

HANSARD
UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2018
YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

As this is an unedited transcript, direct quotes may not be used as Members and witnesses have until 10:00 a.m. the morning following receipt of transcript in which to make corrections in the event they have been misquoted. Please note the page number of any corrections below.

CORRECTIONS: _____

PLEASE SEND ANY CORRECTIONS TO HANSARD EDITOR
kate_covello@gov.nt.ca

OR

TO THE HANSARD BASKET, FRONT DESK OF THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	1
BUDGET ADDRESS	1
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	11
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	13
17-18(3) – Celebrating Recipients of the Governor General of Canada's Corrections Exemplary Service Medal	13
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	14
Addictions Treatment Facilities Tour (Thompson)	14
Addictions Treatment Facilities Tour (Green)	15
Addictions Treatment (McNeely).....	15
Addictions Services in Communities (Nakimayak).....	16
Arts Funding (Testart)	17
Arts Funding (Vanthuyne).....	17
Stanton Renewal Project (O'Reilly).....	19
Constituency Concerns of Hay River Secondary School Students (Simpson) ...	19
Child and Family Services – Child Apprehension (Beaulieu).....	21
National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (Nadli).....	22
Transportation Infrastructure Investment (Blake).....	23
ORAL QUESTIONS	23
59-18(3) – Treatment Facilities Contracted by the GNWT (Thompson)	23
60-18(3) – Availability of Services After Addictions Treatment (Green).....	25
61-18(3) – Arts Funding (Vanthuyne)	27

62-18(3) – Contribution of the Arts and Culture Sector (Testart)	29
63-18(3) – Concerns of Hay River Secondary School Students (Simpson)	30
64-18(3) – Stanton Renewal Project (O’Reilly)	32
65-18(3) – North Slave Correctional Centre Inmate Concerns (McNeely).....	34
66-18(3) – National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (Nadli)	36
67-18(3) – Mental Health and Addictions Recovery Action Plan (Nakimayak) ...	37
68-18(3) – Infrastructure Projects in the Mackenzie Delta (Blake)	39
69-18(3) – Child and Family Services System (Beaulieu)	40
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	43
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	44
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	44
ORDERS OF THE DAY	44

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Thursday, February 8, 2018

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. Vanthuyne.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty): Good afternoon, Members. Item 2, opening address. Minister of Finance.

Budget Address

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Introduction

Mr. Speaker, this, the third budget of the 18th Legislative Assembly, demonstrates determined progress in providing opportunities for Northwest Territories residents to build a better future, even in the face of declining revenues and economic uncertainty.

At the start of this Assembly we defined what we wanted to accomplish together for the long-term future of the Northwest Territories. This budget continues to support this vision by investing in the priorities set out in this Assembly's mandate and by protecting and enhancing existing programs and services while holding firm on restoring fiscal sustainability.

This budget provides resources to update our land and natural resource management and to work on long-term energy and climate change plans to help lower the cost of living and help our people adapt to the effects of climate change.

This budget provides the funds to enhance our efforts to provide residents with better training and education for the jobs of the future.

This budget provides the means to support our communities to become stronger, safer and more caring and to enhance support for our people struggling with personal challenges like mental health and addictions.

This budget provides resources to further our evolving relationships with Northwest Territories Indigenous governments so that our common priorities benefit all Northwest Territories residents.

This budget provides investments to continue our work to strengthen traditionally strong sectors of our economy in an environmentally responsible manner and to support economic diversification and new economic opportunities.

I would like to thank my Cabinet colleagues, the standing committees, and other groups and individuals for their input and advice.

Fiscal Strategy and Budget Highlights

Mr. Speaker, the 2018-2019 budget proposes operating expenditures of \$1.713 billion, paid for with \$1.75 billion in estimated revenues. This leaves a projected operating surplus of \$23 million, the lowest in seven years. The size of this surplus raises two red flags for our fiscal plan. First, as most would know, we have two spending budgets, the operating budget that I am presenting today and the capital budget that was approved in the last session, which totalled \$237 million in infrastructure spending for 2018-2019. We use our operating surpluses to pay for at least a portion of our annual infrastructure budget. A smaller operating surplus leaves less available cash to continue to invest in our infrastructure plan without adding to our debt.

Second, lower operating surpluses in the future mean that the government will not be in a position to reduce its overall cash deficit during this Assembly. In fact, short-term borrowing is now projected to increase but by less than what was accumulated during each of the last two Assemblies.

Coming into the 18th Legislative Assembly, we know that our expenditures were growing faster than our revenue and that we needed to adopt a fiscal strategy that aligned expenditure growth with revenue growth, that created capacity to invest in our priorities, and that returned us to generating a cash surplus to reduce our accumulated short-term debt.

This budget I am presenting today has \$84 million less revenue than what we had at the start of this Assembly. This decline over a three-year period is unprecedented in the history of our government and underscores the need for the steps we have had to take.

When we set our fiscal objectives, we knew that achieving them would require difficult choices. We believe that in the medium term we will start to see modest revenue increases, but we will need to continue to manage our financial resources very carefully so that we do not compromise our ability to deliver quality programs and services and our ability to take steps to address the issues we face as a territory.

In this budget we continue to meet this challenge. We are making investments needed to support existing programs and to address the priorities in our mandate through new initiatives without compromising our fiscal strategy.

Expenditures

This budget proposes a net spending increase of \$57 million from the 2017-2018

budget, including \$21 million in new initiatives and \$20 million to enrich or maintain existing programs. We are also intending to add \$37.8 million in expenditures to adjust department budgets that currently do not reflect the realities of their spending pressures.

This increase in spending is offset by \$28 million in expenditure savings and from programs that are scheduled to expire. In total, we are proposing to spend \$1.713 billion in 2018-2019 of which fully \$1.1 billion, or 64 per cent, will be invested in social programs such as education, health care, social services, housing, policing and corrections.

Economy, Environment and Climate Change

Mr. Speaker, our economy needs support. Following the oil price collapse, the Beaufort Delta has depended on GNWT infrastructure projects such as the construction of the Inuvik Tuktoyaktuk Highway for jobs. While the Sahtu region has received the good news that the National Energy Board has approved the plans to repair the Norman Wells pipeline, this is tempered by the announcement last December that the Mackenzie gas project joint venture has ended and our Delta gas is stranded without access to southern markets for the foreseeable future. In as little as 10 years, one of our world-class diamond mines may close.

We are being rewarded for past investments in the economy through jobs and opportunities for our communities. The Inuvik Tuktoyaktuk Highway is now open. This important piece of our transportation network has attracted national attention for its design and construction and will pay dividends to Northerners in the region through lower prices and year-round access to trade, which will create economic opportunities into the future. This budget proposes to ensure the continued success of this transportation corridor with an additional \$1.7 million for the incremental operations and maintenance costs for the new highway.

To develop our economy further, the first step is to look to the key economic driver of the territory: mining. The diamond mines account for almost one-fifth of the NWT economy and directly employ almost 3,000 people. When the linkages to other business are considered, the importance is considerably more. We have been through the gold mines' closing and we know what will happen to our economy as the diamond mines mature if there is nothing left to take their place.

The good news is that the global mining industry is showing signs of growing interest and activity. Capital investment in the Northwest Territories mining sector is increasing as a result of the expansion projects at the existing diamond mines. There are other projects at various stages of development that need capital financing and that then could be underway. The exploration sector also appears to be starting to grow as the number of prospectors applying for the Mineral Incentive Program funding is increasing.

We need to support the mining sector so that we can maintain a cycle of exploration and development that as much as possible has a new mine starting production as an existing mine winds down. We want systematic development of our mineral resources to provide good paying jobs and business opportunities for Northwest Territories residents

for years to come.

To achieve this goal, we are proposing \$1.1 million in this budget to further work under the Mineral Development Strategy, complete the review of the Mineral Resources Act, and continue the on-going commitment to the expanded Mining Incentive Program. This funding will continue the GNWT's work in convincing the global mining industry that the Northwest Territories is an attractive place to invest. As important, the funding will also allow us to better evaluate the effectiveness of the Mineral Development Strategy over the past few years in advancing the Legislative Assembly's mandate.

The second step is to strengthen our efforts to support economic diversification. Industries like tourism play an important role in our economy, and the investments that we have made in the tourism industry have helped to increase the number of visitors over the past few years. To further support diversification, this budget proposes to add \$1.3 million to implement the Agriculture Strategy. These funds will help reduce the barriers to commercial agriculture by improving access to land that is viable for agriculture and creating a regulatory framework for the safe production, distribution, and sale of farm products. This funding will also be used to protect the environment, wildlife, and other people through developing both rules governing waste management and plans for reducing the risk of new pathogens and potentially dangerous, invasive species and pests, which increases with the introduction of different animals and crops.

Over top of the direct actions to support the economy, our over-arching imperative is to protect the land. We want to see a well-managed environment contributing to our economic well-being and quality of life for Northerners. For that reason, we are proposing to invest an additional \$1.2 million for activities in support of climate change resilience and adaptation capacity, to advance candidate protected areas and for caribou management. These new funds will be used to advance the GNWT's five-year northern approach to conservation network planning, including finalizing the process for existing candidate areas, such as the Thaidene Nene Park, and defining the ultimate extent and components of the conservation network.

The measure of a strong economy is not just the growth in GDP but whether it provides good jobs for Northwest Territories residents. Our responsibility is to invest in skill development so that our residents have every opportunity possible to develop the knowledge and abilities to take advantage of the jobs that are available. We propose to add \$2.2 million in this budget to begin implementation of the Skills4Success strategy, as well as implement a new program that will increase training positions available within the GNWT and to continue to improve our Student Financial Assistance program.

Every year on average, there are 750 Northwest Territories post-secondary students in their final year of studies who are expected to be seeking employment. This additional funding will create the team to help these students seize the employment opportunities in the territory for the many jobs that require post-secondary education and raise the awareness of high school students and other youth about the many employment and training opportunities that exist in the Northwest Territories, the academic requirements of these jobs, and how to acquire the necessary skills and qualifications to obtain them.

Education, Training and Youth Development

There may not be a more important priority for this government than ensuring that more children finish high school with a quality education that gives them the option of pursuing post-secondary education. We expect that over the next 15 years over three-quarters of the jobs in the Northwest Territories will require some form of post-secondary schooling and less than one in 10 jobs will require less than high school. If our children are already behind by grade 3, their future choices for employment as adults are already starting to narrow. We must build on successes from our \$155-million investment in the junior-kindergarten-to-grade-12 system to improve our children's and youths' education outcomes.

Seven years ago, the Beaufort-Delta Divisional Education Council started the pilot project that changed distance learning in the district with school-based support teachers and in-person meetings with students. The GNWT's Education Renewal initiative will help transform this project into the Northern Distance Learning program with the happy result that, where other approaches rarely saw even one-third of the course completed, this program has brought student course completion rates to 70 per cent.

We propose in this budget to build on this success through a \$1.6-million investment in the Northern Distance Learning program for small communities. This initiative will bring a higher level of access to quality education to students in these small schools than we have seen since grade extensions began in the 1990s.

Now that junior kindergarten has been implemented in all 33 communities, we are making good on our promise in last year's budget with an additional \$2.1-million investment. With overall enrolments less than what we expected, we are also going to direct an additional \$881,000 towards providing inclusive schooling funding for junior kindergarten students.

Mr. Speaker, discussions with our youth has made it clear that they faced our most serious social stressors alone, including substance abuse, family violence, unemployment, and homelessness, because the adults in their lives also struggle with these issues. This budget calls for an additional \$1.5 million to put more child and youth mental health counsellors in our schools. These positions will add significant capacity to help our youth and their families address mental health and addiction issues, to support mental wellness, and to build coping and resiliency skills.

We are the only jurisdiction in Canada to have eleven official languages. This budget includes the \$4.3 million in funding received from the federal government to support French and Indigenous languages within the Northwest Territories. This funding helps to implement our action plans for French and Indigenous language so that we can better connect to each other, preserve our heritage, and tell our stories about the land that sustains us.

Community Wellness and Safety

Delivering health and social services to Northwest Territories residents consumes over a quarter of the GNWT's total operating expenses. This year's budget expands and strengthens our health and social services and ensures programs are resourced at appropriate levels through a \$20.7-million adjustment for out-of-territory hospital and

physician services, residential southern placements, extended health benefits, and Metis health benefits. We also propose to adjust the departmental budget to provide \$6.8 million in on-going operations support for our long-term care facilities and homecare, community care, and mental health and addictions services across the territories and \$500,000 for the ongoing funding for the youth-in-crisis mental health program. Finally, a further \$6.7 million for the new territorial hospital annual service payment is added in the budget adjustments.

We continue to invest in the priorities of the Assembly through new initiatives. Through this budget, we propose to invest \$1.5 million to improve services for children with development delays and to develop a more coordinated and effective approach to enhancing services to address the differing needs of children and adults with complex disorders such as fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and autism spectrum disorder. Almost half of this additional funding will be targeted to expand services for young children in small communities who need speech language therapy, occupational therapy, and audiology services as well as enhancing services for other complex neurological disorders.

Homelessness and public intoxication are issues in our community. In Yellowknife, the dual tragedies of mental health problems and addictions are being played out in public areas and on downtown streets and have increased pressures on government services including the RCMP, the City of Yellowknife's ambulance service, and the Stanton Territorial Hospital's emergency department over the past two years. We are working with our partners to put better programs in place to address these issues. As an important step, this budget proposes \$762,000 for the Yellowknife Sobering Centre to make sure that there is a safe shelter and safe transportation to that shelter for intoxicated and homeless people at all hours of the day.

We continue to support community safety through a \$2.6 million enhancement to the Department of Justice's budget to improve access to justice services, to increase support for community justice committees, and to further support the RCMP.

Mr. Speaker, we propose to change the way we address murdered and missing persons cases by investing \$304,000 to fund a historical case unit that will focus on the continued investigation of unsolved murdered and missing persons. Currently, the RCMP Major Crimes Unit is responsible for these investigations and has 63 open but unsolved cases. A dedicated historical case unit within the RCMP will allow the Major Crimes Unit to continue to deal with the newest cases as they happen while the new unit focuses on solving older murdered and missing cases. We expect to close more cases through this new unit.

We also propose in this budget to allocate \$224,000 to support assigning the responsibility for prisoner security to the Yellowknife Sheriff's Office, so that our RCMP officers may focus on their other policing responsibilities that require their specialized skills.

Cost of Living

The high cost of living is a reality for northern communities. The GNWT invests more

than \$186 million annually in programs that directly support low-income families and that offset the high cost of living for residents across the Northwest Territories. Despite this, almost one in five Northwest Territories residents does not always have enough to eat.

This is unacceptable, especially for a people who can obtain good, nutritious food from hunting, fishing, and gathering. This budget proposes to address the 18th Legislative Assembly's Mandate to improve food security by investing \$412,000 in a country food strategy. Working with Northwest Territories residents, we expect to produce a consensus vision and objectives and to propose actions that will guide the development of country food programming and to support the long-term sustainability of country food systems.

We also propose to include \$3.3 million in additional resources to further support low-income residents and offset the high cost of living for everyone. The new funding will be directed to increase income assistance, funding for anti-poverty initiatives, and to address pressures in the Senior Citizen and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Program and the Territorial Power Subsidy Program.

Affordable housing is a priority for this Assembly, and we propose to help address this priority with \$3.8 million to provide incentives for homeowners to replace fuel tanks and to provide funding to cover additional costs for water and sanitation services for public housing. This funding also includes resources for the market rental units being constructed for the RCMP, which will provide ongoing revenue for the NWT Housing Corporation as well as employment opportunities in the communities for the construction and long-term maintenance of the assets.

Governance

Mr. Speaker, this Assembly has worked together in many ways to change the way we do business to reinforce our consensus government and strengthen collaboration with Northwest Territories Indigenous governments. This budget intends to continue improving accountability, transparency and collaboration, and general good governance through an additional \$1.3 million in funding for community governments. This includes greater funding for operations and maintenance and water and sewer expenses for community governments as part of our commitment to ensure that community governments are funded adequately for municipal services.

When we took responsibility for our lands and resources under the Devolution Agreement, we knew we would have a lot of work ahead for ourselves. Together with collaborative partnerships at other levels of government, we transitioned through devolution smoothly.

This budget allocates \$1.3 million to support the GNWT efforts to increase its capacity for land use planning through a new land use planner position and to advance our tenure-enforcement efforts concerning unauthorized occupancy on public lands. This funding will also be used to convert maturing equity leases to fee-simple title so that Northwest Territories residents holding these leases can be comfortable with building homes, starting businesses, and contributing to the economic development of the

territory.

Our Mandate includes collaboration with other Northwest Territories governments and to improve government-to-government relations with all governments. We propose to invest \$1 million through this budget to help advance lands, rights, and resources and self-government agreements, and strengthen our capacity to work with the federal government.

Creating certainty around land ownership and access to land will help develop the economy, providing jobs, services, and income to Northwest Territories residents.

This budget proposes to invest \$485,000 to support key partnerships and initiatives, including the Northwest Territories-Nunavut Council of Friendship Centres, the Women in Politics Mandate priority, and our annual contribution to the Arctic Inspiration Prize.

Infrastructure

This Assembly approved infrastructure investments of \$237 million last October for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. The 2018-2019 capital budget will invest \$133 million for highways, winter roads, bridges, and culverts and \$44 million for health facilities, including the Stanton Territorial Hospital Renewal Project. Another \$60 million is budgeted for other investments, including community government infrastructure, new and renovated education facilities, information technology upgrades, and deferred maintenance and energy retrofits. Including the \$24 million NWT Housing Corporation investments, total GNWT capital investments will be \$261 million.

As many would be aware, the federal government has announced significant new spending on cost-shared programs to invest in territorial infrastructure. While the details of these programs are still being finalized, I want to provide assurance that our fiscal strategy will place the GNWT in a position to be a partner in these critical projects.

Revenue

Mr. Speaker, with the exception of the property and education mill rates that we increase by inflation every year, this budget does not propose to change the tax rates on any of our existing taxes.

However, careful management on the expenditure side of our budget must be balanced with new revenues where possible. During 2018-2019, we will be developing detailed proposals to implement a land transfer tax similar to other jurisdictions. This tax will raise an additional \$3.1 million annually and can be structured progressively by levying a smaller per centage on property of lower value to lower the impact on modest-income homeowners.

In last year's budget we announced our intention to introduce a sugary drinks tax in 2018-2019 with the objective to discourage consumption of sugary drinks. Excess sugar in the diets of many Northwest Territories residents is a serious public health concern, and this tax is one of the ideas to help reduce health problems such as obesity and diabetes and to improve oral health. We will continue to work with stakeholders on a proposed approach and to get feedback from residents.

Last November, we released our plan to address our responsibilities under the federal initiative to legalize cannabis consumption in July 2018 and expect to introduce draft legislation this month. In December, Canadian finance ministers agreed in principle to a cannabis taxation approach that we hope will best meet the objectives to restrict cannabis use by youth and as much as possible eliminate the illegal market. When we formalize this two-year agreement, the GNWT will receive 75 per cent of the federal cannabis excise tax generated in the Northwest Territories below the federal cap of \$100 million and 100 per cent of excise tax generated in the Northwest Territories above the federal cap.

Revenue estimates from cannabis taxes are not included in 2018-2019 budget because federal legislation to legalize cannabis has not been passed. Early estimates indicate that revenues from cannabis for the GNWT will be modest and that there are likely to be some increased expenditure pressures.

As noted in last year's budget, we have signed the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change, which includes carbon pricing as one of the pillars to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Over the course of this year, we have considered the implications of carbon pricing on the Northwest Territories economy and cost of living and have held a public discussion on the issue through an online survey. Later this year, the GNWT will announce its plans for carbon pricing and appropriate offsets to mitigate the effects on our already high cost of living and doing business in the Northwest Territories. We also look forward to further discussions regarding the Prime Minister's commitment to work with us to address our unique circumstances and to mitigate any territorial formula financing implications.

Looking Ahead

Mr. Speaker, looking ahead is about our expectations for the legacy of our changes. We are building a future on changes in the way we offer programs and services and are making the necessary investments to support the economy and our communities and to create the environment for our residents to seize opportunities to create better futures for themselves. We are two years from the start of a new Assembly, and we are continuing to look for ways to improve the future for our children and grandchildren.

The Northwest Territories economy continues to be built on a foundation of resource development. We are, however, facing the reality of maturing diamond mines and cannot take for granted that this economic foundation will last forever. Our challenge, and perhaps our legacy, is to ensure that we are making public investments that strengthen our economic foundation while also supporting diversification initiatives. We need to ensure that we have the infrastructure and the legislation and regulations to support our northern goal of a balanced approach to our economy and our environment.

Our investments in our children's education will enhance our next generation's chances for success and provide the economy with a well-educated workforce with the skills and knowledge needed to take advantage of any opportunities that will arise in the Northwest Territories. We are looking ahead almost a generation with our investments now.

At the moment, we face serious health and social issues and are making investments now to support our residents and meet the challenging social issues that many of our residents currently are struggling with. We see a healthy and thriving population taking advantage of our enhanced ability to deliver healthcare services at home and in healthcare facilities. We see residents benefitting today from our increased investments to address mental health issues and addictions so that they may achieve a better tomorrow.

We know that our territory is truly spectacular, and we see our investments as helping to secure a future with the same spectacular environment that we enjoy today. At the same time, we see rapid changes in our landscape that are rooted in climate change. Our land is vital to our well-being, and we embrace our duty to be responsible stewards and to protect it through our investments to conserve our land, waters, and wildlife. These are investments in our traditions and culture and in our future.

This Assembly has worked very hard to make these investments in our future a reality while sticking to the fiscal strategy and plan and accepting the challenges of restoring fiscal sustainability that make these investments possible.

Mr. Speaker, the 18th Legislative Assembly has done a remarkable job of managing expenditure growth, which has become more important with revenue growth faltering. We have through careful management of our expenditures proposed substantial investments in this budget to harness change in program delivery and to add initiatives to build a better tomorrow. We have focused our new spending on building on the successes of past initiatives and on addressing our priorities through increased funding for key programs and services so that we are supporting our residents where it is needed most.

We cannot rest yet. Revenue shocks beyond our control have meant we are not where we wanted to be by this time in our fiscal plan. We must accept that we are still adding to the debt that future residents will have to pay. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that our revenue decreases this year and next year and slow revenue growth into the future reflect the state of our economy and the critical importance of making investments that will help support economic growth in the future.

Our fiscal situation creates challenges, but we remain committed to reducing our level of expenditures so that we can ensure ongoing operating surpluses that are, in addition to prudent borrowing, critical to supporting investments for the benefit of Northwest Territories residents for decades to come. Our investments in our priorities are supporting current Northwest Territories residents and will also benefit future generations by ensuring a well-managed environment that contributes to our well-being and quality of life and to a strong economy that provides jobs and opportunities for our communities.

This Assembly's past actions as responsible fiscal stewards have kept our fiscal strategy on track. The fiscal plan is working. With the continued support of this Assembly, we can address our fiscal environment while still investing for a better tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Colleagues, at this time, I will call for a short break. I also invite the public in the gallery to join us for a short reception in the great hall.

---SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER: Welcome back, everyone. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to request unanimous consent to move to item 6 on the order paper, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Unanimous consent granted

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the recipients of the Governor General's award for corrections exemplary services in correctional officers. They are here today, and I thank them for their tremendous work in our correctional facilities here, in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Justina Black, Tyler Smith-Tsetta and Catherine Lafferty from the Dechinta University. Thank you.

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

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize two young ladies in the hall today: Kristine Sibbeston -- and I won't tell stories about her except I've known her since she's been a young lady -- and who is also part of the Dechinta University, as well, Cathy Kotchilea from Fort Liard. So, I welcome her to the Legislative Assembly. Thank you. All the friends that I know here, I would also like to recognize you. Thank you.

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

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's a strong showing from Hay River North today. I would like to welcome Roy and Kathleen Houchray, Sharon Caudron, Diane Chisholm, and Jackie Milne was here earlier, as well. Welcome. Thank you for joining us.

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

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Here are the Fort Smith residents who are with us today and who will be presented with the Governor General of Canada's Corrections Exemplary Service Medal: Toko James MacDonald, John Barry Bernhardt, Warren Gillis, Stella Waltherhouse, Andrea Steed, Doreen Schaefer. I thank you for being here and look forward to seeing you when you receive this honour this evening. Thank you.

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

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Catherine Lafferty as a resident of Yellowknife North. She is also the director of Community Development and Indigenous Education for Dechinta. I would like to welcome her to the House as well as other members from Dechinta. Welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Hay River South.

MR. SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize an individual from Hay River who won the Governor General of Canada Exemplary Correctional Service medal, Jeffrey Lamoureux. Congratulations. I would also like to recognize Doris Caudron from Hay River South. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is a rare treat to recognize constituents from my riding that are here today. First and foremost, I want to recognize Agnes Bonnetrouge, who has been a student, gone to university down south, and she is back home. At the same time, I want to recognize Sam Gargan, the former MLA, the Speaker, and the current mayor of Fort Providence and also an associate and a supporter of the Dechinta University and also member of the Dechinta University, as well. Mahsi.

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

MS. COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a Range Lake constituent. We have an agreement because I have butchered his name too many times. David W. is in the audience, and I welcome him here. I would also, as the Minister for the Status of Women, want to recognize Commissioner Margaret Thom, one of my favourite people, great leader of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time, I would just like to welcome and recognize the staff, board members, and alumni for Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning. Welcome to the House. I hope you enjoy the proceedings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge and welcome Margaret Thom in the gallery. We need more strong leaders like Margaret in this house. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. I would also like to recognize Sam Gargan, former Member, former Speaker. Welcome to our Assembly.

The Honourable Margaret Thom, who is here with us as commissioner, masi for joining us. If we have missed anyone in the gallery, it is always nice to have an audience as part of our proceedings. Welcome. Masi. Item 3, Ministers' statements. Minister of Justice.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 17-18(3): CELEBRATING RECIPIENTS OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA'S CORRECTIONS EXEMPLARY SERVICE MEDAL

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, our mandate has outlined direct actions to improve the lives of Northerners. For the Department of Justice, this includes a commitment to offer programming that meets the rehabilitative needs of inmates.

An integral part of the work that the Department of Justice does requires that dedicated individuals in our corrections service constantly learn and adapt to the needs and best practices for helping inmates in our system. These professionals are tasked with providing the safe and secure custody of inmates and supporting their successful reintegration upon release.

This is not easy work, Mr. Speaker, and our corrections professionals work hard to provide culturally appropriate programming and to foster an environment that responds to the various and changing needs for rehabilitation. While this field of work is challenging, we know that it is extremely important.

Tonight, joined by many of my colleagues in this Chamber and the Honourable Commissioner Margaret Thom, 23 correction, probation, and peace officers from the Northwest Territories will be honoured for their exceptional service. Corrections professionals from Yellowknife, Fort Smith, and Hay River will be awarded the Governor General of Canada's Corrections Exemplary Service Medal.

These medals recognize distinguished service and are a tangible expression of national gratitude. The fact that we will recognize a total of 23 individuals tonight speaks to the strong calibre of the corrections service in the NWT.

To be considered for this honour, you must have worked for more than 20 years in the corrections field, including as peace officer or probation officer in an institution or in a capacity which has brought you into contact with offenders as part of your regular work duties. All of the medal recipients for the Northwest Territories, many of whom are with us today, have demonstrated good conduct, industry, efficiency, and most importantly have served our residents in an exemplary manner.

Today's corrections professionals are involved with inmates from the moment they enter a facility or receive their probation orders. They work alongside inmates and model behaviours, demonstrate leadership, and encourage programming options so that people can begin to make positive changes in their lives.

Mr. Speaker, our government is proud of our corrections service. As the outstanding

individuals who will be receiving the Corrections Exemplary Service Medals demonstrate, we have caring, compassionate, and dedicated employees who are committed to making a difference in the lives of others. On behalf of the people of the Northwest Territories, please join me in expressing our congratulations to this dedicated group of professionals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Item 4, Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ADDICTIONS TREATMENT FACILITIES TOUR

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On December 3rd to 8th, the Standing Committee on Social Development and the Minister of Health and Social Services had the opportunity to visit the four treatment centres that the Government of the Northwest Territories has contracts with, that provide treatment programs for the residents of the NWT. As well, we had the opportunity to visit Guthrie House, part of the BC Corrections, that provide residents and inmates with the unique program that helps them deal with trauma and addictions.

Mr. Speaker, the trip was about clearer links between addictions and mental health in the NWT and mental health hospitalizations. Harm caused by alcohol consumption and growing community concerns regarding fentanyl use also weighs on Northerners' minds. This tour will give us a better understanding of the experience of NWT residents in treatment and recovery and of how we can improve our programs and services.

As we all have witnessed loved ones and friends struggle with addictions, trauma and/or mental illness over the years, this trip was an eye-opener for me. We witnessed first-hand the programs and had the opportunity to speak to some of the residents. They spoke about the treatment programs and why they were working for themselves. I realize that these facilities are down south and that this is a struggle for some. I wish we could have the capacity in the north to deal with these issues, but, until we get there, southern facilities may be our best option. In my discussions with some of the residents, they like the privacy to work on bettering themselves away from their home community. They like the fact these four facilities and their programs offer the tools that a person needs to get well, an opportunity to seek further healing, individual and group counselling, and to be able to adapt and recognize the importance of the personal, cultural, spirituality, and after-care support.

One of the key points of this trip for me was treatment only works if the person makes the commitment themselves to get better. They need to do it for themselves. All we can do is love and care for them as they go on this journey. It sounds simple, but it is not. Please show your support and encouragement to them. It is always the darkest before we see the light. I believe we will succeed together. There is hope. We need to talk about how we can help each other.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services later

on. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ADDICTIONS TREATMENT FACILITIES TOUR

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in December, I joined my colleagues, including the Member for Nahendeh, on the Standing Committee on Social Development and the Minister of Health and Social Services for a tour of the four facilities which the government has contracts with as described by my colleague. I came away with a greater understanding of what is offered at these treatment centres and what we can do to strengthen after-care.

The four centres have a common approach shaped by the AA 12-step program with its focus on abstinence and peer support. Clients are offered group and individual therapy that acknowledges that almost everyone with an addiction has also experienced significant trauma in their lives. Between half and three-quarters of the clients complete the initial four- to six-week program, and some of the centres offer a second, transitional phase, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk to you about a man I met from the NWT at the Fresh Start program in Calgary who had been sober for about nine months at that point. He says he has been an addict for 40 years and that no one who knew him believed he could change. After finishing the program, he stayed in Calgary because he does not want to go home. After two previous visits to treatment centers, he relapsed because there was not enough support for him in his community, such as daily AA meetings. He also does not have anywhere to live. He had been living under houses and in an abandoned car prior to going to Calgary.

We met other people in recovery in other treatment facilities who highlighted these same challenges: finding support for their sobriety in their communities and finding housing. The question is how to build on their success so that their investment in their sobriety and the government's investment in their treatment continues.

There are some basic ingredients for success. First, people who are leaving treatment need to be discharged into housing. Discharging people to a couch perpetuates the chaos they have worked so hard to put behind them. Second, we have to figure out how to strengthen after-care in the communities that do not have AA groups by increasing access to the after-care provided by the treatment facilities themselves. Mr. Speaker, this tour was both helpful and hopeful. Addictions do not have to be a life sentence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ADDICTIONS TREATMENT

MR. MCNEELY: Mr. Speaker, in the whole area of rehabilitation and reintegration, there are casualties of our society due to hardships and bad choices.

Mr. Speaker, this group needs the message that their government is there in providing the necessary supports and proactive environments through economic diversification.

It has been said several times that the "best social program is a job" and, Mr. Speaker, I totally agree.

I compliment the Department of Health and Social Services in delivering an addiction treatment centre tour this past December to include the Standing Committee on Social Development. Viewing the facilities and designed programming and interacting with the clients is, in my view, none other than proactive and positive. More importantly, it advances the message on available rehabilitation and reintegration to our community leaders.

Mr. Speaker, on the principles of progress reporting on October 17, 2017, the Minister of Justice statement related to North Slave Correctional Complex inmate concerns. Later, in that regard, I will have questions for the appropriate Minister. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ADDICTIONS SERVICES IN COMMUNITIES

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway has now been open for just over two months, opening up a whole new world of choices for employment, education, trading, shopping, commerce, and travel. The residents of Tuktoyaktuk have looked forward to this day for a long time, and they're ready to take advantage of the opportunities the new highway opens to them.

But, Mr. Speaker, Northerners are practical people. Even when change brings exciting benefits, we would like to know the risks and we would like to tackle them head-on. In this case, increased mobility and activity thanks to the new highway has also enabled easier access to drugs and alcohol and increased risks of community disruption.

During my recent constituency visit to Tuktoyaktuk, residents made it clear that action is needed. Residents spoke of increased reports of hard drugs entering the community and raised their concerns that the community will join the ranks of Canadian towns suffering due to fentanyl addiction. Although the local RCMP are doing their best, the detachment is understaffed for these new demands, Mr. Speaker, and addictions in the community may very well worsen with the legalization of cannabis later this year.

Mr. Speaker, Inuvialuit have been resilient and have been coping with the impacts of the highway and other factors. They need immediate and ongoing support for first responders such as RCMP and health workers as well as mental health workers, Mr. Speaker. This will provide a service very much needed in the region to support our residents.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the Department of Health and Social Services is working on an addiction recovery action plan. Mr. Speaker, that plan must include careful consideration of how the government, Indigenous governments, communities, and Northerners can work together to combat addictions in our small communities,

especially those that are like Tuktoyaktuk, facing sudden and dramatic changes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ARTS FUNDING

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, art is a reflection on society and the aspirations, beliefs, and observations of its members. The expression enjoyment of art is an essential element in the health of any free and democratic society. Art is not created or defined by government, and government's role is to recognize the social, cultural, economic, and spiritual contribution that art makes to our communities. These communities of individual artists, art organizations, and art consumers, they serve in a system and the achievement of these objectives.

Mr. Speaker, the reason I am talking about the arts and the importance of the arts is that, yesterday, the Standing Committee on Government Operations held a public hearing and were overwhelmed by the number of witnesses. We had standing room only in our Chambers, and it was very clear that Northerners care about the arts. What they do not want to see is a battle between arts and sports, which is something we have heard a lot about in the news and also from our constituents. We should not have two organizations or two stakeholder groups that contribute so much to our society and in particular so much to the lives of young people and young Northerners having to battle it out for limited funding dollars, scraps from the table. This is not just about enhancing our culture or enhancing the artistic or sports programs. This is about the economy, Mr. Speaker. The arts and culture sector is a \$54.6-billion industry in Canada, a cornerstone of our economy.

In 2016, the Government of Canada made a historic investment of \$1.9 billion over five years to foster innovation, creativity, and growth in our cultural sector. As part of this investment, the government invested \$550 million to foster the development of the arts in Canada by doubling the budget of the Canada Council for the Arts between 2016 and 2021. This government has not increased the endowment to the Arts Council, the NWT, for 10 years. Over that time, arts organizations have had to struggle to find available funding. It is time that we changed our track record on the arts. It is time that we invested in the council of arts, and it is time that we gave artists a stronger economic basis for their craft, create real creative jobs, and grow our creative industry so that we can give Northerners the health and economic success that they deserve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ARTS FUNDING

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as noted by the honourable Member from Kam Lake yesterday, our Government Operations Committee public hearing drew a large crowd. The Committee is reviewing the Western Canada Lottery

Act, seeking ways to avoid losing money to federal taxation. I think we can all agree that we need to keep northern dollars here, in the north.

However, the purpose of the review needed to be communicated better. Some misunderstood and thought the whole lottery act was up for review. Many of them wanted to propose that lottery funding should be directed to the arts, but it turned out that was not on the agenda. What was clear is that the public debate about arts versus sports continues, and I wonder if it has to.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot walk into a store these days without a sports team wanting to sell me a raffle ticket or pack my groceries. They come to my house and pick up the cans and bottles. Heck, they even help distribute my Yellowknife North newsletter. It is great to see teams so proactive, working and raising money to travel and compete. I remember well my days of doing the same.

No doubt sports and recreation have a tremendous impact on society. The upcoming Arctic Winter Games and Olympics show the results of our investments in youth and sport. I am also a beneficiary. My own introduction to sports was through school and local recreation programs. I was fortunate that it allowed me to compete at fairly high levels in curling and golf. Mr. Speaker, everyone appreciates that we have built up a significant force in sports and recreation. We certainly do not want to compromise that in any way. It would be a shame if we did.

However, Mr. Speaker, art is all around us. In my riding alone, one can see the impact of artistic creativity, whether it is in the architecture of Latham Island homes, the art galleries strewn about Old Town, the murals that adorn every garbage can, power box, and building. Then, of course, there are the world class events like Long John Jamboree, the Snow King Festival, and Ramble and Ride. Each puts on its own display of creativity. The arts clearly have an impact on our day-to-day lives.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. VANTHUYNE: Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the arts has not grown at the same rate as sports, but arts and creative industries are now gathering momentum, with growing demands for resources. They need a dedicated period of public investment to catch up.

It is time for a full discussion about the arts and the resources we need to build and promote this critical piece of our society. As a government, let's reach out to the creative industries and seek their input on how to shape the future.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for critical investment in the arts. It is time for a review of the NWT Arts Strategy. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of ECE at the appropriate time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statement. Member of Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
THE STANTON RENEWAL PROJECT

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President.

The Stanton Renewal Project was raised from the south several times yesterday. Regular Members have had to make numerous inquiries of the Minister of Finance to try to find out what is going on and the implications for us here, in the Northwest Territories. Even though I have suggested a more proactive public communications effort, Stanton Renewal Project website has not had much added to it for some time and there is almost nothing about the recent events with regard to one of the major partners currently in Canada, which is in creditor protection.

To try to get myself more familiar with the Stanton Renewal Project, I reviewed the December 2015 project report on the website. While it is an interesting summary of what transpired, it leaves many questions, including how the \$174.5-million cost savings were calculated between the so-called P3 option and the normal government procurement approach and why insolvency was not identified as a major risk.

The project agreement itself is a massive 2,113 pages, with 45 pages of definitions alone for the main agreement. Needless to say, I did not read the whole document but skimmed enough to get some questions ready for the Minister later today.

The Stanton Renewal Project is the largest capital project our government has ever undertaken. This MLA and the public have demanded better public reporting and accountability. Its standing committees still do not get any regular reports on the status of this work. For our part, regular MLAs should have set up our own oversight system, and we should still do that.

The 2014 Ontario auditor general review of public-private partnerships found that, of the 74 projects reviewed, the Ontario taxpayers ended up paying about \$8 billion more than if the projects had been done by the provincial government, itself. I think there is the lesson there for our government.

It is incomprehensible how the private sector, which has higher financing costs and a requirement for a profit to shareholders, can actually compete with public governments without paying workers substantially less at the end of the day. I recognize that our government has limited fiscal capacity, but you cannot have huge infrastructure projects without the capacity and proper oversight, lessons that are learned the hard way.

I'll have questions later today for the Minister of Finance. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CONSTITUENCY CONCERNS OF HAY RIVER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am the second-youngest member of this 18th Legislative Assembly, but that is not saying much. In fact, my days of being considered a youth are long gone. However, Mr. Speaker, I was elected to represent all of the constituents of Hay River North, not just those who can vote, so, while I may be old, I cannot afford to be out of touch.

That is why this past Monday, over the lunch hour, I held a constituency meeting at Diamond Jenness Secondary School that was exclusively for students. Fourteen students attended, mostly from grades 8 to 10. I was a little worried that maybe they were only there for the free pizza, but, Mr. Speaker, my fears were unfounded. They were definitely there to talk about the issues.

I spoke for a couple minutes about how our system of government works and then opened up the floor, and, for the rest of the hour, I listened to their concerns and answered questions. Unsurprisingly, a lot of the issues revolved around education.

I heard first-hand about how they were directly affected in terms of workload and their ability to succeed by changes to the curriculum. They were concerned about the lack of course selection, especially compared to other jurisdictions. Some felt that they could have trouble following the career path that they had chosen because they did not have access to the right courses. They wanted more practical education, as well. They wanted courses that teach them about the real world, things like taxes and budgets. There were concerns about the lack of special-needs helpers in the school and the need to rely on third-party funders and other students to provide special-needs support.

Then, Mr. Speaker, there is busing, or, more precisely, the lack of busing. Bus routes have been cut back so much that there are only a handful of students at Diamond Jenness who are even eligible to take the bus. Lately, they have been hearing rumours that busing in Hay River may be eliminated completely, and they are rightfully concerned.

The discussion also extended beyond education and went to places I did not expect. There were concerns about how we are providing for our elders and what the government is doing to ensure that age-appropriate housing is available. They were also concerned about the lack of skilled workers available to construct that housing and to complete other projects in the community.

These are just a few of the topics that we touched on. It was very enlightening, and we all agreed that we should do it again, and I plan on it. I have also reached out to Ecole Boreale and hope to meet with students there in the near future. I promised the students that I would get back to them with answers to their questions, and today I will start with questions for the Minister of Education. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES – CHILD APPREHENSION

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to speak about the Child and Family Services of the NWT as it relates to child apprehensions and foster care.

Mr. Speaker, statistics today indicate that across Canada there are more Indigenous children in foster care than there were in residential school at the height of residential school admissions.

Mr. Speaker, half of the NWT's population is Aboriginal; however, over 90 per cent of the children in care are Indigenous. It is my belief that families where children were apprehended are families who are usually living in poverty. Mr. Speaker, I also believe that families who are living in poverty are the same families that are over-represented in our health care system, our justice system, as well as those that need income support to provide for their families. We all love our children, and, if we could provide for them, we would, and, for the most part, we do. Unfortunately, some people are unable to do so and require income support.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that low income is the main catalyst for child apprehension, which leads to a host of other social issues for people.

Mr. Speaker, in 2001, there was a joint study done between Corrections Canada, the Assembly of First Nations, the Department of Justice of Canada, the Department of Indigenous and Aboriginal Affairs, the Native Counselling Service of Alberta, and the Aboriginal Healing Foundation which examined the effects of family disruption on Indigenous and non-Indigenous inmates:

"The study found that a large proportion of Aboriginal inmates were involved in the child welfare system when they were children. Approximately two-thirds of Aboriginal inmates said they have been adopted or placed in foster or group homes. "

Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that the men and women that have served time in corrections facilities or prisons down south are having difficulties obtaining employment. This is a vicious, interconnected circle, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the Department of Health and Social Services does provide financial support to foster-home providers. I strongly suggest that the same support be given to families in order to mitigate the likelihood of child apprehensions and to assist parents in maintaining family units. This being said, I also recognize the value of what foster homes provide and the outstanding --

MR. SPEAKER: Member Tu Nedhe Wiilideh, your time for Members' statements expired.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am seeking unanimous consent to

conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BEAULIEU: That being said, I also recognize the value of what foster homes provide and the outstanding service that dedicated foster parents provide as well. It is not to say that we do not need foster homes as they can provide positive aspect in child development. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO
MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the National Inquiry Into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls recently held a series of meetings in Yellowknife. Over three days, the inquiry invited testimony from witnesses who had pre-registered, while also remaining open to anyone who had not registered but still wanted to speak. Evening events were also held to celebrate Dene, Inuit, and Metis culture.

These meetings were intense and emotional, as women and men from across the territory gathered to speak their truth. Their stories exposed the undercurrents of pain, grief, loss, and trauma that run through the lives of many of our people.

I thank these women and men for their courage and strength to speak out in the face of trauma and ongoing discrimination against Native peoples.

I also want to recognize a group of young people from my riding who also travelled from Fort Providence to stand witness to the inquiry. Led by Beverly Hope, four young ladies, Amber Gargan, Shanita Landry, Kate Brule, and Bailey Gargan, came together to discuss the stereotypes Indigenous women face and how they can respond to violence in their home communities. Mr. Speaker, these youth set an example for us as adults.

Witnesses told the inquiry of the need to break the silence on abuse, discrimination, and violence. We also heard loud and clear that both counselling options and opportunities for recourse through the justice system are not sufficient. As Indigenous people have told the inquiry at every stop, healing is needed to recognize and address the impacts of trauma and colonization.

Mr. Speaker, Leona Brule is from Fort Providence. She is missing, and she has never been found. Phillip Leishmann is from Kakisa. He is missing and has never been found.

To strive for equality of women and men in all aspects of society, multi-faceted solutions are needed: Health and Social Services must continue its work to address systemic discrimination; the problems facing our Child and Family Services must be tackled; and the Department of Justice must continue to work to address security and inmate concerns in its facilities as well as a support for the men's healing program.

Violence against women must stop. We must stop it. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

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

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the people in my region are hard-working and self-sufficient. They would like to see more job opportunities so that they can support their families, grow their economy, and contribute to vibrant, thriving communities.

One of the key things this government can do to strengthen our northern communities is to invest in transportation infrastructure. Good roads enable the mobility of our residents, lower the cost of goods, and enhance food security.

This is especially true for large infrastructure projects which support new investments, even more construction, and increased tourism. These are the kinds of benefits that the people of the Mackenzie Delta need. Tsiigehtchic in particular asked me to let this Assembly know how much they are counting on job opportunities that these projects bring.

Now that the Inuvik Tuktoyaktuk Highway is completed, the GNWT must now turn its attention to securing funding for new road projects, especially more major projects like the Mackenzie Valley highway to Wrigley.

Right now, the majority of tourism spending and other big-ticket spending like people buying snowmobiles, trucks, and boats happens elsewhere. With more roads and projects, it could happen in our territory.

Mr. Speaker, to celebrate the opening of the Inuvik Tuktoyaktuk Highway, the Minister of Infrastructure pointed out that expanding our transportation system connects residents to new social and employment opportunities and stabilizes the cost of living in the territory. It also increases our resiliency and ability to adapt to impacts of climate change and provides better access to natural resources. With all of these benefits, I would expect that Minister Schumann would be leading the charge to get the next big highway project underway. If he is having trouble coming up with a plan, I want to suggest that the GNWT could start with an ice road between Tsiigehtchic and Fort Good Hope. Later today, I will have questions for the Minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 7, acknowledgments. Item 8, oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 59-18(3):
TREATMENT FACILITIES CONTRACTED BY THE GNWT

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I talked in my Member's statement about the four treatment centres that the Government of Northwest Territories contract with. I am going to have some questions for the Minister for Health and Social

Services.

My first question: can the Minister please explain how these four treatment centres were selected for the residents of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services made the decision to contract with these specific facilities based in large part on the recommendations of the Minister's war on addictions and community wellness which was initiated by the former Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu. In that report and based on a significant amount of public consultation, the four Members called for addictions treatment programs that are gender-specific, that are trauma-informed, that use Indigenous healing practices, are able to treat current disorders, and that offer lengths of stay and options for extensions.

In addition to those recommendations, Mr. Speaker, the department also made decisions to only use accredited facilities and to ensure that all the facilities that are able to offer a detox, including at least one option for medical detox and opiates, whether it is on site or remotely located but close. Taken together, Mr. Speaker, the four facilities currently under contract are able to provide a mix of these service options in order to meet the diverse and often specialized needs of the NWT population. They also ensure a high level of quality and focus on best practices and are commonly practised among the facilities that we are contracted with, so options, as well, Mr. Speaker.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for his answer. I have to agree. Those facilities are amazing. I think that the department and the people who were consulted did a great job of selecting these facilities.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell us: how does a resident select a facility that they wish to attend to address their addictions? So, in other words, with these four facilities, how do they select the ones that is best suited for them?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the Members of the House that the facilities are not the only option. There are community options available whether it is community on-the-land options or whether it is community counsellors or whether it is programs like the Matrix programs. However, facilities are the appropriate venue on some occasions.

When an individual needs a facility-based option, the counsellors will often work with them to explain all of the options and the pros and cons of the different facilities based on the needs of that individual. They will also look at availability. Is there room in that facility today? Is there not room in that facility today? Is there something within two weeks? Is there something within one week? They work together based on the needs, what is available in the different facilities. It is based on discussion and what the individual is comfortable with and what is appropriate at any given time.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for that answer. That does help, and, yes, I understand we have the option of using local, and I think that is great, but this facility option is something for the other people moving forward.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister explain: does the department allow residents the opportunity to attend other treatment centres, and is the government going to pay for those facilities?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, residents always have choice, so they can choose to go to facilities that we are not currently contracted with. The difference is we would not be funding or providing financial support if they were to do so. Facilities that are not in contract or have not actually gone through a thorough scrutinization by the department may not be accredited. We do not know whether or not they are safe, and it would be a liability for us to support treatment at a facility that does not meet standards that have been set, so we would not be providing financial support in those situations.

Our contract clearly outlines the specific expectations on the treatment of our NWT residents, such as building safety, reporting requirements, and treatment processes. We also develop a relationship with those facilities so that we can ensure that the follow-up treatment is organized through our staff and that there is a relationship between the facility and our staff. At this point in time, Mr. Speaker, we are contracted with four. Those are the four that we will fund. Residents can choose to go elsewhere, but there will not be financial support to do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Minister for that answer. Mr. Speaker, these four facility are for adults. My next question to the Minister is: with our youth population and their addictions and as they move forward, is the Minister able to advise this House which facilities that we use contract to deal with our youth addiction issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, when it comes to dealing with issues for youth, whether it is addictions or mental health issues, they are very complex, so they require a specific attention. Out-of-territory facility-based treatment for youth with complex needs, which may be addictions or it may be mental health issues are a number of facilities: we have the PLEA Community Services in BC that we utilize, the Wood's Homes in Alberta, and Ranch Ehrlo in Saskatchewan.

Youth attending an out-of-territory program are supported through Child and Family Services. The Trail Cross Treatment in Fort Smith provides some intensive individualized mental health treatment and therapy for youth 12 to 18 from the Northwest Territories, and their families. Treatment within this program is typically six to nine months, Mr. Speaker, in duration. We also utilize the Territorial Treatment Centre for Children for the ages of eight to 12, which is operated by the Unlimited Potential Community Services from Bosco Homes, and that one is here is Yellowknife, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 60-18(3):

AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES AFTER ADDICTIONS TREATMENT

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you can see that we are tag-teaming

together on the topic of the addictions centres. As I mentioned in my statement, there are steps that I feel the Minister could investigate to help recovering addicts with their long-term recovery beyond the initial addictions-recovery stage.

The first and most important, in my mind, based on the tour that we did is that people coming out of addiction treatment centres should not be discharged into housing. The Minister, I know, heard this point as well during our tour, so what is his take on the importance of housing to people returning home after finishing treatment? Mahsi.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I did attend the tour, and I did hear exactly what the Member heard, and I agree with what the Member is saying. There is no question that we want a stable environment for our individuals to go to when they are returning. I will say that some people are returning to their homes, which may provide the environment they need, but we heard loud and clear that there are some individuals who are returning to couches, and that is deeply troubling.

We are working on a new addictions recovery action plan, and I am really looking forward to hearing the report from the Members on the tour and the recommendations they have because I would like to incorporate that into the addictions recovery plan to address the exact type of issue that the Member is speaking of. I look forward to getting their report. I look forward to working with them to address exactly this type of situation.

MS. GREEN: Thank you to the Minister for that response. I feel it is safe to say that this will be one of the recommendations of our report. I am wondering if the Minister can be proactive and commit to investigating this idea and presenting back an idea of the costs and benefits of ensuring that all of the people who are coming out of addictions treatment centres are discharged into appropriate housing?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to create the additional work of having two parallel activities happening at the same time. We were working on the addictions recovery action plan. I hear the Member loud and clear. I hear the Members loud and clear. I feel the same way, and this is part of the work that we are intending to do in the addictions recovery action plan. So, rather than duplicating our efforts, I would prefer to keep us on track to that particular plan and include the work that the Members are suggesting.

MS. GREEN: Thank you for that response. The treatment facilities that we visited provided a range of after-care. Some of it was on the phone. Some of it was online. Some of it was an invitation to return for sort of additional treatment.

Can the Minister commit to investigating what kind of options may be available from the treatment centres to support people in recovery in the small communities?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: It was clear that after-care is one of the areas that is a challenge for our residents who have gone out for treatment. Whether it is an on-the-land program, whether it is a community-based program, it is the after-care that we need to make sure they are getting.

Not only did the facilities mention the programs that they are providing as far as after-

care, which I am open and willing to and will be directing the department to include in our discussion around the addictions recovery plan, but there was also the suggestion that peer support needed some additional support. There is peer support throughout the Northwest Territories. It is supported by Alberta organizations like AA and others, but what I have already directed the department to do is to start exploring how we as a government could support or enhance or provide some incentives to these peer support groups so that they can be sustainable over the long-term because one of the things we heard is some of those peer support groups do not exist, and they are necessary. So, in addition to what the Member has said, I have also given the direction to move forward and figure out what we could do around peer support groups. I think there are some great models out there. The Yukon is doing some really creative things about providing additional supports to their peer support groups, and we are exploring that, as well.

Moving forward with the addictions recovery action plan, we want to make sure the best use of new models, new evidence, what we have heard from Members, what we have heard from communities, build upon previous action plans, and try to improve the results for our residents throughout the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Minister's answer. He is obviously taking a very proactive approach with this. Since our tour, I have learned about pharmaceutical supports that support sobriety and a harm-reduction model. There is a drug called Vivitrol which is administered monthly, and it dampens cravings. It assists people in staying sober. Could the Minister also commit to investigating the costs and benefits of offering this drug to people in recovery? Mahsi.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, the Member did share with me a very informative video on the different options around harm control, including this particular drug. I did share that with the department and asked them to include it in their information to help them have an informed, current, modern addictions recovery action plan. I anticipate that that work will be done. I will confirm that it is part of the plan moving forward. It does not mean that we are committing to providing that drug because I think there are some issues with whether or not it is actually available in Canada or not, that we need to really make sure that we are really comfortable with. The video also talked an awful lot about the science behind healing. It is not just a 12-step program and relying on an abstinence-based 12-step program but also addictions management and a science behind helping people deal with addictions. This is another area that I think the Northwest Territories as well as Canada must explore more.

I have raised this at a national level, and I am going to continue to find ways to move forward with that as a concept here, in the Northwest Territories. Harm-control, harm-reduction is a real thing, and it adds value. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 61-18(3):
ARTS FUNDING

MS. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the

Minister of Education, Culture and Employment with regard to funding of the arts. Mr. Speaker, it is clear from the level of interest generated yesterday by the review of the lottery act how many people believe passionately in the arts and want to see enhanced government arts funding. Our arts strategy was developed back in 2004. I am wondering, Mr. Speaker, will the Minister commit to reaching out to the arts community and will the Minister support a review of the NWT Arts Strategy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member knows, the NWT Arts Council Strategic Plan is coming to an end this year. We are working with the Department of ITI to look at options on creating a new NWT Arts Strategy. Obviously, we want to also involve our advisory body with the arts council and standing committee when we are looking at these options. We will proceed with those options, and, after discussions with the Department of ITI, we will come back to the Members of the Legislative Assembly.

MS. VANTHUYNE: It sounds like there is a little bit of light at the end of that tunnel, so I appreciate the Minister's response. Let's talk a little bit, Mr. Speaker, about the money. You know, the NWT Arts Council, as the Minister alluded to, they have had the same budget for the last 10 years, even though the demand as shown by the number of applications keeps increasing, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister commit to seeking more support for the Arts Council in order that more deserving artists can receive support for their creative endeavours? In other words, will the Minister support an increase to the NWT Arts Council? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Collectively, the GNWT supports the arts community with various departments, with various rebates, with various different supports. We are currently looking at how much we are spending in the arts sector with all departments. Before we begin those discussions, we need to see what those numbers are. We are confident that we do provide sufficient support to the whole NWT arts sector and all the programs that we have throughout the GNWT departments.

MR. VANTHUYNE: I appreciate that the Minister is going to undertake a review of sorts to some degree. The question really was as it related specifically to the NWT Arts Council. Their budget has been fixed for 10 years. At some point, you have to recognize that there do not need to be more research and strategies built around this sort of thing. After 10 years, you need an increase. There were over 1,700 applicants this year for that pot of money. People are being turned away. I just want to know: will the Minister commit to an increase to the NWT Arts Council?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I also want to point out that the funding that we have given to the NWT Arts Council has been protected from any reductions moving forward, as well, and that we continue to support the arts sector and, as I mentioned in my previous answer, that we are going to be looking collectively at our contributions with all GNWT departments to see how much we are actually contributing and supporting the NWT arts

community. Then we will have those discussions afterwards.

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

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to try just a little bit of a different avenue here. We know that the north has produced award-winning artists of all kinds: visual artists, theatre artists, musicians, and filmmakers. We also know that travel in and around the north and to get in and out of the north is very expensive. Will the Minister commit to seeking funding support for artists touring so that northern artists can reach a wider audience across Canada and elsewhere in the world? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Obviously, we do support that as a government. We support our artists that go to national events and festivals throughout the country. We will continue to do that. We also do it in the sports sector. If you look at the upcoming Olympics, we have three athletes who are going to be going to the Olympics who have gone through the system. We also have Juno Award winners, nominees whom we have supported coming from the communities. If you look at other programs we do as a government and as a territory, such as traditional game summits that promote sport, culture, and our artists as well as the upcoming Arctic Winter Games, we are supporting artists, we are supporting athletes, we are supporting both. As a government and as a Member of this Legislative Assembly, we do support, I support, the sports, recreations, culture, heritage as well as our artists, always have and will continue to do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 62-18(3):
CONTRIBUTION OF THE ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I also have questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Similar to my honourable friend from Yellowknife North, I want to talk about arts as a generator of jobs. This also involves the Minister of Labour. This is an important issue. The Conference Board of Canada estimates the annual contribution of Canada's arts and culture industry is 7.4 per cent. As a gross total, that is more than Canada's mining, forestry, fishery sectors plus the Canadian Forces combined. We talk about transitioning, diversifying our economy. We have the artists who can already do this work. We have funds that are oversubscribed. Will the Minister commit to looking at arts through an employment lens and develop a strategy or modify his employment strategies to include the creative industries? Thank you.

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

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it is more than just my department that will need to take a look at this in terms of the economic work and jobs that this arts sector creates. It is going to have to be a whole government approach when we take a look at this. We will be looking at that, as I mentioned in my previous questions, and then come back to the House to give up these numbers.

MR. TESTART: I am glad to hear there is a whole government approach. It sounds like the Minister is committing to taking this on. We have brought this issue before. Today is not the first time it is brought up. What work has he been doing to fulfill these new arts commitments that he is talking about today? I don't see anything in today's budget around the arts.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: As I mentioned earlier in the question period here, I am confident that we are providing sufficient, fair, and equitable support for both the arts and the arts sector as well as the sports sector. We are going to have to look throughout the government to see what our contributions and supports for the arts community is. We will come back to this House and to Members and share that with them before we get into any further discussions.

MR. TESTART: When is the Minister going to come back to the House with all this work, tomorrow, the next day, the day after that? Can the Minister give us a timeline?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: As I mentioned, I am going to have to have this discussion with my colleagues. We also have an advisory board with the NWT Arts Council. There are going to be some discussions that need to happen before we come back. I do not have a timeline. In due course, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My colleague the honourable Member from Yellowknife North brought up some funding dollars. Every Member on this side of the House has brought up more funding for the arts. I am going to ask the Minister again, this time from me, if he is going to hear the majority of the House and provide more funding dollars for the arts within the life of this Assembly? Thank you.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: As I mentioned, we are going to have to look at what our contributions are as a government with all our departments and work that we have with our partners and come back and see what our contributions and our supports for the NWT arts community are. I do feel that we are sufficiently supporting our arts community throughout the Northwest Territories. Once we have those numbers, we will share them with Members of this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 63-18(3):
CONCERNS OF HAY RIVER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier, I spoke about the constituency meeting I held at Diamond Jenness Secondary School in Hay River. I had a great discussion. I had told the students there that I would bring their questions forward and get some answers for them. I have some questions for one of the other youngsters here in the Ledge, our Minister of Education. I would like to ask the Minister: students at Diamond Jenness are concerned about the lack of courses available to them. They brought up a lack of dash-4 classes, basic courses like core French, and courses that better prepare them for real life. I would like to ask the Minister of Education why the students at DJ have less access to courses than other places such

as down south and even Yellowknife? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment does not decide what courses are being offered each semester within their respective schools. That is the responsibility of the school administration in consultation with the superintendents of education. DJSS could offer dash-4 courses, dash-1 courses, but it is the responsibility of the school administration and the superintendent. I think that needs to be brought up to the superintendent as well as brought forth to the administration of the school.

MR. SIMPSON: The buck has to stop somewhere. As far as I am concerned, it stops here, in the Legislative Assembly, with the Members of the Legislative Assembly and the Ministers of the respective departments. That's why I want to ask the Minister of Education: other than talking to the Education Council, what can be done to expand the course selection at Hay River and other schools across the territory?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: As I mentioned, each school obviously decides what courses they want to offer. Each school is different from the next. Courses that are being offered in the Sahtu might be different from what's being offered in South Slave compared to some of our coastal communities. That's why one of our programs, the Northern Distance Learning Program is so important and such a great investment that we're able to offer some of these dash one courses to our rural and remote communities, and that's an initiative that this government is proud of, and will continue to support, but it really is a school administration decision, and working with the superintendent to decide what courses that they want to offer.

As a government, we've committed to making sure that students in our rural or remote communities such as Ulukhaktok, Fort Liard, Fort Resolution, can offer dash one courses because it's been an initiative that we've supported and taken on, but it really is up to the school administration and the superintendent. I encourage the Member to have those discussions with the school to bring those concerns forward, and we will support it, obviously, moving forward as well.

MR. SIMPSON: I see that there's one innovative solution that the government is undertaking to expand course selection, so that's what I'm looking for, is more innovative solutions like that. Maybe facilitate working together, facilitate the way that the different school boards can work together to pool their resources so they have a critical mass that they can offer more of these courses. I'm looking for more solutions.

My next question is that students are concerned about the lack of support for students with special needs. I believe the Hay River Metis Government Council puts in people in the schools, and I know that other students help students with special needs. Why do we have to rely on these methods? What is being done to remedy the lack of special needs support in the schools?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: It's great to see that DJSS has great working relationships with the Hay River Metis and the Government Council. We also see that up in my region, where the IRC has taken one of the leading roles to help their students succeed,

as well. As a government, we do provide inclusive schooling funding to all, well above the legislated amounts that we have, and work with our education authorities, our superintendents, board chairs, to ensure that services are being provided to assist those with special needs in the communities.

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

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It sounds like there are a lot of people involved in this. We have Aboriginal groups. We have Education Councils. We have District Education Authorities. We have ECE. It seems like there must be a simpler way, but I guess that's the way it is right now.

Most students in Hay River can't take the bus to school because they live too close. Basically, if you live anywhere between the bridge and the "Welcome Hay River" sign, you can't take the bus, so there are only a handful of students in DJ who actually take the bus, and now, they hear that bus service may end completely. What is the department doing to prevent this so we can make sure that kids actually get to school so they can learn? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Currently, work has begun to determine the current status, the gaps in services, and how to best address these gaps when it comes to busing. A steering committee has been formed which includes representation from the NWT Superintendents Association, the Department of ECE, and the Financial Management Board to make recommendations on opportunities for potential improvements in providing student transportation for services from junior kindergarten to grade 12. We're going to work on gathering that data, and look at the recommendations, and once the analysis of the status is complete, we will share those recommendations with standing committee and get feedback, as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 64-18(3):
STANTON RENEWAL PROJECT

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I know the Minister of Finance has had a busy day, but I'm going to have to put him to work again. Carillion Canada has now gone into creditor protection. It's the main Stanton Renewal equity investor for construction of the new hospital, the contractor to service and maintain the new hospital following completion, and it is involved in the remediation of the existing hospital for other uses.

In reviewing the project agreement, there are many triggers if something starts to go off the rails. Can the Minister tell us whether the Boreal Health Partnership or any of its partners has provided any event of default notices, notices of changes to the senior financing arrangements, or notices of super evening events pursuant to the project agreement? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Finance.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No notice has been given to the

GNWT. Technically, no notices to the GNWT are required because BHP are not in default under the project agreement. BHP are in default with their agreement with the lenders, so it did send notification to the lenders, and we were copied into it, and they have, I believe, until late February to outline a plan as to how they're going to fix the default. Any proposed plan would have to be reviewed and approved by the GNWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: I'd like to thank you the Minister for his response. It's helpful to get that information. Carillion Canada's website contains a news release dated February the 5th that states: "Fairfax Financial Holdings has entered into an agreement with Carillion to acquire 'select health care facilities.'" I've asked the Minister whether the Stanton Renewal project is amongst the select health care facilities that might be sold to Fairfax, but haven't got an answer yet. Can the Minister tell us whether the Stanton Renewal and existing hospital remediation projects are part of the agreement by Fairfax to acquire some Carillion assets?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my understanding is, yes, it is part of that, and we'll continue to deal with that, and we'll continue to inform Members as to the update on how the sale is going.

MR. O'REILLY: I'd like to again thank the Minister for that information. That's helpful. I understand Fairfax is a big company, so this is good news, I think. Earlier today, I talked about the need to improve communications around what's happening with the Stanton Renewal Project. Certainly I think this side of the House would like to get more information. How does the Minister intend to keep the Regular MLAs and the public informed of what is going on with Carillion Canada and the Stanton Renewal Project, and would he agree it's time for a technical briefing for Regular MLAs?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, as information becomes available, any new information becomes available, we will share it. We are just in the process of updating our latest briefing note on the events that took place in the last couple of days, and I'm planning on providing that to Members tomorrow. As well, the website, Health and Social Services updates the information on the website. I've had a conversation with the Minister of Health, and they have committed to looking at updating the information on the website as well.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Thanks to the Minister for those commitments to improve communications. It will be very helpful.

The Ontario Auditor General found major problems with P3s in that jurisdiction that cost those taxpayers billions of dollars. What lessons has our government learned from P3s, and how will it apply them to the Tlicho all-season road, another proposed P3 project? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the Member is correct in his comments before about the size of Fairfax and what they bring to the table. They are a very large company and have a lot of assets, so they bring a lot of expertise to the table. I think in our update briefing note, it will point out some of the information that the

Members are seeking as to the senior management team, and I think there's a plan for that as well.

One of the lessons learned under these P3 projects is that it clearly demonstrates that, on a P3 project, there is a risk transfer. In a project like this, the risk transfer is on the proponents of the project. That frees the government from any risks that might be associated with them. It's the partnerships wanting to resolve. The GNWT were obviously active as an interested party and any financial or operational risk associated with the liquidation of the project proponents want to own. Again, we will keep Members updated and I think this is a lesson learned, that there is some value in P3 partnerships as far as the risk transfer goes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 65-18(3):
NORTH SLAVE CORRECTIONAL CENTRE INMATE CONCERNS

MR. MCNEELY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement, I mentioned the North Slave Correctional Complex Inmates and the rehabilitation of the inmates and the services and programs provided to the inmates.

My first question to the Minister of Justice is: can the Minister tell what steps have been taken to address the concerns raised by inmates in their letter-writing campaign of last October? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Justice.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. There were a number of concerns raised in the letters which we received in October. They covered quite a range of topics, including programming available, access to outdoor recreation areas, use of space within the facility, access to a law library, cost of phone calls, and staffing issues.

I want to assure this House that these concerns have been taken seriously. Within each of our correctional facilities, there is a process in place for addressing inmate concerns when the management of the facility meets with the inmate advisory committee on a monthly basis, hopefully to resolve the issues that have been brought forward. Since October, these monthly meetings have been continued and I understand that the last meeting of the inmate advisory committee was held on January 24 this year. Thank you.

MR. MCNEELY: Thanks to the Minister for that response. I noticed that there was a reference made to the programming. Can the Minister provide some examples of the types of programming that is available to the inmates of the North Slave Correctional Centre?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Within all of our facilities, we have a number of programming opportunities available to inmates. That's true both here and in the facilities outside Yellowknife. They are constantly looking at and evaluating programs and rolling out new ones. They have recently enhanced the programs to deal with those inmates that have short sentences. They are set up on a modular basis so they can be continued outside of the facility.

To give you some idea of some of the programs that we are offering, they are the following: high school exam preparation, trades exam preparation, assistance with pursuing and registration into post-secondary courses by outside institutions, offering embedded essential skills training, Northern Leadership Program, and Starting Role In Business. There are quite a number of programs that are being offered. These programs are being constantly upgraded and changed as needs change.

MR. MCNEELY: One of the concerns raised to me a number of times by constituents who are unfortunately in the institution: can the Minister update the House on when inmates will be once again able to access the outdoor recreational facility? I understand there was quite a large investment made in that piece of property.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, the number is correct that access to the outdoor recreation has been restricted since the incident of our inmate escape in August of 2016. In the interim, the traditional liaison counsellor has been continuing programming in the indoor culture room and areas within the facility designated for this purpose.

As I previously mentioned in this House, there were some complications in the procurement process that required the department to look at alternatives. The problem was that the bids came in at a figure far in excess of what we were expecting, so I can't speak publicly about the security enhancements, but I am hopeful that soon that work will be completed. I'm hoping that will be resolved by this spring so that area of the facility can be used again by the inmates.

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

MR. MCNEELY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My last question is related to the staffing of the program or the facility. On the issue of staffing, can the Minister also tell us what steps have been taken to address the concerns raised by the staff of the North Slave Correctional Centre? Mahsi.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, the Member opposite is quite correct. There were concerns raised by the staff. There were a number of concerns, including staffing and safety at the facility. I can assure you that these concerns are important to the staff and that safety is paramount among those concerns.

Management at the North Slave Correctional Centre has been conducting regular occupational health and safety meetings and joint consultation meetings with the staff. In addition, they have met with the union or the workers about these same concerns. Stemming and arising from these meetings, several things have been done: improved communication whereby staff have better access to meeting minutes and are involved in changes to policies and standing operating procedures, orientation for supervising inmate recreational activities. In 2017, training in the area of de-escalation techniques, violence prevention, and responsibility surrounding the use of force was delivered through the Corrections Northern Recruitment Training Program to new recruits. Planned training in the areas of crisis negotiations and rectifications, those are among the programs that we have instituted or are being continued at the facility to improve conditions that have been raised quite properly by both the inmates and staff. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 66-18(3):

NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls held its meeting here in Yellowknife and will continue to meet people across Canada. My question is to the Minister responsible for justice: what is the role of the Northwest Territories Department of Justice in supporting, monitoring, and following up on the work of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Justice.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The commission, of course, is an individual commission and does not have any employees within or from any of the territories. The department and this government does realize that violence against Indigenous women is a national crisis. This has been borne out by what we have heard from the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Inquiry.

We are assisting the GNWT with a dedicated family information liaison unit that is a research team to help the victims find relevant documents from across the country. We are assisting in that way. We are not part of the staff of the commission because, as I said, they have to be independent, but we are assisting. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: What is the status of the Northwest Territories Men's Healing Program? To the Minister of Justice, again.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: As Members will recall, this program has been under new management since June of last year. I understand that the program is working quite successfully. There have been quite a few men who have indicated interest in the program, so there was a seamless delivery of the program as the new management took over last year, or rather, July.

MR. NADLI: How will this programming be enhanced in the coming year?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: As I mentioned, there was a seamless delivery of the program as the new management took over, but that doesn't mean that we haven't been looking at improvements, so here are some of the improvements we are contemplating: we want to make the program more flexible so that men will be able to join the group as soon as they are ready and get back into the program should they drop out. The program is more connected to community programs, such as counselling, victim services; an enhanced screening and referral process ensures continuity of service for men who are not ready to join a group so they can be referred to other groups for assistance.

The programming is more connected to the programming that the Correction Service offers. A New Day is not appropriate for delivery in the correctional facility itself, so outreach is targeted to offenders who are being released and can then join the program.

So those are some of the enhancements and improvements that we are making.

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

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance recently announced the initiative to advance the idea of a historical case unit. I want to understand: would the Minister of the Department of Justice know what role that his department will play in basically going forward with that initiative and how perhaps that process could provide a level of support and assurances to families of missing persons? Mahsi.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, I believe the Member opposite, Mr. Speaker, is referring to the unit within the RCMP that will be looking at historical cases. I can advise that we'll be working closely with the RCMP with respect to this matter. I meet with a commanding officer, Mr. Zettler, quarterly. This is an issue that I would certainly raise with him. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 67-18(3):
MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS RECOVERY ACTION PLAN

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier, my statement was on addictions and mental health and the impacts of accessibility to drugs and alcohol to the residents of Tuktoyaktuk after the opening of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister is: can the Minister provide a status update of the development of the addictions recovery action plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, some initial activities to develop the mental health and addictions recovery action plan are under way. We're compiling key findings. We're looking forward to seeing the report from committee on suggestions of things that we need to do better. We're pulling together best practices from around other jurisdictions to help inform further discussion. We've also put together, or we're in the process of putting together, an interdepartmental working group of social envelope departments as well as the NWT Health and Social Services Authority in the Tlicho Community Services Agency. It's our expectation or intention to engage with members of the public and NGO partners as well as Indigenous governments by inviting them to provide feedback on the initial document that will be produced. We're also in the process right now of developing an engagement plan to help us move through this entire process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: I appreciate the update. Mr. Speaker, my second question to the Minister is: what kind of actions will the plan propose to address unique needs of small communities, especially the ones like Tuktoyaktuk are facing and intense rapid change to the community?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I don't want to presuppose on the conclusions that will come out of the work that's being done. I do know that the standing committee will be

making a number of recommendations. Many of those are focused on the information that they heard during the tour. We hope to incorporate those types of things, but until the work is done I would hate to presuppose exactly what this document is going to look like. It's a little early days, but I am committed to working with the Member, Members from small communities, Members from the standing committees, and the public and other stakeholders.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: It's good to see that the Minister is open to working with Regular Members on important issues like this.

Mr. Speaker, my third question is: how will Health and Social Services addictions treatment and prevention programming include a public awareness campaign as being part of the government's approach to the legalization of cannabis?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: When it comes to cannabis, our goal is to protect residents, especially children and youth, from second-hand cannabis smoke exposure. Also, in some ways more important, we want to make sure that residents have the facts on the risks of cannabis and its use on the developing brain. This is an area that I think we need to put some additional attention on to create awareness of so that young people and pregnant and nursing women understand the risks and impacts of cannabis on that developing brain.

Officials within the department have begun meeting to design a public education awareness campaign and we have actually submitted an application to Health Canada requesting funding to support the efforts that we're undertaking in this particular area. Officials from the department are working not just in the department of Health and Social Services but Education, Culture and Employment and other departments to develop some public education and awareness to help residents become aware of the impacts and why they should avoid utilizing or using cannabis, whether it's a smoked form or an ingested form.

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

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the response. During the last constituency tour, residents of small communities were somewhat concerned and wondering how the government is going to roll out its action plan and as well as the coming legislation for cannabis.

Mr. Speaker, my final question: the Minister mentioned he would work with local Indigenous governments and Regular Members on addictions and wellness. I just wonder, Mr. Speaker, if the Minister could give a few details on how the government will work with the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation on addictions and wellness programs in Nunakput. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I feel strongly that the IRC has been a very proactive group when it comes to family support and other initiatives. They were a part of the groups that we actually engaged with in the development of the Mental Health and Addictions Strategic Framework, which is the foundation of the next documents moving forward including the recovery plan that we talked about previously.

Mr. Speaker, all levels of government have a role to play in supporting mental wellness. One of the key directions outlined in this strategic framework is to take a whole government approach. This includes Indigenous governments like the IRC, and we're committed to working with them as we move forward to explore new and creative ways of doing things. The work of all levels of government is important to making this a reality, and we're committed to working with them and all of our partners moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 68-18(3):
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN THE MACKENZIE DELTA

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a few questions for the Minister of Infrastructure. I would like to ask the Minister: what are the Department of Infrastructure's plans for future infrastructure projects in the Mackenzie Delta? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member knows, we have the Building Canada Plan. In the 2017-2018 budget, we spent \$4.5 million and in 2018-2019, we plan to spend another \$4.5 million in this region, but on January 11, maybe some Members of the House weren't aware. When we weren't sitting, the Minister or the MP McLeod and myself were in Behchoko and did an announcement around Bundle 3. In Bundle 3 is \$2.5 million that will be spent on the Dempster between 2009 and 2024. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BLAKE: Can the Minister elaborate on what planning and timelines are associated with the winter road between Inuvik and Fort Good Hope for an ice road from Tsiigehtchic to Fort Good Hope? Also, a new Mackenzie Valley highway from Inuvik to Wrigley.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As all Members of the House know, we have our submission on the Mackenzie Valley Highway from Wrigley to Norman Wells, a \$700 million asset we have within the National Trade Corridors Fund. The second that the Member is referring to from Tsiigehtchic to Fort Good Hope is something that has not been contemplated by this government at this time.

MR. BLAKE: The last government addressed the plans for the department to actually have a winter road from Inuvik by Campbell Lake to Fort Good Hope. I would like to ask the Minister if he knows why those changes were made and, if he needs a little more time for providing that information, can he provide that.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I will endeavour to look into the department to find out exactly about that. As we all know in this House, we have high-priority infrastructure needs across the whole system, including the Dempster Highway. There is a limited amount of funds. We have a significant ask into the federal government of \$1.8 billion for Trade Corridors Fund, which is a significant ask. Our fiscal capacity to be able to meet these demands going forward would be significant. Winter Road, I believe a

number of years ago -- the number I hear is \$800,000 to put that piece in. It is something that I don't think this government can afford at this time.

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

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the only reasoning behind these questions during my constituency meeting was for major projects for creating work in our region. What major projects can we foresee in the future for the Beaufort Delta? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: There are a number of projects that are ongoing right now that are in process. We have the seniors' building in Fort McPherson that is being completed. James Creek Maintenance Camp is on the books. That needs to be coming forward. We are working with Aboriginal governments in the region to move that project forward. We have the new air terminal going into Inuvik, which is a significant amount in the last capital budget. There are other ongoing projects in the region that will contribute to the economy of the region. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 69-18(3):
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES SYSTEM

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement, I talked about Child and Family Services. I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services questions on that. I would like to ask the Minister if there is a way that he could obtain income information on families with children in care or the families of children who have been apprehended. Thank you.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a number of years ago, we moved forward with a new approach to providing child and family services here in the Northwest Territories called Building Stronger Families. The premise and the intention behind Building Stronger Families is to move away from an apprehension system to a prevention system to support families. The bottom line is we want to find ways to support families so the children never have to be apprehended. In that model, it includes working with families to identify the challenges they are facing and come up with ways to address those issues, which, in many situations, may include some of the financial challenges that families are under.

We have recently piloted a situation where we worked closely with the Housing Corporation where individuals were looking like they were going to get evicted and we have actually provided them with some financial support to avoid an eviction and then worked with them on the development of a plan to get them back on a positive financial path. We are prepared and we do look at financial situations of individuals on a case-by-case basis. Finances may not always be the reason that engagement with Child and Family Services is necessary. When it is, we are looking at finding ways to provide some supports to them to help families stay united and together and build stronger families as opposed to tearing families apart. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BEAULIEU: I am sort of hearing that the Department of Health and Social Services is sharing information with other social departments. I would like the minister to confirm that. Are the social departments, Housing, Justice, and the Department of Education, sharing information with Health and Social Services on the clients? Those specific clients I am referring to are people who have children in care or children in foster care.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: As I indicated, the premise of Building Stronger Families is exactly that, building stronger families. This means, as somebody engages on a voluntary basis or whether we have been asked to engage as a result of concerns about safety, we will work with the family, identify the issues that we need to work on to build that family up so they are in a position to take care of their children in a healthy and safe way. If we do need to engage different departments, we would certainly get consent forms filled out so we can actually work with those departments in a legal way and make sure that the clients are aware that their information is being discussed. In fact, the families should be engaged in that, as well. We won't share information without consent with other departments. Where consent is provided and it is about building that stronger family, we are absolutely prepared to work with those families.

The pilot we did recently with the Housing Corporation showed where that could really make a difference. We were able to find and work with families who were having troubles with rent. We actually came to the table with some finances to help them for the short term. We developed a plan. We had the Housing Corporation engaged to make sure they wouldn't evict them during this process so that we could keep families together rather than tearing them apart.

MR. BEAULIEU: I think the system has improved a lot. I agree. I would like to ask the Minister if there could be something more active. By that I mean: I know that we are talking about the same people who are losing their children to the foster care system or the children are being apprehended, are using the health system more than the average individuals of the same age group who are in the correction facilities and so on. An active, integrated case-management process for individual families that have children who are apprehended, I am wondering if the Minister could just talk a little bit about that to ensure that we know exactly why the children are in care. If there is anything we can do, we should be doing that. I would like to ask the Minister about that.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I know the Member is passionate about this particular area. The Member and I actually were part of the review that was done of Child and Family Services in the 16th Assembly that came up with 76 recommendations to improve Child and Family Services. I know the Member was also around when the most recent audit was done which actually gave some pretty negative results about the services provided by Child and Family Services. I also know the Member is aware of the recommendations made by Truth and Reconciliation to improve Child and Family Services.

Building Stronger Families builds on all those recommendations, including the recommendations of the TRC. As I said, it is about providing supports to families to keep them together, to keep them united. We are prepared to use the tools and resources that are available to us, which includes integrated case management where appropriate. There are certain criteria that are utilized to determine when integrated

case management should be used. We are working with families.

I do want to be clear that we are not where we need to be. We are still a long way from where we need to be on supporting families and keeping them united and keeping them strong. We are on the right path. There is a ways to go. I am committed to continuing this work. I am committed to working with committee. I am committed to finding ways to increase our partnerships with not just other government departments but government organizations to keep our families together rather than tearing them apart.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister for that. Financial support, I think, is something that the families need. It appears as though, when individuals are on income support or if they are having trouble with the justice system, that is not quite enough money to be able to provide all of the things you need to provide for children. At the end of the day, one thing leads to another. I don't think it is coincidental that the poorest people are the ones who have their children apprehended. That is not always the case, but that is often the case. I am wondering if the Minister could talk about or tell me what type of financial supports exist in all of the social departments to keep that family together. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: There are a variety of supports across the Government of the Northwest Territories that are available to all residents of the Northwest Territories in times of need. We have income support. We have housing that provides a number of different supports to residents of the Northwest Territories. I don't think we have enough time to list all of the things that they do, but I will say that part of the process of building stronger families is helping families connect with those resources that exist and helping identify the resources that will be appropriate for the times. Once again, I do want to say, we are halfway through implementation of Building Stronger Families. The first couple of years have really been focused on fixing the foundation, fixing the core, and we are starting to do some of these tests like we did with the Housing Corporation to explore these new ideas and new ways of doing business.

I will say, and I think it's good news, we have seen an increase in the number of Child and Family Services files over the last number of years, but what we have also seen is a larger increase of voluntary interactions with us rather than apprehension based activities, and more children staying with their families through voluntary service agreements and trying to find these creative ways to access programs. We still have children who are being apprehended. We want to see that number go down. We have seen that number going down in the last couple of years. We've seen the number of mediations rather than court activities start to take off. It didn't exist a couple of years ago. We have families that are providing supports through a foster program. We found a way to expedite the process for families so that they can get some resources. Things are going in the right direction. We have a long way to go. In my mind, one of the largest challenges we have is the fact that we have a lot of staff out there. We have been doing certain things in a certain way for a long time. It is hard to change attitudes, beliefs, and we are working to make those improvements, and I ask you to work with us as we continue to make these changes to keep families together rather than tearing them apart. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Time for oral questions has expired. Item 9, written questions. Item 10, returns to written questions. Item 11, replies to budget address (Day 1 of 7). Item 12, replies to the Commissioner's opening address. Item 13, petitions. Item 14, reports of standing and special committees. Item 15, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 16, tabling of documents. Minister of Finance.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 63-18(3):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES MAIN ESTIMATES 2017-2018

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled "Main Estimates 2018-2019." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 64(18):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION 830-18(2): SMALL COMMUNITY
EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT PROGRAM

TABLED DOCUMENT 65-18(3):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION 912-18(2) SMALL COMMUNITY
EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT PROGRAM

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following two documents entitled "Follow-Up Letter for Oral Question 830-18(2) Small Community Employment Support Program," and "Follow-Up Letter for Oral Question 912-(2) Small Community Employment Support Program." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Member for Frame Lake.

TABLED DOCUMENT 66-18(3):
PRESS RELEASES FROM DENE NATION, INUVIALUIT REGIONAL CORPORATION,
TILCHO GOVERNMENT, GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL RESPONDING TO
PREMIER'S 'RED ALERT' STATEMENT

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I have four documents to table. First is "Gwich'in Open to Discussion Consultation about Premier's 'Red Alert' Statement" dated November 3, 2017.

The next one is "News Release Premier 'Red Alert' Statement from Taicho Government" dated November 7, 2017.

The next one is "Reconciliation Efforts Welcomed by Inuvialuit Regional Corporation" dated November 6, 2017. The last one is Dene Nation News Release "We, the Dene, Need to Govern Ourselves as a Right to Self-Determination" dated November 2, 2017. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Item 17, notices of motion. Item 18,

notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 19, motions. Item 20, first reading of bills. Item 21, second reading of bills. Item 22, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters, with the Member for Hay River North in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

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

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. There is a motion to report progress. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I will 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, your committee has been considering Member's Statement 1-18(3), North Slave Correctional Complex Inmate Concerns, and we would like to report progress; and, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

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

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Item 24, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): The orders of the day for Friday, February 9, 2017, at 10:00 a.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions

8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Commissioner's Opening Address
11. Replies to the Commissioner's Opening Address (Day 2 of 7)
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
14. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
15. Tabling of Documents
16. Notices of Motion
17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
18. Motions
19. First Reading of Bills
20. Second Reading of Bills
21. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Minister's Statement 1-18(3), North Slave Correctional Complex Inmate Concerns
 - Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019
22. Report of Committee of the Whole
23. Third Reading of Bills
24. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Masi, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Friday, February 9, 2018, at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned 4:37 p.m.