 Yellowknife families taking up the offer of

assisted home ownership in the last 10 years, this faith seems to be a little misplaced. Will the Minister now re-examine the home ownership program and find out how to increase the uptake? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I speak broadly that home ownership, in my belief, is a way for people to take more pride in their belongings and it is a goal that most people achieve towards from when we leave our parents' house, I seriously believe that. However, I also recognize that one size does not fit all, and so we have to look at each community separately. Within the smaller communities, it may be a better possibility. Within the capital city, the majority of our public housing units are actually in multi-dwelling buildings where home ownership might not be as feasible. That is why I have committed to looking at a rent subsidy program, which might work better for people within market communities, certainly within our capital city. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: Thank you to the Minister. In her general statements, the Minister has asserted that, relying on the shift to home ownership, the Housing Corporation is not adding to its housing stock. There is still a problem of availability of housing in Yellowknife. There is not enough in any form. Will the Minister, as a result of her survey, consider taking the cap off of the housing inventory and try to get more resources to build additional homes or apartments?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: We are working diligently with the federal government as well, and CMHC has made an agreement to put a hold on the declining funding just for this year, but they have still stated that in 2038, those operating and maintenance monies will be gone. With that in effect, we have to look at ways that we can actually support our residents in the Northwest Territories in meeting their housing needs.

At this point, I am not looking at increasing our public housing units, but I do believe that the Rent Supplement Program for the City of Yellowknife would address that need. For example, if I build one house in Yellowknife and it costs me \$500,000; if I give people \$500 a month, \$6,000 a year, towards a rent supplement program, I can support hundreds of families versus one family in the same amount of money. Those are the areas that we are looking at. How do we make our resources go further versus expanding things that we have not figured out how to pay for yet.

MS. GREEN: Given that answer, then, is the Minister willing to provide a rent supplement for

additional units, since those units need not be owned; they could be rented, to increase the availability of housing?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: The Rent Supplement Program will be exactly that. It will not be supplementing units that we already own within the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. They will be supplementing market rental units so that we can reach more lower-income families and individuals within our market communities.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is good news from the Minister. I finally want to talk about the federal budget in March. Ottawa announced a transfer of \$36 million to the NWT over 10 years to provide for more housing. That compares to \$240 million over 10 years in Nunavut. Why did we end up with the short end of the stick from Ottawa on housing? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am as confused as the Member in trying to understand why we got short-changed in the northern housing strategy, and so I am actually flying down to Ottawa this Sunday to meet with the Minister responsible for the CMHC, Mr. Duclos. Mr. Duclos, right after the budget was released, did give me a call the next day and promised me that he would provide me a funding formula, because we do support our other territories; however, Nunavut has double of the amount of needs for housing and got eight times the funding. We are asking for an explanation for why we got short-changed within that funding, and also to advocate that we can access more housing monies as it comes out, because a lot of the money for Indigenous people is only on reserve, and we do not qualify for that funding. We are having a face-to-face meeting Monday to discuss all of the issues with the Northwest Territories and our feeling of needing more support from the federal government.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

QUESTION 796-18(2):
FUNDING FOR FAMILY VIOLENCE SHELTERS

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Over the course of this Assembly, it has come up quite often that the family violence shelters in the Northwest Territories are not funded by any sort of funding formula, which leads to disparities, leaving some shelters more in need than others.

When I spoke to the Minister about this before, during the business planning and during the budget session, he stated that he was going to work with the shelters, develop a funding formula, and that work would probably be done in August 2017. We are about 60 days away from August. I would like an update from the Minister to find out what work has been done on developing a funding formula for the family violence shelters. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I and my colleagues recognize that the current funding structure for the shelters has led to some challenges and some inconsistencies. Last year, I did direct the Department of Health and Social Services to examine and work with the shelters to identify some of these immediate pressures. As a result of this work, we were fortunate to receive \$120,000 in new funding to offset the increased operating costs of family violence shelters across the Northwest Territories.

When I met with the shelter network in 2016, I also committed to exploring the potential for a more equitable funding formula. At that time, I indicated, give us a little bit of patience, work with us. We will be in a better position to start discussions in August 2017. That has not occurred yet. We have had some initial work done. We have been working on some preliminary information with the shelter leads, but we have not begun the negotiations around a funding formula yet, and we will not be getting that until August at the earliest. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMPSON: I am aware that there have been some talks, you could call them, with the shelter network and the individual shelters. There have been calls from the department saying, "How much do you spend on staff?" or questions like that. The department is doing something. I am not sure what this preliminary work is, but if the department is trying to figure out what the needs are, why are the shelters not being engaged now in this preliminary work?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: In order to have an informed discussion, we need to actually understand where we are. We have done some preliminary work to determine where we stand, where the shelters stand, and we have been working with the chair of the shelter network who represents all of the shelters across the Northwest Territories. We have done this by e-mail correspondence, but also in face-to-face meetings.

As part of that work, the department has begun work on a bit of a zero-based budget exercise as our first step to determine the funding requirements, as well as the best and most equitable funding model for family violence. We need to have some information in hand in order to have informed discussions. We are working towards that, and we will have more fulsome or more complete discussions around a funding formula starting in August at the earliest.

MR. SIMPSON: I have also been working with the chair of the shelter network to try to get the department more engaged with the shelter network. The Minister says they are trying to determine the requirements for the shelters. Just getting the dry numbers for the shelters is not determining the requirements. It is determining how much money they are spending, which they already know because that is how much money they are getting. The Minister has already made his point clear that he is not going to engage with these individuals until August. When can we expect this funding formula to be complete and rolling out? How about that?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: When I met with the individuals in 2016, I indicated to them clearly that we intend to move forward, we intend to work with them collaboratively, but we need a bit of time. We have just rolled out a single authority in the Northwest Territories, and I indicated at that time we will be in a better position to begin formal discussions in August 2017. I live up to that commitment. We are living up to that commitment. In the interim, we have worked with the chair. We have gathered information to help us present some information when we do meet with them. I do not think the Member is interpreting what I have said correctly. We are working with them, we are gathering data, and we will have informed discussion and dialogue with them starting at the earliest in August. As far as when we come up with a funding formula, it really depends how those negotiations and discussions go. I would hate to presuppose a solution without having those discussions.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

QUESTION 797-18(2):
DESIGNATED AUTHORITY COUNCIL TRAINING

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today, the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs did a Minister's statement on designated authority council training. It is very exciting, and I am happy to hear this. I guess my first question for the Minister is additional funding to support delivery. If this delivery is going to be done by the internet, what additional costs are we looking

at for this delivery of the program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The availability of the training online is one method of reaching people to access their training needs. The reality is that online training does not work for all residents in the Northwest Territories. We also want to make sure that we can also provide face-to-face training and community group-based training as required, so that we meet all of the different learning styles that people have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. THOMPSON: That kind of leads into my second question with limited access and the ability of councillors to actually access the internet program in order to take this training. In regards to the face-to-face training, are we going to actually bring the MACA staff into the communities, or is it going to be like the School of Community Government's other courses, where they hold a regional one and people have to come in there?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: At this point, we are just negotiating with the federal government to see if they will provide funding for the delivery of this support, so it is a little bit premature to report on what exactly this delivery would look like. Once we have the information and a partnership, then we can look at how we deliver it.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for her answer. I am pretty disappointed that we do not have a plan in place. We have built the program, done a pilot project, and now we still do not know if we will be able to implement it right away besides the internet access. In regards to the courses that were developed, what is the difference between the courses that they provide to other organizations? I am looking at the list, and this is the same thing that you go to councils with before, so what are the differences that is going to make this unique to designated authorities that happen to normal hamlets, towns, facilities, and villages?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: They are a little bit different from the municipal government courses that we provide through the School of Community Governments. There are two types of community governments. They are governed by different legislation, they have different authorities, and the reporting arrangements, as well, are different to deliver their programs and services.

Bands generally perform services in the areas of governance, culture, language, membership services, and areas in health, social services, and justice. Municipal governments, on the other hand,

generally perform services in water distribution, waste collection, road maintenance, capital infrastructure, land use planning, and recreation. Although sometimes the bands do municipal-like services, they also have a distinct difference in their services and supports that they provide to the residents in their communities.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, and I thank the Minister for her answer. Four of my communities are designated authorities, and four of these communities actually provide all of the municipal services. Again, when we are talking about this, this is a concern for me. Again, when we look at job descriptions, a band manager is the same thing as an SAO. What is the difference between these job descriptions? Are they similar? Are we utilizing existing resources to modify these resources that they are going to provide to the designated authorities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Respectfully, a lot of the bands and designated authorities actually do provide municipal services. Not all of them do. We do have 33 communities within the Northwest Territories. However, municipal governments are different, as stated before. Although job descriptions will have similarities, municipal governments are not responsible for promoting the language or the culture within their communities, and so job descriptions will have to be changed. They also are not responsible for some of the health and social services and the justice supports that designated authorities get access to. There will be similarities, but there will also be differences within the job descriptions.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

QUESTION 798-18(2):
HIGH COST OF PARTICIPATION AT YOUTH
SPORT DEVELOPMENT CAMPS

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, in follow-up to my Member's statement, I have a few questions for the Minister of MACA. I would like to ask the Minister: what role does the department play in determining the location of sport development camps and other tryout locations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs actually supports the various

sports organizations throughout the Northwest Territories to provide services to the residents. The territorial sports organizations themselves decide where the selection of camps will be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BLAKE: Does the Minister know how many of these events have been held in Yellowknife in the past four years compared to other communities throughout the territory?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Due to our working relationship, our partnerships with the five sports and recreational associations throughout the Northwest Territories, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs does not currently track the information on the location of the selected camps. As so, we do not have that information, what specifically is provided in Yellowknife as to other communities.

MR. BLAKE: What programs for youth under sport and recreation currently exist to help youth athletes from remote communities access tryout and sport development opportunities outside of their home communities?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Sport North right now has the Kids Sport program, and they provide support to families that have a demonstrated economic need, so lower income families can apply for that to access sports and recreation facilities. We also have the two regional recreation associations that will take applications to address accessibility, and the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is willing to provide the information to any families that need support in not knowing where to get the applications for these supports provided.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my last but most important question is: how will the Minister act to improve the accessibility of these events, for instance, ensuring that some are held in the Beaufort Delta region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Municipal and Community Affairs recently met with the five sports and recreation associations, and I may be incorrect, but I believe it was around about a month ago. We are in the process just currently of identifying all of the gaps, overlaps, and areas of need, so I will commit to bringing forward the need to look at providing events, not only in the capital cities or the market communities, but in smaller communities. I will bring that to the table as an identified gap. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 799-18(2):
TERRITORIAL CANNABIS LEGISLATION AND
REGULATION

MR. TESTART: Merci, Monsieur le President. [English translation not provided.] It is just as clear that the presence of a cannabis working group means the government knew the regulations would be needed. I ask today if the Minister could provide the terms of reference of the cannabis working group, including the date the working group was established? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Justice.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the working group has been working on a series of principles, and these will be taken out on the road for public consultation in the regional centres, and also at least several of the smaller communities. There are certain principles that we are acting upon, as follows: restricting youth access to cannabis and the protection of young people from promotion and enticements to use cannabis; legislation to allow adults to possess and access regulated quality controlled legal cannabis; to discourage drug impaired driving; to protect workers and the public from drug impairment in the workplace; to protect public health by controlling the public smoking of cannabis; to enhance public awareness of the health risks associated with cannabis; to provide a safe and secure retail regime for the adult purchase of cannabis and provide for local options; to establish cannabis distribution and consumption restrictions and prohibition. As I have mentioned, we will be seeking the advice and information of the public. There will be public engagement sessions during the summer in the regional centres and also in several small communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: [English translation not provided.] He has laid out clearly what the group has produced to date. How long did it take them to come up with these principles, principles which have basically been around since the 2015 Liberal party platform announcement? There might have been crib from that platform, but I will leave to the Minister to answer. How many times has the working group met? These are well established principles behind this. I'm wondering if they have done anything else. How many times have they met?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I don't have those exact figures before me. I believe they did meet a large number of times, and I will attempt to obtain those figures and provide them to the Member opposite.

MR. TESTART: I guess what I am getting at, Mr. Speaker, is that beyond those principles, there are a number of extremely technical issues. I will ask the Minister this: what is the department's approach to communities that wish to prohibit the sale and use of marijuana products in their communities? How has the working group addressed that issue, and have they made any recommendations to the Minister?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Certainly, Mr. Speaker, this is a complex issue. Of course, the federal government deals with criminal law, and marijuana will be decriminalized July 1, 2018. We will be soliciting advice, as I mentioned, from the various communities. There are communities that are self-governing, and it is going to be very interesting to hear their input which we are seeking and will reflect, likely in our legislation, as it may be, that certain self-governing bodies, local laws, may actually override our own. These are important issues. We will be discussing those with the various communities and governments.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Merci, Monsieur le President. What I hear from the Minister is he has not yet taken a position on that, and I think it is important we get out to the communities. Those discussions have to be carefully crafted so we get good results, and the question we put to our citizens is clear. Apart from those principles, does the Minister have a set of discussion paper around this that he can share with Honourable Members on this side of the House that makes it clear what those questions are going to be that we put to our residents around the important subject of cannabis regulation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, we are going out to the communities and seeking their engagements. We really want to hear from them. We do not have any preconceptions as to how this legislation should be crafted. We are hoping to hear from various interested parties, in particular those small communities where this issue is certainly to be of great concern.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to Commissioner's opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Finance.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 383-18(2):
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), NO. 2,
2017-2018

TABLED DOCUMENT 384-18(2):
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (OPERATIONS
EXPENDITURES), NO. 2, 2017-2018

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents entitled "Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2017-2018" and "Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2017-2018." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

TABLED DOCUMENT 385-18(2):
NWT APPRENTICESHIP, TRADES AND
OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATION STRATEGY
2017-2022

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled "NWT Apprenticeship, Trades and Occupational Certification Strategy, 2017-2022." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

TABLED DOCUMENT 386-18(2):
ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017 NWT OFFICE OF
THE REGULATOR OF OIL AND GAS
OPERATIONS

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled "Annual Report 2016-2017 NWT Office of the Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Member for Hay River North.

TABLED DOCUMENT 387-18(2):
2017 SPRING REPORTS OF THE AUDITOR
GENERAL OF CANADA TO THE PARLIAMENT
OF CANADA - INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT:
REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF
CANADA TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
THE FRESHWATER FISH MARKETING
CORPORATION - SPECIAL EXAMINATION - 2017

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the document entitled "2017 Spring Reports of the Auditor General of Canada to the

Parliament of Canada - Independent Audit Report: Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Board of Directors of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation - Special Examination - 2017." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Tabling of documents. Member for Kam Lake.

TABLED DOCUMENT 388-18(2):
TIMELINE OF CANNABIS-RELATED ISSUES IN
CANADA FROM 2015 TO 2017

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the following two-page document entitled "Timeline of Cannabis-Related Issues in Canada from 2015 to 2017." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 34-18(2):
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE TO
SEPTEMBER 19, 2017

MS. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, June 2, 2017, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on June 2, 2017, it shall be adjourned until Tuesday, September 19, 2017; and further, that at any time prior to September 19, 2017, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Notices of motion. Item 18, notice of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 27:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION ACT

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill

27, An Act to Amend the Environmental Protection Act, be read for the second time. This bill makes several amendments to the Environmental Protection Act. It removes the non-application provision; authorizes the Minister to establish and make publicly available a register respecting environmental contaminants; authorizes the Minister to determine that discharges are nuisances; authorizes the Minister to exempt persons from complying with the act or the regulations; creates a new exception to the prohibition against releasing contaminants for discharges authorized under other legislation and provides that the exception to the prohibition does not apply to nuisance discharges; requires persons intending to discharge environmental contaminants to register with the Minister, obtain a licence or permit, and provide the prescribed information; and broadens the regulation-making powers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I know the Minister is anxious to get on, but I had a closer look at this bill last night, and I do have some concerns.

First off, the department, and I want to commend them for this, they did go through an extensive public consultation around what was called the Northwest Territories Air Regulatory Framework last summer. I submitted comments as an individual. One of those sets of comments was around whether the issuing of air permits is something that might be handled by the land and water boards, who already have a well-established system of doing so that allows for quality public engagement opportunities.

The department did summarize some of the comments that they received back in March of this year. They put out a "What We Heard" document, but it was never really clear what the next steps were, and, all of a sudden, here we have a bill that is landed before us. I will be the last one to try to slow this down, but I think there is a gap here between what the department heard and then this step that is taken, without really indicating what kind of an approach the department is really taking on this. I think there may be a department from the original approach that was laid out in the air quality framework of a year ago, and I would recommend to the Minister that he provide an update that could perhaps be put on the website to let people know what the current approach is.

One matter that I am concerned about in the bill is the ability of the Minister to exempt persons or classes of persons from the act or the regulations. I think that raises some issues around what kind of

terms and conditions should be placed on that and what will motivate a Minister perhaps to exempt persons or classes of persons from the application of the act and the regulations, so I do have some general concerns with the principles of this bill, Mr. Speaker. I would urge the Minister to certainly inform the public about what is going on and how the Northwest Territories air quality Framework may have been modified or the approach that was suggested there may have been changed or modified in some way with this bill. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Bill 27 has had its second reading and is now referred to a committee. Second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act; Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Education Act; Bill 26, An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act, No. 2; Committee Report 10-18(2), Standing Committee on Social Development Report on the Review of Bill 16: An Act to Amend the Education Act Response to Report within 120 Days; Minister's Statement 186-18(2); Tabled Document 383-18(2), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2017-2018; Tabled Document 384-18(2), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2017-2018. With the authority given to me as Speaker by Motion 18-18(2), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider the business before the House, with the Member for Hay River North in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Committee would like to consider Minister's Statement 186-18(2); Bill 16: An Act to Amend the Education Act; Committee Report 10-18(2): Report on the Review of Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Education Act, in that order. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. First, a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have first agreed to consider Minister's Statement 186-18(2), Update on the A New Day program. Minister, do you have witnesses you wish to bring into the Chamber?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I do.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, please introduce your witnesses to the House.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my left is Leanne Gardiner, director of community justice and policing. To my right is Deputy Minister of Justice Martin Goldney.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I will open the floor to general comments. Do I have general comments on this tabled document? Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I will have a number of questions for the Minister about this new contracting relationship based on the fact that this is a non-profit organization that has not been a service provider of this kind in the past, and so I will have questions that relate to the qualifications of this service provider to provide the A New Day program.

I am also interested in finding out whether there have been changes to the RFP that was put out earlier and what those changes might be. I will also have some questions about attracting clients who are not offenders to the program. Of course, John Howard is related services for offenders, and so, those people who are not offenders and who are using the A New Day program, I do wonder if they will feel the stigma of using the program in that location. Finally, we know that there was a very rigorous evaluation of the initial program, but I have not heard very much about how the successor program will be monitored and evaluated. That will be the gist of my questions when the time comes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. The time is now if you would like to start asking those questions of the Minister.

MS. GREEN: Oh, I thought this was a time for general comments. Okay. Very good, then. My first question is: what are the qualifications of the "qualified counsellors" who are providing this program? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Perhaps Ms. Gardiner could assist with that.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you. What we asked for in the RFP and what we will continue to require from our contractor is counsellors with a counselling degree and several years' experience or equivalent, and that is what we will require our contractor to provide, as well, to contract with counsellors who are qualified to deliver this program, same as the program has done in the past.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Have you finished, Ms. Green?

MS. GREEN: No.

MR. O'REILLY: You should keep going.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Do you understand from this, then, that the John Howard Society is not providing the counselling itself but rather subcontracting the counselling, and, if subcontracting, then to whom? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, that's correct. The John Howard Society is in the process of contracting with counsellors. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. Do I understand that the John Howard Society will require the same qualifications of counsellors as in the original RFP? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, that's correct. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. The next question concerns the RFP that was let during the winter and received no takers. I understand there have been some negotiations to get to this point, so could the Minister tell us what changes have been made to

the RFP in order to secure the agreement announced today? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I understand there were not changes to the RFP, but perhaps Mr. Goldney could expand on my answer. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Recalling that what was offered was a request for proposals, it was always anticipated that proponents might come back with some potential options, always recognizing, of course, that it would have to be within the bounds of what we were looking for. I am happy to report that is where we ended up with the John Howard Society, so there hasn't been anything that I would describe as a change to the request for proposals.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. Could the Minister please outline, then, the program that will be undertaken by the John Howard Society? Is it the one that he most recently discussed with us, which is basically a group counselling program? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I understand that it's the same. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is it the Minister's intention to make the proposal in this case available to the standing committee and/or public? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We will have to examine the procurement guidelines to determine whether we are able to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. May I take that as a commitment that the Minister will undertake that examination? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I will undertake that examination.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My next question is about the evaluation and monitoring process for this contract. Could the Minister please describe how this program will be monitored and how it will be evaluated -- or not this program but the revamped program delivered by this contractor? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wonder if I could defer that question to Ms. Gardiner. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Currently, there is a logic model that was already developed for the pilot project. We are currently evaluating that based on our experiences and our lessons learned from the previous evaluation to make sure that the outcomes that we are measuring are appropriate and reflect what we have learned during the pilot. That logic model isn't complete as of yet, but we are expecting in the next few weeks to have that with the benefit of some expertise in program evaluation, and when we have a formal plan for when that evaluation will be, we can provide it. Other than that, we will have a structure in place in terms of reporting on statistics for the program. Part of the changes we made was in the administration of the program, and we recognized a need for additional information, and about participants' progress through the program, and that will be part of our evaluation outcomes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Recognizing the time, I will allow one more question. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My follow-up question is whether the Minister will be able to share that evaluation criteria, and at what point the program will be evaluated using it? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think I could be prepared to share that criteria. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I want to thank my colleague who asked some of the questions that I had here, but I just want to understand how this agreement was reached. This was the Department of Justice approaching John Howard directly. Is that how? Again, thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, after there were no responses, positive responses to the RFP, we did approach certain NGOs, and amongst those was the John Howard Society. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. The Minister's statement refers to an agreement with the John Howard Society. Is this like a letter of intent, or has an actual contract been signed? What's the status of this arrangement? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. An actual contract has been entered into. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I am not sure if my colleague from Yellowknife Centre asked this question or not, but can we actually get a copy of the contract that has been signed, then, even if it has to be provided on a confidential basis to the Regular MLAs? I would like to be able to compare that against what was called for in the RFP, and what the original New Day program was doing. Can he provide a copy of that contract on a confidential basis to the Regular MLAs? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert, to the contract?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you. I think I will need to speak to the procurement office before I make any obligations in that regard. I, myself, have not seen the contract. I'm not certain whether there are certain elements in it that are confidential or proprietary, so that's my answer. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. When does the Minister think he will be able to get back to the Regular MLAs on the availability on the contract being shared with us? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert,

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think I could commit to give the Members a response by the end of next week.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess I would hope for something a little bit quicker, but I will take the Minister's word. Can the Minister tell us how long this contract runs for? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I can advise that the contract runs until March 31, 2021. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Well, that is a lot longer than I would have expected to hear. Can the Minister tell us: is there any sort of probationary period or ability for the department to back out of this arrangement? Indeed, the contractor, if things are not going the way either party expected, is there an escape clause in the contract, and when would it be triggered, or could it be triggered? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert,

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am not aware of any escape clause. One of the things that NGOs generally want is a long period of the contract in length to last for a significant amount of time so they can have certainty in their plans going forward. Of course, contracts can be amended if both sides agree at any time, but I am not aware of any "out" clause but again, I have not seen the contract myself. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes I guess I will go on record as having expressing some concern about this. As I understand, the RFP was for a one-year term, and now this is, I guess for four years. That is a significant departure from what the RFP had called for. Does anybody have any explanation of how we went from a one-year to a four-year arrangement? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert,

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: As I mentioned earlier, NGOs such as the John Howard Society generally want the stability of a long-term contract, so that's why this period of time was agreed upon. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Did the department look at the option of actually reissuing the RFP for a longer period of time, or making other changes to the RFP rather than to enter into some sort of a negotiated arrangement? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert,

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes. Of course, with the RFP, we were always aware of constraints on time that we needed to have something in place by July 1st. There initially was, of course, no applicants to our RFP. We then went out to NGOs. We are speaking to the John Howard Society, and it was their wish should they decide to take this up, which they did, that they be given a lengthy contract so that they would have some certainty for the future. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Again, I will express some concern here that the Regular MLAs, we actually asked for the program to be reinstated for a full year, and the most the Minister would commit to was six months; and then, all of a sudden, it jumps from a one-year RFP to a four-year contract. That's a very significant change in course, so I will just leave it at that for now. The reason why I am going to ask this next question is, I understand, I have worked for NGOs. All of them sort of go through ups and downs over the years, but there have been some recent changes at the John Howard Society in terms of their leadership that might raise some issues around their capacity to deliver on a program like this. How can the Minister provide some reassurance that the minimum qualifications for this organization, or the ability to deliver on this, any minimum qualifications have been met, and that this organization actually has the capacity to deliver this very important program? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert,

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Chair. I certainly concur with Mr. O'Reilly's observations that this is a very important contract, which it is, and there are certainly terms in the contract which the John Howard Society must adhere to, failing which they

would be in breach of the contract. Now, the John Howard Society, I see some notes here, has been around for 150 years; not perhaps, delivering this exact type of program, but somewhat related program, so we do have some confidence in their ability to deliver, and should they fail to do so, they would be in breach of the contract. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. John Howard may have been around for 150 years, but how long have they been here in the Northwest Territories or, indeed, in Yellowknife? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I see from my notes here that they have been around since 1994 in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Recognizing the time, I will allow one more. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I do appreciate the time. Can the Minister's staff let us know whether the John Howard Society has ever delivered a program like this in the past? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Perhaps I could have Ms. Gardiner answer that question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The John Howard Society is responsible for the administration of the contract. They will have subcontracts with qualified counsellors whom we are working with in partnership with them. They are close to having those contracts in place. The staff member at the John Howard Society is not responsible for the actual delivery of the program. As we mentioned, qualified counsellors are required, the same as we required in the RFP process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank my colleagues for proposing the questions. Every time this is brought up in the House, the Minister states that minor changes were made to this program based on the evaluation report that was done. Right near the beginning of this report, it

recommends that consideration should be given to the fact that the program is more than a curriculum, and community outreach should be considered a part of any future program. The community outreach that has been happening at The Tree of Peace includes workshops at the North Slave Correctional Centre, I believe the only program available to those in remand. It has happened in adult education centres, with the YKDFN, the Salvation Army, the Bailey House, and more. In addition, there have been training sessions delivered to nurses in the Stanton Psychiatric Unit which the nurses seem to find quite useful.

However, as I understand it, the RFP states that program facilitators must strictly adhere to the curriculum as set out by the department, which excludes all of this community outreach. The evaluation report also states that some men are not well-suited for group counselling sessions, and future programs should include provisions for individual counselling based on A New Day's curriculum. Yet, as I understand it, in the new RFP, men who are not well-suited will be referred to outside counselling services, in stark contrast to this recommendation. The one recommendation that I did find that was followed was to break the program up into segments so that if you drop out partway through, you can get right back in without having to wait the 20 weeks.

The evaluation also stated that many of the individuals that they interviewed would not change the program the way it operated. Yet, we have a letter from the Coalition Against Family Violence which spent years developing the A New Day program tailored for the North, and this organization was made up of, the Government of the NWT was a part of it, Disabilities Council, Status of Women Council, Tree of Peace, Yellowknife Women's Society, White Ribbon Campaign, Alternatives North, Salvation Army, and the RCMP.

Most of the organizations I just mentioned sent a letter to the Minister on May 10th stating essentially that they have no faith that the program the way the department envisions it is going to be successful. They write, "It remains the position of the coalition that a successful program must be a community-based therapy program. The work with men who abuse must be ongoing while healing and treatment options that are designed to be flexible enough to address the actual needs of those who seek help from this program. As such, the new program design as described in the recently advertised RFP was met with a degree of surprise by members of the coalition. The new program design has some aspects that appear to us to be incompatible with program success and with continued widespread community support."

I ask the Minister: why was the coalition engaged in the first place if now their input is being disregarded? They are begging the department to, well, I will not say "begging." They would like the department to work with them to retool this program into something that they think would be successful. How do they know what is going to be successful? Well, they work with these people every day. They developed the first program. They are the people on the ground. It still boggles my mind that they are being completely ignored and left out of this process. It has been front page news that all the coalition members refused to bid on this RFP, because they felt so strongly that it was such a poor program. These are people who are dedicated to helping end family violence, and yet they were not willing to put their name behind a program that the department says is going to do that.

I do not want to use unparliamentary language, but there is some arrogance from the department on this, I find, and I am at loss. Why will the department not work with these people who have years, decades, hundreds of years between them, of experience in this field? Maybe I will start there with questions. Why did the department flat out refuse to work with the coalition or coalition members to come up with a program design that would be palatable, at the very least, to the coalition? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you. I am going to refer that question, if I may, to Martin Goldney, my deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and there is a lot to unpack there. I am going to do my best, but I certainly would welcome follow-up questions as well. First, I think I have to challenge the notion that the department was unwilling to work with the coalition. I think we are very appreciative of our community partners, but I think there might be a bit of a disconnect. We do commend our community partners for their commitment to addressing this issue, but I think where there might be a bit of a disconnect is in the department's recognition that this is not a program that will fix all family violence issues or even is appropriate for all offenders and men who use violence in their intimate relationships. It is a program that is very specific, is designed for men of a certain risk profile, and cannot be the solution to all of our family violence programs or issues. It is not a one size fits all solution.

I think what we hear our partners saying is they are looking for additional supports and additional avenues to address all aspects of family violence, and we agree. We are happy to work with any community partner with a proposal that could be complimentary and that could tackle some of these related issues perhaps in another way, perhaps for a different segment of the population with a different risk profile. But when we talk about A New Day, when the department talks about A New Day, it is talking about that very specific curriculum and very specific program, and our challenge was really to do the best we can with that program and the resources that we have available.

I would suggest we did not make any significant changes apart from focusing the administration to make sure that we get the best results possible, and we did look at the evaluation very carefully. We are also informed by our experience delivering the program and looked at what needed to be improved. Clearly, we recognize that outreach is one component, but if you look at the number of men who were made aware of the program, very few actually enrolled in the program and made the commitment to do the work required. We think, frankly, there are better ways to connect men with the services that they need. That tells us that a very small number of the men who were made aware of the program felt it was the appropriate program for them or maybe they were not ready at that time. The new program designed does offer the opportunity in that structured assessment phase to connect people with different supports, and we hope that leads to improved outcomes.

Certainly, one of the biggest changes was that modularity, that flexibility to recognize that we need to deliver it in a more flexible model, so we did focus on that change. As I mentioned, we are very willing to work with community partners. I think there has been some disappointment expressed that the department didn't go to the coalition to discuss the changes. I think it has to be appreciated, at the balance, the need for and the potential benefit for further input, with the reality that we had a pretty clear understanding of what changes needed to be made. Again, we are not saying this is the program that is going to fix everything. We do recognize that there are going to be continued conversations required, but we also had to balance the need to have a fair procurement process, as well. It wouldn't have been appropriate for us to talk about things that would show up in an RFP, which is a select group of organizations recognizing that that might create some unfairness to other potential proponents who aren't members of that organization. I think it is also fair to note that not every member of the coalition supported that letter. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. The time allowed is up. I will move Mr. Simpson further down. We only had one question, one answer during that time period. We will move on to the next. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I just wanted to take an opportunity to seek some clarity and understanding and ultimately seek reassurance that the spirit and intent of this program has not been affected. My understanding, with the previous speaker recalling Mr. Simpson, stated very clearly that vision that the groups had in terms of coming together, in terms of trying to address the very big issue of family violence in NWT. The program that was conceived, developed, and established was operating ineffectively and unsuccessfully, from my understanding.

The recent meetings with some of the people who work on the front lines, I was very disappointed that the program had tanked and, in a sense, it is demoralizing that perhaps the initial vision of the program has dramatically changed. I understand the sense for keeping programs and funding resources in the stream of being uncomfortable, but it shouldn't be systemized so much where it becomes very stringent. It discourages people from taking a step to seeking help.

From my understanding, that is what it was and that is what it came to be. After its assessment evaluations, there are some recommendations and changes that were implemented. It went to RFP, and a lot of the groups that could have perhaps put their name forward were discouraged. I was deeply disappointed to see, perhaps, just the diminishing of the program when it was first originally started. What I am seeking from the Minister is if he could explain this question that was asked. I want to understand and seek some reassurances that the original vision of A New Day, with input from, as an example, the Coalition of Family Violence. A lot of the NGO organizations have played a hand in developing the initial vision. They know the philosophy behind that. I wanted to have the Minister explain: are those features still intact as we go forward with entering a new stage with the John Howard Society? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I want to make it clear that the A New Day program, the group's therapy model, and the basic curriculum is not changing. That will stay the same. What is changing is some of the administration around the program, the flexibility which has already been mentioned today, so that men might be able to rejoin more easily. Efforts are going to be made to make more facilitators. We also think that, should

the program work out well, which we are confident of, that the new slightly changed model will enable us to take it outside of Yellowknife to other communities, where this type of program is also badly needed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I think the Minister answered my second question. It was whether the terms would outline the possibility of building upon the successes of the A New Day program to see if there are opportunities for outreach. It has been pointed out that sometimes people, especially men, can't access the program because they are incarcerated.

There should be some efforts made to try to see if they could have an established program, as an example, the North Slave Correctional Centre and, at the same time, looking within the possibility of maybe, in the long term, seeing if this program could be expanded in one or two communities. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I may have mentioned earlier, this of course is a program for men who are not in custody, but there are certain programs they can access in the custodial setting. However, we are hoping to have better connections with probation services. Perhaps those who have been in custody and are released, in completing their sentence, may be able to access the program more easily. Again, as I mentioned, in the future, should the program work out well, which we are certainly hoping for, we may be able to expand it to communities outside of Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I see nothing further from Mr. Nadli. Next item, Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Minister, in his statement this morning, the statement we are discussing right now, seeks cooperation and support of all Members of this Legislative Assembly to move forward. I think that has been a challenging proposition for many of us. The merits of this program are undeniable. I have a few questions. I would like to thank my honourable friends on this side of the House for canvassing well the concerns of both the community and honourable Members on the many questions that they are still waiting on for this program.

The Minister said that all counsellors will be properly trained. We have had a brief discussion about that training, but does this new contract

include a training component, and is the John Howard Society charged with delivering that training? What competencies exist around that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. The Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am wondering if I could have Ms. Gardiner answer that question. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The contract with the John Howard Society doesn't explicitly lay out what additional requirements for training on top of the minimum requirements to meet, as we have done with the pilot program, and as was made clear on the RFP document is the level of cooperation with our department to make sure that any opportunities available for professional development are met and there's a requirement in the contract that counsellors do maintain a minimum level of professional development hours. It's our intention as we've done previously to work with the contractor to make sure that those opportunities - and from our division, for example, we have many opportunities with our community justice coordinators providing training for those coordinators and victim services workers, as well as upcoming through the family information liaison office - that training opportunities that are appropriate for many of these service providers and they would be included in that. Our intention is to continue that and provide whatever support we can to make sure that the counsellors are receiving the support they need as well as of course as the requirement for the clinical supervision. It still exists for this program which would provide additional support in that way as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Does that mean that additional training spaces will be opened up for these counsellors or will they be competing with existing public service employees? I say this because I know some of these training opportunities are quite limited and I'd like the Minister to give a commitment then that the department will make these opportunities available and provide additional resources if required. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you for your answer to at least a portion of that question. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Pardon me. I'm sorry, Minister. Can you please repeat that?

MR. GOLDNEY: I'd ask Ms. Gardiner to answer that question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There will be no competition for spots. The training needs are similar and we will be including those opportunities for all of those service providers that we're connected to, so it will not be a competition. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that response. The Minister acknowledged the community partners that the honourable Member for Hay River North brought up in his line of questions and further recognizes the hard work done by the clients to heal themselves, but at the same time we know that the RFP was not taken up; that it was a rejection of that by those community partners and that as much as we, the Minister, has given kudos to these individuals who have worked hard to rehabilitate themselves is the recognition that only a small number of men. The message is a bit confusing, but does the Minister, does this new deal, is this new deal going to take those considerations into account? How are we going to be continuing to work with community partners and ensure they have input in the future. I want to make sure we're not just paying lip service, political lip service, to people who are benefiting from this program and we're actually showing real support and we are listening to our grass roots when they deliver things. I know this question has already somewhat been posed, I'd like if the Minister can answer this rather than the department officials. I think they've already well explained the department's position, but I'd like to know how the Minister is going to ensure that the viewpoints of clients and of these groups are well connected to this program on an ongoing basis. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister. The Member requested that you answer. Of course, you are under no obligation. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, of course, we are always hoping to work with community organizations. We are, of course, always interested in hearing what the clients have to say. The whole point of this exercise is to review the, the very expensive review, that took place, that was tabled in the House in November was to the effect that not

that the program was broken in any way but that it could be improved. Ultimately, that improvement is for the clients. We're hoping as we move forward the program having become more flexible that we will be able to better serve those clients that wish to avail themselves to the A New Day program and that we're optimistic that will take place. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm not sure if the Minister addressed my concerns about working with the community service providers, but I'll leave that alone for now. My final question is the concerns from the department about this program have always been on an administrative basis. I appreciate the program is more flexible, but these admin, and we just heard that the John Howard Society will be administering the program but not actually operating it. They'll be doing that through subcontractors. Why is it the GNWT then not just subcontractors are handling the administration itself? Why do we need that third-party step? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Perhaps Mr. Goldney could answer that question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Certainly, as the program evolves, we do anticipate and do hope that there will be opportunities to build capacities with other facilitators. The reason the John Howard Society and an NGO was selected was because we did recognize there is some value and we have heard this from NGOs of having a bit of distance from government and having an independent storefront-type scenario available to make it less onerous or less intimidating for prospective clients. We did hear that concern. Moving forward though, we might look at other options that might see the government taking more of a direct role. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: On that point the intention of this move is to have that separation with government to create a more client-friendly atmosphere. The previous operators of this program had very good relationships with our many, many clients. I may not have heard the response to this question that has been asked, but what is being done to retain their expertise for the nationally recognized program they developed? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Well, the previous providers were not interested in bidding or continuing with the contract, so that was their choice to take that path. It was necessary for us to look to other NGOs. I can't advise, however, that there will be, of course, government observation and monitoring of this and also the coordinator will be in-house in the government. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart. There's nothing further from Mr. Testart. Next, I have Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you Mr. Chair. I'm going to try to narrow down my questions because my colleagues have provided a number of good comments and questions. I guess my first concern is did not this, the coalition work with the original RFP and then what I've heard from the Minister is something, was different. Can you explain why the department works with the coalition to come up with RFP but then we end up in this situation? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Perhaps Ms. Gardiner could assist.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll do my best to answer what I think your question is. The original program design, when it was established in 2011, was developed with a committee of some coalition members and government as well as community subject matter experts. The curriculum and the approach was established through that group and then a request for proposals for the program as designed, which was broader in nature than what we've gone with for the long-term program model. It was a different situation in that case in that it was up to proponents to provide a proposal that encompassed the entire program.

In this case, the RFP was based on one segment of the program delivery, in a modular way, if you will. The balance that we tried to strike was understanding that we knew we had significant interest from members of the coalition and other community members, as well as potentially members of the private sector or other community members such as elders, who may not be associated with any official organization. That RFP was designed in that way to make sure that all of those different groups would be encouraged to provide these services, so that we had the ability to provide that depth across the board.

What we did was try to balance making sure that RFP process was fair, so that we were not giving information to one group of potential proponents over another, as well as getting information from our community partners, in which coalition members were quite involved and consulted by the third-party evaluators. We took that into consideration, as well as the lessons learned from the delivery and the operation of the program. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Thanks for the answer. I guess, to me, red flags. You want to learn something? You had nobody from the coalition apply for this. That, to me, is a big red flag. Have you guys taken this as an opportunity to learn something from this? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Well, we were disappointed when we did not receive a response to our RFP from the Tree of Peace or from other possible providers. Therefore, it was necessary to seek other avenues to make sure that this very important program would continue to be delivered. Therefore, we went out to NGOs that we thought would have the capacity to deal with this type of contract. Ultimately, the John Howard Society stepped forward, and that is how they ended up with the contract. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Minister did not answer my question, so I guess four years from now we will probably be in the same boat. It is unfortunate because we could have learned something from it. I guess I will go to my next question. What was the government's response to the coalition letter dated May 10th? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: We did receive the letter. However, we found it absolutely necessary that we move ahead. As mentioned earlier, there was a very extensive report done on the program. It did suggest several changes that we did not see as terribly significant to the overall program. At that point, obviously, there were parties that were not particularly happy with the new RFP, including the previous provider. Therefore, to make sure that the program would still be delivered, we looked to other NGOs, and as I said earlier, the John Howard

Society, an organization that has existed in Canada for 150 years, stepped forward. We now have a contract with them, and we are optimistic as we move forward. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for the 150 years update. It was very important to hear that I think for the third or fourth time here. I now understand that John Howard Society is 150 years old. It has been in the Northwest Territories for 23 years. Thank you very much. However, I guess my big concern is you went out, talked to his organization, and gave them from a one-year term to a four-year term. You did not follow the same process given out to everybody else. To me, I am not worried about John Howard Society so much as the process. You basically said to the coalition that you have heard what they said, but I don't know if you listened to them. Listening to them is different than being heard. Heard, you can sit there and nod your head; listening to them is actually listening to their concerns and making a decision that benefits all parties. It is a win-win. It is a negotiation process. It is a big concern for me.

Let's move away from the society and that. Let's go to your logic model, the evaluation. Now, the department has had a long period of time to come up with an evaluation tool. Now, we still do not have an evaluation tool in place. Will the department get an evaluation tool done right away, so that it is not after the fact, it is not a year down the road, but will be done right away, so that you can see if this program or this process that you're talking about works? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, we would like to think that our decisions are evidence-based. After all, we did go out and commissioned a very extensive report on this program, which suggested certain changes, which after a good deal of consideration, were incorporated into the new RFP. We then went out, and unfortunately, there were not any bidders. Therefore, we had to look further afield to make sure the program continues. As to evaluating the program, of course we will be evaluating the program, and perhaps I could have Ms. Gardiner expand on my answer. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to clarify that we do have an existing logic model. What we are hoping to do is improve upon it based on our experiences so far, and that is the intention

for further program evaluation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister and Ms. Gardiner for the answer. Having a logic model and actually implementing something and knowing what you're looking for? It is great that you have a logic model, but you do not have an evaluation tool in place. You've developed this program. You've developed this RFP. Now, you are sitting here talking about how you are going to develop an evaluation process. If you are going to do something, you should have an evaluation process set in place before you implement this. You guys have been working on it, so it is a concern. I understand you have a logic model. My last question, because the time is running out, is there significant cost, yearly cost to this program, from what we originally proposed to the RFP? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. I request that the Minister keep his answer brief, as we are running short on time. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member is quite correct. Time is running out, and that is why it was necessary for us to move quickly on this. There is an evaluation process, and we are confident that the provider will live up to expectations. If they do not, then would be in breach of the contract. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I will allow you perhaps to answer the question briefly. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: There are no additional costs. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Time has expired for Mr. Thompson. Next, I have Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a few points or a few questions that I would like to ask. First, maybe I will just ask some of the basic questions that I understood about the program previously that I just want to make sure are going to still be in place. One is that I understood to some degree that the program was available in the past to those that were in remand. Is it going to be available to those in remand? I am not talking about those who have been sentenced, but those who are awaiting sentencing. Is this program going to be available to those in remand?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, this program is not going to be available to those either serving sentences or in remand. After all, they are both in custody, and in fact, the program was never meant for those groups. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you. Will the program be available to those that are just simply seeking healing? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Definitely. That it is one of the groups that is targeted for this program. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Like it was previously, will partners of men seeking healing, their spouses or common-laws or even family members, be able to attend counselling as well? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I would like to have Ms. Gardiner assist with this question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Absolutely, the connection of victims of domestic violence to supports that are right for them and designed for them is a key focus of the program. It remains that way. That will continue in this case, that, with the appropriate privacy policies and approaches in mind, those services and those people will absolutely be connected to services designed for them and meant for them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Okay, thank you. Those are good answers. Mr. Chair, I just wonder, we know that there are a variety of programs that are available to those who are incarcerated, that have been sentenced. We know that there is limited access to programs to those who are in remand. Is there a men's healing program available of some sort to those who are in remand currently? If there is not, why would they not be eligible to access this men's healing program? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Certainly, Mr. Chair, there are such programs available, but, if I could let Mr. Goldney expand on that.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There are definitely programs available. The challenge, of course, with remanded inmates it is often difficult to schedule them in those programs. The department has been working, as have other jurisdictions that are facing this challenge, trying to find modular programming that can benefit so remanded inmates can participate in, so we certainly are working in that direction to provide various programs. With respect to the A New Day program specifically, though, I think we have to recognize it is a group program that is not well-suited to be delivered within institutions and, in fact, it never has been delivered in the institutions. But, certainly, we do anticipate greater connections with inmates as they transition out of the institutions, through correction staff and probation staff, to certainly make individuals that might be well-suited to that program offering to be connected with it. Then, hopefully, they will make a choice to further their healing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the reply. I guess, then, an important question that I would have is: we have those who have gone through incarceration and who are now on probation, and those folks would be eligible, I take it, to access the A New Day. What certainty do individuals, men, in that situation receiving counselling have to be sure that what they may reveal, let's say, to a counsellor is not kind of held against them, those in particular that are in probation?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, of course, the discussions with the counsellors would be confidential, so we are not anticipating that would be a problem. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Those were the questions I had around the programming aspects, but now I just want to talk a little bit again about the administrative aspects and, call it, the RFP. I don't think I have heard anything today that

suggests that changes to, you know, we are saying changes, there were minimal changes to the programming. There were more changes administratively, but, from what I am hearing today when you talk about more flexibility, potentially more facilitators, the ability to potentially move it outside of Yellowknife and maybe even into a model that could be used in remand, these do not seem to be administrative aspects that I find daunting, that maybe any other NGO of which have been around Yellowknife for many a year, who have probably provided similar types of services, in fact, administratively. I am just challenged to understand how it was that this particular NGO had the administrative capacity that others seemingly did not. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think it was more a question of interest than capacity. When we went out for the RFP, there were some pre-RFP meetings to which there were at least several NGOs attending, and we were expecting bids, if I can put it that way. However, none came forward, and that is at that point we started searching further afield. The John Howard Society appeared to be a good fit, and we believe they will be. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think this has been touched on before in a broader scope as it relates to the coalition, but did any individual NGOs outline to you the reasons why they would not have submitted to the RFP and some of the potential challenges that they might have faced? Did you get any feedback from individual NGOs in that regard? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I did not receive any direct feedback, so I am going to defer the question to Mr. Goldney, if I may.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think what we heard from NGOs was simply that they were not interested in the program as it was redesigned, and they were not specific in their concerns. You know, I would only be speculating, so I would have to be careful not to do that, but I might suggest some might have preferred that there were not any changes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the interest of time, just one last question. It seems to me now we are going to have an administrative component and a deliverable component, and the deliverable component is going to be coming from subcontractors that are qualified, and the administrative component seemingly is coming from the local NGO. What percentage of the contract, if you can reveal that, is going to, in this instance, John Howard Society for the administrative aspects? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Time has expired, but I will allow the Minister to concisely and briefly answer the question.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I don't have that information before me, but perhaps Mr. Goldney might be able to help. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Unfortunately, we do not have those details yet. A lot will depend on the NGO's discussions with perspective facilitators and the arrangements that they make with those facilitators, so we just do not have that information yet. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Next on my list I have Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Adding to the already-spoken questions here and as my previous colleague said, you are going to have an administrative component and the subcontractor component. I found the former employees very sincere. Has there been employment extended to those former employees of the old A New Day care program? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I am not certain if I understand the question. Of course, the John Howard Society will be making its own arrangements as to whether the Tree of Peace wishes to employ these people as contractors. This is really up to the Tree of Peace, and I have no information as to whether that might be something of interest to them. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Will the Minister provide that information to confirm whether

employment has been extended, and if the particular two employees are going to accept the invitation? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. I am not sure if that is something that the Minister can do. It is related to a third party, but I will let the Minister respond.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I have no ability to do that. As to the future employment of the employees who were mentioned in the question, that would really be up to them and the Tree of Peace. I have no information or no ability to have any effect on that relationship. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Minister had mentioned here earlier that this A New Day program was not being implemented at the YCI or YCC. I think it was, and maybe you should revisit my suggestions to revisit hosting that program with the offenders' community in the areas of reintegration back into the system, in rehabilitation courses, for the reason being it supports an outline in the Auditor General's report that nothing is being done in that area to offer services of rehabilitation and reintegration in that report. I am suggesting to the Minister to take that into account, if he would. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. The Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Such a change would be an almost complete change in the program, which is meant for those not in custody, either serving prisoners or on remand. Now, that is not to say there are not programs to assist those who are in custody. There are such programs, but they have a different focus. The whole point of this program was to assist those not in custody. There are programs for those in custody, and programs for those not in custody. I imagine it would be very difficult to integrate those two programs and, in fact, that is not what A New Day is all about. It is voluntary for men who have issues with their relationships, and it is meant for those not in custody. Again, there are programs for those in custody, presently either on remand or serving prisoners. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Let me reword that. My question is: if an offender was incarcerated for family violence as the program is intended for, would the Minister entertain the idea of targeting those with family violence as clients, who have offended in the

area of family violence, for counselling and rehabilitation? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. The Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: This program is for those who may be offenders in the sense they have committed assaults and so on, but it is not meant for those actually in custody or on remand, of course, which is also in custody. This program is very directed to those not in custody, who are there voluntarily. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: My closing comment is it seems that a decision was made, and there is really no value to provide sound suggestions because that is where it is going to stop. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Would the Minister like to respond?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I don't want anybody to think that a decision was made irrationally. After all, we went out for an evaluation report. This matter has been brought up several times in the House, so there is a very careful evaluation prepared. On the basis of that evaluation, an RFP was issued. There were no responses. We then went out to NGOs, so I am quite confident that we have conducted this whole process properly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Anything further, Mr. McNeely? Nothing further from Mr. McNeely. I have no one further on my list. Thank you three for this discussion. Does committee now agree that we consider Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Education Act?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Minister's Statement 186-18(2) will stay on the order papers. Minister, thank you to you and your witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, you may escort the witnesses from the Chamber. Minister, you may return to your seat. Thank you, committee. We will move on to Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Education Act, as agreed. I will ask the Minister responsible for the bill to introduce it. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am pleased to be here today to introduce Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Education Act. This bill seeks to change the age of entitlement to access kindergarten programs from five years old to four, as well as reduce the minimum hours of instruction required to 945 hours for grades 1 through 12.

The goal of these two major initiatives, also known as junior kindergarten and STIP, is to improve the NWT education system for all learners so that they can meet the challenges of today and into the future, and be successful in whatever they choose to do. Junior kindergarten will provide all NWT families, regardless of their income or geographic location, the option of enrolling their four-year-old children in a free, play-based, developmentally appropriate program. As this Legislative Assembly has recognized, early childhood development is critical to a child's future success, and there is a direct link between the quality of early education and care and positive future outcomes.

We also recognize that we need to provide teachers with time to plan and develop their own learning. This government knows that in order to improve our students' academic results, we not only need JK offered in every community, we also need our teachers to have time, during their regular work week and school year, to develop their skills and properly plan, implement, and assess their students' learning. In order to improve student outcomes, we must ensure educators have access to the experiences, resources, training, and professional development to improve their workload and wellness situations, so they can focus on excellence in teaching. This is what the Strengthening Teacher Instructional Practices initiative is all about.

Before the end of this school year, I will provide the Standing Committee on Social Development with a complete monitoring, evaluation, and accountability framework for the STIP pilot project, where we anticipate seeing improvements in:

- teacher satisfaction through pre- and post-school year surveys;
- teacher human resource statistics, such as sick days;
- use of professional development time;
- student attendance; and
- student course completions.

Significant change will take time, and the evaluation will likely evolve as schools try new approaches with their school calendars. As such, the evaluation plan will include a reporting schedule outlining the appropriate measures, as the initiative evolves over time. I want to reiterate that I believe the territory-wide implementation of junior kindergarten and the opportunity to build in time during the school year for teachers to complete their professional duties and strengthen the quality of instructional practices will be game changers. I strongly believe that, in years to come, we will look back at this moment in

time to these two strategic initiatives and see them as a vital step on the road to success for our young children, our youth, and our territory. I will be happy to answer any questions Members may have. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister Moses. I will note that the committee, the Standing Committee on Social Development presented a substantive report, Committee Report 10-18(2), in relation to this bill. Now, Minister, do you have witnesses you would like to bring to the Chamber?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Yes, I do.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister, Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses to the House.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: To my right, I have my assistant deputy minister of Education and Culture, Ms. Rita Mueller, and Mr. Michael Reddy with our legislative division. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Welcome to the witnesses. I will now open the floor to general comments on Bill 16, and committee, please keep in mind that we will also be discussing the report prepared by the standing committee as well, so please keep any general comments to the scope of the bill. Do we have general comments? Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My general comments are going to be short and brief. We went out and went to three communities. We have heard over 237 responses through e-mails and letters. Committee provided and listened to what people and teachers and administrators said. We are making two recommendations here to the floor to make a decision to amend the bill, and at that time, we will discuss those. I will have further comments during those amendments. I would like to thank everybody for their commitment and hard work to this. It was very interesting and very challenging. We would like to thank all the presenters, and all the work that they did to provide us. Their feedback, the union, the teachers, and all the parents and all that. It was a very difficult decision. I understand this is near and dear to people's hearts, our youth. It is near and dear to me. Bill 16, as we move forward, we do have amendments that we wish to bring to the floor at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. General comments to the bill? Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. First, I would like to acknowledge the work of the Honourable

Members of the Standing Committee on Social Development. They spent a tremendous amount of time making sure this legislation and the public interest, and it was well-represented through their deliberations, and ultimately, through the substantive report that they created and read into the House earlier this week. This act will bring both junior kindergarten into the NWT curriculum, and reduce the number of instructional hours required by law. Those are the most significant portions of it.

It has been a hot topic of debate in our 33 communities. Many different viewpoints rising to the forefront. Ultimately, junior kindergarten has largely been well understood by the public. The strengthening instructional teacher practices, the STIP pilot, is somewhat of a new development for many people although we have been discussing it for several months. To be clear, I think our teachers are world class, and they work in very difficult circumstances here in the North. Given the limited resources that we have at our means, providing them with the flexibility to do their jobs to the best of their ability, I think is a very good policy decision.

I do acknowledge the concerns that the Standing Committee on Social Development has brought forward, and I appreciate what they have set out in their report and the recommendations they have made, and I look forward to debating their proposed amendments later on today. I would like to keep an open mind on legislation. I certainly do support the intentions of this bill, but if there are ways to make it better, I am open to considering those. But I do want to say, I strongly support the hardworking teachers of Kam Lake and all of our communities, and I am very pleased to see that we are working on solutions to the challenges they face every day as they are educating our students and supporting our families. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Next, we have Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, when we had our hearing in Yellowknife, the executive director of the NWTTA said that the status quo in education was not the answer to where we are in terms of student achievement and teacher wellness. I agree with that. I agree with that statement. We need to improve student outcomes in every grade, not only in graduation. The process of getting to the point we are at now, reporting on this bill has been made unnecessarily difficult by poor communication by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

In the case of JK, the standing committee and our colleagues on this side have worked very hard to ensure that full funding for junior kindergarten is, in fact, full funding. That was not given proactively. It was something that had to be wrangled about, and I

think that we do have some good results. But this is a perfect example of what my grandmother would have said was "penny wise and pound foolish." This could have been a good news story right from the beginning if adequate resources had been pledged willingly and proactively instead of being extracted an inch at a time. Likewise, with the Strengthening Teacher Instructional Practices, this also could have been a good news story but it was not because once again, the major problem with this is that there are not enough teachers in our school system, and the teachers who are there now are too hard-pressed to do anymore, a point which I heard repeatedly, and which I do not doubt at all. But rather than providing a proactive approach from a communications point of view, the Minister left it to the standing committee to explain this initiative to incredulous parents and to supportive teachers. As a result, once again, we have ended up wrangling right up until today about amendments and about support for the bill itself. If there is a takeaway from this entire process, it is that communication between the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, and its stakeholders, and that includes parents, students, teachers, Regular MLAs, needs to be improved. We are not your last thought. We need to be your first thought, and that is not what I am seeing here, and the process has been made unduly difficult as a result. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Would the Minister like to respond?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think communication is an issue that we need to work on, but it also needs to be addressed through partnerships with our education authorities working with our board chairs to ensure that this message gets out to teachers. I did attend some of the public hearings as well as constituency meetings where we had parents who were just getting this information presented to them. However, I know some of our education authorities did reach out as well, including us, and we did try to get the communication on the radio and in the newspapers, get it out as much as we can to get feedback from parents and other stakeholders, but I do appreciate the Member's comments, from all three Members who have made comments so far. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Next, we have Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. First off, I want to thank the Standing Committee on Social Development for their exceptional work on Bill 16. I had the privilege of sitting in on many of their meetings. I also want to thank all of the people who participated in that review. My remarks, I am going to focus on a little bit on STIP, and then I will have some remarks about junior kindergarten towards

the end, as well. On the surface, this bill looks like it is small changes, but it has proven to be very challenging to get clear responses and information from the Minister and his department. This uncertainty has often given the appearance of setting teachers' interests against those of parents and created tremendous confusion. I have probably received more e-mails and calls on this bill compared to any of other matters during my term as an MLA.

A few key points I want to make about STIP: a huge amount of collaboration work went into the education renewal initiative as the way to transform our educational system to better meet the changing needs of our students while recognizing the critical role of teachers and their wellness, but changes in instructional hours was not a recommendation coming out of the education renewal initiative. I fully recognize the key role played by teachers as we raised two children here, in Yellowknife, and very much value the commitment of teachers here and across the Northwest Territories. Changes in instructional hours came out of the collective bargaining process as a means to relieve the pressure felt by overworked teachers and to ensure that they are treated fairly compared to other jurisdictions in Canada.

While I believe in and support collective bargaining, Regular MLAs had no idea as to what mandate was provided to GNWT negotiators assigned to the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association contract. This negotiating mandate was clearly driven by Cabinet's fiscal strategy and their desire to set a pattern for future negotiations with the Union of Northern Workers. The NWTTA president went on the public record saying that there was no offer in terms of salary increases, so something else had to be done to get an agreement that teachers would accept. Once again, Cabinet's fiscal strategy was the driving force behind those negotiations, a strategy that has been rejected numerous times by Regular MLAs.

So what are the lessons we can learn from this? Number one, Regular MLAs have to pay much closer attention to what Cabinet is negotiating. I am not asking to be at the negotiating table, but Cabinet needs to share its approach and seek input from the Regular MLAs. That has yet to happen. I have asked for a briefing on the UNW negotiations. The Finance Minister made a commitment to do that during our winter review of the 2017-2018 budget, but it still has not taken place. Number two, as a government, we need to invest a lot more into education to improve student outcomes and teacher wellness by hiring more teachers and other measures. Children should be amongst our highest priorities and, yes, even higher than building roads to resources. Three, ECE needs to get back to the education renewal initiative as the real path to

educational changes. The train wrecks of junior kindergarten implementation and STIP resulted from very poor and often contradictory communications from ECE and a lack of leadership. Junior kindergarten and STIP have diverted an enormous amount of capacity away from the changes that everyone had agreed to make in the education renewal initiative.

To be clear, I believe our teachers are overworked and should be treated fairly. One option is a reduction in instructional hours, but another solution could be to hire more teachers and classroom assistants and other changes. Unfortunately, the bill does not address other options and has not provided an opportunity to fully explore all these options. I want to turn quickly to the junior kindergarten portion of the bill. Everyone would agree, in an ideal world, that junior kindergarten is inherently a good thing, but the implementation has been fraught with poor communications and shifting responses. Junior kindergarten implementation has consumed an inordinate amount of political time and capital. It is beyond me how a policy analysis could have gone forward without considering financial impacts on busing, inclusive schooling, Aboriginal programming and other costs, or the impact on childcare space providers. No matter what the Minister has said, it is clearly not fully funded when it comes to inclusive schooling, Aboriginal programming, and busing.

Yesterday, we received the formula that ECE uses for funding schools, and we now have that information, finally, but it is not where it should be. I will continue to push the Minister very hard on these matters until there are clear and unequivocal commitments to fully fund these aspects of junior kindergarten implementation. I recognize that some of the words I have said are pretty harsh, but, I am sorry, I am going to call it the way it is. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Next, Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. First, like speakers previous, I want to commend the Standing Committee on Social Development for their extensive work on this bill and thank them for taking this legislation on the road to seek very important input from the public. I also want to acknowledge the many residents of Yellowknife North, in particular parents, that took the time to share their views and opinions with me over the past couple of months. I also want to thank the many teachers, many of them from Yellowknife North, who wrote to me sharing their work experience and perspective on Bill 16. I would be remiss if I didn't thank the Minister and his staff for attending my recent Yellowknife North constituency meeting, as well as representatives from the NWT

Teachers' Association for coming and sharing valuable information so constituents could be better informed on this matter. Lastly, I want to thank Yellowknife school districts and their boards for their valuable insight, as well.

Mr. Chair, one of the most important jobs we have as a government is the education of our youth. Our education system is where we place our trust to raise healthy, well-adjusted, capable children, ready to take on the world and become integral contributors to society. It is a sacred duty we have to the children and families of the Northwest Territories and, indeed, our future. As an advocate for education, I am also a staunch supporter of teachers, and therefore I am strongly in support of the Strengthening Teacher Instructional Practices, or STIP, program. We have bestowed a great many responsibilities on our teachers over the years, and we have high expectations of them, and those responsibilities and expectations never cease. In fact, they continually grow.

While the STIP program does reduce the minimum required classroom hours, this does not mean teachers would get more time away from work. Instead, STIP refocuses teachers' hours and school resources to provide enhanced support for teachers and more dedicated time for non-instructional responsibilities. Under the STIP program, they will have more time for planning, strengthening and improving their skills, and professional collaboration and development. They will be able to form and participate in professional learning communities to build on experience and shared knowledge. Emphasizing these things will result in better quality education for our kids. Teachers will be at less risk of high stress, unmanageable workloads, and burnout. As has been said many times in this discussion, teachers who carry an unreasonable workload and can't manage a healthy work-life balance won't be good resources for our kids in the long term.

We know teacher absenteeism and high turnover have been a major concern over the years. I believe we must remain committed to education renewal, in which we have clearly stated that the teacher-student relationship will be positive and healthy while maintaining a safe learning environment. Mr. Chair, as a child, I was challenged with a learning disability, dyslexia. I believe that, as a youth facing this challenge, my time with teachers was better served through quality time and not necessarily a large quantity of time. I would emphasize in this context that Bill 16 permits a reduction in the minimum hours of classroom time, but teachers, administration, and boards will have the discretion to exceed that minimum to provide students with the support they deem necessary.

As has been articulated by many, we must support our teachers, and I believe that to be true if we want to see results. Teachers have the most profound influence on the educational success enjoyed by children. I want to state clearly that I am committed not only to the betterment of education but also to the ongoing development, skill, and proficiency of teachers. By supporting our teachers, we will ultimately be offering the most support and benefit to the ongoing success and wellbeing of our children. We should emphasize, as the Minister noted in his comments earlier, that the Minister has made a commitment to provide a monitoring, evaluation, and accountability plan to the Standing Committee on Social Development before the end of this school year.

The other important element of Bill 16 is the introduction of junior kindergarten. The government has committed to fully funding junior kindergarten, and this is a positive step forward. The Minister's commitment to maintain a pupil-to-teacher ratio of 12 to 1 or better is also significant. These achievements are to be commended. However, to be clear, Members have wrestled with the question of what "full funding" truly means. The department has acknowledged that its funding formulas determine the allocations, but not those allocations adequately. To implement junior kindergarten, funding for inclusive schooling will need to be stretched over an additional grade. The Standing Committee's report indicates that territorial board chairs have already flagged funding as inadequate and in continued decline. These chairs called for funding to be restored to 2012 levels.

We also need to make sure that the transportation requirements of JK are adequately funded. The Minister has made the commitment to monitor the transportation costs and seek additional funding if necessary. I think it's important that we commit full funding to all aspects of JK. To that end, if necessary, I will be seeking to confirm adequate funding in the forthcoming 2017-2018 budget deliberations. In conclusion, Mr. Chair, the education of our young people is a crucial and sacred job. Central to our goal of creating a stable, healthy, and prosperous future for all our citizens, support for our teachers in whom we placed our trust for that mission is an essential part of achieving that goal. Just lastly, Mr. Chair, before final support, I look forward to considering my colleague's amendments and those are my general comments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Next I have Mr. Nakimayak.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I won't take up too much time. I know there's a lot of questions and I won't reiterate what my colleagues are saying. Just coming from my region

of Nunakput, I know teachers are overworked and like other Members here have had tons of e-mails from teachers, from principals, and from education boards. I believe that students need a good comfortable place to go to school and a chance to learn. In my home town of Paulatuk, we've gone through a couple of principals and teacher burnout is an example of, also a sign of whether a child wants to go to school or not.

I know when I was younger, I looked forward to go to school every day. That was the quality of the teachers that we had and the dedication that they put into it. Back then, they weren't as overworked as they are now. I'm just going to keep it short. I support the amendments to this bill. I support the wishes of some teachers across the territory who want to make this difference. I believe that teacher burnout will eventually someday affect the attendance of some students. I'm just going to say that I support this. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak. Next, Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, as part of the Standing Committee on Social Development that was tasked with doing the review and seeking a public process and consultations on the two key amendments that were being proposed, first, of course was JK and the other one was on the instructional hours, I know the report has been done. I thank my colleagues in the House for bringing that report, and I understand we're going to keep talking; more likely the substance of the report later on, but for the most part, what was troubling for me was to hear parents, the quote right off the bat was just, I'm just looking at my notes fairly quickly. One parent made the comment that it was disheartening to learn of the, just perhaps some of the bungling, if I could use that term, in terms of communicating the agreement between the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association and the department in terms of instructional hours. That stood out in my mind in terms of some of the speakers. Of course, these are parents that have the best interests of their children in mind. At the same time, you know, the other comments to say that, well, the status quo is not workable but they need to make some changes. It was a balancing act to try to listen to all the concerns that we have to field throughout the communities that we had visited.

Coming from a small community, it's good that we have large regions and a city like Yellowknife, where you have an abundance of teachers and some very successful rates, successful achievement rates, that we can be all proud of, but, in smaller communities, it's very challenging. In some respects, we lag behind in terms of academic achievements in terms of how our students are

doing in the smaller communities and then to consider the idea of reducing this task from instructional hours. That's hard to take. Frame that in as perhaps the concern and hearing the other concerns that were made. It was almost a balancing act that the committee had, but of course, the most prominent was trying to work with and negotiate an agreement between, of course, the department and the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association and bringing that forth to the parents and to the community and in one respect, the teacher support obviously. The parents were very concerned in terms of how it is that they have to maybe fill in the time that, you know, the need to schedule in in terms of their daily lives and how the needs of their children's well-being is going to be met. It was very challenging, but for the most part what I heard was funding has to be a full commitment from this department, especially for JK. At the same time, we need to seriously mark and flag the idea that we need more teachers and more resources for schools. That, for me, was what stood out very clear. We need to make it a priority as we close off the chapter on this and moving forward. I look forward to the other debates and discussions that might follow from my colleagues for that. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Next, I have Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a few remarks here. As my colleague said with the social committee, we were pretty much tasked with consulting with the communities here. It's a very difficult position we were put in. Many of the students weren't aware of everything that was being proposed. I think that's one important part to emphasize on because the parent should have known about this before it was even agreed to. I feel – I know we do have to do things a little differently. Many of our students are somewhere between two years behind grade level in some of our communities and it's a huge, huge concern of the parents especially up in the North. I know the department has done their research and the research does say that in the long term that this will benefit the students. I'm sure everyone will be keeping a close eye on this. It is a pilot project, a three-year pilot project, that we will be keeping a close eye on. I know it's most likely a longer term that we'll see the outcomes of this, but those are some of the concerns brought forward.

Also, a number of concerns are students in high school, especially with reduced hours once they graduate may not be ready to move on to post-secondary, and I'm hoping the department could assure us that that won't affect our grade 12 students moving forward. Also, the department did make some changes to JK, junior kindergarten. In the last year, it was working well. It was optional to

the communities to offer junior kindergarten. Some of us MLAs here have Aboriginal Head Start programs that were successful for over 20 years in our communities. Now they're competing with junior kindergarten.

It is a very difficult position that they are being put in, themselves, having to scale back, whether it is staffing. Also, the funding that they receive is based on the attendance that they have, which has gone down because some students are attending junior kindergarten, whether it is in the morning or afternoon. That was also brought up. What we are told is junior kindergarten is now competing with Aboriginal Head Start, and for sure, junior kindergarten is going to win. Those are all brought to our attention, and I know the schools have been trained to work with the Aboriginal Head Start programs, whether it is junior kindergarten in the afternoons and Head Start in the morning, and that was working well. I am hoping in the future here that these programs could work jointly, but the bottom line is whatever decision we make today, we are going to get some backlash. The bottom line, I guess, is we do need to support our teachers. I am hoping in the long run that this reduction of up to 100 hours now, it has not been clear what every school has decided to do. I know some are around 45 hours. Some are at 60 or 80, but if schools are not going above 80, it should have been up to 80 hours. Maybe it could have been a little better sell.

Moving forward, I guess, I will be supporting our teachers on this one, and I know the department has told us that every year this will be reviewed, so if things are not working out, I know we could go back to what it was before. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I, too, would like to thank the committee for their efforts on this controversial challenging issue. Like my colleague from the Delta, coming from a small community, it can be challenging as it is in any profession, and I feel that teaching is a noble one. We had, in one of the communities back home, 100 per cent turnover of the teachers. That is an indicator. A school is no good without any staff within.

We are faced with a number of other obstacles to attract high quality teachers in these smaller communities, and the indicators are there to say there is some trouble here. We have got minimal graduation rates, lower than national averages. Those are indicators that something is not working, which results into a joint effort and a joint challenge by the parent community and the teachers. The teachers need time to prepare. Not only do they prepare for the classroom chores, but beyond and outside the regular hours, we have teachers in

probably every community that set aside their own time to try and gather the youth into the area of sports. In the community of Fort Good Hope, we have got an excellent team of young boys there that have won territorial level games here in Yellowknife. I witnessed that over the last couple of years here, and I am quite proud of those fellows there, but equally said, recognition should be given to the teacher also in having to work outside the classroom to encourage and provide activities there for the youth and keeping them off the streets.

For all those reasons, and in the classroom as well, we have a number of cases here that there are multiple class grades within the same room. Preparing our high school students to enter in post-secondary is another challenge there, because it is not the grade examination. It is the same examination as our neighbouring provinces, but we ask ourselves, well, why? I guess one of the reasons why is that the quality of delivery is really not there, because it is faced with numerous remote, isolated challenges, and not all stakeholders are on site and facing those challenges at the community level. Those are my short comments, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. All Members from that side of the House had a chance to comment. I see no further general comments. We will proceed to a clause-by-clause review of the bill, deferring the bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses. Please turn to page 1 of the bill. I will call out each clause. If you agree, please respond with an "agreed." Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Just so I am clear on the process here, are we allowed to ask questions about the subject matter of these clauses? Is this the appropriate time? I see the clerk shaking their head. Okay.

This is the part of the bill that deals with junior kindergarten. Late yesterday, the Minister sent this document to the Standing Committee on Social Development, which I have got a copy of as well. It is the 2017-2018 school funding framework. In this, there are sort of different formulas for different aspects of school funding. There is administration, inclusive schooling, Aboriginal programming. There is a number of them in here. Some of these formulas start with kindergarten. Some of them have been changed to include junior kindergarten. Can the Minister provide some rationale as to why

some formulas include junior kindergarten and why some were left at kindergarten? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do our fund our schools at over \$155 million in the 2017-2018 school year. One in particular such is inclusive schooling, which is \$26.5 million. Some of these funding formulas we are actually funding over the above legislated values, and as he mentioned with the formula funding, he has recognized that some of them include junior kindergarten; however, some do include kindergarten. We are looking at reviewing some of these funding formulas, and appreciate that the Member has brought that to our attention. We would just let the Member know that we are looking at some of the reviews of the formula funding.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. In the last week and a half, I have met with the Yellowknife Catholic Schools, the Yellowknife District No. 1 board and CSFTNO, all of the Yellowknife boards, and each one of them has raised this issue with me about how JK is not fully funded. We have got the evidence now. The Minister says that they are looking at changing some of these formulas. When is that going to happen, and will it happen in time for the 2017-2018 school year? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have committed to fully funding junior kindergarten, as we have said on many occasions. With the funding formulas, that is something that we constantly review. Like anything else, our policies, in terms of the concerns that were brought up in terms of fully funding junior kindergarten, we still don't know the full numbers, so we are still working with our education authorities. Once we have those education authorities, we will look at going through the appropriate supplementary budgetary process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the response from the Minister. Can the Minister tell me: does the department have projections right now of the number of junior kindergarten students that they expect across the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't have the details. I will go to my assistant deputy minister, please. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Ms. Mueller.

MS. MUELLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we have an approximate number of students that we believe are going to be in junior kindergarten for the upcoming 2017-2018 school year. As a result of that, for example, for transportation costs for junior kindergarten students, based on that estimated amount that was included in the transportation funding, that was given to education authorities. What we are still trying to determine and work with education authorities on is the cost of the additional booster seats or seatbelts that would be put into school buses for those children who would require them. That is still something that we are working with education authorities on.

As far as for these other amounts of funding, as the Minister has already suggested, this upcoming school year, \$155 million will be distributed among the education authorities to support JK to grade 12 education. Out of that amount, \$26.5 million has been allocated for inclusive schooling. This current school year is the first year of a three-year phased-in approach for the new inclusive schooling directive. With that, new funding and accountability methods are a model that is being used. Over the next few years, we will see if that is the appropriate amount for the support of inclusive schooling. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Mueller. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As we continue to work with education authorities and families continue to look at enrolling four-year-olds into the junior kindergarten program, we will have a better stance, after this initial setup, on enrollments. I can provide the Member with those numbers as we get them. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That was a very long answer to a simple question, but I have one simple question to ask the Minister: I am looking for a commitment from him to prepare cost estimates, using these formulae, to change the ones that start at kindergarten, change them to JK, and tell me, using their JK student projections, how much extra it is going to cost to fully fund JK? Will the Minister commit to providing Regular MLAs with that information? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you. Members did receive the most up-to-date, most current funding formulae that we have for how we fund our schools. We can take a look at the ones that pertain to junior kindergarten, and then look at adjusting those. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am not sure that actually responded to the question. I am wondering: can I get the commitment from the Minister of the department to plug in their projections of JK students and run them through these formulae, where the formulae start at kindergarten, add in JK, and provide those cost estimates for the additional funding that would be required to fully fund JK? Is the Minister committed to provide that information? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we did commit to fully funding junior kindergarten, we did base those on projected four-year-olds from the previous year, and we already are committing to the 12 to 1 ratio of how we fund junior kindergarten. Those numbers were put in for when we said we were going to be fully funding JK, and that announcement was made during the budget address. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I recognize that the Minister is under no obligation to actually respond to the questions, but I don't know how to make it any clearer. The formulae that are in here that start with kindergarten: can the Minister change that to JK, plug in the projections that he has, and give us the cost estimates, what those calculations actually are? Can the Minister commit to do that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we look at implementing the 12 to 1 ratio right now on junior kindergarten, that is increasing the amount of dollars that are already going to the schools at, I believe, about \$1.5 million. The formula funding we will have to take back to the department and look at whether it is going to impact how we fund the, sorry, that is \$1.8 million for the upcoming school year, and those numbers we can actually start to get as we start seeing enrollment

rates coming through. We will definitely take it back to the departments and look at those. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Time has expired. If you would like, I can put your name back on. Thank you. Next, we have Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To clause 2. From Hay River, there has been lots of talk of junior kindergarten ever since the Minister was just a lowly Regular Member in social programs. Some people in Hay River are philosophically opposed to junior kindergarten, for whatever reason. They don't think children should be in school. Some people are unsupportive of the idea of early childhood education. I feel that we already have the facilities needed in Hay River. While Hay River might be equipped to educate our four-year-olds, I am aware that other communities aren't. My first question to the Minister is: if this clause is struck out or if this bill does not pass, what happens to junior kindergarten henceforth? Does the department continue to pursue this initiative? Is it going to attempt to coerce schools to run junior kindergarten programs? Is it going to offer to fund junior kindergarten programs? What is going to happen to junior kindergarten if this bill is defeated or this clause is struck down? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. First and foremost, this government has set out a mandate in the 18th Legislative Assembly to provide early childhood programs throughout the NWT. This will, however, significantly change how we roll out junior kindergarten to our communities. All education authorities are well into their implementation efforts into junior kindergarten and making it a reality in every school come this academic year, in 2017-18. The 20 communities that currently run junior kindergartens have been doing it very well, and it has been received there very well and are highly successful.

I can't make really definite comments to the Member's questions, but it is mandated by this 18th Assembly that we do provide early childhood programming and early childhood development, and those discussions would have to take place, should that happen, and also discussions taken back to my Cabinet colleagues to find a solution. But I just want to assure the Member that we are committed to providing early childhood programs throughout the Northwest Territories, and junior kindergarten is one of those areas that we can implement it. We do have 12 communities in the Northwest Territories that currently do not have any daycares or day homes, and it is something that we see as a positive, moving forward, providing those

to families that do need the development programs for their children entering school. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to clarify, the department's position is that, if Bill 16 is defeated, it will continue to fully fund, in its own words, junior kindergarten in the Northwest Territories; is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned, we are mandated to run early childhood programs, according to this bill and this specific program. Those discussions would have to be made afterwards, but, as I said, this government is mandated, it is a priority of the 18th Legislative Assembly to provide early childhood programs throughout the Northwest Territories, and I do believe Members, with the passion that they have, understand the value of some of these programs going in our communities and appreciate the support from the general comments that were made around the room earlier. At the end of the day and much like it said in the report from committee, regardless of the outcome, both sides want to do what is in the best interests of the child, and I strongly believe that. Otherwise, it would not have been put into the committee report. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want people to understand the consequences if this bill or this clause is defeated. I want to know what the alternatives are. The Minister has stated that those discussions have to be had, so has the department not at all prepared itself for the possibility that this bill could be defeated, or has it talked about what might happen if the bill is defeated? Because teachers have been hired; some renovations, I am not sure if they are underway yet, but I am sure plans have been made. What would happen, is my question, if this bill is defeated? Is the department going to continue to try to push this onto school boards? Does it have the power to force it onto school boards? I just want a clear answer. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Okay, Mr. Simpson. That is more hypothetical, but we will let the Minister answer if he would like to. Thank you. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Yes, all I can say to that question, and you said it perfectly, Mr. Chair, that is

a hypothetical question, we do not know what the outcome of this bill is going to be at the end of today, but I can let the Member and the Members know that, as a government, we are committed to providing early childhood programs. We developed an Early Childhood Development Framework and Action Plan in collaboration with the Department of Health and Social Services. We are working with schools, education bodies, to address those. We have made increases to our early childhood program funding, and we are working with daycares and looking at setting up daycares in the communities, as well, so we have done a lot of work. We are going to continue to look at early childhood programs as a priority during the term of this 18th Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess what I got from that is that the department, not hypothetically, what would happen. I guess I was asking what were the department's plans. Has the department planned and has it come up with a plan, but I am not going to get an answer to that, so I will drop that. We won't know unless it is defeated, and we will see what rolls out, hypothetically. My other question is the Minister has promised to fund this initiative at 12 to 1, a pupil-teacher ratio of 12 to 1, and I think, if you look in the schedule of the Child Daycare Act regulations, if a daycare has four-year-olds in it, it needs to be staffed at 9 to 1. I know that is age zero to four, but, if a daycare only has four-year-olds in it, it is still 9 to 1, I believe, and I could be wrong. Why is a classroom with four-year-olds only to be staffed at 12 to 1? Why is there a lower threshold than a daycare or day home? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As previously stated when this question has come up in previous committee meetings and public hearings, at the 12 to 1 ratio and the four-year-olds in the school, in the school building they will have access to other resources in the school, school support teams, counsellors, EAs, principals, so they will have more resources in the school system. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have talked to the people in the schools, and they do not buy that answer. They do not think that is an acceptable answer, and that is why I brought it up, because I was looking for an answer that I could bring back to my constituents that they could at least respect. I

will just leave it there for now. Continue on. Thank you to the Minister for his answers.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Questions on clause 2.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Next, we have Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We will just keep going back and forth all night here. I wanted to bring up a little concern that one of my constituents brought up last year. His partner was actually working in junior kindergarten last year, and they are really concerned that they were not really expecting to have to deal with -- because, from what I understand, let's say a three-year-old who is turning four in, say, December, then they are eligible to attend. You know, in some cases, some of the students that are going to junior kindergarten are still in Pampers. It was a huge concern that they were not, when they went to school to become a teacher, they did not really plan to be having to change Pampers in the early grades, so I am hoping that as we move forward that there is a lot of training, whether it is over the summer as they prepare for next year, just so all the staff are prepared and we have assistants coming on so that they get all the proper early childhood training that they need to be dealing with this as we move forward. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you. I will go to my assistant deputy minister to answer that one. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Mueller.

MS. MUELLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is actually very common for even kindergarten children who are five years old to have accidents in school, and so this is something that is just a fact that a lot of our primary teachers, elementary teachers, do have to deal with for kindergarten, for five-year-olds and even into grade 1. But what is found is children, when they are with other children who are not experiencing that, are not in diapers and are toilet-trained, is that very quickly the majority of children also want to be toilet-trained and it just naturally happens because they want to. They see their peers not having to be in the situation of diapers, so that is actually something that happens.

The other thing, we have developed information both for parents' information sheets, both for the parents and for the teachers as well, through our JK teacher training that just took place a few weeks ago and will happen again in September. This is a topic that is discussed, and a lot of solutions are

given to the teacher as different strategies to work with the parents.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Mueller. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just another thing, I have received some concerns that it is a little too early for four-year-olds to be going to school, but I know the research has shown that between three to five years old is the best time to actually start preparing them for when they get into kindergarten and grade 1. I am hoping that the parents and grandparents will see the advantages of junior kindergarten as we move forward, just so the students are well-prepared once they get into kindergarten and grade 1. I have seen the benefits of my child going to the pilot project in Tsiigehtchic when it first began. Just more of a comment. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Would the Minister like to respond?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Yes. I just want to emphasize again that the rollout of junior kindergarten is still optional for parents to enrol their four-year-olds into the program. It is still optional. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Clause 2. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I will try this one more time. I will try to make it as easy as I can. I went quickly through the 2017 school funding framework. I have identified the specific formulas that do not include junior kindergarten and they are as follows:

Administration

- i. Administration staffing
- iii. District education authority O and M

Territorial schools

- iii. School support consultants
- iv. School counselling
- v. School secretaries
- vi. Custodians

Inclusive schooling

- iv. Support assistance
- vi. Staff development
- vii. Specialized learning materials, assistive technologies

- x. Healing and counselling

Aboriginal Language and Cultural Programs

- i. Aboriginal language O and M
- ii. Education assistance and Aboriginal language specialists

Those are the formulas that do not include junior kindergarten students. Can the Minister commit to using his projections of JK students, plugging them into those formulas, and telling us what the additional incremental costs would be? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Under the Education Act, it requires that, when providing operation and maintenance funds to education bodies, the Department of Culture, Education and Employment must allow for a student ratio of 16 to 1. Funding for inclusive schooling supports equals to 15 per cent of all operations and maintenance funds provided in a financial year.

In terms of inclusive schooling, we do add our students. There is a good chance that we will still be above the legislated levels, and adding junior kindergarten, we will still be around somewhere like 13.1 or 13.4, so we will still be overfunding moving forward. We could look at it. We are still going to have funds that are not going to reach the legislated levels on how we fund the operating and maintenance of our education bodies. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think I heard "look at it" at the end there. Is the Minister committing to do the work and providing us with the information? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I said, we will take a look at it. When we do get the funds back, it is still going to be under, but we fund the ratio of 16 to 1. With the inclusive schooling, we will still be funding above what we fund for inclusive schooling. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Does the Minister have any sense of how long taking a look at it is going to take? Is this something that his

department is prepared to give us in a week or two, or how long would it take to have the work done? I think it is plugging a few numbers into some formulas and getting calculations out the other end and comparing it to what it would be without JK. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What I can commit to is that we will work with our education authorities, as we have created an accountability framework in reporting for our education authorities on how they spend their dollars for the 2017-2018 school year, and get those exact figures as we move forward. Right now, we are still looking at how many numbers we are going to get, but we can commit to working with our education authorities and getting those exact numbers and providing those reports as we do every year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Clearly the Minister is not going to answer this the way that I want him to. He is not going to do the work. I will have to find another avenue. Perhaps a written question will be the proper way to do this because he is just not cooperating, and it is quite disappointing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Clause 4. Ms. Green.

COMMITTEE MOTION 104-18(2):
BILL 16, AN ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION
ACT – AMENDMENTS TO CLAUSE 4(B) (RE:
INCREASE TO GRADES 9-12 HOURS OF
INSTRUCTION TO 1000 HOURS),
DEFEATED

MS. GREEN: Mr. Chair, I would like to propose a motion to amend clause 4(b), and I believe that the text will be distributed at this time. The amended subsection will read that paragraph 4(b) of Bill 16 be amended by striking out 945 hours and substituting 1,000 hours.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Motion is in order and being distributed. To the motion, Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I am going to refer to the memorandum of understanding that was agreed between the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association and the Government of the Northwest Territories on Strengthening Teacher Instructional Practise, and I am going to quote a segment of the MOU here. It says, and I quote, "During the life of this collective agreement, the association and the employer agree to work together to explore a range of evidence-based possibilities that may have a positive impact on teacher effectiveness and improved student outcomes. This could include changes to the Education Act and the implementation and subsequent evaluation of structured pilot projects. These pilot projects would include a focus on redirecting up to 100 instructional hours per school year." End of the section that I am quoting there.

Mr. Chair, this is not what happened. We, as a group of MLAs, were not given a range of options. We were given one option, which is Bill 16, the bill in front of us. What we learned through this process is that this initiative does not come from the education renewal initiative. In fact, it is more likely that it came out of negotiations, and that it was an add-on to satisfy legitimate, and I am going to repeat that, legitimate concerns teachers have about their own wellness. We, of course, want teachers to be well and to be ready to do the innumerable tasks which we now require of them in the classroom. But, as I said earlier, we were not presented a range of options. We were given our marching orders, and we were expected to comply with them.

What we need here is more teachers, simply put. We, as I have already said, expect a tremendous amount from our teachers. The classroom has become a much more complex place than it was when I graduated almost 40 years ago. Teachers are required to take into account so many more student needs and to accommodate them in ways that certainly were not acknowledged in my era, and that is not a bad thing, but there is a limit to what they can do. I want to say that we have had a tremendous amount of input from the teachers on the student instructional practice. I would like to correct the record in saying that there were 27 submissions rather than 230 formal submissions on this bill, but I also have to say that I received at least as many personal e-mails from both teachers and parents on this issue, and I know that many of my colleagues did as well. The people who were least heard from were the parents, and even less than them, the students. They seemed to be running behind afterwards because they did not have the communication in a proactive way,

whether that is the responsibility of the school boards or whether that was the responsibility of the department.

Not surprisingly, they were very concerned about the parity of the high school diploma granted by the NWT with that granted by Alberta as the two jurisdictions share a common curriculum as we all know. The Yellowknife Catholic Schools responded to this question about providing certainty to parents by passing a motion at its February board meeting saying that they would not reduce hours at St. Patrick High School here in Yellowknife lower than 1,000 in order to maintain that parity. Their argument was that the students all write the same exams, and that they needed to have equal access to preparation. The comparison with Alberta is really the only one that matters here because we teach the same curriculum. The comparison to other jurisdictions in Canada is not relevant. When the department came to brief the standing committee on this bill in February, the deputy minister confirmed that parity was an important issue, and she pledged that it would be in place. In an attempt to find a middle ground between ensuring that teachers are not only well, but they have the time to collaborate and to engage in professional development, and that parents have the certainty that their children in high school will receive the same number of instructional hours as children in Alberta. My proposal is to reduce the instructional hours, not by 100 but by 45. The original act says 1045. I am suggesting 1000. That gives teachers an additional 45 hours to spend on ways to improve their own health and their outcomes, and it would provide certainty for parents that there is parity with Alberta.

Now, this MOU is not the collective agreement. It is a pilot project. What the department has done is just moved directly into legislating this change. I do not think that is the right thing to do. I think that we should maintain parity with Alberta for high school, and we should evaluate, and I know the department is coming forward with an evaluation plan. Evaluate how this is rolling out before we reduce the hours any further. We also need to keep in mind that Alberta is going through this exercise as well. They may also decide that they want the change in their current mandatory minimums, and so that may prompt changes further in the future.

Just to summarize, the intention of this motion is to find a middle ground between the certainty that parents told us they wanted for their children's education, and the wellness that the teachers' said that they need in order to find their work satisfying, and the outcomes for their students satisfying as well. For that reason, I am putting forward this motion. I have already had significant consultation on this motion with my colleagues. It is my understanding that they will not be supporting it, but

I think it is important that we acknowledge that we also heard from parents that they have this issue, that it is a valid issue, that we have heard them, and in the case of this motion by me, that I support them in wanting to have this standard of education for their children. Those are my comments, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. To the motion, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Sorry, to me, or to Minister Moses? Sorry, confusion here.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): To the motion, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we looked at this motion and looked at it, I went out and did some research. I talked to a number of people including Mr. Oliver and some of the people on the committee. Basically, from my understanding in talking with the people there is that it is a minimum of 945, but a majority, except for maybe one school presently has over 1000 hours in senior high from 10 to 12. This group, this committee is looking at it and saying that there is a minimum 945.

As my friend from Yellowknife Centre talked about, we do need more teachers. I love what Alberta has done. They have taken it and put 907 hours but they still have their instructional hours there, so that means there has to be more teachers in there. Unfortunately, that was not part of the bill. That was not part of what we were trying to get at. The comments about the standards, our education system, we do not require hours. It is course load. You actually don't even have to graduate to attend university. You need to have the equivalence of the courses to attend which basically means that if you have the courses and the marks, and you may be entered into the program if accepted. The one big requirement is the English 30-1 and 30-2, and that is the same. That is what we have to require for it. At this point in time, I understand. I have heard from the parents. I have heard from the teachers. I have heard. I have gone out. I have looked at it, and unfortunately, I cannot support this bill, and I will be voting against it. Thank you, Mr. Chair. The amendment, sorry. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. To the motion, Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would just like to thank my Honourable friend, the member for Nahendeh, for laying out some of these considerations. I, too, have consulted with some people on this issue. The crux of it is, the NWT students graduate with an NWT senior secondary diploma, and not an Alberta education diploma; and

although there are some course equivalencies through the NWT senior secondary diploma such as the Alberta 30-1 or 30-2 language arts course, ultimately, the NWT's diploma is standalone. Universities do not require 1,000 hours when they are considering the NWT's senior secondary diploma. Whether an NWT student has 1,000 hours of instruction per year for grades 10 to 12 has nothing to do with whether or not they will be accepted to post-secondary institutions.

I appreciate where the mover is coming from, and she clearly laid out her case for why compromise is preferable to something imperfect, however, in this case, I think the diploma speaks for itself, and how those diplomas are considered by post-secondary institutions, and as a result, I will not be supporting this amendment. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. To the motion. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you to the Member for bringing forward this proposed amendment. As Minister responsible for Education, I believe that the NWT superintendents, principals, and teachers know their students best. They want their students to be successful as do all of us here in this House and to have a variety of options available to them upon completion of their high school program.

Schools will schedule the appropriate hours of instructions that they believe their students require to successfully complete their coursework. I think it is important for all Members to remember that the proposed 945 hours of instruction represents the minimum hours of instruction, not the maximum hours of instruction. Therefore, schools will still be able to schedule more than 945 hours if they feel it best meets the needs of their students. Mr. Chair, schools will inevitably make the best decisions for scheduling the appropriate hours of instruction for their students to require successful completion of their high school programs. Therefore, Cabinet is not in a position to support this motion before us. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. First off, I'd like to thank my colleague from Yellowknife Centre for bringing forward the motion. I think I heard many of the same concerns from parents that she has. I think this was an attempt to try to find some middle ground or some kind of a compromise here and ensure Alberta equivalency and I commend her for bringing it forward. It's very important that the public hear the debate and discussion around this matter because it's still a live concern with many parents. I can agree with my colleague from Yellowknife

Centre to a certain point. She said many of the same things that I said in my opening remarks on the bill itself that the change in instructional hours was not found in the education renewal. This was driven by the fiscal strategy of Cabinet, the compromise that was reached at the negotiating table, and I believe we need to get back to the education renewal initiative as the way of bringing forward further change to our educational system.

I agree that we need to invest more in our school system. Unfortunately, this bill has only given us one way of dealing with the issue of teachers being overworked and that's reducing instructional hours. I guess I can vaguely remember back to my time in the 1970s when I applied for university. The thing that you submit when you want to get into colleague and university is your transcript, the courses you took, and the marks that you got in them. That's the basis on which universities and colleges accept students. There's nothing in there about instructional hours. I'm not convinced that this amendment will change in any way the ability of our students to gain entry into universities or colleges.

The last thing, I guess, I wish to say is that as I understand it, the Alberta system – their high school level there – instructional hours are in a state of flux themselves. I think it's very difficult to specify what exactly Alberta equivalency is at this point in time let alone probably any point in time. For those reasons, I don't think I can support – I will not be supporting the motion but I do sincerely thank my colleague for bringing this matter forward for the debate and discussion on the floor today. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. To the motion. Seeing no further comments, I will turn to Ms. Green to close debate on this motion. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Of course, when one applies to university, nobody is interested in how many hours you spend in a classroom. What they're interested in is what your marks are and I continue to believe that in order for NWT students to be competitive in departmental exams and have the best chance to compete with Alberta students for post-secondary education that they need the mandatory minimum instructional hours in high school to be set at 1,000.

The last thing I want today to reflect on is that it is a mystery to me and has been for many months here that the department is adamant that every school have JK and it be uniform in every school, but when it comes to mandatory minimum instructional hours, every school can make up its own mind. Is it department setting the standards or is it whimsical? This is not clear to me as a result of this debate on Bill 16. I'd like to request a recorded vote.

RECORDED VOTE

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. The Member has requested a recorded vote. To all those in favour, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Ms. Green.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): All those opposed, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Nadli, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. Moses, Ms. Cochrane, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. McLeod - Yellowknife South, Mr. McLeod - Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Schumann, Mr. Sebert, Mr. Blake, Mr. McNeely, Mr. Vanthuyne, Mr. Testart, Mr. Thompson, Mr. O' Reilly.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): All those abstaining, please stand. The results of the recorded vote are one in favour; 15 opposed; zero abstentions. The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

Clause 4. Mr. Thompson.

COMMITTEE MOTION 105-18(2):
BILL 16, AN ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION
ACT, AMENDMENT TO CLAUSE 4 (RE:
MANDATORY REVIEW OF HOURS OF
INSTRUCTION AFTER THREE YEARS BY THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY),
DEFEATED

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that Bill 60 be amended by adding the following after clause 4. The following is added after subsection 126, subsection 4, subsection 5, the Legislative Assembly or committee of the Legislative Assembly designated or established by it shall review the hours of instruction prescribed under subsection 4 at the next sitting following July 1, 2020.

Subsection 6, the review shall include an examination of the hours of the instruction in effect of those hours of instruction on students and teachers and may include any recommendations for change to the hours of instruction.

Subsection 7, the Minister shall provide a reasonable assistance to the Legislative Assembly or committee of that it is designated or established for the purpose of this section. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. There's a motion on the floor. The motion has been distributed and is in order. To the motion. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I said previously, I did contact a number of people in the union and in the department and spoke about this. The union agrees. We need to do an evaluation and move forward and so has the department talked about their evaluation. What committee has done is remodeled our – modeled after the statutory requirement to review the Official Language Act, established options to formally engage a committee, the Legislative Assembly in reviewing of its items or significant changed interest.

We also picked the date of saying we wanted the sitting as of July 1st, which normally will be September or October sitting, so this will be reviewed at that time. Review of the bill or this amendment would need to cover hours of instruction and their effects on the students' achievements and its teachers while we're looking at how it's impacting not just the teachers but also the students, seeing how it works on it.

Finally, through this whole process, the reviewing committee may make formal recommendations to the government coming out of the review. In other words, we'll make formal reviews. It won't be a tabled document. This is the reason the committee moved forward. As we said previously, we have talked to everybody and this is something that we feel would be a good amendment to the bill to make it more operational, functional, and, I guess, a good piece of legislation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. To the motion. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I will be supporting this amendment to the bill. If you look at the memorandum of understanding, this change in instructional hours was clearly characterized as a pilot project, which means that it is going to be evaluated at the end of it. This was not meant to be a permanent change necessarily, but the way the bill was drafted, this was going to be a permanent change in instructional hours. We had this drawn to our attention by some parents. I noticed it when I first read the bill. This is a permanent change. Where is the review of this?

I believe that this amendment to make the mandatory review is completely consistent with the pilot project nature of the change in instructional hours. The issue of evaluation reporting of the changes in instructional hours and student outcomes and teacher wellness has been a source of concern for parents and MLAs. While there is greater clarity than when we started the review of this bill, I do not feel confident or comfortable leaving such a review in the control of the Minister or his department. I am also concerned about our ability to actually measure meaningful changes in teacher wellness and student outcomes on an

annual basis or even after three years, something other jurisdictions do not seem to be able to do.

Given the very poor communications from the Minister and his department around these changes, the evaluation should be done by an independent party or a standing committee of this Assembly, while recognizing that the Minister will make the final decisions at the end of the day, and I am sure he would consult with it Northwest Territories Teachers' Association and the superintendents.

I also want to speak to the scope of the review that is suggested in this amendment. The scope of the review is focused on student achievement, which we have heard is the main purpose of this portion of the bill, and teacher wellness. I think that sets out the scope of the evaluation, the review that would be carried out, perfectly clear. That would be done by an independent party, by a standing committee. I support that as well. I will be voting in support of this amendment. I believe this was a reasonable compromise that was put forward by the standing committee. I heard most of their deliberations and discussion on this, and I strongly support this. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Next, Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think it is more than reasonable to have an expectation of independent oversight over the pilot project by the Legislative Assembly after there has been so much confusion leading up to this place. Although Honourable Members may have a better handle on it as anyone listening to the debate today can clearly hear, there are still many unanswered questions and many concerns raised by both parents and teachers. This amendment will allow for that independent oversight that would go alongside the internal department evaluation, and I think it is an excellent measure to allow both the department to do its work and for the Legislative Assembly to ensure that this pilot project is meeting the needs of both teachers and students. For that reason, I support it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the Member for bringing forward the proposed amendments. I also believe that a detailed thorough evaluation of the STIP pilot project is critical to ensuring it is successful in achieving our goals of improved students outcomes by providing teachers with time to focus on developing their instructional practices. This is why I publicly committed to share the evaluation framework with Standing Committee on Social Development before the end of the school year and

to continue working with the committee over the source of the three-year pilot.

I have also committed to providing regular public updates on the implementation, monitoring, and outcomes of STIP. This evaluation will not be conducted by the Department on its own. Instead, it will be jointly conducted by the STIP committee made up of residents from the NWT Superintendents' Association, the NWT Teachers' Association, and the Department of Culture, Education, and Employment. The STIP committee is an unprecedented collaboration between government, school board, and the teachers' association and collectively represents the education experts of our territory.

As we look to go forward with implementing STIP, we anticipate having all 49 NWT schools taking part and trialling their own unique school calendars. Already, each proposed calendar has been carefully vetted by the STIP committee before approval. We are under no illusions that all calendars will be equally successful. We will learn from each example, and schools will actively share their success and areas for improvement.

Mr. Chair, given the complexity of this initiative and the many ways it will evolve over the next three years, I strongly believe that STIP committee is in the best position to review this initiative, and as a result, Cabinet is not in a position to support this motion. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister Moses. Seeing no one further on my list, I will return to the mover of the motion to close debate. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the people that spoke to this. I stand by the committee's recommendations. I think it is a good compromise, as my friend from Frame Lake has spoken about. At the end of the day, it is about what is good for the students and the teachers. I guess, from our side, we are going to allow an open vote. People are going to vote as they feel fit. That is how we will move forward, and I would like to request a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

RECORDED VOTE

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. A recorded vote has been requested. All those in favour, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Thompson, Mr. O'Reilly, Ms. Green, Mr. Testart.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): All those opposed, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Nadli, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. Moses, Ms. Cochrane, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. McLeod – Yellowknife South, Mr. McLeod – Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Schumann, Mr. Sebert, Mr. Blake, Mr. McNeely, Mr. Vanthuyne.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): All those abstaining, please stand. The results of the recorded vote are four in favour, 12 opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

Clause 4. Mr. Testart.

COMMITTEE MOTION 106-18(2):
BILL 16: AN ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION
ACT – AMENDMENT TO CLAUSE 4 (RE:
MANDATORY REVIEW OF HOURS OF
INSTRUCTION AFTER THREE YEARS BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND
EMPLOYMENT),
CARRIED

MR. TESTART: Merci, Monsieur le President. I move that Bill 16 be amended by adding the following after clause 4:

4.1. The following is added after subsection 126(4):

(5) The Department of Education, Culture and Employment shall review the hours of instruction prescribed under subsection (4) within six months following the conclusion of the 2019-2020 academic year.

(6) The review shall consist of an examination of the hours of instruction, the effectiveness of the administration and implementation of the hours of instruction, and the achievement of the objectives behind the hours of instruction.

(7) The Minister shall consult with the Legislative Assembly, or a committee of the Legislative Assembly designated or established by it, in the review referred to in subsection (5).

(8) The Minister shall table a report in the Legislative Assembly detailing the outcome of the review referred to in subsection (5)

(a) at the sitting of the Legislative Assembly during which the report is completed; or

(b) at the next sitting of the Legislative Assembly, if the Legislative Assembly is not sitting when the report is completed.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess we will try this again with different language. The intention here is to ensure that there is a mandatory review of this pilot project that is enshrined in legislation. It is very clear that the many concerns that have led us to such an extensive debate around these issues are well reflected once the pilot project has run its course.

This amendment will enshrine the process that the Minister of Education has laid out in numerous public statements into the act itself and will allow both the government and the committee to work together to ensure that the objectives of the STIP hours are well-understood after the pilot runs its course. I appreciate that the Minister has laid out his case for working with the STIP committee, and this work will now go, if this amendment is passed, that work will go on with full partnership with the standing committee. Furthermore, this amendment can be found in other examples of legislation that this government is bound by, and is a good way to ensure sober second thought to major issues of important public policy. As we know, parents and teachers have a vested interest in ensuring this project is successful. For that reason, I would ask my colleagues, the honourable Members of this Chamber to support this amendment moving forward. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. To the motion, Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and as stated in my previous comments, we are committed to giving updates on the implementation, monitoring the outcomes of STIP, as well as continuing to work with our STIP committee, and with the standing committee on social programs, to give them updates as well. The motion that was brought before us, currently in front of us here, is one that Cabinet can support, and we will also be supporting this motion. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Moses. I see no further comments. Oh, Mr. Vanthuyne. To the motion.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and yes, I think that this sort of reaffirms what the department has been articulating all along, and something that I believe, and that is that ultimately, the Department of Education is wholly responsible for education in the NWT; and the language in this amendment ties the department to that responsibility, and still allows us and Regular Members to have a fairly strong level of, call it, contribution that will hold the department to account.

The language now starts to include the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. It refers to

the Minister, and that he shall consult with a committee of the Legislative Assembly, and it also indicates that the Minister shall table a report detailing the outcomes of the review. This is the kind of amendment that I can find myself in support of. Frankly, with all due respect, the prior amendment that was trying to kind of attain the same objectives, really didn't put the department out there for being accountable. It was putting, in my view, the standing committee or the Legislative Assembly committee of whatever sort to be more accountable on the review. I believe now that we are putting that onus back on the Department of Education where it ought to be, and I will be in support of the amendment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. To the motion. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think it's important to understand that this only came in response to the work of the standing committee, and this was a hard fought battle to try to get a mandatory review period. I guess the other thing I want to mention, I think this is a poor cousin compared to the previous amendment but I cannot speak to that again. There are two areas that concern me greatly with the amendment that is proposed. The first is this idea of consulting with the committee. I think I have been here for almost, getting close to two years, and kind of consultation I have seen from my Cabinet colleagues with standing committees has left a lot to be desired. I am very concerned about what sort of consultation the Minister, it is probably going to be the Minister over there, would undertake with the standing committee. If the Minister wishes to speak to that, I would appreciate hearing from him on what sort of consultation, if he was to continue, you would expect with the standing committee as part of this review. That is one of my major concerns.

The second one is the scope of the review that is proposed in this amendment. The scope of the review is...I must read this out because I am not sure everybody has really read this. "The effectiveness of the administration and implementation of the hours of instruction." What does that got to do with student outcomes or teacher wellness? And then, "the achievement of the objectives behind the hours of instruction," I'm not clear what the objectives are right from the start. There seems to be a shifting target here. If the Minister can convince me that the objectives of this review includes student achievement and teacher wellness, I would much appreciate that. I see the five bullets from his statement introducing the bill today here. We have got teacher satisfaction. Teacher human resource stats such as sick days. Use of professional development time, student attendance and student course completions. I am looking for something a bit more

holistic like student outcomes. Are more students passing than before? Are they getting better grades and so on? Those are far more, I think, important indicators of student achievement. I am looking for some reassurance from the Minister that the scope of the review is actually going to deal with student achievement and student wellness, and I don't get that from what I see in the amendment before us. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. I will remind you that the amendment was moved by Mr. Testart, not by the Minister, and the Minister is on the witness seat and under no responsibility, or under no obligation to answer questions. I see no further comments or questions. I will return to the mover to close debate. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As with all things we do in this great institution of democracy, compromise is essential to ensuring we make good decisions for our people, and I am very thankful to have the support of Cabinet on this amendment. I am also thankful to the honourable Member for Yellowknife North for showing his support, and to the concerns raised by the honourable Member for Frame Lake.

The current Minister is not really in a position to speak to this amendment as it will take place well after the term of this Assembly. I have great hopes and expectations that the Minister at that time in the future, gazing in my crystal ball, will follow the aspirations of this amendment very clearly, and work diligently with the standing committee as designated by the Legislative Assembly to complete this review to the satisfaction of all parties. I believe strongly that this is an effective compromise that will bring legislative oversight to this very important issue of ensuring that this project achieves its desired results. It improves teacher wellness, and gives our teachers the flexibility they need to educate the next generation of Northerners. I would like to ask for a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

RECORDED VOTE

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. The Member has requested a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Testart, Mr. Thompson, Mr. O'Reilly, Ms. Green, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. Moses, Ms. Cochrane, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. McLeod – Yellowknife South, Mr. McLeod – Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Schumann, Mr. Sebert, Mr. Blake, Mr. McNeely, Mr. Vanthuyne.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand.

The result of the recorded vote are 16 in favour; zero opposed; and zero abstentions.

---Carried

Clause 4 as amended.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Committee, to the bill as a whole as amended. Does committee agree that Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Education Act as amended is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Bill 16 is now ready for third reading. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 16, An Act to Amend to the Education Act as amended?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Minister, thank you to you and your witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, you may escort the witnesses from the Chamber. Minister, you may take your seat.

Committee, we have agreed to consider Committee Report 10-18(2), Report on the Review of Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Education Act. I will go to the chair of the standing committee for any opening remarks. That will be the Standing Committee on Social Development, for any opening remarks he may have. Mr. Thompson, do you have any opening remarks?

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think we have heard the report enough. I think the report stands for itself, and I will just leave it at that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Mr. Thompson.

COMMITTEE MOTION 107-18(2):
COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE
REPORT 10-18(2) WITHIN 120 DAYS,
CARRIED

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess it has been a very long day. Mr. Chair, I move that this Assembly recommend that the government provide a comprehensive response to this report

and its recommended actions within 120 days. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. There is a motion on the floor. It is being distributed. To the motion. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will request a recorded vote. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to go on record, again commending the committee for its very hard work on this report. I fully support the recommended actions as well as the recommendation for the motion. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

RECORDED VOTE

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. To the motion. Question has been called. The Member has requested a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Thompson, Mr. O'Reilly, Ms. Green, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. Blake, Mr. McNeely, Mr. Vanthuyne, Mr. Testart.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Moses, Ms. Cochrane, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. McLeod – Yellowknife South, Mr. McLeod – Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Schumann, Mr. Sebert.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): The results of the vote are nine in favour; zero opposed; seven abstentions. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Does committee agree that consideration of Committee Report 10-18(2) is now concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. We have concluded consideration of Committee Report 10-18(2), Report on the Review of Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Education Act. What is the wish of committee, Mr. Testart?

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that the chair of Committee of the Whole leave the chair and report progress.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. There is a motion on the floor to report

progress. The motion is in order, non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried. I will rise and report progress.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Item 21, report of Committee of the Whole. May I have the report, Member for Hay River North?

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering the Minister's Statement 186-18(2), Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Education Act, and Committee Report 10-18(2), Report on Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Education Act. I would like to report progress, with two motions being adopted, that consideration of Committee Report 10-18(2) is concluded, that Bill 16 is ready for a third reading as amended and, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Do we have a seconder? Member for Nunakput.

---Carried

Masi. Item 22. Third reading of bills. Minister of Health and Social Services.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 18:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES PROFESSIONS ACT

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 18, An Act to Amend the Health and Social Services Professions Act, be read for the third time. Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote.

RECORDED VOTE

MR. SPEAKER: The Member has requested a recorded vote. Motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Member for Great Slave, Member for Yellowknife South, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Member for Hay River South, Member for Thebacha, Member for Hay River North, Member for Mackenzie Delta, Member for Sahtu, Member for Yellowknife North, Member for Kam Lake, Member for Nahendeh, Member for Frame Lake, Member for Yellowknife Centre, Member for Deh Cho, Member for Nunakput, Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Member for Range Lake.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand. The results of the vote are 17 in favour; zero opposed; zero abstentions. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Masi. Third reading of bills. Item 23, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Thursday, June 1, 2017, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Commissioner's Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 28, Interpretation Act
 - Bill 29, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017
 - Bill 30, Health Statutes Law Amendment Act (Cremation Services)
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Tobacco Tax Act

- Bill 26, An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act, No. 2
- Committee Report 11-18(2), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on the Review of Standing Committee Public Engagement and Transparency
- Minister's Statement 186-18(2), Update on the A New Day program
- Tabled Document 383-18(2), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2017-2018
- Tabled Document 384-18(2), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2017-2018

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Education Act

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Masi, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Thursday, June 1, 2017, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

