

HANSARD
UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2017
YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, October 4, 2017****MEMBERS PRESENT**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, 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. Vanthuynne

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty): Good afternoon, Members. Item 2, Ministers' Statement. Minister for Municipal and Community Affairs.

Ministers' Statements**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 223-18(2):
MUNICIPAL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIR'S LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Speaker, part of my role as the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs is to ensure that we have a modern, responsive, and made-in-the-North legislative framework. This is no small task as Municipal and Community Affairs administers 19 statutes in areas that range from property assessment to emergency management to local elections. The department is currently working on several major legislative initiatives that were identified in the 18th Legislative Assembly's mandate, or that have been directed by the Financial Management Board.

Mr. Speaker, the department is in the process of developing a draft bill to replace the Civil Emergency Measures Act. This new statute to be introduced in 2018 will modernize the emergency management framework in the Northwest Territories and will be complemented by an updated Northwest Territories Emergency Plan.

The Fire Prevention Act relates to the investigation and reporting of fires, regulates fire hazards, and allows for the adoption of standards for the prevention and extinguishment of fires. It was passed in the mid-1950s and has never been thoroughly reviewed. Significant review and amendment is required in order to ensure that a new act reflects our modern operating environment and will serve residents into the future. The department has now completed a first round of stakeholder engagement on this very technical piece of legislation. As we identify solutions to some of the issues raised, additional stakeholder engagement will continue through 2018.

Mr. Speaker, in response to both the mandate, and at the direct request of the City of Yellowknife, we have taken the last several months to engage with stakeholders on

amendments to the Cities, Towns and Villages Act that would permit the six tax-based municipalities to:

- provide loans tied to property taxes for resident-driven energy efficiency measures using a modified local improvement charge process; and
- establish municipal hotel levies through the creation of local bylaws.

The feedback we received during this process will help us to propose and develop amendments to the Cities, Towns and Villages Act that will respond to the needs of individual communities. Should there be broad support for these proposals, I anticipate bringing forward amendments for consideration in 2018. In the near future, I plan to introduce an amended Western Canada Lottery Act which will provide a framework to support the transition of the operation and administration of the Western Canada Lottery Program inside the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Mr. Speaker, I also intend to introduce legislation in 2018 which will provide for the operation and administration of a 911 program in the Northwest Territories.

In addition to these mandated legislative initiatives, I have also asked the department to reach out to our primary stakeholders to identify their most pressing areas of concern. In the fall and winter of 2017 and 2018, we will engage directly with administrative and elected officials in all community governments in a regionally-based engagement process to determine what community governments see as the legislative priorities for the department. Through this process, we will gain a better understanding of where we should focus our efforts in the next Legislative Assembly. I am committed to developing a legislative framework which reflects our modern environment and meets the needs of residents.

As you can see, the department has responded to an ambitious legislative agenda, and I am pleased with the progress made to date. I look forward to the opportunity to work with my fellow Members to review and answer questions about each of these initiatives as they come forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CLOSURE OF MACKENZIE DELTA FERRY SERVICES

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just a few weeks ago, I told this House how a disruption in the ferry services on the Peel River had stranded residents, tourists, and essential supplies, cutting them off from their homes and their travel destinations.

Now, it seems like no sooner than the Department of Infrastructure gets the ferry running again, that once again staring down the barrel of serious service disruption in the region. I am referring to the cancellation of ferry services for both the Louis Cardinal ferry on the Mackenzie and the Abraham Francis ferry on the Peel River. I have spoken of this before, Mr. Speaker, and warned of the possible risks and complications several months ago. Now, winter is on its way and I find that these questions and the concerns of my constituents have still not been satisfied.

Winter services for both ferries were slashed as part of the government's reduction in this year's budget. Regular Members opposed this decision, but the Department of Infrastructure persisted. Now, that is despite the impacts this decision on the communities in the region. Despite the

number of Northerners who will be left in the lurch between the end of the ferry services and the opening of the ice bridges, and despite the risks of cutting off Inuvik from fuel and LNG supplies.

On average in the past 15 years, the Louis Cardinal ferry closed around October 31st, and the Abraham Francis around November 2nd. Ice bridges in the region which can see hundreds of tractor trailers throughout the season on top of regular traffic, do not typically open until mid-December, and that is assuming the weather is cold enough. Mild weather could easily shorten the ice bridge season from either end. The service cap that will result from ferry closures is obvious. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statements. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Colleagues. Mr. Speaker, it is in this government's mandate to make strategic investments in infrastructure and to lower costs of living. Cutting ferry services and driving up the cost of living especially as the mercury drops is quite the opposite. Residents want to see continued ferry service and, Mr. Speaker, it just makes sense. It would keep communities connected, Northerners getting the supplies they need, and to make it clear to tourists that our small communities are open and accessible. The tourism will only grow in importance once the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk highway opens next month. Shutting down these services sends a wrong message. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will have questions later today.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NWT BREWING COMPANY LIQUOR LICENCING DECISION

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, recent news reports outlined some of the details of the NWT Liquor Licensing Board's decision preventing the NWT Brewing Company from selling its product directly to other licensed establishments. I have said it before and I will say it again, the board's decision directly contravenes the mandate goals of this Assembly. Support for small business, tourism, job creation, diversification, economic development, manufacturing, it all goes down the tube with this decision.

Mr. Speaker, the success of the NWT Brewing Company is a sure indicator that there is a big demand for its products. In just two short years, the company has enjoyed reasonable commercial success, creating jobs and contributing to the government's coffers. The demand for such a product does not only exist here. In the Yukon, a microbrewery that opened up in early 2015 has had to increase its output three times in 2 1/2 years. Originally built to produce 300 litres a week, it has recently expanded to produce ten times that amount. Mr. Speaker, this is what we need to support, growth. Demand for NWT Brewing's product is high. The business has created jobs and has contributed significant dollars to the Territorial Treasury through the manufacturing taxes it pays.

The Stevens's were appreciative earlier this year, and I commend the Minister of Finance for authorizing the reduction in the manufacturing tax that the company pays. That said, while the Liquor Board was encouraged to permit direct sales to other licensed establishments and is authorized to make that decision, it declined to do so. Mr. Speaker, the board's decision requiring NWT brewing to market its products through the government's liquor warehouse along with the associated fee, prices its product right out of the market and, in my opinion, it flies in the face of the good work the Minister's department did to lower the manufacturing tax. We are supposed to be supporting small business growth, but this nonsense make it impossible for the NWT Brewing to grow even while their product is in high demand.

Mr. Speaker, I support the Minister in conducting a review of the act. That is commendable, but the board's original decision and the refusal to change that decision looks bad on this government, and it is simply bad for business. It needs to be changed. Later, I will have questions for the Minister of Finance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statement. Member for Deh Cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ZHATIE KOE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it may surprise the people to know that our Friendship Centres are a part of a network of 118 centres across Canada. We are represented in the North by the Northwest Territories for Nunavut Council of Friendship Centres, and initially by the National Association of Friendship Centres, or the NAFC.

Nationwide, Friendship Centres provide culturally enhanced programs and services to more than 780,000.00 Indigenous people in more than 100 communities, however, the door are open to everyone. Friendship centres provide critical social programs for the residents of our smaller communities. In Fort Providence, the Zhahti Koe Friendship Centre has been operating since 1983. Over the years, it has provided many essential programs. Currently, two youth workers run evening and weekend programs for the kids ages 6 to 14, a healthy children's worker supports mother, babies and preschool aged children. Two workers run the radio program, and the justice coordinator works for the NWT justice committees and income support and fine options clients.

Mr. Speaker, the Zhahti Koe Friendship Centre and the programs it delivers are not a luxury. Programs such as family life have helped many people in the community, and I worry about the people of my home town if the Friendship Centre has to close its doors. Unfortunately, because of federal funding delays and the lack of GNWT funding, this is a very real concern.

In September 2017, NAFC and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada finalized the agreement for funding friendship centres. The release of funds has, however, been stalled, and this delay has put many centres in crisis including the one in Fort Providence. They have waited since the new fiscal year, April 2017, to receive their funding, and they are still waiting today. Unfortunately, the GNWT has proven unwilling so far to step in and help most of the federal funding, either in the short term or on an annual basis. The Northern Territories group of friendship centres met with the MLAs in Kam Lake last spring to seek support for a proposed core funding agreement for the NWT friendship centres. Cabinet did not support the idea. This year, the Zhahti Koe sought \$31,250 in funding through the GNWT's NGOs stabilization fund. Mr. Speaker, this funding meant to assist non-government organizations with capacity development was turned down because the centre did not have its registry filings up-to-date. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Masi.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. NADLI: Mr. Speaker, this makes no sense to me. Mr. Speaker, with assistance to build capacity, maybe the friendship centre could get these housekeeping items done? Instead, they are too busy trying to raise funds on their own through bake sales and bingo. They are always looking for creative means for fundraising. Recently, they joined the local "Chase the Ace" to fund the youth centre.

Mr. Speaker, friendship centres are not federal organizations. They provide vital social programming in our communities. When is the GNWT going to recognize the important work

they do by funding them so they do not have to continue to struggle to keep their doors open? Masi, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CRITERIA FOR MID-TERM REVIEW OF MINISTERIAL PERFORMANCE AND LEADERSHIP**

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Tomorrow, we will conduct the mid-term review of Ministerial and Cabinet performance. In the interest of full disclosure and transparency, I want my constituents and colleagues across the floor to know how I have gone about beginning to assess Ministerial performance. In preparation for the performance evaluation, I reviewed the leadership speeches made by each of the candidates who eventually became Ministers. I also reviewed the mandate letters assigned to each Minister, priority tasks for their portfolios. I have also used the performance criteria suggested by the Rules and Procedures Committee, and I will just read those out.

- effective leadership;
- responsiveness to issues relating to portfolio mandates;
- ethical conduct, honesty, integrity and impartiality;
- commitment to transparency and accountability;
- open, respectful and considerate communication with fellow MLAs;
- ensure Regular MLAs are informed of, and give an opportunity to provide meaningful input into important decisions in a timely and respectful manner;
- inclusiveness, earns the support and respect of NWT residents by engaging the public, municipal governments, business, NGOs, and the voluntary sector, seeking their input and advice;
- works to build and maintain respectful and effective government-to-government relations with Indigenous governments;
- works to build and maintain respectful and effective relations with the federal government; and
- engagement: encourages others to give full consideration to different, sometimes opposing points of view, to promote informed decision-making.

For my assessment of Cabinet as a whole, I have reviewed the progress on our Mandate. I have developed questions for each of the Ministers based on this preliminary assessment and look forward to our discussion tomorrow before making my final decisions on confidence. No Minister has met with me or attempted to influence my assessment in any way. It will be a learning experience for us all, something that we will likely wish to reflect on, and pass on any further advice for the next Assembly. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CONCERNS OF THE BOMPAS SCHOOL GRADE FOUR CLASS

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during my latest regional tour, I had the opportunity to speak to a number of students and teachers. I gave them the opportunity to do a Member's statement to present their ideas and concerns. Today, my statement is coming from the Bompas grade four class. Mr. Speaker, the class spoke about the positive things about the village: the quality of the water, and how it is the best in the world. People are really friendly, and they feel safe, and can walk around town without getting lost. They find the land to be very beautiful and clean. They really like the active after school program funded through Municipal and Community Affairs.

They spoke about what needed to be done to make their life better in Fort Simpson. Surprisingly, better housing. There is a huge demand for more housing units. Too many homes have multi-generations living under one roof. More things such as a movie theatre, bowling alley, arcade, restaurants, another grocery store, and more recreation facilities are on the list. Better quality of produce being sold. The students also stressed things that they liked about their school. They spoke about their teachers, how they are very friendly and caring. The willingness of teachers to take them out of the classroom for nature walks and visit various places in the community. They like the fact that culture and language is a very important part of the school activities.

The students also provided suggestions about what needed to be done to make the school a better place to be. They would like to see a full-time gym teacher, full-time French teacher, an art room, and more Dene Zhati opportunities.

They felt that the library needs to have more books in it. They would like to see a wood shop in the school, or allow them access to the one at TSS. They would like to see the school develop a track and field facility, plus a number of other recreational facilities. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the students for sharing, and allowing me to be their voice today, just like I wrote my own Member's statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
IMPORTANCE OF GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Reviews on government direction, program and service delivery is essential to the healthy lifestyles of our Northern communities and the people we serve. Making a difference is a concept that only can be related to by realizing results, however, getting there means developing strategies and action plans. Over the past several statements, I have related to progressional measures to the few mentioned strategies. This is fundamental to the success, and more importantly, prudent management principles.

Mr. Speaker, the residents of the Northwest Territories expect change. We only have to review the 2015 election results both at the national and territorial levels. My colleagues had mentioned (1) government efficiencies and reviews; and (2) the best social program as a job. It is understandable that global commodity impacts are beyond our control, however, being resilient, adaptation, and diversification are strengths realized by this government. We can only see that and hear that in the successional statement presented by the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the term remaining to continue our efforts on improving program and services reviews, monitoring, and most importantly, the federal investing in Canada infrastructure initiatives. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statement. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS SERVICES IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. BEAULIEU: Marci cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about alcohol and drinking, and would like to highlight all the work done by the staff at Health and Social Services to support the Government of the NWT's priority of ensuring that services are delivered locally with culturally appropriate methods on mental health and addictions. I was first elected in 2007 as MLA. Over the years, I have met many community members and organizations in my riding. I wanted to make a difference in the small communities and provide a voice for my constituents, hearing the constituents' concerns and issues, and overall assessment of their needs in the riding. The main issue was alcohol in small communities. In 2007, it was alcohol, and today, ten years later, it continues to be alcohol.

Mr. Speaker, one of the priorities of the 18th Assembly is community wellness and safety for the NWT residents, and "creating opportunities for healthy lifestyles and community leadership for our youth." Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity to sit down with community health nurses and asked "What is the biggest cost driver in small communities in the NWT?" Nurses often note that alcohol is an extremely serious issue, and is the biggest cost driver to the health department. Mr. Speaker, Statistics Canada report that in 2012, the Northwest Territories has the highest per centage of heavy drinking at 31.7 per cent, while the whole country of Canada is 17.4 per cent.

A community health nurse noted in her assessment, the NWT has the highest rates of alcohol-related health centre visits, usually in the early morning after people have been drinking. Mr. Speaker, after having discussions with community members, the main issues I have heard are no job opportunities in small communities, and they also note that it is hard to find childcare services for kids if they have to work two weeks in and two weeks out of their community. It has been noted that it is hard on families, especially on the children. I would like to see early childhood development programs in all communities, and afterschool programs that can help families in promoting healthy families that can provide support to families in need. This will also create more jobs in smaller communities, and allow families to focus on healthy living. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement?

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is a great issue with alcohol in the NWT, and a plan needs to be developed on how to strategically deal with addictions, and promote healthy families in small communities in the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statement. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS FUNDING POLICY

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, non-governmental organizations, or "NGOs," provide essential and invaluable services to the people of the Northwest Territories. These not-for-profit organizations are run by dedicated, community-minded people who care about giving back and improving the lives of their fellow citizens. The list of what they contribute to our society is endless, and the work they do is not easy. In addition to fulfilling their primary mandates, many NGOs invest an inordinate amount of time and effort securing annual funding.

This splits their focus, inhibits their ability to plan beyond 12 months, and leaves many budgeting carefully throughout the year, just to keep the lights on.

For this reason, many NGOs rely not only on their core funding, undertake on this government's Stabilization Fund which by the government's own policy is intended to "help NGOs who deliver critical government-funded programs or services to the public to stabilize or develop their capacity." "Critical" programs and services, Mr. Speaker, are defined as ones "the government would either deliver directly, or engage a third party to deliver if the NGO was not delivering them." Despite this, the amount of available funding under the policy, \$350,000 annually, has not been increased in the last seven of the eight years that the fund has been in operation.

Mr. Speaker, I chair the Standing Committee on Government Operations which has continued to carefully monitor the government's management of this fund. Members are deeply concerned by our research which shows that the fund is over-subscribed by approximately three quarters of a million dollars each year. We continue to call for an increase to this fund, a request that our predecessor committee gave back in the 2012 Main Estimates. Mr. Speaker, we are concerned that the management of this fund has been improperly parked with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, where it is managed by Sport, Recreation and Youth, and inaccurately portrayed as an initiative supporting volunteerism. We are concerned that vital NGOs such as the Soup Kitchen in Hay River are being denied this funding because they do not meet the criteria.

Mr. Speaker, we have called on the administration of the NGO Stabilization Fund to be returned to the executive. We have called on this government to increase the amount of funding annually allocated to it. We have also called for a review of the fund's policies to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of our essential NGO sector. We continue waiting, Mr. Speaker, for a positive response from this government to any of these requests, and we will continue to push for this change as we review the 2018-2019 business plans in November. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AUDITS

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in March of 2015, the Office of the Auditor General released its audit of child and family services in the NWT as set out in the Child and Family Services Act. The auditor found both departmental and regional action on child protection wanting. Let us take a step back and remind ourselves why we are talking about protection services for children. They are, of course, the most vulnerable members of society. While most children are born into families that are able to meet their needs, some are not. Some families are dysfunctional because of addictions, violence, and the legacy of residential schools. It is the well-being of these children government must protect. According to the last annual report on child and family services, there are an average of 1,940 assessments and investigations per year, a number that has risen over time. We are talking, Mr. Speaker, about 2,000 children for whom there are concerns that warrant investigation.

Mr. Speaker, this is a shockingly high number, and the stakes are high too. As the Auditor General said in 2015, "it is critical that the territory have in place a well-functioning child and family services systems, one that provides the required protection and prevention services to children and families in need." As shocking as the numbers are, so are the conclusions. The Auditor General reported that "the Department of Health and Social Services and the regional authorities were not adequately meeting their key responsibility for the protection and well-being of children, youth, and families." Further, there was a lack of accountability, monitoring, and

resourcing to make the system work. This situation is the background to the current discussion about compliance audits.

The OAG found that most health authorities had not completed audits most years. The Auditor General described the failure to complete the audits as "significant as they provide the department with information that allows it to monitor whether regional authorities are delivering services in compliance with the act, and more fundamentally, whether children are being protected from harm, abuse and neglect." The Auditor General recommended that the department conduct audits annually, and require health authorities to create plans to address deficiencies. The department agreed with this recommendation.

I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I will not be able to complete this statement in the time. May I seek unanimous consent to conclude? Mahsi.

--- Unanimous consent granted

MS. GREEN: Thank you, colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, fast forward to January of this year. The standing committee on social development held a public briefing on child and family services. The Minister told us that the audit results were unavailable because of technology issues. He also said that trying to reproduce the audit would require him to go back and do a significant amount of work which he was unwilling and unprepared to do. What he did do was compile recommendations, and presented them as a letter to the committee. I am assuming that the audits for the 2016-2017 are now complete. I will be seeking assurance from the Minister that he was able to gather all the necessary data to monitor the provision of child and family services and to address any deficiencies the audit revealed. Masi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statement. Member for Hay River North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SUPPORT FOR NORTHERN FARM TRAINING INSTITUTE

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Agriculture: where do I begin? I will start with the good. There is significant potential in agriculture in the Northwest Territories, not just as it relates to economy and employment, but also to food security and health. Right now, the demand for locally produced foods far outstrips the supply. To capitalize on this potential, we need to help current producers expand their operation, and help new producers enter the industry. The most urgent issues that must be addressed, according to producers, the Agriculture Strategy, and the revised mandate of this Assembly, relate to land, labour, funding programs, and training. Despite this urgency, there has been no progress towards resolving these issues and many producers are frustrated.

Access to land is probably the biggest impediment to sector growth. The land lease application process can take years, Mr. Speaker, and because each application is assessed on its own merit without clear guidelines, the process provides no certainty, predictability, and often ends in disappointment. However, this is a moot point in many cases because the cost associated with leasing land often makes it uneconomical for many types of agricultural use. Labour costs are also stifling growth and deterring new entrants. Under the GNWT's agriculture funding program, Growing Forward 2, the only agriculture-related positions eligible for funding are management positions at non-commercial enterprises. New entrants are further deterred by the utter lack of funding available for start-ups.

In communities without an established agricultural sector, consultations revealed that a deficit of local expertise, and a lack of training are also major barriers for new entrants. As luck would have it, a local farmer, Jackie Milne, not only took it upon herself to design a training program

specifically for the North that is accessible to everyone regardless of education level, but also managed to get the feds to fund a physical campus for her Northern Farm Training Institute, or NFTI. NFTI has garnered recognition from former Prime Minister Harper, the federal Minister of Agriculture, the Assembly of First Nations, and even Hellman's. Yes, the mayonnaise people, to name a few. The campus is also internationally recognized and regularly hosts visitors from around the globe. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it seems like everyone is interested in NFTI except for this government.

Despite the fact that we need to train our residents, the Department of ITI has been refusing to provide funding to residents so they can attend NFTI since its campus was built. I will have questions on this and more at the appropriate time. 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 Yellowknife North.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Fletcher Stevens. Fletcher is the owner and operator of the NWT Brewing Company and the Woodyard Pub which is located in the Yellowknife North riding. Welcome to the House.

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

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize my aunt sitting behind me here, the interpreter for the Slavey portion of the proceedings. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too, would like to recognize the interpreters from Tu Nedhe-Willideh. First, Mary Rose Sundberg from Detah, and Dennis Drygeese from Lutselk'e. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, acknowledgments. Item 7, Oral Questions. Member for Nahendeh.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 927-18(2): BOARDING HOME PATIENT SERVICES

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, I have heard a lot of positive things about the boarding home here in Yellowknife, however like most things, there are a few concerns that residents have raised, and I would like to raise them here today. Mr. Speaker, there are patients that have to stay in the boarding home long-term. Even some have resided permanently. Has the department looked at placing them in their own home without having short-term patients staying in their place? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it depends on availability. The patient may sometimes have a roommate, sometimes have a room to themselves, however there are increasing periods of high medical travel here in the Northwest Territories which affects volumes. In some situations, patients may need to share the room. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for his answer. I am a little disappointed that I have some constituents who are permanently there now and have to share the room. I was hoping that they were getting a little bit of privacy. Mr. Speaker, boarding homes have chauffeurs and drivers who deliver really great service. They are very friendly and very helpful, but the concern for some patients is they have to wait long periods of time to be picked up or get dropped off early for flights. What does the contract say about providing transportation for these patients, and does the department allow patients to use taxis and reimburse them for those costs if they don't have access to the shuttle? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, when an individual is staying at one of our boarding homes, the transportation is included in the boarding home contract, so they are compensated for providing that transportation. Transportation is intended or supposed to be provided to and from the airport, but also to and from appointments. If the Member has some specific incidents he would like to raise, I would certainly like to hear those to see how often that is happening. Maybe it is something that we need to look a little bit more deeply at.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for his answer. I will follow up with him with the specific concerns residents have talked to me about. Like most places, food is usually an issue for some. The concern isn't about the quality; it is about the traditional food. How does the department ensure the boarding room has access to traditional food that can be provided to the patient? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, once again, the boarding homes are contracted to provide particular services: room, board, transportation. The boarding homes do try to have traditional food on the menu when that food is made available to them. In Yellowknife and Edmonton, by way of example, the boarding homes are run by Aboriginal beneficiary organizations, and I do know that they make an effort to provide traditional food and traditional menus. However, they are limited by budget and supplies not always there. As a result, they can't always provide these menus on a regular basis, but I do know that they want to and they try as best they can.

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

MR. THOMAS: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Minister for that answer. It does clear up a little bit of concerns out there so I am able to share that with my constituents. Mr. Speaker, due to appointments and flight schedules, patients sometimes miss meals. How does the department ensure that the patients are fed? Do they get a food allowance to cover this additional cost that is put onto them, because the flights are not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, once again, if an individual is staying at a boarding home, meals are intended to be provided. However, if they are arriving late or they have experienced delays, light food is supposed to be available for them, so not a full meal but something that they can eat when they get there. This can include things like sandwiches, fruit, juice, cookies – we all like cookies – coffee, and tea, should they miss one of their regular meals. If they are in transit and they are late or they are travelling over what would be a normal meal time, they can claim up to \$18 a day to offset some of the costs of buying food. If a patient experiences a delay due to circumstances such as weather, I do understand the medical travel end is willing and able to provide some reimbursement for meals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 928-18(2):
NWT BREWING COMPANY LIQUOR LICENSING DECISION

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we know that earlier in September, the Minister of Finance made a commitment that he would be instructing his officials to undertake a review of the liquor regulations to make them more transparent and more relevant. This is good news; we have a huge, growing tourism-based economy that – you know, I think it is time to do this. My question to the Minister is: can the Minister provide this Assembly with an update on what he intends to do with this review? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Finance.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have asked the official of the department to review the existing board processes and policies of the NWT Liquor Act regulations. In addition, the department will be reaching out to stakeholders as to how to modernize the board enforcement and decision-making processes to ensure they are transparent and fair. We plan on having the work completed for review by the next fiscal year. We do, however, plan on implementing the changes that we can make in the interim. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you to the Minister for the update. Mr. Speaker, I have said before that reviewing policy and changing it is a good, productive step, but often policy and regs are only as good as those who administer them. I wonder, can the Minister let us know what he actually hopes to accomplish with this review?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the plan is that the review should somewhat modernize the sale and licensing of alcohol in the NWT and provide the NWT Liquor Licensing Board with the necessary tools to do their jobs in a fair and transparent manner, as well as addressing concerns raised by licensees.

MR. VANTHUYNE: That also is good news. I am happy to hear that from the Minister, and providing good tools will be welcomed. I would like to get down to something a little bit more specific, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister is aware, my constituency is home of the NWT Brewing Company. It is the only liquor manufacturer in the NWT, and they have frankly been denied the ability to deliver their product directly to licensees. This decision has made the cost of the NWT Brewing Company's product economically unviable for local bars and restaurants to access. Can the Minister tell me what he is doing to address this issue?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we thought that the existing liquor regulations had enough leeway to allow for the sale of beer by the NWT Brewing Company directly to licensees. The board, as an independent quasi-judicial body, did not agree with that interpretation of the regulations and would not allow direct sales. To be fair, Mr. Speaker, the board can only make decisions using the existing legislation and regulations. If they are out of date and no longer relevant, it falls on us to change them. I have directed the department to draft regulations that allow for the sale of NWT Brewing products directly to licensees, without having to go through NWT liquor warehouses and paying the handling fees.

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

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and cheers to that. This is great news, Mr. Speaker, and will be well-appreciated by many – by all, in fact. Certainly, I might find myself at the brew pub later today celebrating. Just to that, as well, if I can just get additional clarification: can the Minister inform this House when the Brewing Company can expect these regulations to be in place so that they can sell their products directly to licensees? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I expect the regulation will be in place by the end of October, and the NWT Brewing Company will be able to begin deliveries if I am in a position to sign the regulation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 929-18(2):
NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS FUNDING POLICY

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope I get as good answers as our last round of questions. The funding for the NGO Stabilization Fund has not increased in the last seven years. It is also oversubscribed by about three-quarters of \$1 million. During the same time period, the NWT inflation rate has increased by an average of about 2 per cent per year. Will the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs commit to working with their Cabinet colleagues to put additional funding to support NGOs into this fund, and support NGOs in delivering services and their core functions? Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a Minister, I work with all of Cabinet, actually, to put forward our needs for finances. As stated earlier by me many times, actually, is that every department and Minister sitting here would like to have more money. The reality is that we do have to live within a fiscally-responsible environment considering the economy and, therefore, I do put my concerns forward. Unfortunately, the money tree is not as deep as I wish it would be. I can only cut off so many branches before the tree dies. So I do put forward my needs as every other Minister does, but we are all trying to be fiscally responsible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: I thank the Minister for the gardening lesson but I would like to really get at this. This issue, this fund, has been called on to be supported for many years. Nothing is going on. Can the Minister comment on why this government is persistent in disregarding the concerns of the Standing Committee on government operations, and continues to fail to respond to our recommendations?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: It is important to note that this, the NGO Stabilization Fund, is not the only funding available to non-profit organizations within the communities. As a non-profit administrator for many years, this was actually supplementary funding. This was not the core funding that we received, so it is supplementary funding. It is about a state of pride and stabilization funding to non-government organizations that provide a critical service for the Government of the Northwest Territories that if we didn't have them, we would have to provide those services ourselves.

MR. TESTART: The Minister has revealed some information that I said this morning in my Member's statement, and has failed to answer the question why the standing committee's concerns and recommendations are not being addressed. I would like to ask the Minister how this program that is currently housed in sport and recreation is supporting volunteerism in the Northwest Territories.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: This program, as stated earlier, is about helping stabilize non-government organizations that provide a critical service that the Government of the Northwest Territories would have to provide if it wasn't in effect. It does support volunteerism in that the majority of non-government organizations are managed by volunteer boards, which is actually part of their society's act. So it is something that does support volunteerism to the heart and to the core.

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

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister has laid out what this fund does quite well and I agree with her 100 per cent. The core funding NGOs receive from other sources are used for their core delivery of programs and services. This stuff is for other things to help stabilize their operations. They don't have to dip into those resources, so if the Minister is not going to put more money into it; the Minister is not going to encourage it be moved out of MACA; the Minister is going to continue to ignore the recommendations to the standing committee; will she at the very least adjust the fund so it rises with inflation and keeps pace with the growing cost of living in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Municipal and Community

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, this fund is not meant to provide poor funding. This fund is meant to provide stabilization to non-government organizations so that they can provide critical services for the Government of the Northwest Territories. There are requirements that are application-based. I would like to say that we wish that we could give to everyone. There are requirements though, etc. such as societies that apply for this fund have to be current. Those are some of the guidelines that we have. I will adhere to those guidelines because it is important.

As stated earlier, I wish I had billions of dollars, Mr. Speaker, because if I had billions of dollars, we would not have food poverty. We would not have housing issues. We would have roads to every community. We would have schools and we would have proper health centres and legal services. The reality is that we are all living within a fiscally responsible environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

QUESTION 930-18(2):

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS SERVICES IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. BEAULIEU: Marci cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement, I talked about the alcohol impacts of small communities. I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services what is the department doing to address mental health and addiction issues in small communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a fairly broad question but I'll do my best to stick to youth and younger people as the Member's statement focused in what I thought was mostly about youth. We are coming forward. We have just tabled more recently the Youth and Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan which articulates and outlines a number of things that we need to do as a government and as an Assembly to support our youth who are struggling with either mental health issues or addictions issues.

One of the key things that we're looking to do is providing some quality counselling supports to our youth. Traditionally, a lot of this has been done in the school system. We're looking at a new way of doing this with community counsellors that are working in schools but also are year-round employees rather than seasonal or school-based employees. It's pretty exciting work. I think by working together, we could really make a difference in people's lives.

In the Member's statement, he talked about the healthy family programs. I think it's really important to recognize that a child's development starts long before birth and that we need to

continue to do things to help families be healthy, help families be strong in raising their children. We have healthy family programs in 17 communities in the Northwest Territories providing high-quality programming to help expectant parents be ready for their child's birth to make sure that they're in a strong position that they're living healthy lives and that they're in a position to provide supports to their children.

There are a large number of things we are doing between the action plan, the child and family committees, as well as treatment option counselling and everything else that's available to residents. I would strongly encourage the member to encourage youth in his community, youth around the Northwest Territories to take advantage of the help lines, the Facebook pages we have to provide support, and to talk about these issues that people are facing. We need to not be silent about the challenges people are facing, whether it's mental health or addictions. We need to be working to get the message out there. I applaud the member for his statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BEAULIEU: A very good answer, Mr. Speaker. Where can the people, I guess in general and I don't expect the Minister to know specifically which place to go to in the small communities, but in general where can the individuals that are struggling with alcohol or struggling with mental health turn to when they're trying to address their issues in the small communities?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, there are a number of places. They can go to community counsellors. The Member will point out that there isn't a community counsellor in every community in the Northwest Territories, but we have them in most communities in the Northwest Territories. Where they don't exist, they can be reached by telephone. Those numbers are usually available at the community level in the community health stations or other places, so please encourage your youth to look at those.

As we move forward with the new community counsellor program, I think there's a real opportunity to enhance what's available to our young people whether they're in school or not in school. We can't forget technology, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our youth are very adept more so than some of us utilizing technology which is why we've opened up and done some work around having some Facebook pages available where there can be some group sessions, individual sessions. They can work with client leads to help them identify what programs might be available with them, both at a local, regional, and territorial level. Between that and the help lines, there are some things that young people can engage in directly right from their homes right away.

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, changing gears just a bit. I'd like to ask the Minister if the department has been able to determine the cost of alcohol to the health system in the NWT.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the years there have been some suggestions on what the cost of alcohol is on the system. I think the Member has actually shared some numbers that he had with me. I can't remember what those numbers are at this time, but I will go back and see what we can provide as far as what those numbers are. I might have to look at Hansard because I think the Member might have actually used those numbers at a previous date and once upon a time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, early this month, the federal government committed to providing \$204 million to support First Nations and Inuit communities to improve mental health services. I'd like to ask the Minister if his department is up to speed on that and if they are going to be accessing any of that money over and above what's coming

directly to the GNWT from the federal government. It seems to be a special type of an announcement aside from that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Speaker, any time the federal government announces a pot of money that's available to support youth and mental health, youth and mental health and addictions or frankly any pot the government identifies that might be available to the Northwest Territories, we as Cabinet, we as Members obviously look into that to figure out what is available to the Northwest Territories. I can't speak to exactly what is available to us today or what mechanism there exists for us to actually obtain some of those funds. I do know that I think it was the year before the last the federal government did announce a \$69 million pot to help combat addictions and suicide across this country. Of that amount, \$2.5 million was allocated for the Northwest Territories. Half of that went to the IRC. The other half is flowing through the Government of the Northwest Territories to communities for on-the-land programming. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 931-18(2):
SUMMARY OF COUNCIL OF CONFEDERATION MEETING RESULTS

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. The Premier, I believe, was in Ottawa yesterday and maybe even this morning. I want to welcome him back. I'd also like to use this opportunity to get an update of what was discussed and any outcomes at the first Minister's conference. Can the premier provide us with a brief summary of the main issues discussed and any outcomes? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Honourable Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had the opportunity to attend the swearing-in of the new Governor General of Canada and I was honoured to be invited. It was a very impressive ceremony and we have a very impressive new Governor General. I also attended a meeting of the consult of federal Premiers and attended a First Ministers' Meeting hosted by the Prime Minister of Canada with the three national Indigenous government leaders and the Premiers of all the provinces and territories. Then we moved into a First Ministers' Meeting with just the Prime Minister and the premiers. The agenda for the first Ministers is obviously set by the Prime Minister. We had briefings on by the governor of the bank of Canada on the state of the economy and also by his statistician who went into more detail. We had an update on NAFTA negotiations. We had an update on small business tax, an initiative of the federal government. We also discussed cannabis and then we had a very short period left for a round table discussion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: I want to thank the Premier for that list of what he did in Ottawa. It was very thorough and I appreciate that very much. I guess I'm most interested in the First Ministers' conference. Can the Premier tell us as he did mention that cannabis was on the list of topics discussed. I'm wondering if carbon pricing was also discussed. Can he tell us what sort of positions were put forward and whether there was any resolution of these issues at the First Ministers' conference.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As I said, the agenda is set by the Prime Minister so I took some representation to have cannabis added to the agenda by the consult of federation. Carbon pricing was not discussed. It was not on the agenda. The discussion on cannabis mainly followed up on the consult of federation meetings that we had earlier in the year in Edmonton

where the Premiers expressed concern about the fact that a lot of work still had to be done in five key areas with regards to implementation of the cannabis legislation.

We were reminded once again that there were still some concerns about the lack of time that June/July of 2018 is too soon and that we don't have enough time to get properly ready. The prime Minister indicated that this was not an evented time. It was a progress over time where we're looking to protect our youth and our children from the bad effects of drugs. Also, we're trying to make sure that the bad guys didn't get to keep all of the money. The longer we waited to implement, more money goes to the bad guys. We had a very good briefing by the parliamentary secretary. He talked quite a bit about enforcement of impaired driving or cannabis impaired driving and how that was going to work. He talked a lot about education. We also talked about the retail methods that would be used. I raised the matter of we have dry communities in the Northwest Territories and obviously to have communities where we don't have cannabis would go against the initiative of legalizing cannabis.

The parliamentary secretary did advise that our member of parliament has invited him to visit the North and he would be visiting at some point in the near future. I think that would be very helpful. There's still a lot of concern about licensing of retail or distribution methods and also the production of cannabis is still felt by the Premiers in a lot of the provinces that as soon as cannabis is legalized, there's not enough production available to meet the demand. That was the gist of the discussions, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Premier for his very thorough answer. I very much appreciate getting the information. Can the Premier tell us whether he had any side meetings with Northern territories Premiers, and generally what might have been discussed, and any outcomes?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We attempted to organize the meeting with the three Northern Premiers because historically, we work to have a united position on a lot of these issues. Also, we are doing work on a Pan-Territorial sustainable development vision which we are trying to do in conjunction with the development of a Federal Arctic Policy Framework, but we were not able to get the three Northern Premiers together because it was just too short a period of time, and everybody was arriving at different times.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Once again, I would like to thank the Premier for that information. I really do appreciate getting this information from the Premier, and I know he is just fresh off the plane. Again, I sincerely thank him for this. I know that other Ministers also go to federal-provincial-territorial meetings. I am just wondering, this sort of reporting back would be really helpful, at least for myself and probably other Members on this side of the House. Can the Premier find a way to more systematically get back to Regular Members about what happens at federal-provincial-territorial meetings like the First Ministers' Conference?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: In practice, generally, FPT meetings and even the Council of Federation meetings, generally, we share whatever communiques or decision documents that are released with the standing committees and the Members, and we are prepared to continue to do that. In this case, the First Ministers' meeting, there was no communique or documents that were issued, so I would be prepared to brief the committee if we can find the time to do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 932-18(2):
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AUDITS

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. He appeared at the Standing Committee on Social Development last winter to talk about the 2015-2016 audit of Child and Family Services. He provided as a follow-up, a report on the audit, but not the audit themselves. Why wasn't the audit given to us in the original form? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, audits prepared by the Department of Health and Social Services around Child and Family Services, are never made public or shared with committee as a result of the confidential nature of much of the detail and information contained within. When I met with committee in January 2017 when we discussed the audit, I indicated that although we had put in a new audit process as a result of recommendations from the Auditor General of Canada and as part of our building stronger families, an audit was done that looked at qualitative and quantitative data, and a new tool was developed by the Department of Health and Social Services for this process including a new database.

On reviewing the audit results, or rather the audit report, unfortunately, it became clear that the quantitative data collected was not at all reliable. This was as a result of a number of reasons including the staff were not particularly familiar with the new database that was created, and because the standards were constantly during that year the audit results were done, and they were not linked to consistent standards. It was a problem. It was unfortunate. It was frustrating for both myself and for the Members. I did commit at that time to pulling together a summary of the results that we had at the time, recognizing that the quantitative data was not as reliable as we had hoped for, but there was qualitative information gathered at the same time which did provide some useful insight. We provided a summary to committee. That document once again is not made public as a result of the confidential nature of some of the data within.

I have made a commitment that we are going to provide summary documents to committee in confidence moving forward. In 2016-2017, we have put in a new audit process that has been tested and retested to make sure that it is actually going to give us the data that we need in order to make informed decisions and provide quality reports which will lead to a quality summary that will be shared with Regular Members.

MS. GREEN: Thank you for that answer. What kind of reports, audit reports were shared with regional authorities in the 2015-2016 audit?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Originally, prior to the changes in 2015-2016, the audits were done with regional authorities, were done by a senior auditing team within the department, and were unfortunately conducted kind of on an irregular basis, and I think this is one of the things that the Auditor General rightfully, hammered the Department of Health and Social Services on, that this was not done in a regular way. This was not done regularly. In the past, the individual reports were shared with the authority so that recommendations for improvements within could be made. We want to be able to continue to do those types of things, provide information to regional operations of the new territorial authority so that they can make improvements and provide high quality child and family services. With our new audit tool, we believe we have a system that will allow us to do both the qualitative and quantitative analysis so that we can continue to make recommendations at a local delivery level for the high quality provision of child and family services, recognizing that today, we are moving in a new direction of child and family

services. Building stronger families is the new way of doing business. It is different than it has done before, and we are looking at supporting families rather than apprehending children.

MS. GREEN: There is no question that this is the right direction to go. Apprehending children is the last resort. With respect to the 2015-2016 audit of Child and Family Services, the former CFS advisor, Andy Langford, is quoted as saying, "Taken at face value, our measures of compliance are arguably worse than they were three years ago when the auditor general completed his audit." This is not a comforting result. Could the Minister tell us how the department responded to this observation?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: This goes to the fact that we have put in a new system for actually collecting data, and we have tested it rigorously to ensure that the data collection is something that is both useful and practical, and it will give us information we need to make informed decisions moving forward. Mr. Speaker, I certainly would like to see a copy of the information the Member is making reference to, and put it in context with respect to where that letter was sent to, who, and what was it answering as opposed to making assumptions in this House on exactly what the conversation before and after was.

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

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I think that the Minister can get that information from the department. It was obtained through access to information by media and reported this morning. One of the end results of the conversation last winter was that there would be this new audit tool which the Minister has referenced. When will the committee receive the report of Child and Family Services for the 2016-2017 fiscal year; and is there any consideration of making a summary of it public to promote confidence in Child and Family Services? Mahsi.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Speaker, the directors' report will be made public. It is a summary of activities over a year, ongoing progress and processes where we are at any given time with Child and Family Services. The summary that I am going to provide committee is not something we are prepared to make public at this time. I hear the Member, and I would like to, obviously, bring some comfort and confidence to the work that is being done in recognition of the incredible hard work that many of our staff are doing to improve Child and Family Services in recognizing that we are taking a new direction with building stronger families. Those summaries will contain some information that might identify, or certainly could be used to identify families which is something that we are not prepared to do at this point in time. I will share it with committee so that we can discuss about moving forward in a collaborative way for the best interests of our children, but I am not prepared to make that document public and risk identifying individuals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 933-18(2):
BOARDING HOME PATIENT SERVICES

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my question is directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services here, following up on my colleague from Nahendeh's question on the Vital Abel House boarding unit.

To improve standards by the service provider at the Vital boarding home, will the Minister review or take actions towards the continuation of the word "audit" or an "improvement inspection" to the facility? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we do have contracts with a number of providers, both here, and in Yellowknife, as an example, as well as in Edmonton. These homes provide incredibly valuable services to the residents of the Northwest Territories who do need to receive care and/or assessments and diagnosis outside of their home communities. We are always monitoring how the contract is being administered. I will commit to having a conversation with the department to find out where we are now, when the last sort of review was done, and any information I get, I am certainly happy to share with Regular Members.

MR. MCNEELY: I will provide a couple of examples that can be included on the checklist of the inspection. It would be wheelchair access, one of these automated buttons is not on there during my last visit; and another checklist item could be, what are the options for the overflow of people over and above what the room capacity is actually designated to have? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I always appreciate getting some suggestions and ideas from the Members. I will certainly share that information with the department as we are looking into our current contracts with our providers. I have been to the different facilities that we do support by way of contract here in the Northwest Territories, and they are wheelchair accessible. There are spaces for people that do have limited mobility, but certainly interested in following up on the Member's suggestions.

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

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister provide that information after gathering the inspection results to my office and to my colleague from Nahendeh, please? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: As we're looking into our contract, if there are any irregularities or changes coming, I'm certainly happy to share that information with members. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

QUESTION 934-18(2):
ZHATIE KOE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I spoke about the vital role the Zhatie Koe Friendship Centre plays in Fort Providence and the uncertainty of funding commitments to the Northwest Territories friendship centres. My questions are to the Premier today. My first question is: when the Northwest Territories' group of friendship centres sought core funding from Cabinet last spring, what was the outcome of that meeting? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Honourable Premier.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'll thank the Member for the question. I just want to point out that friendship centres provide a very important service to the communities, and the friendship centre movement I believe is a very unifying force in the communities. Having said that, the friendship centres are core funded by the federal government and the Government of the Northwest Territories is not privy to those fiscal arrangements.

I do know that the federal government has been looking at a broad range of fiscal arrangements with Indigenous organizations and this may include friendship centres. Our understanding from the friendship centres is that they have a concern over possible funding reductions, and just recently you've been made aware that they've reached an agreement but there are delays in the

flow of funding. When we met in May, a request for core funding was not made. The only request that was made was to establish a process whereby we could work with them so that they could fundraise on a more effective basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NADLI: I'd like to thank the Premier for his reply. My second question is: in the absence of core funding, will Cabinet consider bridged funding for the Zhatie Koe Friendship Centre to ensure they can stay in operation until their federal funding comes through? Mahsi.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, the friendship centres provide a very important service. I've recently seen some correspondence where we've been asked to lobby on their behalf with regard to having the funding flow more quickly from the federal government. This is certainly one of the areas where the federal government and the friendship centres can work together to help advance and facilitate the aims of the friendship centres. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my years as MLA, I have witnessed many occasions where Cabinet has found funding for urgent projects and supplementary initiatives. This suggests to me that the funding is there and can be found if there's a political will to find it. Will the Premier be hero for the Northwest Territories' friendship centres and work with his Cabinet colleagues to find funding for them?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We're always looking at ways to becoming heroes, but I should say that over the past three years the friendship centres have accessed funding from the territorial government. We've provided over \$900,000 to the friendship centres for program delivery. The friendship centres provide a lot of important programs and services on our behalf, and they also are able to access, on an application basis, other funding pots that are available. As I said, I expect to be able to respond to the friendship centres with regard to trying to find a way to work with them and to improve their ability to fundraise.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. He has indicated that he's working with the Northwest Territories Association of Friendship Centres for a process to work together. Will the Premier commit to the Northwest Territories' friendship centres that he will work together with the Cabinet, along with our federal colleagues, to ensure that there's consistent and timely transfer of funding to friendship centres. Mahsi.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I think it would be a shame if friendship centres had to lay off workers and employees because funds that are supposed to flow are not flowing as quickly as they should. We're quite prepared to work with all of the different bodies and institutions to try to find a workable arrangement so that friendship centres can continue to provide the important services that they provide to the communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 935-18(2):
MACKENZIE DELTA FERRY SERVICES

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a follow up to my Member's statement, I have a few questions for the Minister of Infrastructure. I'd like to ask the Minister what the Department of Infrastructure's current intention is for winter services on the Louis Cardinal and the Abraham Francis Ferries. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As most Members know in this House, our intention is to run the ferry until freeze up this year, and after that we will be attempting to accelerate the winter road service to the regions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BLAKE: As I mentioned in my statement, with the opening of the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway November 16th, I know a lot of my constituents - and I'm sure a lot of tourists - are awaiting the opening so they could be the first to travel this road. I'd like to ask the Minister what the department's rationale is for this decision that will contribute to the isolation of small communities in the region.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To inform the Members of this House, the decision to accelerate the ice road there and keep the winter ferry going as long as we could until the road was up to capacity was made in 2013, I believe. In 2014 they began to do the accelerated construction of the ice road crossing. This was mainly around the energy concerns for the community of Inuvik and the possible shut down of the kill well at the time. A propane mixture was going to have to be introduced to get through this dry spell of the well until a long-term solution was found.

That's not the case, however. The number of propane trucks has not increased. In fact, the number has pretty much decreased since 2013. As a result of discussions with our department and the proponents of the kill well, we've determined there's no longer a need for us to have the ice road accelerated. There are also contingency plans put in place to have propane in the community to carry them through this closure. The other part of this is the weather around the Dempster. In 2015 the road was closed 40 per cent of the time that we did the winter ferry service, and that was at a cost of \$1.8 million for 36 days.

MR. BLAKE: I'm not sure where the Minister gets all his numbers from. Last year alone we had in the neighbourhood of 140 tractor trailers on those ferries. I'd like to ask the Minister how the department plans to support the increased demands for travel and access likely to put pressure on regional infrastructure in the lead up and follow of the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As I've said, we've committed to the opening of the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway on November 14th. Depending on weather, freeze up is at the end of October. We've committed to buying some lighter spray equipment this year, which is en-route to the communities to accelerate the ice road construction. That will allow us to get on the ice roads sooner. That ice road should be open within three weeks to light traffic, and probably mid-November for heavy traffic. That's based on the historical numbers that I have.

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

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister just said the third week of November for light traffic and mid-November for heavy traffic, so that does add up to me just like some of his other numbers there. The bottom line, Mr. Speaker, is this keeps the cost of living down. How does the Minister expect to keep the costs of living down in the region when they take out the ferries and increase the costs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: This continuation of the winter ferry was a decision of the House of this Assembly. We have made \$1.8 million as I've said. The road was open for 36 days based on it for \$1.8 million with the Dempster probably closed as much as 40 per cent of the time. It's not good value for the money. The decision was made to put this winter ferry service into accommodate the kill well. The situation right now is not a concern of ours. There seems to be from the producers' side of things, there is not an effect of it going forward. We will continue to monitor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 936-18(2):
SUPPORT FOR NORTHERN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my statement earlier today, I brought up several issues that relate to our fledging agriculture sector. My first question is about lands. I'm aware that access to agricultural land is an issue for the Department of Lands but the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment has the agricultural file. I wanted to both pass on the message that the farmers who are actually putting in the sweat equity to get this industry off the ground are frustrated with a lack of support they're receiving when it comes to accessing land. I want to ask the Minister what he is doing to help them access affordable agricultural land in a timely matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I want to remind this House this is the first ever agricultural strategy of the Northwest Territories. We tabled that in March. We were working towards this budding industry to bring local production of food to residents of the Northwest Territories. Yes, the issue of lands is one that we're working on. It's an interdepartmental working group working on this. It's myself, ITI, health and social services, ENR, the Department of Lands. We're assessing this stuff. We're looking at other jurisdictions and what's going on. We're continually talking with the federal governments so we're not having the roles and responsibilities mixed up. We will continue to work on that, but yes, the issue of lands is a liability. This is one of the biggest things we have to implement in the strategy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMPSON: About half of the agricultural funding in the Growing Forward 2 program is spent internally on ITI by things such as promoting agricultural awareness, community gardens, and other non-commercial ventures so why does the Minister of Industry prioritize the socialist programs instead of flowing the money directly to the commercial producers?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: When we tabled this strategy, we went out to consultations to develop the strategy across the Northwest Territories of people that are interested in agriculture. That fed in into how we developed this strategy going forward. That was their strategy along with ours that we put forward in this house. We are finishing up our Growing Forward 2. They're the last year of our five-year growing forward plan. We're going to be moving forward with a new plan with a federal Minister, but right now we're out doing a survey to see feedback on what we can do in the strategy. How can we make things work better and listen to what residents in the Northwest Territories have to say about implementing this strategy. To clearly answer the Member's question, the strategy was developed in consultation with all of the farmers in the Northwest Territories.

MR. SIMPSON: Speaking of the strategy, many of the recommendations in the agricultural strategy relate to training, specifically during the community consultations it came to light that communities outside of the regional centres support train the trainer approach and a focus on experiential learning so that they can gain and develop agricultural skills within the community.

Nifty has been successful in providing both of these. He had residents or regularly denied funding to attend Nifty in favour of brief community-based workshops which offer no real experiential learning and which are no match for spending weeks on a working farm. Why over the past two years has ITI systematically denying residents the funding they require to train with the northern farm training institute?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I have never heard that concern. If that Member has that type of information, I'd gladly sit down with him and discuss it.

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

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess I'll take that up with the Minister later. I'll fill him in. How about this? Why does ITI believe they're better positioned than the northern farm training institute because ITI has been the one who has taken over the role of deciding what residents need to know if they think they know better than a farm training institute. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I don't believe that's the case. The strategy that we put forward, as I said, is in consultation with the people that want to do farming in the Northwest Territories. We're back out doing a survey with them right now to see what we can do to implement to make this thing better going forward. We will continue to do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 937-18(2):
NAHENDEH RESIDENTS ACCESSING CANCER TREATMENT

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Minister of Health and Social Services. During my visit to communities, I noticed that there seems to be a high rate of cancer in my riding. Can the Minister please tell me how many people from Nahendeh are being sent out for cancer treatment presently? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can say that there are residents of Nahendeh being sent out for cancer treatment. Some of those are in Yellowknife. Some of those are going south for radiology services or chemotherapy but at this point in time, I'm not prepared to actually give the number. The number is low. Given how low it is, I don't want be in a position where we might be able to identify individuals by articulating the number but I will certainly discuss that with the member later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for that answer and I look forward to having a conversation with him. Can the Minister please tell us if there are support groups available for patients with cancer and if these patients are told about this type of program?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Yes there are all sorts of different support groups that exist throughout the Northwest Territories. In addition, we have a cancer care coordinator who works out of Stanton Territorial Hospital and does provide outreach to support NWT cancer patients throughout their entire cancer journey. When the cancer coordinator is aware of a cancer patient via healthcare provider or by a self-referral, she does let patients know about the supports that are available to them that are appropriate and does work to connect them with those resources.

Mr. Speaker, the medical travel guide also lists a number of the different organizations and groups out there whether they are community groups, national groups, or groups supported by different societies. That is in the medical travel guide with all the contact information. I can certainly provide a comprehensive list to the member. I would list them off all here but we would be going for an extended period of time which I know makes the members unhappy when I go for long periods of time and don't tend to, yes.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for his answer. I guess my concern is when I talk to some of my constituents they're not away of these support groups out there so I look forward to

working with the Minister. My understanding when patients go out for chemo treatment, the immune system is very unstable or is very susceptible to cross-contamination issues. Flus and that can make them sicker. Does the department have a policy in place to deal with patients who are getting treatment for cancer, both staying in the boarding home or in hotels?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I think this also goes to one of the questions the Member asked earlier today about individuals being in their own rooms. Unfortunately, there is no specific policy in place regarding cancer patients and boarding homes. Cancer patients do stay at boarding homes but the accommodations made can be different depending upon patient circumstances. For example, it could be important that other arrangements are made for patients with reduced immune systems as a result of this type of treatment. This is a policy hole in our system right now. This is one of the things that I've asked the department to look at, how we can address or work with our clients who have long-term accommodation requirements may have to leave the territories for extended periods of time as a result of treatment or in compromised positions where it may not be safe for them to be sharing rooms with other people who might be coming in with different illnesses. This is a policy gap that exists. This is something that has been identified. This is something that the department is working to address.

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

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for the answer. It kind of leads in to my next question. Can people with chemo treatments and that, can the Minister start working with these patients to put them in hotels until a policy is in place so their immune systems don't allow them to catch other diseases such as colds and stuff like that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, when these individuals do come to our attention, we do work with them on one-off basis to try and address their issues. It does not mean that every cancer patient is in the same situation that we have described, but where there are certainly issues as a result of other conditions or the chemo effect on their immune systems, we are prepared to work with them to find alternative arrangements. It may not be a hotel. It might be other family supports or other private accommodation that might be most appropriate, but we are certainly willing to work with our residents to make sure that they remain healthy as they are going through treatment and are not catching other conditions or sicknesses or illnesses. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The time for oral questions has expired. 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 468-18(2):
INTER-ACTIVITY TRANSFERS EXCEEDING \$250,000 (APRIL 1, 2017 TO JUNE 30, 2017)
PURSUANT TO SECTION 74 OF THE FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION ACT

TABLED DOCUMENT 469-18(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES SURFACE RIGHTS BOARD 2016-2017 ANNUAL REPORT

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents entitled "Inter-Activity Transfers Exceeding \$250,000 (April 1, 2017 to June 30,

2017)" and "Northwest Territories Surface Rights Board 2016-2017 Annual Report." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters, Committee Report 12-18(2), Minister's Statement 186-18(2), Tabled Document 419-18(2), 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 will now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, committee wishes to consider Committee Report 12-18(2), Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning Report on the Progress Review of the Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019, and Tabled Document 419-18(2), Proposed Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019 (Revised). Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. We will consider the documents after a brief recess.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I would like to call Committee of the Whole back to order.

Committee, we have agreed to consider Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning Report on the Progress Review of the Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019 and the proposed mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019, revised. I propose that we consider these concurrently. Does committee agree?

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. I understand that the Premier had some opening comments. Premier McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To open this discussion, I'd like to make some brief remarks on the proposed revised mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019.

In June of this year, Cabinet and Regular Members each tabled their respective reports reflecting on the government's progress on our mandate. These reports provided a critical evaluation of our progress on the almost 200 commitments in the mandate, including suggestions to ensure we continue to work effectively toward fulfilling the priorities of the 18th Legislative Assembly through the second half of our term.

Since June we have engaged in a collaborative process with Regular Members to revise and improve our mandate. This process has required us to listen carefully to each other, find common ground, and compromise when it is in the best interest of Northwest Territories' residents, all of which are items essential to the functioning of a consensus government. Based on the feedback received from Regular Members, as well as subsequent discussions in Caucus

and correspondence back and forth between Regular Members and Cabinet, we have proposed a revised mandate for consideration by Committee of the Whole, which we tabled at the beginning of this sitting. The proposed revised mandate is the product of a great deal of coordination and collaboration between political leaders and government departments, and takes into account Regular Members' feedback as well as the fiscal and operational realities that our government must face.

The proposed revised mandate continues to follow the priorities of the 18th Legislative Assembly that the original mandate followed, while also recognizing that new information and changing external factors may warrant an adjustment to our approach. To this end, the proposed revised mandate includes new commitments regarding emerging issues, such as the legalization of cannabis, youth suicide prevention, revised wording to clarify existing commitments, and restructuring of existing commitments to allow for progress to be tracked and reported.

Additionally, we have responded to the standing committee's concern about duplicate commitments by removing or combining copies of commitments that were found under multiple headings. Once the Legislative Assembly has adopted a revised mandate, departments will develop new milestones for added commitments, and revise the milestones for existing commitments to ensure they accurately capture and report on the activities undertaken by government to fulfill our mandate. These milestones will be tracked and reported on the mandate website, which will also be updated to reflect the revised mandate.

I look forward to our discussions today on the revised mandate, and I am confident we will have a much improved document that will guide us through the remainder of the life of this Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Does committee have any general comments on the documents? Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I simply want to state I'm happy that we have undergone this process. I think it's very becoming of us as a government to take an opportunity halfway through our term to review the priorities that we made as a government. Certainly, when you're fresh off the campaign trail and newly elected, there are a lot of burning issues. We seem to at times even get emotional about those.

We put a lot of work and lot of effort into drafting our original mandate, but as I noted, I think this is the right thing for us to do. I've appreciated the steps that we have taken as a government: meeting earlier in the spring and again later in the fall, and now coming to a revised mandate halfway through our term. I think it only makes sense. I'm a small business kind of guy, and it's not uncommon for small businesses to have to pull out their business plan ever once in a while, dust it off, and make revisions so that they can stay current.

We hear from our constituents on a regular basis and they're the ones that matter in this. They've informed us time and time again on those things that they value and that they want to see us work on collectively. We've come to realize over time that maybe some of those things didn't get fully captured in the original mandate. With that, I want to simply say thank you to everybody for all the work that everyone has done in getting the mandate to where it is today, and I look forward to completing the process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd also like to express my appreciation to my colleagues for the work they've done in revising the mandate and in hopefully improving it. I want to reflect on some of the limitations of the mandate, though, while I have the opportunity. The first is that it

doesn't really contain priorities. In it there are 200 priorities that range from building a new road at a price tag of \$67 million in the current capital budget, to supporting initiatives that will get women elected, at a cost of \$15,000 or so. There is no sense of the weighting in this mandate, of the relative importance or scope or cost of those different items. The thing that I regret most is that we have too many priorities, and with too many of them we don't really have a sense of urgency around which ones need to be accomplished immediately and which ones don't.

It's also worth noting that there are some major initiatives being undertaken by the government that never were in the mandate. I'll give you a few examples. One is departmental amalgamation. There was nothing in the governance section that referred to the need to undertake departmental amalgamation. I believe that was the result of fiscal realities, which I don't necessarily disagree with. It was not something, however, that we had agreed to as a priority, and it wasn't something that we made a priority, despite the fact that it became a priority nevertheless. This theme is also apparent with respect to the effort to set up the airport revolving fund. The change in governance for the Yellowknife Airport is not something that appears anywhere in this document, and nor does removing the board of NTCP or Aurora College.

What has developed is a kind of two-tier approach. There are the priorities of the government and there are the priorities of the Caucus, and this document represents the priorities of the Caucus. It doesn't represent what the government has decided to do in its own respect. That's a real limitation.

Having said that, this document is cited by every Minister every time something is done, and if it isn't in the mandate, then it doesn't get done. There's kind of a double jeopardy that goes on with this document.

It's full of good intentions, but it's not necessarily full of ways and means. As a result, I think we're setting ourselves up—despite the glowing reviews on the government's mandate tracker—for a lot of unfinished business in this 18th Assembly because we've simply taken on way more than we can possibly accomplish, not only fiscally, but in terms of the capacity of the departments that we work with to get the job done. I'm happy that this work is done. I think it's better to revise the mandate than not, but I think the document has some real limitations, revised or not. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Next is Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm agreeing with the sentiments raised by my two previous speakers, colleagues from Yellowknife North and Yellowknife Centre, respectively. I think we had a more collaborative process this time around. That's a good thing. There are, however, a number of conflicting items and commitments in the mandate, and it's not possible to do it all. It's so big that you could drive trucks through it. I'll use one example. When we say that we're going to try to accomplish three major road projects all at the same time, I think it's unrealistic and raises unrealistic expectations among residents. It's just not possible financially, capacity-wise, and so on. I've always said that I think we're doing our residents a disservice by having too many items in the mandate. In some cases there are even conflicting items. There is no way we can build a Mackenzie Valley highway, a Slave geological province road, and a road to Whati at the same time. Even if the federal government gave us gazillions of dollars, there's no way we could do it all at the same time. I think we should have spent more time setting some priorities, as my colleague from Yellowknife Centre said.

I think the process that we went through was a sound one. I do worry, though; I think some of the discussion and debate that we have had around changing parts of the mandate should take

place on the floor and in public. This is not just about tweaking in some cases. This is about fundamental changes to our priorities and the things that we have agreed to try to work together on.

I will just use one example which I will speak of later: child care. There is a fundamental change in the priorities in this new document. We are not aspiring for universal child care anymore. We are just going to try to improve affordability and accessibility. I think that is a fundamental change. I think it represents a broken promise, and I will raise that again when we come to that part of the discussion later today. Those are my remarks, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Before we continue, I just want to take a minute to thank all the Pages, not just the ones here today, but the ones who have been here this sitting and this entire session as we are coming to the end of our third session. Thank you to all the Pages that have been with us this year. Next, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will try to be as quick as possible here. I would like to thank both sides for working together on this revised document. It was a lot of work throughout the process of developing it and to revise it. I really have to say that youth suicide prevention, to me, is very important, and it is getting the recognition it does need to deserve as we move forward on that. My colleagues talked about other priorities, and there was a lot of give and take. I know there were some issues on the mandate that I had to give up that were unrealistic, and I understood they were important for my riding, but for the global picture, sometimes you have to give some things up. I would like to thank everybody for working together and working hard as we move forward.

It is a challenge, and it would have been nice to do some stuff in the open, but sometimes work has to get done. As I said during it, I just want to move forward on this mandate. Sometimes we are able to achieve some stuff behind closed doors that we might have taken longer to do here. No disrespect to my colleagues who wish to do it in the open. I believe in open, transparent government, but sometimes we need to get work done. Sometimes it can be done behind closed doors. Some meetings are challenging. I know I was part of committees, and we had some pretty good conversations. I do not know if we could have done that out in the public.

I thank everybody for the hard work they did in developing a revised mandate that I think we can hopefully achieve through the remainder of the term, if not at least the majority of it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I provided my thoughts, just acknowledging that we did revise our mandate. As colleagues have put it, it was a collaborative process between Regular MLAs and Cabinet. It is commendable that with 19 MLAs with diverse backgrounds and, of course, the diversity of the ridings that we represent, we came together and came up with a product that we think will serve at least the agenda of this government. We have two years to try to set our sights in terms of ensuring that the goals that we have set for ourselves are measurable in respect of at least being timely, following up at the same time, and at least having a measure of resources allocated to those initiatives that we might undertake during the two years of our term.

I have got some notes here. We were elected in November of 2015, and together, as a Caucus, we developed a mandate for the 18th Assembly. We are halfway to completing our terms as MLAs. The mid-term review offers an excellent opportunity to pause and reflect on our work. It is a good time to look at what we have accomplished with our mandate and to reassess our

priorities for the remaining two years. Likely, we will shift or reposition our expectations and huddle as a team once again.

I will offer a few thoughts on our mandate from a SWOT perspective: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. I think our weakness could be how we work together as Regular MLAs and Cabinet. I think it is very important that we try to work collaboratively and cooperatively, with mutual respect and understanding. We are all in the same boat trying to strive for the betterment of the NWT. We are trying to at least build on our common interest in ensuring that we address very hard core needs, sometimes fundamentally, that small communities have or larger centres or even cities, for that matter, have. We are trying to better our society in general.

Of course, the other one, and I did not want to spend too much time on it, is threats. It is the unity. It is how we work together. It is very important that we be mindful that if we do not have unity amongst ourselves, we are in a weak position.

In light of that, I did not want to build upon the weaknesses or the threats that we might have, but trying to build upon the opportunities and strengths that we have. One of our greatest strengths is the resilience and creativity of our people. Mr. Chair, as we know, the cost of living, including the cost of goods and services, is higher here because of our distance from larger markets and the remote locations of our communities. I have been encouraged by the efforts being made regarding the domestic production of food in areas such as agriculture and greenhouses. We need to support more of this innovation. We need to roll up our sleeves and plant initiatives for the long-term.

The Dehcho Process presents an opportunity to fulfil a long-standing commitment to create certainty. Mr. Chair, the Premier and Minister Bennett have the report of the ministerial special representative, which was well-received by the Dehcho First Nations. The GNWT should work towards completion of the process within the year, including outstanding negotiations, including the Akaitcho, Metis, and K'atloodeeche First Nation. Let's get this done before an opportunity to create certainty becomes a missed opportunity that puts us into the blame game.

Now, once again, the TRC had outlined recommendations that the government needs to act upon. It could be that this government, in the spirit of reconciliation, ensures that we complete all outstanding land claims. Mahsi, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to thank all of the honourable Members of this Assembly for their hard work and dedication to finding that common ground that has produced a stronger mandate than we initially started with. One of the hallmarks of our governing system is that we put aside our political differences and come together as a caucus and work collaboratively and constructively. That does not mean we disagree, but it means the diversity of our opinions gives us a stronger basis to draw upon and make better decisions for our people.

This is a more refined version of the original document in many respects. It is less ambitious, more realistic, and is practical within the short time we have left serving our constituents before we head to the polls. The priority actions that are going to make the biggest impact on diversifying our economy, creating jobs and growth, and taking care of people in need are all centre stage in this document.

As many people know, I am a big believer in transparency and openness in our political processes, and this mandate speaks to that in the first place. By having a public debate on this document and by tabling it for all Northerners to see, we are letting our constituents into the

decision-making process, and allowing them to do that is one of the reasons I ran. Of course, this process is capped with the midterm review that will be taking place tomorrow, which, again, speaks to greater accountability and transparency in our consensus government.

Many of the processes that we have in place have been in place for a long time. They just have not been particularly public. Now we are able to do that. I think laying a road map for where we want this government to go, what kind of priorities are important, and what will be the best value for our money are all important considerations, as well as ensuring that the viewpoints and aspirations of all of our people, regardless of whether they are from Yellowknife or from smaller communities or regional centres, all equally reflected in this document.

Now, members of the public and, of course, honourable colleagues will note that there are changes, and there is a tracked change document that has been tabled as well as a companion to this revised mandate. I hope that the government will be in a position to speak to some of the changes and why they were made. In many cases, it is to have more realistic outcomes, but in some respects, many of the mandate commitments have not been advanced sufficiently within the last two-year period that marks this review period. If we are going to move off those mandate commitments, I think it is important to tell people why and to communicate very clearly with the public why some of the more ambitious goals that we have set for ourselves have to change. I hope we have the opportunity to do that today in this House and, if not, to communicate that through other means, through the government's own communication channels.

That being said, democracy is about compromise. That is its great strength, and we all have to give a little to get a lot for our constituents. At the end of the day, we will have a new revised mandate that will give more impact for the two-year period we have left. I look forward to continuing the debate on this document and to considering any potential changes that come forward on the floor today. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Next I have Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do look forward to the deliberations here on finalizing the mandate or the revised mandate for our second half term. In looking back and as mentioned by my colleague from the Deh Cho, we all contribute towards the mandate here originally with a wide range of diverse knowledge and expertise to contribute towards the mandate. I think right when the developments of the mandate were taken place there, it was realized by most of us that we probably wouldn't achieve all of them but we're going to certainly try.

As mentioned several times, it's essential and prudent management to review the mandate with additional amendments so that we move forward. I think we can all agree that the past term there were certainly a lot of changes, globally and territorially and nationally. Now our direction moving forward should reflect and accommodate those changes. Reviewing the mandate is essential in capturing the opportunities that are presented to us with the environmental economic changes. I'll leave it at that. I look forward to finalizing the mandate. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Next, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'm looking forward to the revised mandate as well. I know that the mandate document is a very, very big document. Sometimes, you kind of tend to look at the mandate and have a lot of difficulty really prioritizing the mandate. There is a lot of and it's a huge document. The larger the mandate gets, the priority the each of the items get.

For me, I look at the mandate and I apply certain things that I've come here to do. I come to the assembly and then I always said and I feel that any mandate items that provide employment to our citizens and in across the territory is a good mandate item. There are items that can be measured by looking at the improvement and the employment numbers across the territory. I'll look at the mandate items and I look at how it applies to the wellness of the community or wellness of the GNWT. I look at the mandate and decide whether or not or that if the correction facilities are beginning to empty out because people are well and whether or not the hospitals are beginning to empty out because people are well. Are there items in the mandate that address that issue? I look at the mandate and I apply education to it. Are the people getting more educated? Are people graduating at a higher rate? Are people preparing for jobs by getting training and so on? I look at the mandate and say to myself, "Is it taking care of the seniors?" The seniors are our most respected people and are we allowing the seniors to age in places a big mandate item? An important mandate item that I speak about often in the House and I think that the mandate items I do that and are important.

I look at how they support families in the GNWT. Does this mandate at the end of the day provide proper supports for people suffering from addictions? Does the mandate provide good health to the citizens of the Northwest Territories and good housing? Does this mandate address the cost of living? Does this mandate address early childhood development? How much of this mandate is targeted towards probably the greatest investment that any government can make and that is in early childhood development starting with pre-natal healthy families.

I know that the mandate has junior kindergarten in there. We've asked for daycare programs. Any of those types of things that are there to address early childhood development that will support the families that will move forward. We start to see the results by higher graduation rates. We have people in our small communities that are graduating at a rate only slightly above 50 per cent. We know statistically that once you graduate, even from grade 12, it opens the door for higher education. It also does one important thing. It gives you an 80 per cent chance of getting a job. Otherwise, you have less than 50 per cent chance of getting a job. I know that that's an important aspect and once people are educated and they're working and they get away from the addictions and so far, I look at this mandate to say, "Well, are those things being achieved by this mandate?" It'll be interesting that at the end of our term when we evaluate the mandate to see if those aspects were covered and have things improved as a result of this mandate and the work of our government and the work of our members in this assembly having proved the situation for the people of the Northwest Territories.

For me, that's what the whole idea of a mandate is. I look forward to help revising the mandate and then measuring the mandate to see if it's done what it has achieved and what it's intended to do. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't really have much to add. All I can say is that it makes good sense to line our future with our current environment. Our colleagues on both sides are strategizing their priorities. I think that's what we need to focus on as we're all each independent MLAs. We need to focus on the priorities in our region and capitalize on government to government relationships between the territorial government and Indigenous governments as well as the federal government. I think, in this day and age, the leadership is evolving. We need to work together to move forward to ensure that housing and health remain at the top, as well as jobs for our territory, and as well as looking at the economy.

What is happening around this world, and what are the demands for the metals and the diamonds and other resources that we have in the territory? I think we need to look at the big

picture and work with that, eventually coming to work together on some of the projects that are reasonable, some that are viable in each region, as well as training and opportunities for Indigenous groups. I think we need to ensure that, for Indigenous groups, self-determination in each region is a possibility so that we can move forward together. Otherwise, if we move forward separately, we are not going to really go far. It seems that we need to tighten up a little bit here and make that connection to work together. I think that is how we are going to achieve most of this mandate.

That is all I have to say, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak. Any further comments on these documents? Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: I have no further comments on this. Could you advise how we are going to review this document? Is it going to be page-by-page or in another way? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): There are no further general comments. We can consider any motions that there may be on the floor. Ms. Green.

COMMITTEE MOTION 113-18(2):
TABLED DOCUMENT 419-18(2): PROPOSED MANDATE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, 2016-2019, ADDITION OF TEXT REGARDING THE
KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY,
CARRIED

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If we could turn to page 11, I will introduce my first motion. I move that Tabled Document 419-18(2), Proposed Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019 (Revised), be amended on page 11 by adding the following words: "supporting the development and growth of post-secondary institutions and programs available in the NWT; researching the feasibility of creating a Northern centre of excellence to promote and support research, innovation, and use of traditional Indigenous knowledge, and foster partnerships with universities, governments, and other organizations." Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, this represents an expansion of this area to acknowledge that the knowledge economy is an important growth area for the NWT in terms of employment and that we would like to see those opportunities developed by introducing this amendment. Thank you.

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

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We had a vigorous round of discussion around this issue of a knowledge economy, and we, all the honourable Members, felt that this was an effective way to start addressing some of these issues.

The rule of thumb, I guess, in the world has been that manufacturing and industry follows low-cost labour, and we are seeing that trend reverse. The knowledge economies are becoming the driver of production in the world, and actually, highly-skilled workers are slowly returning manufacturing back to countries that are developing knowledge economies.

Canada is well-positioned to make use of that. The federal government has recognized this and is investing millions of dollars in developing knowledge economy and moving Canada away from its traditional bread-and-butter economic drivers being the resource industry. I have

spoken about this in this Chamber before, and the City of Calgary is a perfect example of a local economy built on the strength of resource development that has diversified using its knowledge clusters, the university, centres for excellence and innovation, and now 40 per cent of its workforce is employed in the creative industry.

What does that mean for the North? We have other challenges. We have a significantly smaller population. We have limited access to post-secondary institutions and other centres of innovation and excellence. We have to start a plan to develop those so that we do not get outpaced when southern Canada starts shifting towards this as well. There is always going to be a place for the resource economy and resource development in the Northwest Territories. We need it to fuel these other innovations, but if we fail to diversify towards a knowledge economy, we are missing the boat on where the direction of this country and the entire world is heading. We cannot be left out by this.

That means a complete rethinking of our labour market. It means investing in information and computer technology jobs and opportunities to grow them, and it means building a plan that will develop centres for excellence, identifying knowledge clusters, and developing those resources so that we can make use of where the knowledge economy is growing and how it works.

There is a lot of work to be done on this. It can be a complicated and often confusing issue. This motion puts in our mandate the foundation for building a knowledge economy plan that will grow over time so that we keep pace with these developments that are happening all over the world and in Canada. It will also better position us to access those federal funds that are flowing from Ottawa to support the growth of this industry. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I will keep this very short. This is one of the changes that I do support, and I am well on record in this House as supporting post-secondary education here in the Northwest Territories and how we do not have a university. There are no universities north of 60 degrees, no universities in northern Canada, and I have talked about how a community like Akureyri in Iceland, 19,000 people, has a university, and there are Canadian students there studying circumpolar matters because they cannot do it in Canada. I am well on record supporting the development of a knowledge economy and the need for a post-secondary education strategy for the Northwest Territories. Thank, Mr. Chair.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

The motion is carried. Thank you, committee. Anything further from committee? Ms. Green.

COMMITTEE MOTION 114-18(2):
 TABLED DOCUMENT 419-18(2): PROPOSED MANDATE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
 NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, 2016-2019, ADDITION OF TEXT REGARDING POST-
 SECONDARY EDUCATION, TRADES-ORIENTED LEARNING AND NORTHERN
 EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS,
 CARRIED

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that Tabled Document 419-18 (2), Proposed Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019 (Revised), be amended on page 17 by adding the following words: "through Aurora College and other educational partners, we will develop and promote post-secondary programs designed to meet the Northwest Territories' needs in high-demand occupations identified in the Labour Market Forecast and Needs Assessment (2016)." Thank you.

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

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, this follows on from the previous motion where we are trying to strengthen post-secondary education in the Northwest Territories to equip the workforce for coming high-demand occupations. That has already been studied. We know what those occupations are. We just need to make sure that we are in a position to train people to fill them. Thank you.

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

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to request a recorded vote on this motion.

RECORDED VOTE

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Question has been called. The Member has requested a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): All those opposed, please rise. All those abstaining, please rise. The results of the recorded vote are: 17 in favour; zero opposed; zero abstentions. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Thank you, committee. Anything further? Ms. Green.

COMMITTEE MOTION 115-18(2):
 TABLED DOCUMENT 419-18(2): PROPOSED MANDATE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
 NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, 2016-2019, ADDITION OF TEXT REGARDING NORTHERN
 SOLUTIONS FOR HOUSING,
 CARRIED

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I move that Tabled Document 419-18 (2), Proposed Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019 (Revised), be amended on page 20 by inserting the words: "reduce the number of households and core housing need in the NWT by 250 households per year for the next three years; create a comprehensive and fully-costed plan to reduce core need; increase lobbying of the federal government to halt the continued reduction in CMHC operation and maintenance funding; prepare to take maximum advantage of federal housing funds when available." Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. There is a motion on the floor. It has been distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the effect of this motion is to put the content of a motion that we passed in this House on June 2016 into this mandate. At that time, we voted unanimously to address the long-standing issue of the shortage of safe, affordable housing in the Northwest Territories. This was something that we did after the original mandate document was created. We are catching up now by putting this motion in.

What we know about core housing need in the NWT is that there are about 15,000 households in the NWT, and approximately 20 per cent of those households are in core housing need, which means the houses are either unsuitable, inadequate, or unaffordable. Briefly, that means they are either not big enough, not in good enough repair, or they cost more than 30 per cent of a family's net income.

The thrust of this amendment is to provide a tangible goal to work towards in terms of reducing core need across the NWT in the life of this assembly. Thank you.

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

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to request a recorded vote.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I just would like to get some clarity on this. It is 250 households per year for the next three years. That sort of gets over into the next Assembly, which is fine by me, but does anybody want to clarify that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): To the motion. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the effect of this motion is that the spending will happen by the end of the fiscal year 2019-2020. That is a budget that we will pass in this assembly before we go back to the electorate. Thank you.

RECORDED VOTE

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Question has been called. The Member has requested a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): All opposed, please stand. All abstaining, please stand. Thank you, committee. The results of the recorded vote are: 17 in favour; 0 opposed; 0 abstentions. The motion is carried.

---Carried

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Ms. Green.

COMMITTEE MOTION 116-18(2):
ADDITION OF TEXT REGARDING MAKING CHILDCARE ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE,
CARRIED

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we are still in the cost of living section. I move that Tabled Document 419-18(2), Proposed Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019 (Revised) be amended on page 23 by inserting the words "creating an action plan for a phased-in approach to making childcare more accessible and affordable." Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, our original mandate document called on the government to create a plan to provide for universal child care in the Northwest Territories. The intention there was not necessarily to look for the funding to implement universal child care within the life of this Assembly, but to ensure that there was a plan in place in the event that there was money available to implement universal child care. As it turns out, the new federal government does have money to create 40,000 new spaces for child care in Canada over the next ten years. What we need is a plan so that when the bilateral negotiations finish, and this money begins to flow, we have a solid understanding of where we need to improve accessibility and affordability of child care by creating this plan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Earlier in general comments, I said how, I neglected to say that I actually support most of the changes that are going to come forward. This is one, though, that I think the public deserves to know more about. This is a fundamental change in the document, in the mandate, that was tailored by Cabinet about what we are going to do about child care. The original mandate document reads "implementing universal and affordable child care." The version that has been tabled by Cabinet reads "making child care available and affordable." The words "universal" have been taken out. All along, I have objected to this change, and certainly back in December of 2015, when we were collectively putting forward our own individual priorities, I said that children, and more specifically child care, was one of the three priorities that I felt that we should be working together on.

Where that arose from was the work of the 17th Assembly. In December of 2013, there was a motion that was passed unanimously in the House that called for a feasibility study to be done

on child care. That work was done by the University of Toronto. It was a well-researched document, and it said that if we were to implement universal child care here in the Northwest Territories along the lines of a Quebec model, it would cost us \$20 million a year. There are additional benefits as well that would result in increased GDP of \$16 million or more, increased labour income in excess of \$15 million. It would create about 200 new jobs, increase female participation in the work force, increase tax revenue, and decrease social assistance. That is kind of the benefits we could get with universal child care. We are moving away from that, and I think the public deserves to know this, and we should be transparent and open about it.

I will support the motion that is here because at least we will end up with an action plan. It is not clear to me, though, how we would actually ever measure something like making child care more accessible and affordable. What does that really mean? I guess I have been on record saying, I believe this is a broken promise on the part of our government, something that I do not support, a moving away from universal child care. I would like to know from my Cabinet colleagues, why they are backing away from this commitment for universal child care? Is it too expensive? Are there other commitments that are a higher priority? I would like to start with that, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to ask for a recorded vote. Thank you.

RECORDED VOTE

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Testart. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

COMMITTEE CLERK (Ms. Franki-Smith): 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, Mr. Testart, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Thompson, and Mr. O'Reilly.

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

The results of the recorded vote are 17 in favour; zero opposed; zero abstentions.

---Carried

Ms. Green.

COMMITTEE MOTION 117-18(2): REPLACEMENT OF TEXT REGARDING WORKING COLLABORATIVELY TO REDUCE POVERTY, CARRIED

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our final amendment is on page 27 in the section Community Wellness and Safety. I move that Tabled Document 419-18(2), Proposed Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019 (Revised), be amended on page 27 by deleting the words "We will continue to work collaboratively to reduce poverty in the NWT by funding community-based partners, convening meetings of stakeholders, finalizing indicators

that allow performance to be assessed, and developing additional options for action" and inserting the words "we will continue to work collaboratively to reduce poverty in the NWT by funding community-based partners, convening meetings of stakeholders, finalizing indicators that allow performance to be assessed, collecting information from these indicators into an annual report, developing additional options for action, and ensuring continuous quality improvement to the administration of the anti-poverty fund based on evaluation results." Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. There is a motion on the floor. The motion has been distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion? Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The effect of this motion is to make the wording in this particular bullet more specific since the mandate was passed in March of last year. There have been two roundtables convened, and there has been some progress in identifying performance measures for reducing poverty. It is my understanding that at the next roundtable in November, there will be a type of report available to participants that will show what progress has been made on these indicators. This is one area where fighting poverty is something that we all aspire to, but making progress is something that we need to measure. The government has invested significant money into this area in a number of different ways. It is not only in the anti-poverty fund, but in the child tax credit, and the increase to the seniors' benefit.

We need to know whether this is making progress on people who are living on low income, and by selecting and reporting on indicators, we will be able to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to request for a recorded vote. Thank you.

RECORDED VOTE

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Testart. To the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

COMMITTEE CLERK (Ms. Franki-Smith): 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, Mr. Testart, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Thompson, and Mr. O'Reilly.

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

The results of the recorded vote are 17 in favour; zero opposed; zero abstentions.

---Carried

Thank you, committee. I was going to congratulate our clerk here on her TV debut, but I think you have been pre-empted by bingo already. Anything further? Seeing nothing, does committee agree that consideration of Tabled Document 419-18(2) and Committee Report 12-18(2) are concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Tabled Document 419-18(2) and Committee Report 12-18(2) are concluded. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the chair rise and report progress.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: May I have the report, Member for Hay River North.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, you committee has been considering Tabled Document 419-18(2) Proposed Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories; and Committee Report 12-18(2), Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning Report on the Progress Review of the Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019. I would like to report progress with five motions being adopted, and that Tabled Document 419-18(2) and Committee Report 12-18(2) are concluded. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Do I have a seconder? The Member for Kam Lake. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

Masi. Item 22, third reading of bills. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 27, AN ACT TO AMEND THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, 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 third time. Mr. Speaker, I would request a recorded vote.

RECORDED VOTE

MR. SPEAKER: The Member has requested a recorded vote. The motion is in order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

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

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

The results of the votes: 18 in favour; zero against; zero abstentions.

---Carried

Bill 27 has had its third reading.

Colleagues, I would like to thank the Pages who have joined us in the Chamber during this sitting, the interpreters who have been with us each day, and the contractors who have contributed to the success of this sitting as well. We appreciate the hard work and dedication that you show each day.

Today, we will conclude the second session of the 18th Legislative Assembly. The Third Session is scheduled to begin on Tuesday, October 19, 2017. Before we conclude, I would like to take this opportunity to remind everybody that the mid-term review committee will gather in this Chamber tomorrow, October 5th, at 9:00 a.m. to commence the mid-term review.

Early in the life of this Assembly, we, as Members, committed to hold a public mid-term review in an effort to demonstrate our shared commitment to greater transparency and accountability. Our standing committee on rules and procedures has considered the matter and recommended a process which has been agreed to by all Members of this House.

The proceedings of the mid-term review committee will be televised live across the NWT on local community channels and direct-to-home satellite on the Bell and Shaw Direct networks. It will also be broadcast via Facebook live on the Legislative Assembly Facebook page and on CKLB Radio on Thursday evening from 7:30-9:30 p.m. The public and media are invited to observe the proceedings of the 18th Legislative Assembly's mid-term review committee from the public gallery.

Mr. Clerk, will you ascertain the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable Margaret Thom, is prepared to enter the Chamber and prorogue the second session of the 18th Legislative Assembly.

Prorogation

COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Hon. Margaret Thom): Friends and relatives, in my language, I have said that I am thankful to be here, and that we have been brought together to work together, and to do our work that we were meant to do.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly, good afternoon.

I have just returned from Ottawa late last night, where my husband, Jim, and I had the honour of attending the Installation Ceremony for Canada's new Governor General, Her Excellency Julie Payette. As you may have heard on the news, her statement emphasized on science, and more importantly on teamwork. "We are all in this together."

Jim and I also had the opportunity to meet several of the provincial Lieutenant Governors, as well as the two territorial Commissioners from Nunavut and the Yukon.

ASSENT TO BILLS

Now, as Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I am pleased to assent to the following bills:

- Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Coroners Act
- Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Residential Tenancies Act

- Bill 27, An Act to Amend the Environmental Protection Act
- Bill 28, Interpretation Act
- Bill 29, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017
- Bill 30, Health Statutes Law Amendment Act (Cremation Services)
- Bill 33, Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2018-2019

Prior to proroguing this Second Session of the 18th Legislative Assembly, I wish to announce that the Third Session of the 18th Legislative Assembly will convene on Tuesday, October 17, 2017 at 1:30 p.m.

Now, as Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I hereby prorogue the Second Session of the 18th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

Mahsi cho, quyanainni, koana, merci beaucoup, thank you.

---PROROGATION

The House prorogued at 4:50 p.m.