



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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## **HANSARD**

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**The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker**



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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2000****MEMBERS PRESENT**

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

**ITEM 1: PRAYER**

Oh God, may your spirit and guidance be in us as we work for the benefit of all our people, for justice in our land and for constant recognition of the dignity and aspirations of those whom we serve. Amen.

**MR. SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Good morning, everyone. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Jake Ootes.

**ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS****Minister's Statement 9-14(2): A Report on Education in the Northwest Territories**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, later today, I will table a document entitled Towards Excellence: A Report on Education in the NWT.

The document presents statistical data that indicates how well students from kindergarten to grade 12 are progressing through the education system. This is the third time that such a report, often referred to by educators as the "indicators document", has been published in the Northwest Territories.

But the report I am tabling today is the first such report that deals exclusively with data from the new Northwest Territories. The information contained in this report will allow parents and the public to access tools often used by educators and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to evaluate the success of the current programs.

It provides a basis for comparison from year to year. This information gives a clear indication of the strengths of the educational system and the areas where improvement is needed. Towards Excellence reveals that there is much to be proud of in our education system.

For example, the number of students who graduate from high school in the Northwest Territories is on the rise. School participation rates are up and more than 90 percent of the students currently in the education system now have access to senior secondary schooling in their home community. The overall education level of Northwest Territories' residents has risen.

But there is work to be done in attracting aboriginal students to the teaching profession. We need more aboriginal teachers to serve as role models in their communities and to help in preserving language and culture. And we need to ensure that all students, regardless of where they live, have access to a variety of quality program offerings in their senior secondary years.

Mr. Speaker, our government is accountable to the people it serves for the programs it delivers. By presenting an accurate picture of our education system, Towards Excellence provides a framework for accountability.

The information in the report will form the basis for reflection and discussion about the school system. At the same time, it will guide the work of planning an education system that works for all of us.

Mr. Speaker, Towards Excellence is not only a snapshot of where we are, it helps us set realistic goals for our education system and for our students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS****Member's Statement 28-14(2): Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to talk today about student financial assistance, as this is something that is near and dear to my heart. I have raised this issue in this House before.

As many of my colleagues know, I attended high school in Yellowknife and went on to university in the south. I have to say that the student financial assistance, from an administrative point of view, has certainly improved. I remember the first time I applied for student financial assistance, I had great difficulty. It was very confusing. I believe things have improved.

But as I mentioned previously in this House, unfortunately, tuitions at southern institutions have doubled, and sometimes tripled, over the last 10 years. The rates for student financial assistance in the Northwest Territories are the same as they were when I was going to school. This is no longer acceptable. We do not have a positive situation when we are expecting kids to make do with less.

We can all agree the current situation is unacceptable. We have in front of us the government rolling out some new legislation which proposes to make changes to student financial assistance. It looks very good on the surface. But I am hoping we can dig more deeply here today and discover exactly what this government is rolling out. I know the former government was presented with a couple of different approaches, and they chose to support a different approach than this government is currently bringing before it. I would like to discuss the two different approaches, see which was the more equitable of the approaches, and see if we cannot talk about that.

I know we sometimes choose to support things we think we can find the political support for. But I think that is just a euphemism for the road of least resistance. I really do not think that is in the best interest of students of the Northwest Territories. I am going to be asking the Minister responsible for Education some questions about this later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**Member's Statement 29-14(2): Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our most important resource is our people. We have huge potential in our residents, but Northerners can only reach their full potential with good access to education. An important part of that access is student financial assistance.

Mr. Speaker, since becoming a Member of the Legislative Assembly in 1991, I have probably had more calls to my office about student financial assistance than any other single issue. Of course, that may be due to the time I spent as the Minister responsible for Education. But even as an Ordinary Member, I have found student financial assistance to be a large concern amongst my constituents. It was a significant concern expressed during the last election campaign.

Over the last eight years, I have heard progressively fewer complaints about the operation of the program, and more complaints about the amount of money provided by the program. I know the administration has improved. I think the responsiveness has improved. The speed at which cheques are issued is dramatically faster. But the level of funding has not changed in nearly eight years.

Everyone I have talked with understands that we most likely have the most generous program in Canada. But in the past eight years, inflation has eaten away at its value. The federal government has nearly abandoned support for post-secondary education in Canada by slashing CHST funding, which has left universities and colleges scrambling to survive. This has driven the cost of tuition up, to three or four times what it was just five years ago.

If we want to foster success among northern students, our Student Financial Assistance Program needs to respond to the changes that have taken place in the rest of Canada.

I was pleased to hear the Minister was planning to put forward changes to student financial assistance that would put more money into the hands of students. I tried, when I was Minister, to make changes to the program that would do just that, but could never achieve consensus on how it should be done.

Mr. Speaker, unless more money is put into the budget for the program, changes only move money around. It may look somewhat different, but if we all use the same amount of money currently budgeted for student financial assistance, that means if some students are getting more money, it is coming from other students.

Mr. Speaker, the problem has always been where to get new money from? What program should it be taken from? Members in this House could never agree to shift money from another program so student financial assistance could be increased.

I sincerely hope that is what the Minister is now proposing. I, for one, am prepared to discuss cuts in another area to get more money into the Student Financial Assistance Program. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member for Frame Lake is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Dent, you have unanimous consent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, honourable colleagues. Mr. Speaker, as I have said, I, for one, am prepared to discuss cuts in another area to get more money into the Student Financial Assistance Program. And to make sure we improve the program without creating winners and losers.

Our students face enough challenges without creating class divisions among them. Mr. Speaker, let us do the right thing and give more money to our students. Let us give them the tools, and challenge them to concentrate on being successful. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lakes, Mr. Roland.

**Member's Statement 30-14(2): Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will also be following up on the statement on student financial assistance. Mr. Speaker, there has been a push for changes in this program for quite some time from organizations and aboriginal groups outside of the department to try to make it more flexible.

As we have heard, we have one of the best programs in the country. We also have one of the highest costs, with travelling back and forth. We also have one of the lowest, qualified groups in terms of grade levels of aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories. I believe that is why the program was designed, to try and support them through the system.

Mr. Speaker, part of what this program is doing right now is causing division among aboriginal groups in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, I speak for the Inuvialuit in this situation. Many of the Inuvialuit students have gone south to school, qualified for the program, received their degrees and diplomas, and are greeted with a nasty tax bill at the end of their course. Mr. Speaker, that kind of bill at the end of one's schooling, when they are looking for a job, can be devastating, especially when there was no preparation for it.

Right now, we know, because of the Indian Act, that Dene people are considered status and are tax-exempt from the grants of this government. But the Inuvialuit and the Metis of the Northwest Territories are not considered in the same light. We have to pay taxes on that. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister regarding this matter during question period. In light of the differences and proposed changes, it still continues to differentiate between aboriginal peoples of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

### **Member's Statement 31-14(2): Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to address the issue of student financial assistance. Money is very clearly a critical issue, but as in most government programs, money is not the only issue. There are structural and process issues that can also be changed and improved on. I would like to address some of the specific areas that I wish to discuss further with the Minister.

There is the issue of travel benefits. Right now, students have to go to a travel agent designated by the department. As a result of this lack of choice, the service to the students is not what it should be. There is no incentive for the travel agent to provide the best options possible.

Student financial assistance is a program that should be delivered in the communities, but is centralized completely in Yellowknife. There is no ability for the student financial assistance officers to contact or get to know the students. There is minimal linkage with career development people in the regions. I am going to suggest, as I already have to the Minister, that in fact student financial assistance officers should be relocated to the communities, out of the Yellowknife office and into Fort Smith, Inuvik and possibly Hay River. The large centres that have the majority of students, so they can work closely with their career development and really know the students.

We have a double standard when we deal with our students in Aurora College in the North and students going south. Student financial assistance money goes to Aurora College, whereas down south, the students get the money. They are treated as adults. Here, in the North, we for some reason treat students differently because of some bad experiences with non-payments of funds and fees. We treat all students as less than adults. That is not acceptable.

We have to look clearly at how we deal with disabled people and students. Right now, there is no way to deal with them. There is no access for them. Students who are disabled and have special needs have to go to various departments with their hat in their hand, trying to cobble together financial arrangements to go to school.

There are restrictions on sharing of information. Student financial assistance does not share lists of students with other departments so they can work with students to find employment. While we have these internal roadblocks, our graduating students are being recruited in southern jurisdictions. Teachers, nurses...Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Member for Thebacha is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Miltenberger, you have unanimous consent.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, colleagues. In effect, by not having the systems in place to support our students, we often lose the benefit of the valuable investment we have made.

We also have in the Student Financial Assistance Program, an elaborate, administrative system that is set up to mainly keep track of and oversee the students. For example, students are

given travel money for Christmas, and there is no flexibility. If they do not use it at Christmas, it has to go all the way to the Minister's desk to have a decision made, when in fact the Minister should be looking at other things, like finding \$1 million for student summer employment, rather than deciding if a student can make different use of the travel money they have been authorized to spend.

We have no clear way to track success, Mr. Speaker. We have a comprehensive and detailed, relentless system to track failures and debt collection, but we do not have the same system in place to work with the students that are graduating. To work with industries to find them jobs. We have to look at ways to not leave students who fail out in the cold for three years. Is there a way to give them some bridging to get them that one semester they need to get back on their feet.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we have to work closely with our aboriginal partners to coordinate the funds they have with the funds we have. This is done by the people in the Dogrib region. By doing that, they are able to compound the benefit and effect of the money they spend. Mr. Speaker, we are not here simply asking for money. There are things this government can do to change and improve the system to make it more effective for all students. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

### **Member's Statement 32-14(2): Condition of Highway No. 3**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk of something that is a rather urgent matter for my constituents. Earlier this week, I made a statement regarding the accident involving a tractor trailer on Highway No. 3 between Rae-Edzo and Yellowknife.

The results of the accident were two-fold: injuries to a person and damage to the environment. Although the driver was discharged from the hospital with minor injuries, the full impact of the environmental damages as a result of the spillage of approximately 20,000 litres of diesel fuel will not be known until the summer.

On Wednesday, the Minister of Transportation took my question about the cause of the accident as notice, stating that the issue is still under police investigation.

But yesterday, Mr. Speaker, one day after the accident, the Minister announced a change in the speed limit for trucks on the unconstructed portion of Highway No. 3 from 90 kilometres per hour to 70 kilometres per hour.

The timing of these two events is very curious, Mr. Speaker. I am very concerned about what his statement implies about the dangerous condition of the highway. As the Minister admitted himself in his statement, the lowering of the speed limit was necessary for two reasons; one, to reduce the wear and tear on the road and two, to give motorists a greater sense of confidence that they can travel the highway safely.

To put it another way, Mr. Speaker, I believe what the Minister is saying is that the perfect condition of Highway No. 3 cannot handle the current traffic load of the road. At the same time, the motorists do not have a sense of confidence that they can complete the journey safely.

It is clear the huge volume of trucks travelling to the mine sites is taking a toll on the road. The road cannot take the wear and tear, and this is dangerous to the public. He had no choice but to reduce the speed limit for the trucks, Mr. Speaker. But this does not solve the problem. This can only be a short-term emergency measure. The current plan for the reconstruction of the road is more than 10 years. We surely cannot continue this way for 10 years or more.

The resource industry is already hampered by the short winter road season. The increasing fuel prices are adding to the cost of doing business. Decreased speed limit is one more obstacle because this will mean a delay in the transportation of supplies to the mine site. In the end, we all pay.

But there is a more important flaw in the Minister's measure, Mr. Speaker. And it has to do with the safety of the people travelling on the road. I am concerned that having two separate speed limits...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Ms. Lee, your time has expired.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Member for Range Lake is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may continue, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am concerned that having two separate speed limits would encourage small-vehicle operators to keep trying to pass the big trucks. You can see how this can be dangerous for everyone travelling on that road.

As I stated earlier, Mr. Speaker, this road is a fatality site waiting to happen. How many lives do we have to injure or lose on this road? How much fuel and contaminants do we have to dump into the lakes surrounding this highway before the road is paved and widened? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

#### **Member's Statement 33-14(2): Arctic Winter Games Athletes**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak on this highway issue and the issue of the Arctic Winter Games. On the highway issue, I would like to compliment the Minister responsible for Transportation and his staff on their decision to reduce the speed limit...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Lafferty, just a reminder that you can only speak on one issue in your statement.

-- Interjection

-- Laughter

-- Applause

You may continue, Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** ...on their decision to drop the speed limit of truck traffic on Highway No. 3. I know my constituents can

travel without looking in their mirror expecting tractor trailers to overtake them. On that issue, my athletes have to get to the Arctic Winter Games, so I would like to thank the Minister. Today, I would like to acknowledge and congratulate the many fine athletes, coaches, chaperones and support staff within the western Arctic who are heading for Whitehorse with one of our colleagues in March to represent our Territory in the 16<sup>th</sup> Arctic Winter Games.

In my home community of Rae-Edzo, 14 athletes have been successful in obtaining a spot on Team Northwest Territories. I send my congratulations to Tracy Beaulieu, Glenn Blondin, Colinda Blondin, Tyron Fish, Melvin Lafferty, Jonathan Mackenzie-Zoe, Shane Mackenzie-Zoe, Cody Mantla, Wendy Mantla, Marvin Migwi, Kerry Lee Rabesca, Pamala Richardson, Fred Steinwand and Freddie Tinqu. These athletes have worked hard and earned their place in representing our Territory in events such as volleyball, soccer, wrestling and Dene games.

I would like to acknowledge the time and efforts of two of the coaches who will be attending: Mike Botermans, who is the juvenile men's soccer coach, and Sara Tkaczuk, who is the women's volleyball coach. I would also like to acknowledge the coaches and teams that did not make it to the Arctic Winter Games for all of the hard work they put into their sports. Within the North Slave, I would like to acknowledge the abilities of Bernice Beaverho, Katrina Jeremick'ca, Christina Simpson, and Tephane Wedawin. They will be representing our Territory on the women's volleyball team.

In closing, I wish these athletes and coaches every success as they head off to the Games. I hope they return with memories they will cherish for a lifetime. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Just to remind the Members, Members' statements are to be on one topic. I am assuming the athletes are going to be using Highway No. 3, so I will allow the comments.

-- Applause

Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

#### **Member's Statement 34-14(2): Recognition of Arctic Winter Games Athletes**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this time to congratulate the many people in my riding who were successful in their efforts to represent the Northwest Territories at the Arctic Winter Games in Whitehorse. Individuals such as Archie Ari, who will be coaching the dog-mushing team; Desmond Annete and Jim Kay of Aklavik, who will be participating in Arctic sports; Janice McLeod from Aklavik, who will be participating in badminton; Joyce Stor, who has made the ladies' hockey team along with Jackie Pascal of Fort McPherson. I look forward to seeing these two young ladies making the Canadian Olympic Hockey Team someday. I believe they have the potential. I would also like to acknowledge Lorna Stor of Aklavik, who will be going along as staff. In snowshoeing, we have several individuals: Aleca Francis; Shaun Niandoh; Kevin and Corinne Roberts, along with the coach, Dennis Wright of Fort McPherson.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to add that I have a lot of concerns. I do not see too many team sports the communities of the

Mackenzie Delta are participating in, except for the two ladies participating in hockey.

I think it is important this government invests in the well-being and health of the young people in our communities. In order to do that, Mr. Speaker, I feel this government has to identify healthy lives as one of our priorities.

In order to do that, I believe we have to work with groups such as the Aboriginal Sport Circle, who work closely with Sport North to ensure we have the resources and the ability for students in the communities to participate in territorial and national events. But it does take money. As other Members have stated, there is a lack of resources in a lot of our communities. We have a large unemployment problem.

Mr. Speaker, I think this government can take some efforts to improve the lives of the people in our communities by doing simple things. It is important we put money into improving the existing facilities in our communities...Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Member for Mackenzie Delta is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. As I stated, I think it is important this government makes an investment in our communities by putting money into improving existing facilities. We have hockey rinks we are not able to make use of during the summer season.

But I think a simple gesture by this government, but finding a program that can be carried out right across the Western Territory by simply putting concrete in those facilities so that we can use those facilities year-round, in the winter for hockey and Arctic sports, and also in the summer for rollerblading, indoor soccer and other events. These facilities would then get the maximum potential, allowing the athletes in our communities to achieve their goals and be competitive nationally and territorially.

I would like to suggest that the government seriously consider that. With that, I would like to wish all of the athletes that are going to the Arctic Winter Games from across the Northwest Territories all the best, and I look forward to seeing them in Whitehorse between March 5<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup>. With that, all the best. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

#### **Member's Statement 35-14(2): Federal Funding for Aboriginal Education**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Translation starts) I will be speaking in my language now. If you would all put your earpieces on I will start.

Yesterday, Mr. Kakfwi, our Premier, put two statements...

We talked about how we will work with our children to keep them in school. In this part of the Northwest Territories ... when we took our treaty rights... the way we were to be educated, and to look after our health care, medication, all of these were promised to us.

But as it is, people from this Territory, when they are going to school, they are not always successful. There are some students who go south, but only approximately 50 percent of them succeed.

This money that is supposed to go to our education, I do not think the government is making proper use of it. We wish that we would educate more of our people, but the way I see it, that is not the situation, and many people have mentioned that.

So, for the future, that is why I will ask the question this morning to the Finance Minister about this situation. Thank you. (Translation ends)

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

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

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize today in this House a constituent, friend and fellow hockey player, Mr. Bob Rose, a businessman from Fort Smith. Thank you.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Welcome, Mr. Rose. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I did not want this person to think I had forgotten about her, so I would like to recognize Ms. Pat Thomas of the NWTTA.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I think Ms. Thomas has received 100 percent recognition since she has been here. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

#### **ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS**

##### **Question 35-14(2): Student Financial Assistance Regulations**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment questions on the Student Financial Assistance Program. I am not sure that the average Northerner or student understands that the details of what the student will actually receive are contained in regulation instead of legislation.

The bill which the government will propose today will make amendments to the Student Financial Assistance Act and will deal with raising the amount of money available in the loan fund and increasing the lifetime limit on the amount each individual can borrow. Mr. Speaker, I am sure that you can appreciate that students are more concerned with how much they will receive for student financial assistance rather than how we tweak our legislation.

My question for the Minister, Mr. Speaker, is whether the Minister will commit to tabling the proposed regulations now

that the amendments to the Student Financial Assistance Act have been introduced. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 35-14(2): Student Financial Assistance Regulations**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps I can get some clarification. Does the Member wish to have me table the redesign of the Student Financial Assistance Program? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary to Question 35-14(2): Student Financial Assistance Regulations**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, that is correct.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 35-14(2): Student Financial Assistance Regulations**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this has been a program that has been a long time in the making. It has been two and a half years since it started and during questions, I will get into some of the background for the Members, audience, and public.

The redesign is available, and this afternoon I will be holding a press conference and we will be starting to redistribute the redesign to the various interested parties. I will table the redesign, Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate moment. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary to Question 35-14(2): Student Financial Assistance Regulations**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is reassuring, but I am wondering if the Minister can tell us; will these regulations be in place soon or, more specifically, when will these regulations be in place? I am concerned about students going away to school in the fall, so I would like to see this done as quickly as possible.

The question is when will the regulations be in place? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 35-14(2): Student Financial Assistance Regulations**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the Member for bringing this up. I think this is a good information item for people to know about. I intend to table the redesign in this Session. Additionally, as I had mentioned, I am going to hold a press conference this afternoon and we will have a communications strategy to distribute with the material.

We have already advised the chiefs in the Territory that the redesign and the bill is coming before the Legislature. The process that we will follow is that the bill will be given, hopefully, second reading this afternoon. At that point the bill, presumably, would go to the standing committee. The standing committee would have to review the bill and the redesign. That is the process it will go through.

Once the standing committee can report back to the House, to the committee of the whole, the process will be that presumably it will be debated here. Then it is up to the House as to how soon we can pass that bill. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Bell. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**Question 36-14(2): Financing Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment. As I noted in my Member's statement this morning, I believe we need to expand this program by adding money to it. I know that we are in a very tight fiscal situation. All of us in this House are aware of that.

We have heard from the Minister of Finance that whenever we provide money for one program it inevitably means taking money from another. Can the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment tell us if the proposed changes to the Student Financial Assistance Program will involve taking money from somewhere else in order to increase the monies going to students?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 36-14(2): Financing Student Financial Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The proposed changes are that the revolving loan fund will be increased from the present, I think it is \$23 million, to \$33 million, adding \$11 million, as part of a revolving loan fund. Through the system being designed there would be remissible loans which will replenish the loan fund. So I do not see that there would be additional funds from other areas. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 36-14(2): Financing Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am trying to get a thorough understanding of what this means. The Minister has said that there is going to be an increase in the revolving fund, but that there does not appear to be any new money. Are we really talking about moving money around in the existing pot so that it is basically the same budget line that we are going to be looking at, and it is just a difference in the way that the program is administered and the monies are parceled out? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 36-14(2): Financing Student Financial Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The changes in the design will change some of the grants that are now provided to remissible loans. Those remissible loans will come into the system when students finish school. Historically it has been shown that a certain amount comes back to the territorial government. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 36-14(2): Financing Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I am to understand then, Mr. Speaker, there is no new money going into the program, but we can increase the amount of money going to some students because we will be recovering money from students who have failed. Would that be accurate in the way of characterizing the way we are getting more money for some students? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 36-14(2): Financing Student Financial Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Some money will come from students who have failed, but additionally some students may not stay in the Northwest Territories and go to the south, and those will be repayable loans. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 36-14(2): Financing Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If in fact we are going to be recovering monies now that we are not perhaps recovering because we are changing grants into remissible loans there would have to be conditions for those loans. Have we made the standards for qualifying for remission even more difficult than they currently are? Does the redesign make the standards even more difficult to have loans remised? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 36-14(2): Financing Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The changes that have taken place are that Northwest Territories indigenous Dene will continue to receive a basic grant for tuition, books and travel, and a supplementary grant for living allowance and high accommodation costs. Northwest Territories indigenous Metis and Inuit will be receiving a basic grant for tuition, books and travel, but a remissible loan for living allowance.

Northwest Territories schooled students will receive tuition, books and travel as a basic grant, and a remissible loan for living allowance. Others, Northwest Territories residents not

schooled in the North, will be put on an income-assessed repayable loan basis. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary to Question 36-14(2): Financing Student Financial Assistance**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister has not talked about what the success rate is. Do we see some of this money coming back because we are expecting to see 20 or 30 percent of the students who currently are receiving grants perhaps fail the course, and that is how we are getting a lot of the money into this program? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 36-14(2): Financing Student Financial Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not have the exact technical information and details on that here, but I have been informed that, historically tracked, there has been an ongoing return to the Northwest Territories. The projections are that there will be a certain amount, as I say, through some changes that are being made. People who were not schooled in the Northwest Territories may apply for income assessed repayable loans. That will come back into the system, and that has changed from the previous system.

The Northwest Territories schooled, we are changing to remissible loans, and if those individuals do not stay in the North, they become repayable. Additionally, Northwest Territories indigenous Metis and Inuit are offered remissible loans. The objective here, Mr. Speaker, is to set up a system. And through the consultation process we were informed that the emphasis must be on providing more money for the students, but additionally to stress the success factor and the return to the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**Question 37-14(2): Aboriginal Education Rights**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have questions on the Student Financial Assistance Program for the Minister of Education, Culture, and Employment. As the Minister is no doubt aware, and alluded to during a response to an earlier question, money that is available to band councils to provide post-secondary education to its memberships is routed through this government.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell us the amount of funding the territorial government receives to educate aboriginal post-secondary students in accordance with their treaty rights?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 37-14(2): Aboriginal Education Rights**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not have that answer at hand. I will have to take the question as notice.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Question 38-14(2): Tracking Progress of Assisted Students**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my Member's statement, while money is an issue, there are a significant number of process changes that could be made to this student financial assistance system to improve the delivery of student financial assistance. These issues have been raised not only by MLAs, but we have had those issues brought to our attention by students who have lived or who are trying to live through the system as they get their education at university and college.

One of the issues, Mr. Speaker, is how we work with students, work with industry, work with career development to see how and where we are succeeding. How many teachers are we educating? How many nurses? How many engineers? What type of relationship do we have with industry to help students get placed so they are not recruited by southern jurisdictions? As I indicated, we have a very comprehensive system to track down students that owe us money.

But we have a very weak system in terms of working with students and industry in career development in the schools. Can the Minister indicate how he intends to address this system on some of the issues so we are not just putting more money into it but to make some substantial changes that will benefit students? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 38-14(2): Tracking Progress of Assisted Students**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the Member is certainly pointing out a good area for us all to be working on to ensure that those students who we put through the system come back to the North, that the North benefits from it. So that we encourage them and set up our systems so that there are possibilities for employment and so forth.

I will just state that the emphasis of this program is to provide an emphasis on more money for students, as I said earlier, but also to ensure that there is a system to bring students back North. I think the redesign has been done on that basis. And what we have heard through the public consultation process was the need to provide more money for students, to work on success for students and the need to have them come back North.

I appreciate what the Member is saying, that we need to work on that area. Providing opportunities for them. We need a system of tracking. I am not sure what is in place now. I can find out for the Member. It is an important area for us to look at. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Supplementary to Question 38-14(2): Tracking Progress of Assisted Students**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister indicated in one of his earlier replies, this whole system and redesign has been in the works, like a lot of other things in the government, for years, so it is time to funnel this issue down from the abstract and the fuzzy warm feeling to the specifics of how it is going to work. When you come to this House to discuss the issues you have to talk to specifics. What kind of system is the Minister trying to put in place? Will travel benefits, for example, be loosened up to allow students flexibility and the ability to get the best deal in travel arrangements to go south? Will regulations be loosened up so that in fact students can use their travel vouchers at Christmas, but if they do not go home at Christmas because of other obligations they can go home at reading week without having to go all the way to the Minister to get approval?

Those kind of simple, fundamental changes, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister speak to those and commit to looking at those? Those are not major changes. They are not rocket science. They are process and structure. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 38-14(2): Tracking Progress of Assisted Students**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member has a very good point in what he is saying. There are very restrictive areas in this. It may be more expansive than what I know about. I know of one situation where we are very restrictive as to when a student can travel back home, as the Member has referenced.

I think it is an ongoing area for us to work on. I am hopeful the standing committee's review on this can make some recommendations in those areas, and point out some of the difficulties in this. I appreciate the Member's comments. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Supplementary to Question 38: 14(2): Tracking Progress of Assisted Students**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While I appreciate the Minister's appreciation of my comments, I would also appreciate a commitment from the Minister and the department to look at this and do more than appreciate the fact that the issue has been raised. This is not new information, Mr. Speaker.

Another area I seek commitment from the Minister on is will he commit to look at how we can have student financial assistance better deal with disabled and special needs students? Those are further areas where there are gaps. It takes all types of interventions to deal with people who are entitled to receive a post-secondary education, but the system does not quite fit for them. Will the Minister commit to look at that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 38-14(2): Tracking Progress of Assisted Students**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member has a very good point. I will commit to looking at the areas he has raised. There is no question those are areas we should always keep in mind to improve our system and administrative processes. We have to look at updating our application forms and information packages for students. Some things are already in the works. For example, we have a website where students can access information.

Existing staff need to be trained in some of these areas, and some of the new areas that can potentially be introduced. Decentralization may be an area to look at down the road. However, we also need to consider what self-government may eventually lead to. I think there is potential in what the Member is stating. There are areas we should continually look at. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Supplementary to Question 38-14(2): Tracking Progress of Assisted Students**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the Minister that what has been proposed is an interim measure, as we negotiate with the aboriginal governments for the takeover of these types of programs.

My final supplementary to the Minister is: will he commit to, in the next school year, have the same kind of comprehensive system we have to track failures to start tracking successes? So we can work on the proactive side, and not just focus on debt collection, where we seem to be putting all of our time and effort into systems development. Can we look at developing a system so we can work closely with industry and other parts of the department, like career development? A system that will allow us to work with the students to realize the benefit of our investment in them? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 38-14(2): Tracking Progress of Assisted Students**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure I can commit to putting that into place by the next school year, if the Member means by September. I will certainly undertake to work on this very heavily. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

**Question 39-14(2): College and University Entrance Program**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I said in my Member's statement, a lot of work has been done in this area. But there is still a lot of concern from residents and aboriginal groups in the Territories and the differences made through this Student Financial Assistance Program.

One particular area is a program that is available, on a limited basis, to status aboriginals, called the College and University

Entrance Program. This program prepares aboriginal status students for success in post-secondary studies, and has been delivered by Aurora College in the past.

Several MLAs made comments in the last Assembly on their disappointment that this excellent program was not extended to people of Inuvialuit and Metis descent. When you consider the average grade level completion of aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories is grade eight, you can see the post-secondary opportunities are limited for some residents.

For example, an aboriginal person of Metis descent is able to upgrade through the adult education program to a grade 12 level. This would not necessarily mean that person is ready to enter a diploma or degree program.

My question for the Minister is whether the proposed redesign of the Student Financial Assistance Program allows funding for students taking university or college preparation courses? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 39-14(2): College and University Entrance Program**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe we fund access or adult education programs to prepare students for college or university. If that was his question, the answer is no.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 39-14(2): College and University Entrance Program**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This directly relates to my question that this government is unfairly controlling money meant for the post-secondary education for aboriginals. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister to explain how allowing students to access college and university preparation courses is in conflict with the intent of the Student Financial Assistance Program? Mr. Speaker, the idea is to provide available money for post-secondary education. Why is it not available to all aboriginal people of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 39-14(2): College and University Entrance Program**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if I could get the Member to clarify. He spoke a bit too fast in his preamble. I wonder if he could just clarify. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Roland, could you repeat your question for clarification?

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the Minister's benefit, there is a concern that this government is unfairly controlling dollars that were meant to be used by aboriginal people for post-secondary education. I would like the Minister to explain how the present system benefits all aboriginal people

of the Northwest Territories if this University and College Entrance Program is only available to one sector of the aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes. We have a point of order here. Mr. Miltenberger, your point of order.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, given the valuable, limited time we have, I would ask the responses be delivered in a timely way. If they wish to have a team huddle, the clock should stop, so we are not penalized for their strategizing. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I am not sure if that is a point of order, but I will ask the Ministers that when they are asked to respond to the question, if they could avoid any unnecessary delays, or defer to another Minister that may be able to answer the question. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 39-14(2): College and University Entrance Program**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the program the honourable Member is referring to is a federally funded program, the University and College Preparation Entrance Program. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 39-14(2): College and University Entrance Program**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a federally funded program, but it is administered by this government. Will the Minister commit to examining the issue of readdressing the way it is done now, and taking appropriate steps to involve all aboriginal people in preparing them for post-secondary education? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 39-14(2): College and University Entrance Program**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will certainly undertake to look at the program, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary to Question 39-14(2): College and University Entrance Program**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister spoke earlier of looking down the road at something like this. The fact is we need to build this road. Can the Minister give us an idea as to how long this will take to start preparing this and put this into place? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 39-14(2): College and University Entrance Program**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this point, I have no idea how long this might take, but I will get back to the Member on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 40-14(2): Student Financial Assistance Program Flexibility**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Speaker, I have concerns regarding the flexibility of the Student Financial Assistance Program. I have raised this question in this House previously, and will continue to do so.

Mr. Speaker, when there is an emergency or crisis that occurs and students have to go home, there is no real mechanism to deal with emergency or compassionate travel, and students are penalized if they decide they have to go home for a funeral or other emergency.

I would like to ask the Minister what his department is doing to redesign this program to make it more flexible to allow the staff to deal with extreme circumstances students may find themselves in.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 40-14(2): Student Financial Assistance Program Flexibility**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again I have to make a commitment to the Member to look at this. The student financial assistance redesign is a result of a lot of consultation with individuals, aboriginal groups, students and so forth. The design went through a process where it was initiated through a Ministerial Forum on Student Financial Assistance. Following that, there were consultations. Following that, there was discussion with the standing committee of the social envelope, and the Government Operations Committee of the previous Assembly. The design came forward from all of that, and it seems to be the design that was most acceptable to the majority of the people. That is what has been put forward.

I will have to get back to the Member on his question. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 40-14(2): Student Financial Assistance Program Flexibility**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Again, on the subject of flexibility to the Student Financial Assistance Program, will the Minister tell us of the consequences under the proposed redesign if a student is forced to withdraw from their studies due to illness or a death in the immediate family? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 40-14(2): Student Financial Assistance Program Flexibility**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not have the answer here. I will have to get back to the Member on that.

The way the system currently works, if the person has to leave a program or fails a program, there is a one term grace period. After the second term failure, then that particular term must be repaid. That is my knowledge of the way the system currently works, Mr. Krutko. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 40-14(2): Student Financial Assistance Program Flexibility**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I understand the need for control to ensure there is no abuse of the Student Financial Assistance Program. However, Mr. Speaker, a government without compassion is called a bureaucracy. I would like to ask the Minister to make a commitment to examine the proposal to redesign the Student Financial Assistance Program to give our staff the ability and leeway to make compassionate decisions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 40-14(2): Student Financial Assistance Program Flexibility**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned, there is a grace period for anyone failing a term. There is only a requirement for repayment if they fail a second term. In my mind, that is the method by which a student can withdraw from the program. I am not sure about the other areas the Member asked about, but I will get back to the Member. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 40-14(2): Student Financial Assistance Program Flexibility**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have to realize that this is a fact of life living in the Northwest Territories; a lot of our students attend institutions in the south. We should take into account that special circumstances occur, and we should allow for these circumstances. Will the Minister take this into account, realizing we do not want to see students have to fail simply because of a death in the family? Will the Minister seriously look at this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 40-14(2): Student Financial Assistance Program Flexibility**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly will look at the matter. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

**Question 41-14(2): Designation of Financial Assistance Funding**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment. It relates to the Student Financial Assistance Program.

I am wondering where student financial assistance money comes from? Does the federal government earmark funds for post-secondary education to specific groups of people? Do they say "here is this much money, this much is for Treaty people, this much for Metis, this much for Inuvialuit, and a certain percentage for non-aboriginals"?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 41-14(2): Designation of Financial Assistance Funding**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not have the answer to that question. I will take it as notice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

**Question 42-14(2): Administration of Student Financial Assistance Program**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment. It relates to the Student Financial Assistance Program.

I have heard complaints that cheques are not always deposited in a timely manner, and that students are unable to get notification that funds have been deposited. These two complaints were in the final report of the Ministerial Forum on Student Financial Assistance. They were also in a letter that was tabled in the House on Wednesday from the Northwest Territories Students Coalition.

Mr. Speaker, it makes a big difference to students if their funding does not reach them in a timely manner. When students have to resort to food banks, as some have because cheques were late, it does not reflect well on this program.

My question for the Minister is what steps has the department taken to ensure on time delivery and notification of funds? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 42-14(2): Administration of Student Financial Assistance Program**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are some technical questions that I am not in a position to answer. I am more than happy to answer these questions before the standing committee or in committee of the whole. I can tell the Member the department is looking at streamlining the process,

and looking at things like websites and creating updated application forms and so on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary to Question 42-14(2): Administration of Student Financial Assistance Program**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the technical nature of the question and the detail involved. The Minister has mentioned a website. I am wondering if a 1-800 number is also something that can be part of the toolbox he is looking at? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 42-14(2): Administration of Student Financial Assistance Program**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is correct. That is something that is being looked at. It is in the working stage. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

**Question 43-14(2): Student Travel Restrictions**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, the Honourable Jake Ootes.

In the last couple of days, many concerns have been raised about student financial assistance. I would like to bring forward a concern that has been brought to my attention.

I understand students currently attending post-secondary education outside of the community are funded for travel, but only for travel at the start of the year and at the end of the year. However, if a student wants to use this funding at a different time, the student must receive approval from the Minister.

Given there are hundreds of students from the Northwest Territories attending post-secondary education, I would think evaluating student requests to transfer travel entitlement would take a great deal of the department's time, that could probably be spent elsewhere. Would the Minister consider changing this regulation? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 43-14(2): Student Travel Restrictions**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was mentioned earlier by one of the Members that there needs to be some administrative changes. One of the areas referenced was when individuals can use their return travel for Christmas, can it be at other times? I will commit to Mr. Lafferty that we will look at this. These issues do end up on the Minister's desk. The reason for that is they are part of the regulations that are in place now. Those regulations need to be looked at. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary to Question 43-14(2): Student Travel Restrictions**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister consider input from the students in further evaluation of the regulations? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 43-14(2): Student Travel Restrictions**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A great deal of consultation was done. After the Minister's Forum on Student Financial Assistance, there were public consultations followed by the reviews by the Standing Committee on Social Programs and the Government Operations Committee.

The input from students has been ongoing. I think it is important to see if we can set up methods by which we can continue to have the feedback from students on the system. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary to Question 43-14(2): Student Travel Restrictions**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to ask the Minister will he be looking at changing these regulations in the near future?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 43-14(2): Student Travel Restrictions**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The process we will be following is that I will seek second reading of the bill this afternoon. I will table the redesign. We are releasing the redesign publicly this afternoon through a press conference and by mail-out. The Standing Committee on Social Programs will no doubt wish to review this intensively. Following that, they will report back to the House in committee of the whole. That process allows for input from the Members and others, if the committee so wishes.

The timing of that process is in the hands of the standing committee. Once it comes back to the House, then it will be dealt with. In order for this new redesign to be implemented, we would have to aim for approval by this House at the end of the March session, in order to give us time to meet the school year for next year, which would be September. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

**Question 44-14(2): Limits on Access to Student Financial Assistance Funding**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, regarding the proposed Student Financial Assistance Program changes. Mr. Speaker, I am concerned with the length of time students are

able to access grants. Will the proposed changes cap the length of time the aboriginal students can receive funding?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 44-14(2): Limits on Access to Student Financial Assistance Funding**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the length of time the redesign proposes the availability will be for 12 semesters. There will be an ability to access up to eight more semesters through a repayable loan. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary to Question 44-14(2): Limits on Access to Student Financial Assistance Funding**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister explain why fundamental treaty rights of aboriginal people is being limited by time? The right to education is a fundamental, basic right to which aboriginal people with treaty status are entitled to. I do not see how it could be time-sensitive.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 44-14(2): Limits on Access to Student Financial Assistance Funding**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The consultation that took place dealt with the issue of getting more money into the hands of the students, with the issue of success, and with the issue of getting students back to the Northwest Territories, to be productive in the North. The recommendations were that the amount of time and availability would be capped. That was done in consultation with the aboriginal leaders and with the public. As well, it was reviewed by the standing committee of the previous government. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**Question 45-14(2): Uptake on Student Financial Assistance Program**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, have a question for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, regarding the Student Financial Assistance Program. I believe the proposed amendments are a step in the right direction, with the exception of some of the shortfalls in terms of how the recommendations from the Minister's Forum on Student Financial Assistance were addressed, such as the amounts provided for tuition and books, overall cap on the amount spent on the program, the new definition of a full-time student, and the amount provided for part-time students.

My question today has specifically to do with item number 5 in the recommendations of the Minister's Forum on Student Financial Assistance. It recommends the primary focus of the Student Financial Assistance Program be indigenous and aboriginal people, and non-aboriginal Northwest Territories youth who have completed part or all of their schooling in the Northwest Territories.

It lays out the focus the program should address. I believe the correspondence the Minister has provided does not give enough information as to whether this was dealt with. I would like to ask the Minister if he can provide us with a breakdown of the numbers within each group of students, status aboriginal, non-status aboriginal students, Northwest Territories school students, and non-Northwest Territories school students? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 45-14(2): Uptake on Student Financial Assistance Program**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the question asked for some statistical information which I do not have here. I am not sure how well it is broken down. If it is available, I will certainly attempt to make that available to the honourable Member.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary to Question 45-14(2): Uptake on Student Financial Assistance Program**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to be clear, may I please have the Minister confirm he is taking the question as notice, and that he has to reply in the Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Minister is not taking the question as notice. He is going to get back to you. But I will allow Mr. Ootes to answer that.

**Further Return to Question 45-14(2): Uptake on Student Financial Assistance Program**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned to the Member that I felt her question dealt with statistical data, which I do not have at hand. We can provide it through the standing committee and committee of the whole. I have to advise the Member of that. If need be, I will give notice on it. That is what I am doing. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** I am still unclear as to whether you are giving notice or taking the question as notice. You have to be specific. If you are taking it as notice, that is one thing. If you are going to respond later, that is another thing. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary to Question 45-14(2): Uptake on Student Financial Assistance Program**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think I have to go back to being a lawyer a bit here. I would really like the Minister to answer yes or no as to whether he is taking the question as notice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 45-14(2): Uptake on Student Financial Assistance Program**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Yes, I will take the question as notice, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. I will write that down as the Minister is taking the question as notice. As the clock ticks...item 6, oral questions. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 46-14(2): Infrastructure Investment in Small Communities**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. I would like to ask a question of the Minister regarding my Member's statement on the issue of the Arctic Winter Games, making sure our communities have the resources and the infrastructure in place to participate in recreational events, ensuring they have a good chance of making the Northwest Territories team.

Mr. Speaker, I made reference to some initiatives in my statement which this government can probably take regarding developing our infrastructure in our smaller communities and taking advantage of these facilities year-round.

I would like to ask the Minister if his department would consider looking at finding new ways and initiatives for investing in the smaller communities by improving our infrastructure so we can use these facilities year-round?

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

**Return to Question 46-14(2): Infrastructure Investment in Small Communities**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs have, over the years, helped develop infrastructure in most communities of the Northwest Territories. Most of the communities have a very good infrastructure. There are one or two communities that still need to catch up. However, those that have the infrastructure, the communities have the capability of utilizing the facilities in the seasons they are made for.

In regard to the Member's question about putting in concrete and things to improve the infrastructure so they can be utilized in the summer, I would also like to see something like that happen. I would have to work with my department to see what the capabilities are. In that case, here in the Legislative Assembly, we go through the budget and the capital process. There is a process in place that we would probably have to look at. I certainly would like to work with my department to look at these possibilities. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 46-14(2): Infrastructure Investment in Small Communities**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think such a project will outweigh the nays, when you think of the potential and benefits they will also provide to communities. I think such initiatives will bring things like economic stability to a lot of our communities who may not have the opportunity to host large

events like the trials for the Arctic Winter Games, or even community assemblies. We are also looking at regional, territorial, and national events. I think the spin-offs of this little initiative, which would be a small investment by this government, will provide more in benefits, which would outweigh the cost invested. I would like to ask the Minister if he will look at developing a pilot project so these projects can take place within this fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 46-14(2): Infrastructure Investment in Small Communities**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mahsi. The honourable Member is asking if I would seriously look at a pilot project, but before looking at a pilot project, I would like to see what the possibilities with this department and our capabilities, as well as the willingness of the Members of this House to see whether we are going to put our monies into capital infrastructures. Perhaps there will be opportunity in the next year or so for looking at doing things differently. This might be one of the ways to do things differently, to provide recreation facilities in the communities and best utilize the infrastructure we have there.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 46-14(2): Infrastructure Investment in Small Communities**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think this project is seriously needed. If this government looks at the dollars we have put into income support or social assistance programs, and put that money into make-work projects such as this initiative, we would probably realize a savings to this government for the amount of money we spend on people who are on income support. This is an initiative that can generate jobs in the communities and at the same time improve the facilities. I would like the Minister to seriously consider this.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return to Question 46-14(2): Infrastructure Investment in Small Communities**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I will seriously consider the suggestions of the honourable Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 46-14(2): Infrastructure Investment in Small Communities**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not only speaking for the riding I represent, but for all small communities who want to have this opportunity to be able to get the best return on the facilities they have. I think it would also extend the life of the facilities that are already there. I would like to ensure the Minister work along with not only myself, but other colleagues in this House, to ensure we have the ability to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for unanimous consent to extend question period before the clock runs out.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. There is a request for unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays? There are no nays. The clock will be reset for one hour. The Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

#### **Further Return to Question 46-14(2): Infrastructure Investment in Small Communities**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I realize there are a lot of small communities in the North that have recreation facilities, and some do not. The honourable Member's line of questioning is to enhance and improve the arenas, so the arenas can be utilized. I think this is a very good idea. I will see what the capabilities of the department are, and what we have to do to move this idea along.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Before we move along with the next question, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize in the Gallery representing the Federation Francophone Tenoir, a dialogue group travelling in the North, dealing with French language. Mr. Geno Leblanc, Mme. Mariette Carrier-Fraser, Mr. Marc Arnal, Mme. Isabelle Chiasson, Mr. André Légare, Mr. Fernand Denault, Mme. Michelle Doiron, and Mr. Robert Asselin. Bienvenue.

-- Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

#### **Question 47-14(2): Federal Funding for Aboriginal Education**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Finance. It is related to an earlier question I had. Can the Minister of Finance answer a question on federal government funding on post-secondary education for aboriginal status Dene? Can the Minister tell me how much funding is provided to the Government of the Northwest Territories for aboriginal post-secondary education?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

#### **Return to Question 47-14(2): Federal Funding for Aboriginal Education**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The grant we receive from the federal government comes from the Department of Finance. It is not broken down into various categories such as student financial assistance, or education, or other areas. It is impossible at this point in time to break it up. The federal government does not work it that way. We do not have a specific amount we receive in the grant that is earmarked specifically for this particular purpose. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

#### **Supplementary to Question 47-14(2): Federal Funding for Aboriginal Education**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister try to figure out a sum that he thinks might be the amount slated for aboriginal use for post-secondary education? The reason I ask this is I can see, with land claims being settled down in the Mackenzie Valley, the transfer of responsibility for post-secondary education, and for that matter, education as a whole, will be negotiated. There has to be some kind of understanding of a number that First Nations groups can use to start negotiating. Without a number, where do you start? If the Minister could find out how much funding is available for aboriginal post-secondary education and education in the Northwest Territories? Thank you very much.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

#### **Further Return to Question 47-14(2): Federal Funding for Aboriginal Education**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, the amount of money allocated for education or health, or any other area of expenditure, is an amount that we determine here. We have the authority in this House to determine how we are going to allocate the money. The best way of providing an estimate would be the amount that we vote for here for education, and the various programs within the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. It is not something the federal government does for us. We have that authority. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

#### **Supplementary to Question 47-14(2): Federal Funding for Aboriginal Education**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell me how much of that money is marked for aboriginal post-secondary education? What is the success rate of that funding? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. There were two questions there. The Minister can choose which he would like to answer.

#### **Further Return to Question 47-14(2): Federal Funding for Aboriginal Education**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, we do not determine how much in education is for aboriginal students and how much is for non-aboriginal students when we allocate our budget. Many of our classrooms and school districts have a mixture of students. Some are non-aboriginal, some aboriginal, some status, and some non-status, and so on.

I suppose theoretically we could work that out, but it would be based on percentages of aboriginal students versus non-aboriginal students. It would be an interesting calculation. I am not sure what it would do, but theoretically it could be done. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

**Question 48-14(2): Decisions on Funding Allocation**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, part of my question that was taken as notice earlier was answered by the Minister of Finance. I would like to direct this question to the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment.

It is my understanding from the information given to us by the Finance Minister that it is up to this government to decide who gets grants, remissible loans, and regular loans. We set the policy and regulations deciding how to split that money up, not the federal government. Is that correct?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 48-14(2): Decisions on Funding Allocation**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is correct. It is this government that decides the amount of allocations for the Student Financial Assistance Program. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary to Question 48-14(2): Decisions on Funding Allocation**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the past Social Programs Committee had serious reservations about the changes you are proposing here today, and subsequently recommended that you make things more equitable for all students, they were making feasible suggestions. Suggestions that were well within the ability of this government to act upon. Is that correct?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Member could repeat that question. I missed the first part of the question. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Delorey, would you repeat the question for Mr. Ootes please?

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I was asking was that the past Social Programs Committee had serious reservations about the changes that are being proposed here today and had subsequently recommended changes they felt might make the policy more equitable to all students. My question was, were these recommendations well within the ability of this government to act upon?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure of the question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if Mr. Delorey could explain the question again for me.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. There was a question there, but I will ask Mr. Delorey if he would ask the question again. We will still count it as the first supplementary.

**MR. DELOREY:** My question is simply the past Social Programs Committee made recommendations that they felt would make the program far more equitable to all students. Is it correct to understand they were working well within their parameters, and the recommendations they were making were well within the ability of this government to act upon?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. That is a question. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 48-14(2): Decisions on Funding Allocation**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure what specifically the Member is referring to when he talks about the recommendations of the previous standing committee and the parameters that they were working in.

If the Member is asking if they had the authority to deal with that then yes, that is correct.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary to Question 48-14(2): Decisions on Funding Allocation**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the program dealt and made these recommendations, they obviously felt the recommendations they were proposing were making the program far more equitable to all students.

This government chose to ignore those suggestions and instead are recommending a program that is far less equitable to all students. I am wondering if the Minister could justify the reasons for changing their minds?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 48-14(2): Decisions on Funding Allocation**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding was the program that was put forward was put before the previous government and approved. We are simply carrying on with that particular program. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

**Question 49-14(2): New Funding for Student Assistance**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on the issue of student financial assistance, we seem to have different answers coming. The Minister of Finance said that there is no definition, no money specifically set out for different levels of students, whether they are aboriginal, non-aboriginal, Metis, Inuvialuit or Dene. In fact, this government has that control and has put those standards in place.

As I said in my Member's statement, I have a lot of concern with this area, when we set out the differences between people. Earlier today there were questions on how this is being financed. The indication is that this is being financed on failure.

In fact, the new money coming into this program is going to come from Metis and Inuvialuit students who currently receive grants from this government being turned into remissible loans. If they fail, this government will go after them for that money to put back into the program. Is that the situation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

#### **Return to Question 49-14(2): New Funding for Student Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The program was designed, as I said earlier, after a lot of consultation. It was felt that it needed to concentrate on several areas: working on putting more money into the hands of students, working on success and the incentive of success and trying to get students back to the Northwest Territories.

Should a student fail, the student has the ability to repeat a program without penalty. If the student were to fail a second time, the student would have to repay that particular term. The question with regard to where the funding comes from, it would come partially from that requirement, but also it is remissible. Therefore, if the student succeeds and comes back to the Northwest Territories, that student has an ability to have that loan remised. It is not repayable. If the student does not come back to the Northwest Territories, then the loan becomes repayable. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

#### **Supplementary to Question 49-14(2): New Funding for Student Assistance**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, although Mr. Ootes is not a hockey player, he does a fine job of stick-handling. In this area, the concern we have of setting up different levels, or tiers, in the Student Financial Assistance Program when it comes to aboriginal people is not acceptable.

In fact, part of this funding that is upping the limit is coming from the failure of those people. On top of that, my understanding is we are going to set the percentage for failure from 60 percent to 75 percent. We are setting up people to fail in this process. Mr. Speaker, that is not acceptable. Can the Minister tell us if the department considered replacing the supplementary grant for status aboriginals with a remissible loan so that all aboriginals in the Northwest Territories would be equal? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

#### **Further Return to Question 49-14(2): New Funding for Student Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, after a lot of consultation, it was decided the most acceptable solution was to go with the process of allowing students who go for higher education the ability to carry a 60 percent workload in the first year. Following that, it would be increased to a 75 percent workload. In the event the student failed, the student

has the ability to fail the first semester. If there is a second failure, then there is a requirement to repay.

In the event the student wishes to reapply, they can take and complete a period on their own and they would again qualify for a loan. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

#### **Supplementary to Question 49-14(2): New Funding for Student Assistance**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we heard in an earlier response that it was the previous government that had gone out and consulted with the people in groups, but in fact today we are a new government, the 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly. There is an opportunity here before this legislation is changed or the regulations, which people will not see, have an opportunity to be amended before the actual program gets changed. Will the Minister look at changing it to adapt to the new Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

#### **Further Return to Question 49-14(2): New Funding for Student Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The bill is before the House for second reading this afternoon. I believe a lot of consultation has been done. The design has taken a lot of people's input, a lot of students' input, and a lot of aboriginal input into consideration. This design is the one that most equitably meets everyone's needs. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Roland.

#### **Supplementary to Question 49-14(2): New Funding for Student Assistance**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Was part of this consultation with the aboriginal groups that are going to be directly affected by this change? Were they notified that in fact the standards were being changed and that their people, the Inuvialuit, the Metis, would, if they failed the program, have a collection agency go after them to put money back into the system? Were they notified of that? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

#### **Further Return to Question 49-14(2): New Funding for Student Assistance**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not aware of that. I am not sure what all of the communications were with the aboriginal groups. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

#### **Question 50-14(2): Rationale for Speed Limit Change**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister responsible for Transportation. It is regarding the Member's statement I made today about the dangerous road

conditions on Highway No. 3. I would like to ask the Minister what prompted him to announce the policy yesterday? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

**Return to Question 50-14(2): Rationale for Speed Limit Change**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department was responding to concerns expressed by the public as to the ability to navigate this stretch of highway safely. There were also some suggestions from the public that the large trucks should be slowed down to assure safety.

There were also suggestions put forward by Members in this House. The department is responding to a concern expressed by the public as to safety in navigating this stretch of the road. Mr. Speaker, we concur with the general public that there are some sections of the highway that are badly potholed as a result of the heavy truck traffic.

This is quite noticeable, because the other half of the highway going south is not potholed. This obviously suggests that not only is it a problem for the heavy truck traffic, but it is going to be a problem for lighter trucks as well to navigate the potholes. At this time of the year, it is not easy for the department to repair those potholes because the surface of the highway is frozen.

We have to do whatever we can to reverse the situation. It may be a while before we can repair all of the potholes. This is a temporary measure that we are taking. At this time, we are only tying the timeline of this reduction of speed to the winter road activity. If winter road activity ceases, heavy truck traffic is no longer a problem. If the department is satisfied with the condition of the highway, and if we are permitted, we will lift the reduction of the speed limit.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Steen. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary to Question 50-14(2): Rationale for Speed Limit Change**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am really happy to hear the Minister agrees this road is in very poor condition. There is a need for real action here. I am also glad to hear from the Minister that this is a temporary measure. I would like to know what other long-term plans the Minister has to address this condition of the road? This is really not a road. It really is a mud hole. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return to Question 50-14(2): Rationale for Speed Limit Change**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I suppose I am not the only Minister who has agreed this stretch of highway needs reconstruction. As a matter of fact, that is the whole purpose of the program, to improve the condition of the highway so it can handle the increased heavy traffic. I think the department recognized quite a while ago that this road was never designed for the type of traffic it is now experiencing.

We are in the process of reconstructing this highway section. The rate we are going at now, the rate this House allows us to proceed with, is \$6 million a year. That is the pace we can go at right now. That is what has been allowed for the department in the past. We hope that is what will be allowed for us in the future. We will not know until the business plans are approved.

In the long-term, we are hoping the federal government will come forward with some federal funding and highway infrastructure money in this year's budget. However, we do not know that with any certainty. We have to wait until the federal budget comes out. It is the plan of the department that if we are able to tie in with federal funding, we would increase the reconstruction program. But at the rate we are going right now, at \$6 million a year, we are looking at ten years. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary to Question 50-14(2): Rationale for Speed Limit Change**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have many Members on this side that have had a briefing on this project, and I am alarmed to hear that in fact, it may even be more than ten years. This is in light of the fact we do not have full production of diamond mines. We only have BHP. We will hopefully have Diavik coming in the very near future. We also have Winspear on line. This little road cannot handle one mine during the winter road season. This road cannot wait for ten years.

I hear over and over again that we have to ask the federal government. I want to know from the Minister, what has he done in the whole time he has been in his office? How many meetings did he have with the federal Minister of Transportation? What is he doing to lobby the federal government for additional money? Is he just waiting for the budget to come out? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. There were three questions in there. What have you done, who have you lobbied, et cetera. The Minister can answer any one of those that he chooses.

**Further Return to Question 50-14(2): Rationale for Speed Limit Change**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the time that I have been the Minister of Transportation, I have attended meetings with my provincial counterparts. We have put forward recommendations that the federal government put in place a national highway infrastructure program. This would allow us to accelerate this program so it is possible that we could have this section of highway completed in five years, rather than ten.

That is our hope right now. We have not heard anything negative. We have heard only positive support from the provinces. Actually, we are supporting each other because the provinces have the same problem.

So that is what the plan is right now, to accelerate it. We cannot accelerate it more than what we suggest at this point in time, which would be five years, because, the indicators say there is not enough heavy equipment in the Territories to handle an acceleration program that is faster than that. We would have to import heavy equipment. Contractors would

have to import heavy equipment, which would mean less benefits for the local contractors. That is how we look at it.

However, if this House gives us the money to do the job faster, and if they want us to do the job faster, we will do it faster. That is what is controlling us right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Final supplementary, Ms. Lee.

#### **Supplementary to Question 50-14(2): Rationale for Speed Limit Change**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for a more positive response on that. I can also say to the Minister that I have a different opinion as to the availability of resources to build a road faster. I am sure if we got the money, we could work around the lack of equipment.

I think that this is a concern not only with Yellowknife Members and constituents, but with the constituents of Rae-Edzo and Fort Providence. We have to involve the aboriginal organizations that are affected in these regions. I want to know if the Minister will make the commitment to bring all of the stakeholders together and make this project a priority on his list of things to do in the next little while? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Steen.

#### **Further Return to Question 50-14(2): Rationale for Speed Limit Change**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I have said previously to other questions from other Members, this project is part of the Northwest Territories highway strategy. We have not yet firmed up that strategy. Acceleration of reconstruction of Highway No. 3 is part of the four highways programs we are looking at. There is going to be further meetings of the stakeholders on all four proposals, specifically Highway No. 3. I have no problem committing to a meeting of the stakeholders, including all of the stakeholders along that highway who wish to take part.

In fact, I believe there is a meeting scheduled this afternoon, which was suggested by one of the Members. We are having preliminary discussions on how we can address the acceleration of Highway No. 3.

We are always open to suggestions, but no one brings any money with them. That is the problem.

-- Laughter

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. It is a wish of us all. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Great Save, Mr. Braden.

#### **Question 51-14(2): Reconstruction of Highway No. 3**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to address the Minister of Transportation and see if we could explore the issue he raised at the end of his last return. Where can other sources of funding come from?

The five-year plan he just mentioned is indeed a ray of new insight on this very pressing issue. We had believed there was going to be a ten-year plan. That is really a long-term solution.

Mr. Speaker, five years is something that seems much more achievable. Is the federal budget and the federal caucus the only option the department is looking at for more resources? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Steen.

#### **Return to Question 51-14(2): Reconstruction of Highway No. 3**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker as far as I know, that is the only option we are considering. The other thing that could happen is that this House could devote a lot more money towards the project. At this point in time, I think that going by what has been allotted in the past few years, \$6 million is a sum we thought we could afford to put towards the project. We are not considering other options at this point in time. Although there have been suggestions made about other options, we are not currently considering them.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

#### **Supplementary to Question 51-14(2): Reconstruction of Highway No. 3**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is; will the department look at other financing options if viable plans are brought to the table?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Steen.

#### **Further Return to Question 51-14(2): Reconstruction of Highway No. 3**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the department would consider any proposals put forward.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### **Question 52-14(2): Location of Student Financial Assistance Program Delivery Staff**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, and goes back to the Student Financial Assistance Program.

This department has a number of services. You have career development officers located in the communities. You have income support workers located in the communities. Yet for some reason, student financial assistance officers are located up in the Lahm Ridge Tower, well removed from the people they serve. In many cases, they only communicate electronically or through the dreaded voice mail.

I would like to ask the Minister, given the need to link these services, why are our student financial assistance officers locked in the headquarters? Why is headquarters doing program delivery in that area when in all other areas the delivery is at the community level? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 52-14(2): Location of Student Financial Assistance Program Delivery Staff**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to acknowledge the Member's question. The program has five staff and they perform specialized areas. In each of the programs, there are five staff only, Mr. Speaker. It is important this core staff work closely together. There is a current effort to automate certain areas where we can. For instance, providing a new web site and a state of the art, interactive voice response system. Additionally, we are redesigning a student guide. Those are the areas we need to look at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Supplementary to Question 52-14(2): Location of Student Financial Assistance Program Delivery Staff**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the thrusts of the Premier's statement was to get the services out, decentralize, give the technology and the delegation of authorities. Why can some of the authorities not be delegated for student financial assistance like income support, and tied into the proper telecommunication computer systems? Why can we not in fact deliver those services where the people and the career development officers of the regions are? They know the students, and are available to be more responsive. They are not stuck up here with hundreds and hundreds of requests coming in from people they do not know. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Members are reminded to keep their preambles short in the supplementaries. The Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 52-14(2): Location of Student Financial Assistance Program Delivery Staff**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The short time I have been there, I have not had an opportunity to analyze whether it is feasible to take five positions and spread them throughout the Northwest Territories. I think the Member will acknowledge that. He had a lot of time in that department to be able to look at this possibility. I have not. In all fairness, I have to take the time to do that before I can commit to say we will decentralize. What is important to remember is that yes, decentralization may come, but we have to take into consideration how decentralization will be formulated in this Territory. We have to consider how self-government will work. We are all speaking in these terms throughout our meetings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Supplementary to Question 52-14(2): Location of Student Financial Assistance Program Delivery Staff**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope this government and this Minister is not going to use eventual self-government as a reason for inactivity. When I was Minister, I did suggest the case. I did think it was possible to take three positions out of Yellowknife and put one in Inuvik, one in Fort Smith and one in Hay River. Put one into the large regional centres where the majority of students are and keep the other

two here. In the time I was there as Minister, I had to get up to speed in a hurry. The Minister can take a look at that and not slag me off by saying self-government is going to make us paralyzed. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I am not sure if there is a question. Mr. Miltenberger, would you ask a question please?

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am asking the Minister whether he will commit to step aside from behind the shield of inactivity that he poses through self-government, and to in fact look at this. He said I should have looked at it and I am telling him that I did...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Miltenberger, would you go to the question please?

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Will the Minister look at two positions in Yellowknife rather than five? You can keep two in Yellowknife, one in Inuvik, one in Hay River and other regional centres where we have the majority of students. Will the Minister look at that?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 52-14(2): Location of Student Financial Assistance Program Delivery Staff**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not inactive and I will not be inactive. I have been very busy in this department getting up to speed.

I appreciate his concern, and it is a legitimate concern. However, I have not had time to look at these positions and to deal with it. Mr. Speaker, until I do, I cannot commit to decentralize this particular program. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**Question 53-14(2): Recommendation on Student Financial Assistance Redesign**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can appreciate the Minister of Education has only been in the portfolio a short while. I would like to ask him this question regarding student financial assistance.

While he has only been the Minister for a short while, I am sure we can agree that he was on the Government Operations Committee for much a longer time. I am going to ask the Minister to recollect a little bit here.

Last year, the Department of Education presented the Government Operations Committee with two proposals for student financial assistance revision.

They were known internally as Plan A and Plan B. I think everybody in this room is aware of Plan A and Plan B, so, we can stop pretending we do not know about them. I believe Mr. Ootes was a Member of the committee, which vehemently recommended the government look at and adopt Plan A as the most equitable solution. Can he confirm or deny that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return to Question 53-14(2): Recommendation on Student Financial Assistance Redesign**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My recollection is either the Member is referring to the Resource Management Committee, which later became the Resource Management and Infrastructure Committee.

I was not an alternate, if I recall correctly, on the Government Operations Committee. This matter was dealt with in depth by the Social Envelope Committee. As I said, I have given you the history of this. It did receive a lot of consultation publicly. I believe the previous Minister of Education started by doing a report.

From that, he established the Minister's Forum on Student Financial Assistance. Following that, there were public consultations with a number of groups. Following that, it came to the Standing Committee on the Social Envelope. Following that, it went to the Government Operations Committee.

Mr. Speaker, this particular program and the model that has been put forward is the one that has been looked at as the most acceptable by the people who have had input; the most acceptable by the most people.

It provides some key areas of concern. It provides more money for students. It invests in the future of youth of the North. It encourages student success. There are many benefits that are being passed on for students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary to Question 53-14(2): Recommendation on Student Financial Assistance Redesign**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. I believe at the end of your term you were on the Government Operations Committee when the committees were consolidated. I believe this came through Government Operations. I would just like you to confirm or deny whether or not you have knowledge of what was known as Plan A and Plan B? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. I would caution Members to focus their attention on this Assembly. I am not sure whether we should be going to see what people did in the other Assemblies. But I will allow the Minister to respond to the question. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 53-14(2): Recommendation on Student Financial Assistance Redesign**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In all honesty, I cannot recollect if I was there at the time of this. I remember that we had a situation where...I am sorry, I cannot recollect. If I recall correctly, we continued for a period of time with the infrastructure resource management and the social envelope. Then I believe we continued with government operations. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Members, if you could direct your questions to questions, and not head in the direction

of a tribunal. I sense there is some direction towards grilling a Minister. I think if we would keep it to questions, we may get some answers. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary to Question 53-14(2): Recommendation on Student Financial Assistance Redesign**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Point taken. The Minister has told us that through consultations, this was the most equitable solution we could find. I am wondering if the Minister can just let us know if there has been any discussion in the department about other solutions that might be more equitable? Or if this is the only thing that has been brought forward to his knowledge? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 53-14(2): Recommendation on Student Financial Assistance Redesign**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The review process indicated this was the most advantageous, and the most acceptable redesign proposal for the Territories. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary to Question 53-14(2): Recommendation on Student Financial Assistance Redesign**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just some clarification; was that most equitable or most politically satiable? I missed it, sorry. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return to Question 53-14(2): Recommendation on Student Financial Assistance Redesign**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** I think that it is the plan that is most beneficial for the Territories. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**Question 54-14(2): Maintenance of Northwest Territories Highways**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Transportation. We have heard a lot about Highway No. 3. I for one know what potholes are all about, and what it means to have to do with less, realizing this government has a responsibility to maintain highways in the Northwest Territories, which is a lot bigger than Highway No. 3.

Mr. Speaker, we have eight major highways at this time. We have to maintain Highway No. 1, Highway No. 2, Highway No. 3, Highway No. 5, Highway No. 6 and Highway No. 7. That is not counting the winter roads. I think if we are going to look at having problems in one area, we have to look in the context of the whole Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, we have some 2,177 kilometres of roads to maintain in this government. We are talking about 100 kilometres of road here.

I want to make sure the Minister realizes the resources this government has is limited. I want some assurances there will be money there to maintain Highway No. 8, the Dempster Highway, and it is not all put into one highway system. Will the Minister make a commitment to do that?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

**Return to Question 54-14(2): Maintenance of Northwest Territories Highways**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the Member for his comments, because it saves me from saying them.

-- Laughter

It is a fact of life that people will be concerned about the structure of the highway they are driving when they are driving it. So it does not matter where you are in the 2,000 kilometres, people are concerned about the section they are driving.

The department recognizes this, and makes every effort to try and spread our resources over the whole 2,000 kilometres as the traffic requires. If there is heavier traffic, we obviously have to put more funds towards repairing or maintaining that section of highway.

The Member is right. He has a section of highway that is not hard topped, the same as the section of highway south of Fort Simpson is not hard topped. It is also not hard topped in the Fort Liard area.

Mr. Speaker, heavy truck traffic, no matter where it is, takes a toll on the road. You can see the results of heavy truck traffic in the Fort Liard area as well. This puts a strain on our budget. In return, we ask this House to give us sufficient funds to maintain those highways. I can assure the Member his section of highway could get just as much attention as another section, depending on the traffic. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 54-14(2): Maintenance of Northwest Territories Highways**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that answer. I have been involved in the resource committee, where we have had some drastic cuts in the last number of years to the Department of Transportation budget.

I think one thing this government has not really felt the impact of is the effects of the environment. We are having problems getting our winter roads in because we are having changes in the temperature. We are having problems moving goods and services.

Due to that problem, this government has to keep in mind we are accountable to all residents in the Northwest Territories, especially when dealing with the problems we are seeing with the winter road construction this year. The time limits are getting smaller and smaller. In some cases, the season is becoming a cost barrier to this government.

I would like to ask the Minister what this government is doing to develop strategies to extend the length of time we could use our winter roads and other highways?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return to Question 54-14(2): Maintenance of Northwest Territories Highways**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department is trying to address, to some degree, the change in climates, which is having a major effect, like the Member stated, on the length of the window the winter road is open. In particular, the one from Wrigley north.

What the department's strategy is at this point in time is in our capital, we try and place bridges on those small rivers that are giving us problems. Every year, we put \$700,000 towards improving these river crossings. That is the strategy at this point in time, to come forward with plans to put in place bridges on all river crossings that are giving us problems with winter roads.

As well, Mr. Speaker, the department is hoping that everybody here realizes that the only way we are going to get more money for the infrastructure programs is if we can reduce our social costs. The Premier said, in the last few days, that we have to address our social problems, which then allows this department to have more money towards improving our infrastructure, highway infrastructure, in particular. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 54-14(2): Maintenance of Northwest Territories Highways**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do know we need these improvements. The question I have for the Minister is; could the Minister tell me exactly where he sees these dollars coming from to make these improvements?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return to Question 54-14(2): Maintenance of Northwest Territories Highways**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, like I mentioned, \$700,000 a year is being put into improving the winter roads on an annual basis. However, this year, we came up with a surplus that was related to putting the bridge in at Hay River. There was a small surplus there which allowed us to have a bridge constructed that we would put on the Ochre River. This is one river that will be addressed this year that would not normally have been, but the \$700,000 is really what has been doing it on an annual basis. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Supplementary to Question 54-14(2): Maintenance of Northwest Territories Highways**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in regards to the transportation envelope, could the Minister tell

me if there has been any increases in the community-access road programs so that communities can get access to the outside world by developing their own infrastructure to connect with the existing highway systems?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

#### **Further Return to Question 54-14(2): Maintenance of Northwest Territories Highways**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, there is an access road program that the department administers and it allows roughly \$50,000 per year per community if requested and they are identified as an access road. As a matter of fact, the Member's community receives access road funds to build an access road from Aklavik towards the mountains, I believe. In the last couple of years, we have been donating to that community and the access road program. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

#### **Question 55-14(2): Improving Northwest Territories Highways**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is also for the Minister of Transportation.

In my campaign, on the south side of the lake especially, my constituents told me repeatedly that there is too much emphasis placed on diamonds, and the fact that this stretch of road between here and Rae is for diamonds. The trucks that are damaging the road are going up to BHP, Diavik or Lupin. The federal government collects money, royalties and taxes from people who are employed there. This should be a federal government responsibility. The Minister should go to Ottawa and say "Hey, put your money where your mouth is, walk the walk, walk the talk or something."

There is a stretch of mile between Fort Resolution and the old Pine Point site. There is a stretch there that is under lake level. We are talking potholes. Can the Minister commit to a plan over the next couple of years to see what the department can do to improve that section and put a hardtop throughout the whole road straight to downtown Fort Resolution? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The Minister responsible for Transportation, the Honourable Mr. Steen.

#### **Return to Question 55-14(2): Improving Northwest Territories Highways**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am sure my department is listening to the suggestion, and if it is possible, it will be reflected in the business plans. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

#### **Supplementary to Question 55-14(2): Improving Northwest Territories Highways**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell me what he means by possible? Is it financial shortages that is

making it impossible or is it an unwillingness from the department? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

#### **Further Return to Question 55-14(2): Improving Northwest Territories Highways**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct. Possible means if we have the money to do it. If it is possible, we will have it in the business plan. It will be reflected in the business plan, but the business plan has to be approved by this House. Therefore, if the House approves it, we do the job.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

#### **Supplementary to Question 55-14(2): Improving Northwest Territories Highways**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you. Financial shortages seem to be a problem right across the board. Has the Department of Transportation looked at alternatives to calcium in topping off existing unpaved roads in the Northwest Territories for greater stability, strength and longer lasting topsoil? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. That is a technical question for the Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

#### **Further Return to Question 55-14(2): Improving Northwest Territories Highways**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is a technical question and to be sure the Member gets a correct answer, I will take the question as notice and respond. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Steen. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

#### **Question 56-14(2): New Bridge Construction in Hay River**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seeing as we are asking questions of the Minister of Transportation, I do not want to get caught not saying anything. We have a situation in Hay River, as well, that is directly related to the Minister of Transportation.

As the Minister knows, we are putting a new bridge in Hay River. The department has made plans as far as handling traffic during the construction of the bridge. Could the Minister confirm that consultation has been done with the people involved in the Hay River area, and that the plans for the upcoming break-up in the spring have been designed to accommodate one lane traffic over the railroad bridge? Does he know how long that will be for? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

**Return to Question 56-14(2): New Bridge Construction in Hay River**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department does not have any plan to put anything in place once the river crossing is closed down. We are suggesting the traffic will have to go through the rail bridge and it will probably have to end up with traffic signs or traffic control lights because it is one lane traffic. I am sure the department will work with the stakeholders in the community to see what we can come up with that would best suit the situation. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary to Question 56-14(2): New Bridge Construction in Hay River**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There was an amount budgeted for putting in this bridge and when the call for proposals came back and the contracts came out, there was about a \$400,000 savings from the amount that had been budgeted. Would the Minister confirm that for me please?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return to Question 56-14(2): New Bridge Construction in Hay River**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Mr. Speaker. The department realized a \$400,000 surplus from that particular project. We reallocated that funding to construct a bridge for Ochre River. If the Member wants more specific information than that, I will have to have the department put it in writing for him. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary to Question 56-14(2): New Bridge Construction in Hay River**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to know from the Minister that when spring break-up comes and residents have to travel back and forth between Vale Island and the new town of Hay River, if it proves that people cannot get back and forth in an hour, and there is an easy solution as far as throwing a couple of culverts across the channel, and putting a gravel pad so people could drive across, would there be money and would the department be willing to look at that as an alternative? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return to Question 56-14(2): New Bridge Construction in Hay River**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is specifically the type of suggestion that I said the department would be open to. We would sit down with the stakeholders, and with the community and come up with whatever they can afford to do, for one thing. Furthermore, we would discuss any problems with Fisheries and Oceans. That is what I meant when I said the department would sit down with stakeholders and see how best to address the situation. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Steen. The time allocated for question period is over. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. The Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**ITEM 11: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

**Committee Report 1-14(2): Report on the Operational Planning Workshop Held in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Accountability and Oversight Committee, one of the newly formed standing committees of the 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, recently held a two-day operational and planning workshop in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. The purpose of the workshop was to develop a coordinated and cohesive approach to reviewing government-wide issues that will come before the committee.

The Accountability and Oversight Committee, being comprised of all 11 regular Members, focused discussions on developing a vision and mission that will guide our work for the next four years. As part of developing the vision and mission, the committee discussed and established fundamental values which would form the foundation for how committee members carry out their activities. Mr. Speaker, the committee agreed upon the following vision, mission and value statement:

Our Vision is to be responsive and accountable to the public by acting with integrity to contribute to the achievement of the 14th Legislative Assembly's vision.

Our Mission would be to take positive action to support, question or oppose government initiatives and to hold government accountable.

Mr. Speaker, as Members of the Accountability and Oversight Committee, we have agreed that we will work together in a manner that;

- is in accordance with the Members' conduct guidelines of the Legislative Assembly;
- promotes trust and openness in our dealings with each other;
- provides the opportunity to exercise our rights and privilege to voice opinions;
- recognizes that after best efforts to reach consensus we may agree to disagree; and
- recognizes that there are formal and established procedures through which dissenting Members may express their views.

Mr. Speaker, the Accountability and Oversight Committee recognizes that this is just the start of their commitment to work

together to develop the priorities and objectives necessary to guide the government in building healthier communities for all of our residents. As set out in our vision statement, Members are committed to making a positive contribution to the 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

As part of the next steps in this focusing process, the committee will be meeting again in the near future to further refine their work on priority and objective setting. It is the intention of the Accountability and Oversight Committee to report back to the public and this House on the outcome of this next session, as well as to report on other matters as required. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that this report be received by the Assembly and adopted. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. There is a motion to accept and adopt this report. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Before we go onto the next item, the House will take a short break.

-- Break

**MR. SPEAKER:** The House will come to order. Item 12, reports of committees on review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. The Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

#### ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

##### **Tabled Document 16-14(2): Towards Excellence: A Report on Education in the Northwest Territories**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled, Towards Excellence, A Report on Education in the Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Tabling of documents. The Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

##### **Tabled Document 17-14(2): Letter from the Minister of Education Regarding Student Financial Assistance Act Amendments**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document dated February 21, 2000 entitled, Student Financial Assistance Act Amendments. It was sent to all Members by the honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Tabling of documents. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

##### **Tabled Document 18-14(2): Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board Five Year Report, 1994 to 1999**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I would like to table a report from the Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board, entitled Resource Report 99-10. It is a five-year report from 1994 to 1999.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. The Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION

##### **Motion 9-14(2): Tabled Document 14-14(2) into Committee of the Whole**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, February 28, 2000, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the Member for Deh Cho, that Tabled Document 14-14(2), the Final Report of the Minister's Forum on Health and Social Services be moved into committee of the whole for discussion.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 14, notices of motion. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

##### **Motion 10-14(2): Pipeline Development**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, February 28, 2000, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the Member for Deh Cho, that the 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly is committed to work cooperatively in partnership with aboriginal governments to take control of the development of northern resources; and further that this Legislative Assembly urges the Government of the Northwest Territories, in partnership with aboriginal governments, to actively promote the development of a natural gas pipeline through the Mackenzie Valley; and

Furthermore, that the Government of the Northwest Territories seeks to maximize the benefits that would accrue to Western Arctic communities with the development of a natural gas pipeline down the Mackenzie Valley; and

Furthermore, that this Legislative Assembly endorses the efforts of the Premier and the Executive Council in seeking, with aboriginal governments, the control of our natural resources and the sharing with these governments of the resource revenue arising from that development. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you Mr. Roland. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. The Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

#### ITEM 16: MOTIONS

##### **Motion 8-14(2): Date for Tabling of the Public Accounts (Carried)**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS section 74 of the Financial Administration Act specifies that unless a date is otherwise fixed by the Legislative Assembly, the Public Accounts of the Northwest Territories for the previous fiscal year must be tabled in the Legislative Assembly on or before December 31<sup>st</sup> or not later than 15 days after the commencement of the next session;

AND WHEREAS the Financial Administration Act does not contemplate the complexities and additional accounting and audit work associated with producing Public Accounts with agreed upon opening balance sheets for two new territories;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that the Legislative Assembly fix the date of June 30, 2000 for the tabling of Public Accounts of the

Northwest Territories for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1999. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. We have a motion on the floor. Members are reminded that a copy of the motion is in their binders. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Bill 1. The Chair recognizes the Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

#### ITEM 18: SECOND READING OF BILLS

##### Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Education Act

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Education Act, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this act amends the Education Act to set out rules with respect to the student/teacher ratio and student support services that must be adhered to when operation and maintenance funds are provided to the education bodies under section 128 of the Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. The Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just have some comments I would like to make. As we look at this piece of legislation, there are budget implications that I feel we have to look at carefully. Where is Cabinet planning to get the new money? This is worth over \$14 million over the life of this government. The numbers we have seen project that with the current rates, we could have a possible deficit of over \$150 million. Which programs does Cabinet plan to take money from?

The distribution of the pupil/teacher ratio fund is also something that has to be looked at. While pupil/teacher ratio is a territorial standard, it is not really what each school and school board gets. The formula varies depending on the size of the schools. Smaller schools have lower pupil/teacher ratios. What will that impact be? Will this be an across the board adjustment to the formula? Or will it require a reworking of the formula? Will this raise even more concerns about the inequities between large and small schools?

Special needs is another issue, Mr. Speaker, that is clearly not a well defined area. Right now, there could potentially be a black hole in requirement for funds given the wide definition. There are no real guidelines for the allocation of these funds based on any particular special need. The funds are allocated on the assumption that every school board and every region is dealing with the same quantity and type of special needs, which is not really the case. Will this new funding simply be added to the formula on an equitable basis?

There is also the issue of precedence, Mr. Speaker, as we look at this legislation. Are we, as we are putting specific program requirement in legislation, going to be prepared to look at this as we enter negotiations with the Union of Northern Workers, in terms of social workers and case loads? Doctors and nurses and client loads?

This is an important piece of legislation. It is not as straightforward as I think people would like to think. We have to look at this in the broader context of the overall governments' budgeting and fiscal planning. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. To the principle of the bill, the Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak to the proposed amendments to the Education Act. Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendments to the Act address two major issues that are crucial to improving education in the Northwest Territories; pupil/teacher ratio and student support services.

In terms of pupil/teacher ratio and student support services, the amendments propose to reduce the pupil/teacher ratio over a period of four years. Lowering the pupil/teacher ratio will affect class size. The research in this area is overwhelming. Small classes improve children's learning conditions. In smaller classes, teachers are able to spend more time with individual children and are better able to meet their needs. It just makes sense, Mr. Speaker. The individual help children receive decreases as the number of students in the classroom increases. In their research, they conclude average pupil achievement increases as class size decreases.

In terms of student support services, our classrooms consist of students with varied backgrounds, abilities and needs. Today our students are faced with many challenges. They need support services more than ever. The amendments propose to increase funding to student support services from 8.2 percent of total schools funding to 15 percent beginning the next school year. Mr. Speaker, our students need this support.

A Yellowknife educator says;

"while the focus in education over the past 10 to 15 years has been to integrate special needs students and towards inclusionary education, I do not feel money and resources have accompanied this goal, rather regular classroom teachers have been asked and expected to meet the diversity and intensity of needs."

This is a systematic problem that needs to be addressed and this is echoed throughout the Northwest Territories. The proposed amendments to the Education Act will affect every student in school in the Northwest Territories. These amendments are supported by all the partners in education; teachers, parents, school trustees and divisional educational councils and educational authority members. More teachers and more student support forces cannot help but have a positive effect on our educational system.

Mr. Speaker, our educational system must focus on promoting the success of all children as learners and on developing the talents and potential of each child. To do this, we ask that legislators ensure the funding is in place to provide quality education and equal opportunity to all children in the Northwest Territories. The proposed amendments to the Education Act are a good beginning to doing this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. To the principle of the bill. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe this is a step in the right direction, but I do not think it goes far enough.

I believe we have to deal with education in the context of all elements, not only with teaching, but ensuring we have the resources and the expertise in the classroom to deal with many of the social problems we see in our small communities. I am talking about FAE and FAS. Fetal alcohol syndrome affects many of our smaller communities.

One of the concerns I have is that I do not believe that this will deal with the problem of dealing with large communities versus small communities, and how a community the size of Tsiigehtchic, where you have 170 people, has three teachers, but you have also transferred the authority of improving our education by having kindergarten to grade 12 in many communities.

However, we do not have the human resources to ensure the quality of education in those communities, ensuring the students are treated fairly. It does not matter where they are. We have to ensure they have the programs in math, science, chemistry, whatever they need to ensure that when they graduate high school and move on to post-secondary education, they have the education and the marks to get them to the second step. This does not deal with that.

I feel strongly that in order for this Act to really encompass education, you have to look at it in the context of all the implications we face in our small communities. I feel there has to be a mechanism of measuring the programs or legislation we pass in this House to ensure it really meets the intent it was set for.

I have seen too many times where our high school students in our smaller communities have to prepare their own curriculum material in order for them to be taught because there is a lack of materials in our classrooms. They have to go out and develop their own curriculum. It is the same for the teachers. There is no more money in the system for them to be able to purchase simple things to deliver the quality of education we need in our classrooms.

This is a band-aid on a major cut. I think we have to seriously look at the other elements when we review this bill. I have asked the Minister to consider having the ability to open up this legislation to allow us to deal with the education problem at this time, without having to come back in another couple of months to deal with these other major problems. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. To the principle of the bill. The Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak in favour of the principle of this bill.

I have always been in favour of whatever would be in the best interests of the school children in our Territory. I think it is particularly important that we are going to commit to increasing the funding for special needs. Having been the Minister of Education for some time, I certainly saw that as being the major area of concern in our classes in the North.

We certainly have a large number of young people who need special assistance. If this bill will ensure some of that support in

the classroom, which should have been there when we legislated inclusive schooling, and has not been there for some time now, will actually get there, then I really appreciate seeing this brought forward. I was in support of it in the last government, because we signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the NWTTA to achieve the same goals.

As my colleague for Thebacha has pointed out, this does represent a bit of a different situation in the manner in which it is being instituted. With it being legislated this way, and with us knowing we do not have any additional funds to put into the program right now, we are going to have to be vigilant about where the funds come from. I would hope we are talking about from outside the program, so we are not taking funds from daycare centres or other important social programs to put into the classroom. We need to make sure this is additional money from outside the Department of Education if it is going to achieve these very important goals.

As I said, the most important part of this is the support for special needs. There is very little research on the importance of class sizes. What has come out is that it takes a class size of less than 17 before you can see any measurable difference in achievement. Given the pupil/teacher ratio that we are going for here, and recognizing that that is just a level of funding, it is inconceivable that we will actually be achieving, in the real world, class sizes of less than 17.

But I think the most important part here is that this will help bring down the size of the classes to ensure that, with the special needs support they will be getting in the classroom, the teacher will have a better chance of being successful.

While I do support the principle of this bill, it has set a precedent in that this government has negotiated something that will affect other employers in the Northwest Territories. This being set in legislation, will then require Yellowknife Education District No. 1 and Yellowknife Education District No. 2 to institute the same requirements.

They have, without an employer being at the table, set the precedent of negotiating an agreement and then enshrining it in legislation. That is a precedent that I am somewhat concerned about, particularly in the case of Yellowknife boards. Those boards will not see the full revenue this government will pass on to other boards in the Northwest Territories to make sure this change in the class size and this support for special needs takes place.

In Yellowknife, the boards do not receive the same level of funding. They are only funded for 75 percent of the cost of delivering the education in kindergarten through grade eight. I have some concerns about this bill and how it will be achieved, Mr. Speaker. I think it is only fair to give the government notice that in the committee review, I will be wanting to address a couple of those issues. But I certainly support the principle of the bill and will be voting in favour of it today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. To the principle of the bill. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lakes, Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not think there is anybody in this Assembly that would say this initiative is a poor one. The fact is we are putting more money into education, which is badly needed. But it is the method of how this is occurring I wish to address. Mr. Speaker, this bill

deals strictly with the pupil/teacher ratio. Simply lowering class sizes will not bring about the desired results, which is a quality education.

The fact is this bill alone continues to show how we, as a government, passed and continue to move in a way that is not dealing with the actual problem, but skirting around the issue and putting out fires. We have heard many times that special needs is a large problem for the schools in the Northwest Territories.

Hopefully, these new positions that will be created will be directly targeted to the early grades. As the studies show today, if we are going to have an impact on a child's life, to let them be allowed to be better people in our societies, we are going to have to get to them by the time they are six years old. We should be aiming for that target. If we are going to make a real difference to the education system we know, we are going to have to focus, not just cover a whole area like we are spreading butter on bread. We are going to have to target these expenditures. I hope that is what the department will do with this at the end of the day.

Mr. Speaker, it is the quality of our education system that is in question. Many people will say we have a good system. In the current education system, a system we call now the pure or passing, where you do not need your grade level. They keep you with your age group and move you along so that you are not "damaged". I think those individuals, by the time they become young men and women and realize they do not have the marks of someone in grade nine or ten, it is then they are negatively impacted.

One more thing in the area of quality education. Hopefully, this will be targeted so we can start working at the quality of our system. We have a lot of hard working individuals in our system. I have spent some time around a large number of children in the grade three and four area at one time, helping out with the vacation Bible school in Inuvik. I know the pressure they are under. It is difficult to handle children at that stage. But one of the things that is undeniable in the Northwest Territories is that we could probably find in every community, that teachers are sending their own children to southern institutions for a better quality education. That shows me we are not dealing with the quality issue. We are putting fires out around the problem.

Special needs is driving the fact that we need more assistance in the classrooms. Why are we not dealing with trying to stop the special needs situation from developing in the first place, instead of dealing with the pressures afterwards? We can look at a number of bills throughout this government, Mr. Speaker, and find that we have failed in a lot of areas.

In the days when there was money flowing like milk and honey out of the promised land, we were able to develop a new program over here and develop a new program there. Those days are gone. We are having to struggle with today's society, which has less money to go around, with increasing pressures. I hope that as this goes through committee, they will be able to explain how this money will be targeted to improve the quality of education, not just by reducing the class size, but by truly directing and targeting our younger children. If we are going to make a difference, it is going to be in the early childhood intervention area, in grades kindergarten to three.

How are we going to use this money to get parents involved to teach their children at a young age to pick up the habit of learning? Simply talking about reducing class sizes over the next few years is not going to do that. Simply talking about student support services is not going to fix the problem. We need to do a comprehensive review. They went through a study. They said to do it this way or that way. Well, I think as a government as a whole, we have to look at it. If our own teachers are sending their children south, that tells me there is a problem. Is this going to fix it? I hope at the end of the day, people will start keeping their children in the North to show that we truly do have a good quality system.

Mr. Speaker, I support the fact we are putting more money into education, as this bill proposes to do so. But I still have very grave concerns on how it is going to be worked into the system. Gone are the days when we just laid dollar on top of dollar, a new program here and there, to try and fix things. That does not work. Previous governments have shown this. Hopefully, starting in the new millennium as the 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly, we are not going to continue on that path. We are going to mark out a new role and set out new guidelines and expect measurable results. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. To the principle of the bill. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am also in support of the principle of this bill. I have concerns similar to those of my colleagues. I think the problem of education in the Northwest Territories involves much more than student/teacher ratios and special needs.

I think this government has to be proactive in looking at ways of developing an education system that is reflective of the needs of the people. One way this could be done is to restructure the existing boards so that it is more reflective of the community they are supposed to represent. The Dogrib Community Services Board is a good example of that. I would be very happy to see some statistics since they took over the education, health and social services department and started running it their own way. A good friend of mine is working in that area, and he has nothing but good things to say about it.

In the communities I represent, along with the Yellowknives, they want to start their own board, similar to that of the Dogrib's. But they are running into roadblocks. People who have control now do not want to give it up. We are going to have to be tough and say you are going to have to give up control to the people who know the kids and the problems in the communities. Let them run it the way they see fit.

In the transfer of these programs and services, there has to be some thought given to incremental costs. People are starting to wise up to this government. This government gives out programs and services, but does not give enough resources to run those programs and services. They are hitting roadblocks right off the bat, and that is not a good way to start things.

Another area this government has to look at is improving the facilities. A lot of the facilities in the Northwest Territories schools are old and need improvement. Like my honourable colleague over here said earlier, there is no money. If we find some money for this area, we should not have to delve into other social programs costs. The government has a big challenge ahead of them to be imaginative in finding new sources of revenue.

Mr. Speaker, I am in support of the principle of this bill, but I do believe you have to take a comprehensive look at the whole education system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Bill 1 has had second reading and accordingly, the Bill stands referred to a committee. Item 18, second reading of bills. Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1999-2000. The Minister of Finance, the Honourable Joe Handley.

**Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1999-2000**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1999-2000, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill makes supplementary appropriations for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the fiscal year ending March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. To the principle of the bill. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have some concerns regarding the misuse of the special warrants. We are trying to open this government up to be more open and accountable. You would think with the experiences of the previous government, this government would realize that we will be under scrutiny, not only from Members of this House, but also from the public when it comes to how this government spends its money.

I want to make sure this government realizes this is the first supplementary of this government, but also that there is a history of governance. How we got here today and realizing the conflict of interest inquires and whatnot, there were many questions raised as to how special warrants are used, and to how this government makes decisions. Especially decisions when this House is not sitting.

I feel we should learn from the past. We should realize what we do in this House reflects on all of us as Members and how government spends money. It reflects on how those decisions were made. We have to ensure, as Ordinary Members, we scrutinize the policies, procedures, and the process these appropriations follow.

We now have rules in place which were established by the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly that ensure this government is not going to be scrutinized on how we spend our money. Nor will we be scrutinized for the way decisions are made by Cabinet, in light of ourselves as Members.

I would just like to put it on the public record that I have some concerns regarding how this supplementary appropriation has been halved and the misuse of special warrants. After having to make some major cuts as a Member of the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly, we cannot go back to the old ways. We have to make sure we realize that we do have limited resources, and we do have some financial restrictions.

We are looking at possibilities of having some major impacts in front of us that we have to ensure that we are ready for when

those impacts come upon us. I would like to make it clear to Cabinet and also the Minister of Finance that this government has to ensure there is going to be the public trust in Members and Cabinet Ministers. We have to scrutinize all decisions from the bureaucratic level to those made in this House. We have to make sure whatever rules are in place are carried out.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make it clear that I would like the Cabinet to seriously look at what came out of the conflict of interest inquiry regarding how capital projects are allocated, especially when you see capital projects which were not even in the budgetary process showing up in Ministers' ridings through special warrants. I feel those days are gone. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? Bill 2 has had second reading. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to committee of the whole. Item 18, second reading of bills. Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act. Minister Handley.

**Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the indemnity made pursuant to the cooperative enforcement agreement on consumer-related measures. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. We have a motion. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. Bill 3 has had second reading. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee.

Item 18, second reading of bills. Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act. Mr. Ootes.

**Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 4 An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill amends the Student Financial Assistance Act to increase the aggregate of the principle amount that may be outstanding in respect of all loans made to one person and in respect of all loans made under the Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. We have a motion. To the principle of the bill. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be in favour of this bill today. I would like to talk a little bit about the proposed changes. In 1992 was the last time we raised student financial assistance amounts; 1992 is a long time ago. I think it is high time this government did something to put more money into the

pockets of students. This is certainly a step in the right direction. I applaud the government for taking that step.

With tuition skyrocketing, students can no longer cope. I think we can all see that this is a scary reality. However, as we have said many times, there really is no new money. It is very important that we look at exactly where the money for this program is coming from. I think much analysis is needed, and we will look at that in committee, to see if we truly are doing the most equitable and beneficial thing for the Northwest Territories.

I think we have to look at the treatment for the various different groups of students. We say that for some students, we are solving their tax problems by taking away grants and giving them remissible loans. I would argue we are just giving them a whole new set of problems, Mr. Speaker. As to the principle of this bill, I am certainly going to vote in favour of anything that puts more money into the pockets of students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. To the principle of the bill. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting this bill. It is impossible not to support in principle a bill that will get more money into the pockets of students. One of the challenges we face is that this bill does not outline how the program itself is going to run. I know we will have a look at that as we review this in committee.

I wish to make clear what I support in principle; getting more money into the pockets of students. I will not support revisions to a program that increases class divisions among Northerners. I think it is absolutely essential we find a way to get more money to students. I think that means more money in the program. I do not think that can be achieved by just moving money around within the program.

Mr. Speaker, while I support this today, I simply wish to be on record to reserving my right to change my mind in the approach, depending on how the program itself is laid out to a committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. To the principle of the bill. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too support the principle of the bill. I have fought long and hard, especially for the Inuvialuit and Metis people I represent. They have been discriminated against for years, regardless of the fact they are aboriginal people recognized under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution. They are penalized by Revenue Canada through the taxation of student loans, while other people do not have the tax problems that the Inuvialuit and the Metis have.

The intent of this bill is to try to remedy that, and put everybody on the same playing field. I support that. I also want to make sure that whatever we do, we do not create another level of bureaucracy, where we find the people we represent, be they Inuvialuit, Metis, or non-aboriginal people, are not burdened by more red tape and bureaucracy. We have to streamline it in such a way that it is accessible, fair and improves the lives of our students when they go off to obtain a post-secondary education.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I think it is important this government consider the possibility of looking at some mechanism to allow this program to take into account that there have been implications on Inuvialuit and Metis students. Financial implications with which they are having some major tax problems due to Revenue Canada. If we can find a way to assist those students, I will support that fully.

With that, I support the principle of the bill. It will ensure this program does not cause another burden for our students. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. To the principle of the bill. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak briefly to the principle of this bill. Like my colleagues, I will support the principle of the bill, very clearly reserving my right to influence the department and the Minister in terms of the regulations and how this is going to be translated into action.

Though I know this is a tough political issue, and time is short in negotiating self-government, in the next two to three years, it is possible this program may have been taken over by aboriginal governments. I see what is being proposed as an interim measure. But there are things that can be done by the Minister and his department almost immediately, such as regulations, the structure of the administration, to give students more flexibility. There are very simple administrative things that can relieve the pressure and the frustration the students feel when they go through administrative red tape.

I will support this, but like my colleagues, will be scrutinizing it very carefully when it comes through the committee. We will be working with the Minister for commitments to do what can be done as we look at this interim step. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. To the principle of the bill. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lakes, Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I will keep this brief as we have had a lot of questions in this area. But I am having a hard time accepting the principle of this bill. It has not been made clear enough if the new funding for this program is going to come on the backs of those that are unsuccessful in their attempts at achieving a post-secondary education.

There is still a difference between the aboriginal groups in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, I hope my social programs colleagues are hearing this and will take this as they review the bill in committee. I am having serious problems with this and the way it looks like it is being designed and put forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favor? All those opposed? Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act has had second reading. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee. Item 18, second reading of bills. The Honourable Mr. Steen.

**Bill 5-14(2): An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Motor Vehicles Act to remove exemptions that permit certain drivers and passengers to refrain from using seat belts. The bill also permits municipalities to make by-laws respecting bicycles, sleds, skateboards and other such devices, including by-laws requiring the use of personal protective equipment. The Commissioner is likewise empowered to make regulations at the request of a settlement or unincorporated community in respect of these matters. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. We have a motion dealing with the bill. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called? All those in favor? All those opposed? Bill 5, has had second reading. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration of committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Minister's Statement 1-14(2), Sessional Statement and Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1999-2000, with Mr. Krutko in the Chair.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. David Krutko):** Thank you. We are dealing in committee of the whole with Minister's Statement 1-14(2), Sessional Statement and with Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1999-2000. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would recommend the committee consider Bill 2. I would further move that committee agrees we extend sitting hours to conclude consideration of that item.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** There is a motion on the floor to deal with item 2 and also extend committee of the whole until this item has been concurred with. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. We are dealing with Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1999-2000. Members, you will find the bill in your binders. We will go to the Minister of Finance first for his opening comments on the bill. This will be followed by general comments on the bill by Members. Once general comments have been concluded, the committee will determine if they agree to go into detail of the bill. The Minister will be asked if he wishes to bring in witnesses, with the concurrence of the committee.

The process for the detailed review of the supplementary estimates include a detailed, page by page, review of the document, which is behind the bill in your binders. Once the committee has concluded the detailed review, the committee will go to the bill for a clause-by-clause approval process. After the conclusion of the clause-by-clause consideration, the bill will be reported.

We will begin by asking the Minister responsible for Finance if he would like to make opening comments on this matter.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Supplementary Appropriation No. 3 requests authority for additional appropriations of \$9,026,187, made up of \$4,111,154 for operations and maintenance expenditures and

\$4,915,033 for capital expenditures. Approximately \$5 million of the new supplementary funding requirements will be offset by new revenues, recoveries or other means. As a result, the net funding requirement is \$4 million. These requirements are within the estimated supplementary reserve established in the budget and will not change this year's forecasted deficit of \$34 million.

The operations and maintenance supplementary appropriation requirements include the following major items:

- 1) \$1.3 million for the Department of Health and Social Services to meet the salary obligations arising from finalization of the new Hay Plan job evaluation ratings for nurses and social workers.
- 2) \$1.1 million for the Department of Finance to address the increase in anticipated interest costs of short term borrowing to meet government financial commitments.

The capital supplementary appropriation requirements include the following major item:

- 1) \$3.6 million for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation to address capital requirements associated with:
  - the three-month extension of the Minimum Downpayment Assistance Pilot Project;
  - independent housing and repair programs in Fort Liard;
  - construction of two independent housing units in Tulita; and
  - the private home owner pilings repair initiative in Inuvik.

This requirement is fully offset by a recovery from the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's 1998-1999 operations and maintenance surplus.

Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to review the details of the supplementary appropriation document. Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments to Bill 2. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a concern with the use of special warrants, especially knowing that special warrants could be used in the area of urgent requirement, emergency or is considered in the best interest to the public. That last part can be defined in a fairly broad sense. Knowing that this is a carry over from a previous 13<sup>th</sup>

Assembly, I think it is just a matter of passing on the information and concern to the Finance Minister.

Hopefully, as we go through our own budget cycle and the interim appropriation process comes upon us, this will be considered in future supplementary appropriations. Although the method of carrying these forward is of concern, I think they have been developed in the last number of months, so I do not intend to go into great detail with the Finance Minister in this area. I just want to raise a concern of the actual use of special warrants versus not previously authorized in those areas. Hopefully the Minister will be able to have some remarks on that as we go through this supplementary appropriation. Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Handley, do you wish to reply to that?

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, no, except to agree with the Member that this is a carry over from the last government. I certainly intend to be very diligent in ensuring we abide by the intent and the wording of what special warrants should be used for. Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments? If there are no more general comments, I would like to ask if the Minister wishes to bring in witnesses.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, I would like to bring in witnesses.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Does the committee concur that the Minister may bring in his witness? Agreed. Would the Sergeant-at-Arms escort the witness in, please? Thank you. Would the Minister of Finance please introduce his witness to the committee?

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, on my right is Lew Voytilla, Secretary to the Financial Management Board Secretariat.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** I would like to draw the Members' attention to page 5. We will be dealing with detail. We are on page 5, dealing with detail Executive, operations and maintenance, special warrants, not previously authorized, Executive Offices, Minister's Office, \$73,000. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will the Minister inform us as to the requirement for a special warrant in this situation? Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Minister.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, the requirement in this case was one where the party involved had paid out the money and required to be reimbursed. I guess that fits within the definition of public interest.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Who owns the building the Native Women's Association is occupying? Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Minister.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, it is owned by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** General comments? Detail: Executive, operations and maintenance, special warrants, not previously authorized, Executive offices, Minister's office, \$73,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Cabinet Secretariat, special warrant, \$189,250. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The special warrant used in this situation was for the legal costs to do with the electoral boundaries. It was an ongoing process, so could the Minister inform me as to why, in this particular case, it comes under special warrant? Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Minister of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, this particular warrant was not really an ongoing process. It is a situation in which there was an appeal of a court decision.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** General comments. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister explain further? I guess in my mind it took up a fair bit of time in the previous Assembly, so it was not a new issue, like a forest fire all of a sudden raging out of control. Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, it was very difficult to predict whether or not there was going to be an appeal. Also, there was a fair bit of debate on the responsibility of the GNWT in supporting this issue. It was controversial at the time.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** General comments. We are on page 5, Cabinet Secretariat, special warrant, \$189,250.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** We are on page 6, Executive, operations and maintenance, labor relations and corporate services, special warrant, \$457,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you. Budget evaluation, not previously authorized, \$150,000. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In this particular situation, we are changing to a new accounting system. I guess as a government we are being forced to change over by the public sector accounting board. But we have known for a couple of years that this was a direction governments were going in. Why would this not have been put into the planning process? Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, this issue is one that we did not become aware of until after the main estimates were done for the current fiscal year. Following that, even after we knew we were going to be moving in this direction, we still needed time to figure out what it was we were going to do and how we were going to do it. This was too late for the main estimates for 1999-2000.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** In budgeting and evaluation, \$150,000, not previously authorized. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Although it was too late to make it for this budget cycle, has the staff not been aware of this for almost two years? Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Minister.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, I think the staff were aware two years ago or so, but it was not clear as to how it was going to be handled, or what the recommendations were going to be. That decision only came about in the last year.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am wondering if the Minister could advise whether this \$150,000 would be an ongoing human resources cost to administer a new system, or is this a one-time expenditure to basically set something up? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Minister of Finance.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, this \$150,000 is a one-time expenditure. Having said that, there are going to be ongoing costs as we get the new accounting system put in place for tangible capital assets. Any future requirements will be built into the business planning process.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like the Minister to clarify the comment of the ongoing costs, especially as it pertains to the development and adding on of positions. With PeopleSoft, we end up with an additional 12 staff built into a service system that was just replacing an old one. For some reason, we now have all these extra staff because the system does not seem to be doing what it was supposed to.

We have this particular one with tangible assets, as well as the one with the pension plans, all of which have significant, ongoing human resource costs. Can the Minister indicate to us how they are going to link those together, so they do not keep dealing with these in a piecemeal fashion, but it is part of the broader business planning process? Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Minister.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I do not think this one should result in a lot of staff increase, in fact, of any staff increase. There is no intention to set up a division or a section that is going to deal with tangible capital assets. The costs we will incur come about as we implement the system and we need to do an accounting of all our assets and figure out what the amortization period will be for them and how the system will be structured.

Once it is in place, it will be run out of the departments. From my knowledge of the system, which I admit is probably limited, it appears to be a system that is going to save us money many times over by doing proper replacement and maintenance of the assets we have. But there is no intention to create a whole division to manage this new accounting process. Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister is aware, as am I, that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. We have heard of the optimistic goal before. The reality is we have found that things that were supposed to save us money and be done with existing resources are not doing that.

I refer once again to the PeopleSoft system, which I have been watching. This strikes me as having the same kind of potential as the pension plan move to be repatriated to the Northwest Territories. I will just note for the record that I hope the Minister's best intentions come true. I will be watching closely to see that is done with existing resources. Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Minister.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, it is good advice. I also hope my best intentions come true. Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. We are on page 6, budget evaluation, not previously authorized, \$150,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Total department, special warrants, \$646,250.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Not previously authorized, \$223,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Page 7, Finance, operations and maintenance, treasury, special warrant, \$1.12 million. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, in the area of special warrants for short term borrowing costs, does the Minister have information available regarding when payments become due on our line of credit, which I believe this points toward? Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Minister of Finance.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, we have overdraft provisions with both the Royal Bank and with the CIBC in order to get the best rates. In overdrafts with the Royal Bank, they are due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. With the CIBC, it is on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Can the Minister provide a little more information? We have agreements with CIBC and Royal Bank to get the best deal possible, but again, a special warrant is a situation where I see it as being urgently required. Was this the case? Did a certain timeline come upon us that we have to do this, or could it not have come in as not previously authorized? Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Minister of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, this was a difficult one to predict in advance. I think the reason for it was we underestimated the interest costs we would incur. Two things came about that caused that to happen. One being the equal

pay payout. I think there was some retroactive pay on salaries that also had an impact. Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Comments. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Was there a date that came about that made this a requirement for a special warrant when it came to paying this? As a special warrant, was there a certain timeline that we came upon that we had to pay this? Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Minister of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, I do not know the specific date, but certainly by mid-fall or early fall, we realized we were going to be short and would have to take this action.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** We will deal with Finance, operations and maintenance, treasury, \$1.12 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Total department, special warrants, \$1.12 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** We are now on page 8, Health and Social Services, operations and maintenance, health insurance program, not previously authorized, \$262,000. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister inform us of the particulars of this \$262,000? Which group of physicians was it for? Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Minister of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, this is a three percent fee increase that was negotiated between the Department of Health and the physicians in the Northwest Territories. It is not a collective agreement situation, it is one where the department negotiates with the physicians. It covers both salaries, but also other expenses the physicians would incur. This one came in too late for the main estimates, but it is basically \$212,000, which is a global three percent increase and another \$50,000 that was agreed to for continuing medical education for the physicians.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are these fee-for-service cost increases? Is that what you said? It is not a collective agreement? So are all the physicians in Yellowknife fee-for-service, or do we have salaried doctors as well?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, this is for increases to the medical fee schedule, so it is for everything the doctors do. In answer to the second part of the question, we have both salaried and fee-for-service doctors.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for further clarification, is there a mix in Yellowknife, or is that fee-

for-service in Yellowknife and salaried doctors in the communities?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** I believe there is a mix of salaried and fee-for-service doctors in the Northwest Territories, but I do not know if the Minister of Health can clarify that. I am not exactly clear on it.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will wait to get into that level of detail when we have an opportunity to meet with the Department of Health. I have one more question regarding these negotiations for physicians' fees. Are they based on any kind of regular timeframes, or did they feel they were getting overworked and underpaid? Did we go back to the table due to the doctor shortage to make sure we keep our employees happy? Or is there a set timeframe for review of this kind of negotiation?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, the fees are reviewed periodically. I do not believe it is on a schedule, I think it is based more on a situation where we either have to bring our physicians and the fees they charge in line with what is going on in the rest of the country or we face some other sort of circumstance. There were, in the recent past, a couple of reductions in fees that caused our doctors in our situation to be less than attractive compared to the rest of Canada.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** We are on page 8, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, dealing with Health and Social Services, operations and maintenance, health insurance program, not previously authorized, \$262,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Community health programs, not previously authorized, \$1.3 million. Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Cabinet seems to be in a hurry here, so I will make my questions short. By taking two job classifications, the nurses and social workers, and changing them, is there a ripple effect in terms of costs and upward pressure on all the other salaries? This Hay Plan system was supposed to bring all the different jobs into line. If, by taking two out in an arbitrary fashion, have we skewed the whole system and is it going to put upward pressure across the board on all the costs and all the job classifications? Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Minister of Finance, Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The government continually does interdepartmental assessments of the potential impact of any increases to particular categories of workers. In this case, any kind of impact that there would have been, I do not believe that there was any, would have been taken into consideration as we did the interdepartmental checks.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** My recollection of the overall new job evaluation was negotiated with the UNW to, in fact, address one of the outstanding issues in terms of pay equity. This change was made subsequent to that. Is there a role for the UNW, or does that only happen during the collective bargaining process? Is there an ongoing agreement and a working committee that keeps track of this to make sure it is done in such a way that it does not get, if I may use the word in its proper intention, bastardized so it would lose its benefit? Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, there is a provision in the Collective Agreement for dealing with disputes with regard to this matter. The government is going through the process of reviewing the job classifications. We have already done the excluded ones and are now working on the unionized positions.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** We are dealing with page 8, community health programs, \$1.3 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Total department, not previously authorized, \$1.562 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Page 9, Justice, operations and maintenance, law enforcement, not previously authorized, \$65,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Community justice and corrections, not previously authorized, \$246,967.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Total department, not previously authorized, \$311,967.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Page 10, Education, Culture and Employment, operations and maintenance, advance education and careers, not previously authorized, \$300,000 negative.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Total department, not previously authorized, \$300,000 negative.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Page 11, Transportation, operations and maintenance, airports, not previously authorized, \$358,937.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Motor vehicles, not previously authorized, \$114,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Total department, not previously authorized, \$472,937.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Page 12, Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, operations and maintenance, risk management and economic development, not previously authorized, \$75,000. Mr. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This has come up every year for the last three years. If my recollection serves me correct, there is going to be an attempt to build this in so it does not come forward as a supplementary appropriation, or not previously authorized. You have enough time now to see the patterns and how this is working out, so you can budget for it through the regular business planning process.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, there is no reason why this should not be built into the business plans.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you. Risk management and economic development, not previously authorized, \$75,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Total department, not previously authorized, \$75,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Municipal and Community Affairs, capital, community operations, not previously authorized, \$481,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Total department, not previously authorized, \$481,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Health and Social Services, capital, community health programs, not previously authorized, \$454,000. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like an explanation for this item, funding to record a grant in kind. Could the Minister please explain that process? Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. As part of our accounting, in recent years we have gone to a system where any time we donate or give an asset to another party, then it is necessary to record the value of that asset as being a grant in kind.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Community health programs, not previously authorized, \$454,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Total department, not previously authorized, \$454,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Page 15, Justice, capital, community justice and corrections, not previously authorized, \$30,033.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Total department, not previously authorized, \$30,033.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Page 16, Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, capital, Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, special warrants, \$3.605 million. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister expand further on the last bullet here? It says, "net affect on government operations will be nil as allocation is fully offset by the recovery from the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's 1998-1999 operations and maintenance surplus".

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, last year, the Housing Corporation had a surplus in operations and maintenance. They, as I understand it, required capital money in order to do an extension of the Minimum Downpayment Assistance Program. They are not allowed to switch their surplus money in operations and maintenance over to capital. The process they go through is to turn the money back to the Government of the Northwest Territories, and the Government of the Northwest Territories gave it back to them as capital. I could confirm that with the former Minister. Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Why do we not allow the former Ministers to fend for themselves.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Housing Corporation, special warrant, \$3.605 million. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. If the Minister could just give me a little clarification, again, with regarding the details of the program. The concern has been brought to me by some of my constituents that, although the Minimum Downpayment Assistance Program was well meaning and well intentioned, that in some instances southern residents were able to buy homes in the Northwest Territories and utilize them as revenue properties. Now, while I understand we may have wanted to encourage southern residents to purchase homes here with the idea of relocating, if relocation was not in their plans, was it possible for southerners to buy homes essentially as revenue properties? Thank you, Mr. Minister.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you. The Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, a basic condition of the program was that it had to be the individual's primary residence. There was no question about that at all.

For anyone to follow the policy and guidelines on this program, they would have to live in the house. If the Member knows of a situation where someone has bought a house with assistance from this program and is using it as a rental property, or some other purpose and living somewhere else, we would be very interested in knowing about it.

There is also a minimum time period in which people had to live in the house before they could turn it over. You could not buy it one month and two months later turn it over to someone else, or sell it again and take advantage of the money.

We would be interested if anyone is working around the rules. I suspect there may have been some.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. I know there was a review done with the program. While we may want to look to see if there is anybody trying to work around the rules, do we now track any of those purchases? Have we done any follow up to ensure the rules are being adhered to? Is that part of the review process? Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I do not know exactly what the Housing Corporation is doing. They do have the capacity, through the Corporation itself and their housing associations, to be tracking and monitoring all of the various programs they operate. I expect they are monitoring this one to ensure people are complying with the guidelines.

As we said yesterday, we would be very happy to make available to the Members the evaluation that was done of this program. Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** We are on page 16, Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, capital, Northwest Territories Housing Corporation special warrant, \$3,605,000. Mr. Delorey

**MR. DELOREY:** Could the Minister tell me if he knows of any situation where the minimum downpayment was used to purchase a house and then, through negotiations with certain things happening where that minimum downpayment was applied to two different people but to the same house?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I am not aware of any situations like that. I did hear stories about people doing that at one time, just on the street. If there is any information that is available on those kind of circumstances, I am sure the Housing Corporation would be more than happy to check it out.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Delorey.

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you Mr. Chairman. Are you saying there could still be an avenue open to investigate that type of a situation if one is suspected to exist?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Handley.

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Yes, certainly there would be.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** We are dealing with Housing Corporation, special warrant, \$3,605,00.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Total department, special warrant, \$3,605,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** We are on page 17, Education, Culture and Employment, capital, special warrants, \$300,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Total department, special warrant, \$300,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Page 18, Transportation, capital, motor vehicles, not previously authorized, \$45,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Total department, not previously authorized, \$45,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1999-2000. Detail, clause 1.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Clause 2.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Just for the new Members, we are on page 1, which we will be going through clause by clause.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Clause 1.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Clause 2.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Clause 3.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Clause 4.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Clause 5.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Clause 6.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Clause 7.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** We are dealing with schedule, page 4, part 1.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance, \$4,111,154.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Part 2, capital, total capital, \$4,914,033.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Total supplementary appropriation, part 1 and part 2, \$9,026,187.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** We are back on page 1, the preamble.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Bill as a whole?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Does the committee agree the bill is now ready for third reading?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Bill 2, is now ready for third reading. I would like to thank the Minister and his witness. We will now rise and report progress.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The House will come back to order. Item 20, report of committee of the whole on the review of bills other matters. Mr. Krutko.

#### **ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS**

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, the Committee has been considering Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1999-2000.

I would like to report that Bill 2 is ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Is there a seconder for the motion? The Chair recognizes the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland, as the seconder. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Item 22, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

#### **ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**MR. CLERK:** Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Standing Committee on Social Programs as well as the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development at adjournment today, and on Monday at 9: 00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight, and at 10: 30 a.m. of the Board of Management.

Orders of the day for Monday, February 28, 2000:

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

6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
  - Motion 9-14(2), Tabled Document 14-14(2) into Committee of the Whole
  - Motion 10-14(2), Pipeline Development
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Minister's Statement 1-14(2), Sessional Statement
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
  - Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 1999-2000
22. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. The House will stand adjourned until Monday, February 28, 2000 at 1: 30 p.m.

--ADJOURNMENT