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The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Friday, December 9, 2011

Members Present

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Hon. Tom Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Blake, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Dolynny, Mr. Hawkins, Hon. Jackie Jacobson, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Mr. Moses, Mr. Nadli, Hon. David Ramsay, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 10:02 a.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Good morning, colleagues. Mr. Bromley.

POINT OF ORDER

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on a point of order under Section 23(i) where it speaks to imputing false or hidden motive by another Member. Section (h) makes allegations against another Member and Section (k) is abusive or insulting language of a nature likely to cause disorder.

I would like to draw Members' attention to unofficial Hansard page 9 yesterday, where Mr. McLeod, Bob McLeod, in speaking in support of Mr. Miltenberger's point of order in the House said: "I was offended, I guess, when Mr. Bromley lumped us all together as being somebody like Hitler or Pol Pot or General Radek because he doesn't like our Greenhouse Gas Policy."

It is possible that Mr. McLeod was influenced by similarly inflammatory language by Mr. Miltenberger who, on the previous day, according to unofficial Hansard, page 19, implied that I was trying: "to put us in the same category as Gbagbo and some of these folks from Serbia and other folks that have been charged over the years, Nazis and stuff..."

Mr. Speaker, surely it's reasonable to use hard words in attempting to help this House to realize the urgency for action on climate change. Its rising impact on humanity is clear and not debated. The actions required of government to reverse this impact are also clear and not debated.

However, the Minister agreed this is so, in responding to my first oral questions on Wednesday. However, responsible governments around the world have failed to implement the required action, and thus horrific impacts of famine, drought, floods, storms and ocean surges caused by climate change now rise annually to include human deaths in the hundreds of thousands.

I have called attention to our role as one government in this clearly global situation, but this is a far cry from me calling government leaders war criminals such as Hitler, Radek, or Pol Pot. The clear implications of Mr. McLeod's words that I was saying or implying that we are the same as these people is offensive and odious to me and, in my mind, an attempt to stifle debate and clearly cast false aspersions.

I can say it no better than in the words of an advisor. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a crime against humanity is an immoral or destructive act following from a sense of crime, meaning a shameful or regrettable act, an unfortunate situation, a bad thing, an evil or injurious act, an offence, a sin, especially of a grave character. Well, nobody likes to hear such words about his or her own actions. I, for one, agree that the GNWT's lack of leadership on this issue constitutes crimes against humanity of the highest order, threatening the health, happiness and various lives of the millions or billions of human beings and the ecosystem they depend on. The fact that these crimes are being committed by other leaders around the world makes the GNWT no less culpable for them.

Thus, Mr. Speaker, my point was that if we continue these actions...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Bromley, I would like you to just stick to your point of order. It's not for rebuttal. So, if you could get to your point of order, then we may proceed. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That concludes my point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I will allow some discussion on this. The honourable Premier, Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can only speak to what I heard and the honourable Member is now changing his definition of a crime against society. He took a very broad brush and lumped us all in there, and now he's trying to say there are different shades or different definitions of crime against humanity, and I think if you're going to use inflammatory phrases like he did, I guess he should expect that he will get the same kind.

I think that to now try to change what he meant by using those very offensive words of “crimes against humanity,” to say he didn’t want to include war criminals and he only wanted to talk about people that were offended by how the governments are taking action on climate change is a whole different category. He did say “crimes against humanity,” and my interpretation of people who perpetuate crimes against humanity are dictators and warmongers who have killed millions of people. To lump us into that same category, to me, is very offensive.

I heard what he said and that was my interpretation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. On the point of order, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to rise and note the whole intent of our points of order is to bring order to the House and I believe that further discussion is not really helping our Assembly and our government as a whole. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the point of order. I will allow Mr. Bromley to close.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very briefly, this House has yet to rule on whether my use of “crimes against humanity” was indeed a wrong use of our language or not. But, obviously, Mr. McLeod believes it was wrong. I believe it was right, but he believes it was wrong and uses that to justify his using bad language or the wrong language as well. Do two wrongs make a right?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. On this point of order, I’ll take it under advisement and report back to the House at a later date.

I want to remind the Members, we’re put in these positions to work for the betterment of the people of the Northwest Territories in trying to move forward. This is the second point of order since we sat in the House and it’s only the fourth sitting day we’ve had. I want to remind the Members to try to work for the betterment of the people of the Northwest Territories. I’ll take your point of order under advisement and I’ll get back to the House at a later date.

Item 2, Ministers’ statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Human Resources, Mr. Glen Abernethy.

Ministers’ Statements

MINISTER’S STATEMENT 9-17(1): PUBLIC SERVICE IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. “Public Service. Public Focus.” is the motto of 20/20: A Brilliant North, the NWT Public

Service Strategic Plan. Our ability to provide quality programs and services is clearly linked to recruiting and retaining talented staff who are committed to their professions, their communities and the people they serve. The public service is the face of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

20/20: A Brilliant North guides the ongoing development of the NWT public service, with the aim of making the GNWT an employer of choice. There are real advantages to working for the GNWT public service. We have competitive salaries and great benefits, including the public sector pensions. There is a great range of diversity of work and our staff have opportunities for career growth, development and advancement. Many staff have told us how much they appreciate our family-friendly work environment, including paid time off during the holidays.

Ultimately, the GNWT seeks to balance ongoing positive, constructive relations with our employees and their representative bargaining agents, with sound fiscal management and good governance.

20/20 includes a range of actions. The Department of Human Resources continues to make significant progress in fixing and sustaining the foundation for human resource services. We are improving pay and benefits processes and completing service partnership agreements that confirm roles and responsibilities of our staff and the clients that we serve. This is a very important initiative that is long overdue and is critical for strong corporate human resource management.

I am excited about promoting the GNWT as an inclusive workplace that recognizes and embraces diversity. This ensures that excellence, innovation and commitment form the basis of our service to the public. In early 2012 a new campaign will promote the GNWT as an inclusive workplace that embraces diversity, including the hiring and supporting of employees with disabilities. As well, the GNWT will be issuing a confidential survey to all employees late in January 2012 that will encourage employees with disabilities to anonymously self-identify. The government is also in the process of developing Aboriginal cultural awareness and diversity awareness training for the public service.

As is the case with governments across Canada, the GNWT has an aging workforce that needs to take steps to ensure succession planning within the public service, including:

- the Associate Director/Superintendent Program that supports the development of Aboriginal employees into senior management positions within the public service;
- developmental transfer assignments that provide employees with opportunities to develop on the job; and

- formal education programs such as the Leadership Development Program.

These are just a few examples of the initiatives that support our public service and ensure we continue to have skilled, talented employees within the Government of the Northwest Territories. To this end, I look forward to working with the Members of the 17th Legislative Assembly as we support 20/20: A Brilliant North, the NWT Public Service Strategic Plan and the public service mission of providing excellent service to the people of the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. David Ramsay.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 10-17(1):
MACKENZIE VALLEY HIGHWAY

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to provide Members and Northerners with an update on the Mackenzie Valley to Tuktoyaktuk Project. I'm pleased to reiterate a confirmation from the Caucus of the 17th Legislative Assembly identifying the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway segment as a priority project that will help to strengthen and diversify the Northwest Territories economy.

In the June 2011 budget, the people and Government of the Northwest Territories were pleased to hear Canada include \$150 million over five years for the construction of the all-weather highway from Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk. The federal government described the highway as a project of national significance because it advances the country's position on security, sovereignty and economic development.

A great deal of planning work is required before starting a project of such significance. Department officials are currently preparing a business case report, which will assess procurement options. Department officials have initiated discussions with Canada toward a draft funding agreement, and discussions with the Inuvialuit land administration to secure land tenure for the highway right-of-way have also begun. This work will lead to important decision points for the 17th Legislative Assembly.

The proposed Infrastructure Acquisition Plan for 2012-13 includes preliminary funding that will allow the department to continue this planning work, thereby indicating to Canada our commitment to build the all-weather highway.

Further GNWT investments will be needed to complete this project. One of the things that would make it easier to plan for and fund not just this project but for other infrastructure needs as well would be a completed Devolution Agreement. Such an agreement would give this government access

to resource revenues that could be used on behalf of all residents of the Northwest Territories.

I would also like to update Members on the progress we are making on the planning for the southern section of this highway. As Members may recall, a funding announcement from CanNor in 2010 led to department partnerships with land claim groups and organizations to lead, develop and manage the project description reports – PDRs, as they're referred to – for sections of the Mackenzie Valley Highway.

These partnerships maximized local involvement, increased local input and maintained local control of the planning process. These partnerships have also confirmed how government and Aboriginal groups can partner on the planning of public infrastructure projects.

On November 30, 2011, the department received a third project description report of the Mackenzie Valley Highway. During the handover ceremony in Norman Wells, it was especially encouraging to acknowledge that all of the land corporations in the Tulita district passed resolutions supporting this work. It was also encouraging to know that Ms. Cece Hodgson-McCauley is still advocating for our highway, and it was a pleasure having the opportunity to meet with her again.

The Department of Transportation has also confirmed that the Kahsho Development Foundation and the Pehdzeh Ki First Nation will be submitting the final two PDRs before the end of this year.

The PDRs will be brought together into one report and will be provided to regulators for initial review early in 2012. The next steps are subject to obtaining additional funding to continue moving into the planning and environmental review process. Building on this momentum, the department will continue toward moving the project into the next phase.

Northerners are ready to take another step toward realizing the dream of an all-weather highway from the NWT-Alberta border all the way to the Arctic Coast. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 11-17(1):
ABORIGINAL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
UPDATE

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Towards the end of the 16th Assembly, I tabled the Aboriginal Student Achievement Education Plan. It was developed after a broad consultation and aimed to eliminate the education gap between Aboriginal and other students. I am pleased to say that Aboriginal education leaders

endorsed the plan by signing the Education Partnership Declaration.

The plan lists the four priorities of the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative: early childhood and child care, family and student supports, Aboriginal language and culture curriculum and resource development, and literacy.

This year we are taking action on several of these priorities. To support literacy, the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative funded five new community libraries in the schools in Behchoko, Fort Liard, Gameti, Whati and Tuktoyaktuk.

This funding brought new research materials, books, graphic novels, picture books and magazines for children and adults into libraries. It also allows for one member of each community to keep the libraries open after school hours for public usage. These community members received training and support from the public library services staff. The Northwest Territories now has 20 public libraries covering all regions.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment also provided funding towards one literacy coordinator for each school division. These coordinators participated in several days of training at the beginning of the school year. ECE staff worked with them to highlight regional successes and improve literacy practices in the school.

Funding was provided again this year to support the orientation of teachers in Aboriginal culture, and work progressed on developing a Dene language curriculum.

To engage parents, teachers and students in school, last year we implemented the first phase of a communications campaign focused on attendance at school. It was well received, Mr. Speaker. Our feedback tells us the campaign has resonated with students. We are continuing the campaign this year, as we know that attendance is a key factor in education success for students. Our next steps will focus on engaging parents more fully in their children's education. We heard many times during our consultation that the school alone is not responsible for educating students. Parents must take control of their children's education.

His Excellency the Governor General has made it one of his priorities to reinforce learning and innovation to ensure Canadians have the opportunity to reach their full potential. During his visit to Fort Smith today, Mr. Johnston will be taking part in a roundtable discussion on the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative to learn about one of the key ways the Government of the Northwest Territories helps our people achieve their educational goals. We must continue to believe in our students and support the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative, so all students can reap the

benefits, bringing us closer to our goal of healthy, educated people. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Premier, Bob McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 12-17(1):
MINISTER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Michael Miltenberger will be absent from the House today to host a dignitary visit by the Governor General of Canada in Fort Smith. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ADDICTIONS TREATMENT PROGRAMS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to talk about addictions. Last month when Members set our collective priorities for the 17th Legislative Assembly, we included enhancing our addictions treatment programs, and for good reason. If we could only solve some of the problems of addictions with some action, by taking action, so many other issues would become less of a problem than what we have here before us today. We would have less crime, less violence, fewer people on income support. We would have healthier families, fewer babies born who are sick, who are with illnesses, better educational outcomes and a much less strain on our health system.

Every time a person gets on a road to recovery and stays the course, there are positive ripple effects that go through society. As I mentioned before, we have less problems. The question that we have here today is: What is this Assembly going to do by helping to get people on the right track, by supporting addictions treatment programs here in the North?

I will have questions for the Minister of Health later today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
HOMELESSNESS AND INADEQUATE
HOUSING ISSUES

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to continue my crusade for better services from this government for residents struggling with homelessness and inadequate housing. In September, during the election and the campaign, there was a lot of talk around the issue. Candidates expressed support for an Anti-Poverty Strategy, for

more housing and better housing programs. Now that the rubber has hit the road, so to speak, now that this new Assembly is in place, the new Executive is up and running, I have to ask this question: What will the 17th Assembly do to live up to the comments and commitments around homelessness made a few months ago during the election?

It is not like there are no options. Members of the 16th Assembly spoke many times about housing and homelessness. Those Members made suggestions and recommendations for change, for improvement of the situation in the NWT in their statements.

As recently as last May, a report written by Nick Falvo was tabled in this House, which made five specific recommendations to improve homelessness in Yellowknife and across the NWT, many of which echo previous recommendations and fit nicely into the government's own document called "Framework to Respond to Homelessness." In my four years here, I have seen little change, little response to any recommendations and certainly no focus on the issue of homelessness.

The Framework to Respond to Homelessness is dated January 2007 and badly needs review and updating, especially in light of the recommendations from the Falvo report. The framework is based on the principle of a continuum of housing, and that is great, it should be, but have we ensured that all parts of the continuum are funded and available to our residents? I don't think so. The framework has identified four next steps, but only one of those four has been accomplished in the last five years. Mr. Falvo's homelessness report has five recommendations, four of which are directed to the GNWT and none of those four have been acted on.

I recognize and accept that an election and transition period from the 16th Assembly to the 17th has occurred and that does slow things down, but I have to repeat the question I asked earlier: What will this Assembly do to live up to, one, its commitments from 2007, two, the recommendations from Mr. Falvo's report, and three, all that election talk? How will homelessness be handled by this new government in 2012-13 and beyond?

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. BISARO: We cannot continue with our current practice of dealing with homelessness off the corner of someone's desk. Change is essential and I and the residents of the NWT expect to see some action and improvement from this government on the homelessness front. It's a job that all of government must tackle together. Let's get on with this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the past couple of days my fellow colleague Mr. Bromley, who is well respected among his peers and the citizens of the Northwest Territories on his views on climate change, was cited on the use of strong language to describe the seriousness of his thoughts. Although I tend to agree his choice of words may have been used in the wrong context, I do agree that his passion for making our government more accountable for our carbon footprint is dead on accurate and for that I do thank him.

It would be ill advised for me to stand before you and attempt to mimic or regurgitate statistical data or convince you of my green ambition to save the planet. This is not my intention here today. I do wish to inform the House that we all have an important obligation to perform, not only for our constituents but for our families and for our children. I would hate to tell my future grandchildren that I had an opportunity to make positive changes for our climate and I chose the easy road. That, Mr. Speaker, will not happen.

I think many here have seen and heard Mr. Al Gore throughout his Inconvenient Truth crusade, yet many have not seen or heard of Bjorn Lomborg's Cool It economic approach to climate change, where Mr. Lomborg clearly claims that there has been much hype and exaggeration of global warming solely to root much needed research dollars.

Now, my intention here is not to split hairs about the economics of climate change, science, or Hollywood drama. My intention here today is to disseminate that there are different points of view when it comes to global warming and the realities of scale. This is especially true when our government is forced into accepting unrealistic climate targets based on science that is equally being questioned.

So what is one to do? One of the principles that always served me well in the business world was catching people doing something right. It was much more productive for the performance and success of a resolve than trying to be punitive or restrictive. The same basic principle can be easily introduced throughout the Northwest Territories when it comes to positive affect in our climate in the North.

In simple terms, providing tax incentives or financial credits for businesses or individuals doing good behavior is an easy and affordable step in the road to climate recovery. I say with conviction, let's do away with unattainable targets and unrealistic goals set by so-called purveyors of catastrophic thinking

and let's embrace a cleaner delivery model of our everyday footprint on our environment. Our real mission should be to deal with the economic realities of options.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. DOLYNNY: Our real mission should be to deal with the economic realities of options in dealing with climate change and rewarding those who take the positive steps of change. In the end we all want the same thing. Maybe in the process we can reach the NWT's true climate goals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON "NOT US" ANTI-DRUG CAMPAIGN

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to talk about a great program that's been initiated by a few departments through the Healthy Choices Framework a couple of years ago that did result from some tragic incidents throughout the Northwest Territories and that we still see today, and that is dealing with drugs in our communities.

The Not Us! Campaign is a very successful campaign initiated through the Department of Justice. It has partners of the RCMP, Health and Social Services, Education, Culture and Employment, MACA and the Executive. It is a program that fights the drugs in our communities. It gives an opportunity for people at the community level to take a stand and say no, we don't want these drugs in our communities and we want the drug dealers out.

In Inuvik I've been part of that committee for the last two years and what that entails is you get a \$10,000 grant for your first year to run programs. Having a very concerned group of individuals in Inuvik, as well as in the communities of Hay River and Yellowknife, and I think most recently Fort McPherson, it is taking a really strong stand and we are seeing some really positive outcomes of this. There are a lot more drug busts in the communities and incarcerations of some of the drug dealers that are doing harm to our people in the communities as well.

Today I just want to thank all those throughout the Northwest Territories who have taken that stand against drugs, who have taken that stand to put these initiatives in their communities and for the great work that this government is doing in supporting all the departments and this program. I do hope to see more funding going to prevention programs like this so that we don't have to band-aid the situation in years to come.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RECONSTRUCTION OF DETAH ROAD

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to salute the success achieved thus far on the reconstruction of the Detah road and call for us to keep building this road and building this success.

During this fiscal year and last, \$4 million has been spent on the long-overdue reconstruction of the only all-weather artery to the community. Deton'Cho Corporation has led this project with a creative mix of joint ventures, partnerships, training and apprenticeship opportunities, equipment acquisition and development of management capacity, all the great things we want to see in the cost-effective projects that build our local and Aboriginal-owned businesses.

You can't use the word "partnership" often enough. Deton'Cho, local private sector suppliers and partners, our territorial Transportation department and the federal government have cooperated to squeeze maximum benefits from every dollar. The government has backed that capacity and business development, granting the negotiated contracts that have enabled these benefits. The result: Local people are getting the jobs close to home, growing a local economy, and today we are closer to completing an acceptable highway to serve Detah's vital needs. With the Highway No. 4 realignment around Giant Mine in the wings, Deton'Cho has the possibility for steady, continued success.

In this capital budget session we know that money is tight. Last year we were able to re-profile funds to add \$2 million to this project. I will be asking this government to seek every opportunity to see that happen again. Deton'Cho has proven that it can be nimble and pick up the cash to ensure no precious dollars go to waste. I will be looking for dedicated funds to see this work completed.

The workers on this project are local family people. Many have gotten the training and the good jobs at the mines, but the jobs close to home and family are best. We've mixed up a recipe of success on the Detah road project. Let's pull out all our best ideas and resources to roll these achievements to the end of the road.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MACKENZIE VALLEY HIGHWAY

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was in the Sahtu region last year and last week and did a tour up in Fort Good Hope and Colville Lake. I missed the Wells because of the weather conditions. When I was in the Sahtu, the local

contractors were getting busy and people were getting excited because they were starting to open up the all-weather winter roads into the rest of the communities and connections to the south.

I was very happy to hear Mr. Ramsay's statement here about the progress of the Mackenzie Valley Highway and the support the 17th here has given this construction. My people are looking forward to the day when we can have the same opportunities as other Members here who enjoy all-weather roads into their communities or just to go down south to purchase supplies or visit family or do those other things that the Members enjoy who have the all-weather road.

I know Mrs. McCauley, Auntie Cece, is very happy, because she gave some good reviews and raves in her news column to the Minister and to the partnership on this project here. I want to tell this government here, and the Members, that we greatly appreciate the support. I hope the spirit of John Diefenbaker, the Prime Minister, lives within Mr. Ramsay to open up the highway, fulfill the dream of building the Mackenzie Valley Highway into the North to really connect the people in the North. We are looking forward to it.

We have some major infrastructure such as the Bear River Bridge that needs to get put in. We are going to see an influx of hundreds of millions of dollars in the Sahtu within the next five years with oil and gas exploration. We need help, and there's help there and we can do it, but we need to push this government, push the federal government and tell Mr. Harper to please help us build this road within four years.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONGRATULATIONS TO WILBERT ANTOINE ON HIS MINING CAREER

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to honour one of my constituents, Mr. Wilbert Antoine, who works at Canadian Zinc Mining Corporation. He indicated to me that this month he's celebrating 40 years in the mining industry.

He began his career in mining in 1971. He didn't realize he was getting into mining; he thought he would take a short job. He ended up working for Cardinal River Coals in Alberta for 31 years. Upon completing that, he did move back to Yellowknife in July 2002 and spent six years with BHP Ekati Diamond Mine and he thought he was going to retire there. He made a trip home in 2007 to celebrate the 20-year anniversary of the Papal visit to Fort Simpson and realized that there was another mining company operating out of there, which is Canadian Zinc Mining Corporation.

He began talking with them and found he was very interested in working for them because they were in his home community and there is huge opportunity to develop a mine in the Nahendeh region. He's been working there for the last three years. He does say he began his mining career in the mountains and he's ending his mining career in the mountains, as well, especially back home there.

I just want to add that he sent me a note and I'd like to quote him. He says that mining has been wonderful to him over the years. He raised and educated three wonderful children, now with successful careers of their own, totally independent, with children of their own. In the past three years he really prides that he had the best job in the world working with Canadian Zinc, flying and helicoptering over the most beautiful part of the world in the Nahanni Mountains. Serving his communities is very satisfying and rewarding.

He also links his career to his and our uncle Albert Norwegian of Fort Providence, who also celebrates his 78th birthday on December 21st.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I just want to make a note that I've been speaking with Mr. Wilbert Antoine. He also indicates that Canadian Zinc received environmental approval from the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board. I just wanted to say to all the youth and young people out there, and those looking for careers in the mining sector, that there's a huge potential in and around Fort Simpson in future years and we can look to the example of Mr. Wilbert Antoine, who had a successful career. This is an important sector that can be looked at for a long-time career.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 28-17(1): FUNDING FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF HIGHWAY NO. 7

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to follow up on Highway No. 7 questions with the Minister of Transportation. I did take note that yesterday the Finance Minister indicated some priorities in his ministerial statement and I was actually taken aback that Highway No. 7 wasn't mentioned at all.

It is part of our national highway system. It is key and critical to the development of our Northwest

Territories having access to B.C. and all the tours and industry that comes out of there. Especially if we are going to look at increasing the development in our region, a good highway system is critical to the North.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Transportation if he worked with the Finance Minister in looking at his statement, because Highway No. 7 and the reconstruction and the upgrades were not mentioned at all and I believe that it should be a priority of our government.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. David Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member for the question. Obviously, Highway No. 7 is a concern. Going forward we are going to need to identify more funding to address the issues with Highway No. 7. Going forward it's going to take a sizable contribution of about \$3 million a year for 10 years in order to address the work that needs to be done there. A complete reconstruction of Highway No. 7 is estimated to cost about \$250 million. Again, I think that's something you'll hear, is we really need to come up with more funding, and when we do get some more funding, certainly Highway No. 7 would have to be given the development down in the Deh Cho region something that would factor into any decisions there.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I'd like to highlight it as a priority of this government. I think far before we invest in the fibre optic line, we should invest in Highway No. 7. I don't believe that the Finance Minister, I don't know if they made a mistake, but he should be mentioning Highway No. 7 as a priority. Should we run into some additional funding or we relieve our debt limit, I believe that Highway No. 7 should be critical enough that it should make this initial list of investment, should we have the opportunity. I'd like to ask the Minister of Transportation if he can work with his Cabinet colleagues, work with the Premier and make this a priority going forward.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Certainly as we move forward, I'm looking forward to working with the Member and the EDI committee to make this a priority and to come up with a plan so we can address the situation on Highway No. 7. Again, it's going to take funding and a substantial amount of funding to make that happen. But I do believe if we can work together and put everything on the table, I think we can certainly see this as a priority as we move forward when we do get some additional funding.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I believe that the Finance Minister, who's got the strings for the financial purse, is not going to be mentioning Highway No. 7 in any of his statements. That's my point. I'd like to

ask the Minister of Transportation if he would get his colleagues to make it a priority and start mentioning it in this House.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I certainly would have that conversation with the Finance Minister and my Cabinet colleagues as we move forward and identify further sources of funding for Highway No. 7. That discussion will take place.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What's critical here is that if the Finance Minister is going to mention four or five projects and then not mention Highway No. 7, is that when and if we do get some debt relief that it's not going to make this list. I'd like to ask the Minister of Transportation once again, will he push and will he get his Cabinet colleagues to ensure that Highway No. 7 funding infrastructure will be done, should we have the opportunity. Mahsi cho.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: In this consensus system of government, when we do identify further sources of funding, you can rest assured that I will work with the Member, I will work with committee on identifying those priorities, and Highway No. 7 should rank near the top of those priorities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

QUESTION 29-17(1):
MORATORIUM ON EVICTIONS
DUE TO RENTAL ARREARS

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my question is dealing with the moratorium that the Minister of Housing released earlier this week. It is a good program and I think it's a great opportunity to educate the people in the communities on how to get back and educated into the housing programs, as well as getting them back on track with a payment plan. In the four months that we have from now until the end of the fiscal year, I wanted to ask the Minister of Housing what is the plan to work with these people in the communities to get back on a payment plan. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We would encourage all tenants out there to go in to their local LHOs and work out a repayment plan with them. The LHOs are usually very receptive to folks coming in and trying to enter into repayment plans. Then once they do that, then we would encourage them to honour their repayment plan. That way, come April 1st, they're not in any danger of being evicted. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: That sounds like a good plan in the broad scope of things. However, we do know that some tenants will not go and speak to their LHOs. Is there a plan in place for the LHOs? I know they do a lot of work and we don't want to overburden them, but is there a plan in place to go and speak to the tenants in their home, especially the ones that might be mobile enough or also with some language barriers? Is there a plan in place to do an outreach program to go and speak with the tenants? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Obviously, we'd like to see the tenants take the initiative, those that are able to, to come in and speak to their local LHOs and work out a repayment plan. The tenant relations officers in all our LHOs do a very good job in keeping in contact with tenants. For those that have mobility issues or those that maybe have a language barrier, as I said yesterday, most of our folks in the LHOs are from the community, a lot of them can speak the language; however, we wouldn't want that to be a burden to those that can't understand English as well as they should. We would do what we can to ensure that they understand the process as it's been laid out. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: My next question is: Come April 1st, the end of the fiscal year, any tenants across the Northwest Territories who have not taken that initiative to get on a payment plan, what is the course of action that the Housing Corporation is going to take for those who have not honoured this agreement that the Minister has put forth? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Come April 1st, for those that haven't entered into repayment plans, obviously, as much as we don't like doing it, we will have to evict them. I'd like people to see this as another opportunity to enter into repayment plans; not only that, but honour it. We're quite confident that we'll have some folks out there that will come forward. Unfortunately, there will be some, as the Member said, who will just not come into the local housing authority. If they don't come in, then, obviously, come April 1st they face the danger of being evicted. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you for that information, Minister of Housing. My final question is: We do have some tenants that have really high arrears. Is there an action plan to assist those that feel they don't have a chance to get out of those arrears? Is there a program or some kind of policy in place that will help those that are beyond what they can pay? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We do have some tenants out there that have very high public housing arrears. We try and work with them to ensure that

they are entering into a repayment plan. We're not asking them to try and clear off their arrears in a matter of a year, for those with really high arrears. We have some cases where folks have been paying on their arrears what they can afford over a number of years and we've had some success stories where they've been able to pay those arrears off. We wouldn't want our tenants feeling that because their arrears are very high, there's no end in sight. All we're asking them to do is come into the local housing authority, enter into a repayment plan and honour the agreement that they made with the local housing authority, then their chances of remaining public housing clients is very high. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 30-17(1):
MACKENZIE VALLEY HIGHWAY

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was listening to the honourable Member for Nahendeh talk about Highway No. 7 and I was just envious of him because he's talking about a highway that I hope someday the Sahtu people can have that opportunity to join among their fellow colleagues when they talk about highways. We want a highway.

My question to the Minister of Transportation is: Once the project description reports are completed... We're waiting for two more and then they will go into one package to the federal regulators or the regulators who are responsible for the issuing out these permits and the other things that they are responsible for. I want to ask the Minister when is he expected to bring these PDRs to the next phase and will the communities then receive some financial help to help them move through the regulatory system. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member for his question. It was certainly an honour to be in Norman Wells last week to receive the project description report from the Tulita district. It's very good to see groups getting together to agree that an all-weather Mackenzie Valley Highway is important. The work was very well done and well received.

We are currently waiting for two project description reports that will complement the other three. There are five in total that will be put together and submitted to the regulator. We're hoping to have the other two project description reports by the end of this year. Once those are done, it will move into that regulatory phase.

Again, I think, moving forward, the important thing is that we're going to have to identify further

sources of funding to continue the momentum on moving the work forward.

Again, I look forward to working with the Member and groups up and down the Mackenzie Valley to ensure that that happens. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: I know the people in the Tulita district were very happy to see Mr. Ramsay in Norman Wells to receive the project description report that they completed and they're looking forward to the couple of other ones that need to be completed.

I want to ask Mr. Ramsay what we need to do to start now getting the attention of the federal government. They've given the Government of the Northwest Territories \$150 million to start to work on the northern portion of the highway, Inuvik to Tuk. What do we need to do now to start banging on the doors, to tell Mr. Harper, the Prime Minister, that we need to start putting some money aside?

They are a majority government. They can do it. What do we need to do to get it done? Do we need to bring Mrs. McCauley down with us to start pounding the drums at Mr. Harper's door?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, we need to move forward, and I spoke earlier of continuing the momentum. I think lobbying the federal government, talking about the Mackenzie Valley Highway at any opportunity that we have publicly, in this forum, at constituency meetings, any chance we get with the federal government or provincial counterparts. Keeping it on the radar, I think, is one of the most important things as we move this forward.

Again, it's continuing that momentum, I think, that is the most important thing and trying to identify funding that is going to continue to push this project forward. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Can the Minister examine a strategy as to the type of lobbying tactics we can do with the Aboriginal governments, with partnerships, to begin looking at how the department then can take every opportunity with the partnerships to go down to Ottawa or have the opportunity to speak to the federal Ministers or their counterparts?

The Tuktoyaktuk committee did a fantastic job. They got \$150 million. We need that type of strategy also within the Sahtu or any other portion of the Gwich'in and a little part of the Nahendeh. We need to follow into the Inuvik Beaufort-Delta area. It may take years. We need to put a strategy together and start pounding on the doors to let the government know that this part of the highway needs attention and we need money now.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Certainly we definitely need to continue the effort. Again, working together, working collaboratively, as was shown by the folks

in the Sahtu, we can continue to move this project forward.

Again, it's going to come back to the funding. Yes, we have a \$150 million commitment on the Inuvik-Tuk portion of that highway. We need to seek some further commitment from the federal government on other sections of the Mackenzie Valley Highway. We need to continue to push, continue to move the project forward. It's by talking about it; it's by working together that we will continue to advance this project. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Part of the infrastructure is the Bear River Bridge. Is the Minister hoping to look at other options on how to fund the crucial infrastructure on the highway?

As I said, there is close to \$600 million that is going to be spent in the Sahtu on oil and gas exploration. Can the Minister entertain suggestions/proposals as to how we get this crucial piece of infrastructure built in the Sahtu that would serve the people in the Sahtu and the oil companies, but also it will help the federal government? They are taking out millions, hundreds of millions from the Norman Wells oilfield. They should be able to contribute to a simple infrastructure, and shame on the government for not putting any funds up to look at this infrastructure. Can the Minister help out there?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Certainly, in the grand scheme of things, the Bear River Bridge is an integral piece of the Mackenzie Valley Highway and it will be. Certainly when funding is the way it is, we need to look at other sources of funding, we need to look at partnerships. We need to be very creative when it comes to supplying the transportation infrastructure needs around the territory. Certainly, if there are proposals out there, if there are ideas out there, we are interested in hearing them. We are interested in listening and sitting down with folks to work together to try to accomplish what we can with what we have. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

QUESTION 31-17(1):
HOME CARE SERVICES
IN MACKENZIE DELTA

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I have a question for the Minister of Health as to home care. Will the Minister, as an interim solution until we re-establish the long-term care facility in the Mackenzie Delta district, increase the amount of home care workers in the communities of Aklavik, Fort McPherson and Tsiigehtchic? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently, Health and Social Services closed the Joe Greenland building down and then retained over \$400,000 of the funding that's used to operate the facility there in home care. The intention now is to hire two more additional home care workers for Aklavik and we are now also looking at Fort McPherson, 132 people over the age of 60 in Fort McPherson and some of which need home care and there's only one home care worker in Fort McPherson. So the Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services Authority is looking at that situation right now to determine the need, the exact needs of what home care need there is for home care workers.

In Tsiigehtchic we have 20 people right now over the age of 60-some, a few of which require minor home care, but we have one home care worker and the plan in Tsiigehtchic is to stay with the one home care worker at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BLAKE: It was very unclear what the plans were for Fort McPherson and I would just like a little more follow-up on that. Are there plans to increase the amount of workers there? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: As I indicated, in McPherson we have a lot of people over the age of 60, many of which do require home care. There are 132 people in the community that require home care, so Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services Authority are looking at ways now how to enhance that service, recognizing they only have one home care worker who can't possibly service all those people. So we have asked them to look at it and they are looking at it.

In Tsiigehtchic at this time – and we can take another look at it, I'm not saying we won't look at it – we have 20 people over the age of 60, and there is some need for some minor home care and they have one home care worker. But if the Member feels there is a need for more than one home care worker in Tsiigehtchic, despite the low numbers, I'm prepared to discuss that with the Member. Thank you.

MR. BLAKE: At this time I have no further questions. Thank you, Mr. Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 32-17(1):

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS IN WELEDEH

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Transportation, a follow-up on my Member's statement about transportation projects planned for the Weledeh riding.

In my statement I mentioned the great partnerships that developed, the training and the development of an Aboriginal business and so on. I think we've got great progress there. I want to know, first of all, if the Minister concurs with that and is happy with the accomplishments that have been achieved about the investment of this government about the reconstruction of the Detah road.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, and, unfortunately, last week I was supposed to meet with Deton'Cho but I got weathered in in Norman Wells. I look forward to that meeting that will happen soon. I look forward to partnerships like that down the road. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate that response. Many people are getting weathered in these days as the climate changes.

Quite a number of people missed the Commissioner's supper last night because of three days not being able to get out of BHP. I will look forward to that meeting, Minister, with my constituency.

Many benefits have accrued, obviously, but we're also talking about the Giant Mine bypass road this year. I am wondering if that is, indeed, planned to go ahead in the coming fiscal year.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Work continues on the realignment of Highway No. 4. With any luck that work will go ahead this year. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: My colleague from the Sahtu noted that had there been an all-weather road available, the Minister may have made it back earlier as well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Ohhh.

MR. BROMLEY: No, I appreciate that response. I would like to ask: Will the Minister look for opportunities to facilitate progress on the Detah road in association with the Giant bypass construction project? This has been something talked about in the past by the Minister of Transportation and there might be some opportunities. Will the Minister be looking for those?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: As I mentioned in a previous reply, I think it's important given our financial picture these days that we look at opportunities to partner with people to achieve our goals of supplying the transportation infrastructure that we need here in our territory. Certainly, I look forward to the discussions with the Member, and the committee and those proponents that are interested in doing work with the Government of the Northwest Territories. Working together, we'll accomplish much more. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Your final, short supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, thanks for the response from the Minister. I think the work done to date certainly does epitomize that and I appreciate his ongoing interest in proceeding in that cooperative basis.

Is there a possibility for involvement of the Deton'Cho Corporation as an example of the Giant Mine bypass road and other associated projects in the riding? Mahsi.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: As we move forward, I believe there will be partnerships evolve and opportunities that present themselves. Certainly, I think that opportunity does exist. I'd like to say that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 33-17(1):
HOMELESSNESS REPORT BY
MR. NICK FALVO

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Premier and they relate to my statement about homelessness. I'm directing them to the Premier because the recommendations in the Falvo report reference more than one department and it is my belief that homelessness should be dealt with across many departments, not just one.

My first question to the Premier is: The Falvo report has five recommendations, four of them are to, well, not to the Executive, some are to Health and Social Services, there's one to Housing Corp, there is certainly one to the government as a whole. I'd like to know from the Premier what plans he has. What plans does the government have to act on the recommendations in Nick Falvo's report from May of 2011? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Honourable Premier, Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Homelessness is becoming an issue that is starting to be pervasive almost throughout the Northwest Territories. We just recently received the Falvo report. I believe it was only released about two weeks ago. This is an issue that we plan to address. It's not something that there's a silver bullet that we can resolve the problem overnight. As the Member stated, it involves a number of departments. We also have to involve the NGOs. The efforts that have been undertaken here in Yellowknife have resulted in Yellowknife becoming almost a leading player in how to deal with homelessness. I guess the way I see it is we would try to resolve these problems closer to the communities where the homeless people come from.

For the most part, in looking at the five recommendations, we are supportive of the

recommendations and we are going to move forward. We are looking at involving all the departments that are mentioned, to work together to deal with this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. BISARO: I am really pleased to hear him say that this is a pervasive problem, that there's no silver bullet that he's going to involve NGOs. All of those things I agree with. I appreciate the commitment to taking some action. The report, I believe, was released in May of 2011 and maybe the Premier just got it, but it has been out for a little while and it was tabled in the House in August.

The first recommendation in the report is one that has been mentioned quite often by Members of this Assembly – by the previous Assembly, pardon me – and it will be mentioned many more times by this Assembly, I think. It urges the government to establish a homelessness secretariat. I would like to know from the Premier whether or not in their planning that they have done to date, whether the 17th Cabinet has considered consolidating homeless programs into one place and establishing a homelessness secretariat. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess I would like to express our appreciation for the work that has been done by Mr. Nick Falvo and the fact that his research is bringing attention to the issue.

As a government, we have been working on a Shelter Policy review. Our decision on whether to form a homelessness secretariat will be done in conjunction with the recommendations of the Shelter Policy review and our response to those recommendations. By all means, when we complete the Shelter Policy review and it recommends that we have a homelessness secretariat, we would certainly look at doing so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Before we go on, colleagues, I would like to remind the Members on the sidebar chatter to give the Minister and the Members respect in their questioning and their response. Moving on, the honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Premier for his response. I do have to say, though, and I appreciate the work that is being done under the Shelter Policy review. I am eagerly anticipating their results, which I hope are forthcoming soon, but the Shelter Policy review really is only being done by the Housing Corporation, and homelessness, I think the Premier knows, cuts across other areas of our government and our programs and services. I would hope that we don't base our decision on a secretariat, only, on the Shelter Policy review.

Another recommendation within the Falvo report was to develop shelter standards. Mr. Falvo

specifically referenced the Salvation Army, who has men sleeping within five feet of each other and many of them with various and sundry health issues. I would like to know – and I realize this is perhaps better directed towards the Department of Health and Social Services – but, again, as the Premier have their Cabinet discussions, has there been consideration of developing standards for homelessness shelters across the Territories. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I guess I look at the territorial facilities that have been established here in Yellowknife, facilities such as the Bailey House and so on, and also the Betty House that is in the planning stages, and our own homelessness policies that allow us to address the problem on a going forward basis.

As far as standards, I believe that all of those facilities meet those standards. I would be quite prepared to work to have our Health and Social Services and Housing Corporation look at the standards. I think the Salvation Army facility looks like a very fine facility. I guess they don't want to leave anybody out in the cold, so I guess if having standards would mean we would leave people out in the cold, I don't know if that is the intended purpose of having standards. But, certainly, we want to make sure that when we deal with addressing the homelessness situation, we don't cut any corners. If we need standards, then, by all means, we will deal with that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Final, short supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Premier. I think that Mr. Falvo's point was that there are no standards and that they need to be developed. He wasn't just referencing how close men sleep together; he was referencing the fact that there is a security issue. There is one person on duty throughout the night for some 50 men that are sleeping there. There is an issue of a human right and safety in there as well.

I was really pleased to hear the Premier mention that they are looking at these five recommendations. I would like to formally ask the Premier if the government will be providing a formal response to those five recommendations to both me and to the House, and when might we see that. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we will be working with my colleagues. I anticipate that we should be able to respond probably early in the new year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

QUESTION 34-17(1):
MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is dealing with my Member's statement that I gave yesterday in dealing with mental health and addictions. We have had a lot of discussion here today on infrastructure and some new capital projects that are coming to the Northwest Territories. Alongside with that, unfortunately, we do get a lot of health and social issues that do come with these big capital projects.

My question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services and deals with mental health programs and infrastructure. What is the plan to fix the lack of services that we have in some of our communities, especially in our regions, and the lack of human resources to address these mental health concerns? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The intention of the department is to continue with the Community Counselling Program, trying to address some of the wellness services in the community, increase the wellness services in the community, and also reviewing the Mental Health Act. The department is waiting for the release of the national mental health report from the Canadian Mental Health Commission. I will be attending the National Mental Health Summit in Winnipeg in February as a part of the release of that commission report. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I don't think we need a Mental Health Act or see a report to know what is happening in the communities and the neglect that we are having on people who really need the services for these mental health issues. Once again, I would like to ask: Is the Department of Health and Social Services, not only them but there are other departments that are involved in this, how we can work together to address the issue right now?

It is Christmastime. It is a tough time for anybody that is not getting the services they need. I think it is something that needs to be addressed now rather than later, when we have to review some documents to tell us what we already know. I would like to ask the Minister again, is there a plan in place that can identify these situations or offset the lack of services in our communities right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Yes, the intention of the Department of Health and Social Services is to move to prevention. Right now the Department of Health has a small budget in promotion and prevention.

The intention and the direction that I have given the department has been to increase the amount of money we are spending on prevention, and specific to some of the communities where there is a high incidence of addictions and mental health. The plan is to go into the schools to start at the youngest age possible, to work with the kids and so on, and also working with the health professionals at the community level, and move more money into prevention and try to prevent working upstream so that we prevent addictions from affecting the health of the people and mental health people as well. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: I'm glad to hear that the department is taking a proactive approach in education for prevention and awareness. However, right now, as I mentioned earlier in my two questions, we do have a waiting list, especially in Inuvik. The waiting list for anyone to get counselling is about three months and it is something that needs to be done now to address those issues. We will be coming to a new fiscal year in 2012-13. I was wondering if there was anything on the horizon in the fiscal operations O and M budget within the Department of Health and Social Services to offset those issues of our workers right now that are being over-exhausted dealing with counselling. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The intention is to fill the vacancies of the mental health and addiction workers that are currently in place. Right now there are vacancies which are causing the backlog, and the intention is to move some of those people, if necessary, to out-of-territory options in order to get the counseling necessary for the individuals. But a key is to try to fill the vacancies, which we are having some difficulty doing at this time. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: That's all great for the communities that do have vacancies, but like I said, for communities that don't have vacancies and they are already fully staffed, they are getting overload from some of the communities, especially Inuvik. They get referrals into the region and they're getting overworked. Long days and, as a result, like I said, we are getting people that are on the backlog for three months to receive the services.

What's the plan for the communities that do have full staff but are overworked? That needs to be addressed because we're neglecting the people that are needing those services. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The intention is to continue to work with the health and social services authorities. If the Beaufort-Delta has a backlog, then our intention would be to support them from outside the Beaufort-Delta to try to get the backlog dealt with. Again, like I said, we would try to do some out-of-territory counseling, if necessary, and hopefully deal with the backlog. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just one last further question here. The Department of Health and Social Services, there are programs out there with other departments that make it so people have to go through the process, go through the counseling to get assistance; specifically, Housing, ECE and some Justice for rehabilitation. However, some of those people that are going through it don't necessarily take it serious or are making the backlog for the people that really do need it. Is the Minister of Health and Social Services willing to come up with a plan to offset those issues so that the people in the Northwest Territories who really need these programs can get access to them, working with the departments of Housing, ECE and Justice? Is he willing to sit down with them to come up with a strategic plan, an action plan, should I say? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Yes, this department would be prepared to deal with Housing, Education and the Income Support Program, housing programs, public housing programs, so that we can prioritize the counseling needs at the community levels. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 35-17(1): ADDICTIONS TREATMENT

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today I talked about concerns of addiction. Certainly, as we look at the beginning of this new Assembly, there are many people here that would like to see the addictions problems addressed. Although I know the Minister is new to the job, I would like to highlight a comment made in Wednesday's Hansard on December 7th on page 5, in which the Premier says we need to find creative ways to address addictions, mental health, and promote wellness.

That now brings me to the question to the Minister of Health and Social Services. Is the new leader of that department, who will be setting the course for Health and Social Services, what's his intention on addressing the addictions issue in the context of the much needed problems to address detox, whether you're treating alcohol or other drugs such as crack or meth? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Health, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is where I had indicated earlier of working upstream. We're trying to work in the intervention, to try to ensure that addictions that people are facing, and mental health issues that people are facing, that they do not face those issues by us

trying to prevent that from happening. Our intention, again, is to look at increasing our budgets in the area of prevention, hopefully working with children and so on at a young age and also dealing with youth. We think that that type of approach of making the youth and the children aware of the issues and so on, and then as they get older they would be able to avoid the addictions that are apparent now at the community levels and also right across the North. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you. I appreciate the answer from the Minister on prevention and I wholeheartedly agree from the approach of upstream. It's better than being downstream without the paddles. On this particular problem, though, it almost sounds like they've abandoned the people with this particular issue. It's great to provide prevention for those to keep them away from drugs such as crack or meth, and hopefully it will keep them away from alcohol abuse, but the territory really needs a detox centre to focus in on how to address these issues, and in the past they've used Stanton, which is not an appropriate facility. So, my question is more focused on what is the Minister willing to do on today's problem for people suffering from addictions problems? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The department is spending about \$6 million on mental health and addictions. In the city of Yellowknife the department is supporting programs and the Tree of Peace for addictions programs at the Sally Ann, at the John Howard Society. As far as straight detox goes, at this time we have a ward at the hospital, which is not specific to addictions, but does include addictions. Then there's also the Nats'ejee K'eh Centre in Hay River that's there for the treatment of people with addictions. Right now that unit is running at about 50 percent capacity each time they have an intake. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: I appreciate the facilities or the locations the Minister has highlighted, but in fact those are areas that help people to carry the burden of their addictions, but yet it's not a detox or a treatment centre by typical design.

Although the Minister doesn't need to be educated on this particular issue, we know we had an addictions centre downtown that was used for many years, then was closing and then given away. Then they built one on the Detah road and that was closed and now is being used as a training centre. I mean, how many more addictions centres do we have to open and close and still not address the problems?

So, back to the question. We need a detox centre here in the Northwest Territories. Where that is located doesn't really matter to me. Treating the people of the North is the priority, not the location of this particular facility. How will the Minister tackle this particular issue? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Right now the department has some programs in place to address some of the problems. We are enhancing the Aftercare Program for addictions, and the closure of the addictions and detox centre, the closure of some of the treatment centres was something that happened in the past due to capacity, not the capacity of the department but the capacity of the treatment centres. All of the treatment centres at that time were operating with very few clients. The decision was made to roll it up into one centre and try to keep that centre full and operating as efficiently as possible.

At this time, even though we only have one treatment centre in the North, again that treatment centre only operates under 50 percent capacity for intake of clients. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I take exception with the last comment provided by the Minister. We only have one treatment centre, but the problem where I take exception with that is it's not focused on detox or multi-problems when it comes to alcohol or drugs such as crack and meth. My fear, and the fear of many people, is has this government given up on people with addictions. Will this government finally take a clear stance, draw up a plan and build or even lease a detox centre to treat the people of the Northwest Territories who suffer from addictions? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Some of the organizations that I spoke of do deal with the fact that individuals, prior to attending treatment, have to essentially be alcohol or drug free for several weeks prior to attending. There's also a program in the Sally Ann where there's a withdrawal management system. There's a unit there that individuals go, to go through withdrawal. With those programs, the intention is to use individuals that are serious about coming to treatment to deal with their issues, they go there, they remain essentially drug free or alcohol free for a certain period of time before they go for treatment. As far as pure detoxification, yes, there is a centre or a unit in the hospital that can help with that, if individuals need to go for detoxification, that can help. They can also go to the withdrawal management systems at the Sally Ann.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 36-17(1):
COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY
FOR THE CARE OF ELDERS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Minister responsible for Seniors. In our Aboriginal culture and beliefs it is a well-

known fact that we take care of elders. Elders take care of the community, kind of watch over the community so that the community stays within the respect of the land, and the water and the animals. Over the years that role of elders has diminished somewhat. The basic fact is that elders are still being respected; they still need to be looked after. Over the years the policies of the GNWT have removed our elders and now they are in need of help.

I want to ask the Minister responsible for Seniors if he would work with his other colleagues to look at a comprehensive approach or strategy to how we take care of elders and their basic needs in the communities. Would the Minister come back with a plan to look at how our elders should be taken care of in our communities?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Tom Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently, I met with the NWT Seniors' Society. We had a similar discussion. The seniors wished to be more involved with not just their own communities but to be involved with the whole territory. Representatives were there from all the communities. I indicated to them that this government was prepared to work. We are doing some intergovernmental work with the seniors and we are planning on trying to utilize the seniors and get their input as to what services they need at the community level.

MR. YAKELEYA: I spoke to some elders in Tulita, Fort Good Hope and Colville Lake. The elders are afraid. They are afraid of the government's policies because it violates their requirement or criteria to receive help from their family members. They are living alone. Some of them are old, they're ill, they're in their 70s and 80s. They're saying if they have a family member live with them, they're going to get punished because they're not going to be eligible for some programs. That is so wrong. That is so against our culture, and our beliefs and upbringing. That's what I'm asking the Minister.

Would he meet with his colleagues to change some of the requirements, for example, for the fuel subsidy and other subsidies that they are receiving? The government seems to pick on the elders. I want to ask, don't pick on the elders, don't pick on my culture. This is what is needed to help our elders. They have been there for us; we need to be there for them. I want to ask the Minister if he would look at those types of specific policy changes that he could work with the other Ministers and start making changes as soon as possible.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Yes, as the Member responsible for Seniors that is my intention, is to work with the Department of Education on the Seniors Fuel Subsidy Program. Sometimes – the

Member is right – the individuals are living with the elder and supporting the elder, but because the policy indicates that they need to have a Revenue Canada form filled out to determine their income, the individual senior loses the fuel subsidy. Also in public housing, sometimes the seniors who are eligible for no rent in public housing will sometimes end up paying rent when they're getting support from their family.

As the Minister responsible for Seniors, my intention is to have discussions with the Ministers of Housing and ECE and work with them to try to resolve that issue.

MR. YAKELEYA: My colleague from Mackenzie Delta talked about increasing the home care workers in his communities, which I support. I think we also have a solution to help the Minister help this government saying if you can allow family members to live with their elders and take care of them, some of them are fragile – some of my own relatives – allow their family members to take care of them. That's the way my culture has based its foundation on taking care of its elders. If not, they're going to live alone, like somebody said in Colville Lake. There was an old man who died by himself. That put a lot of tears in the people's eyes. That is so shameful. We should not have let that happen. That old man said if I allow somebody to live with me, I will be punished by this government.

For goodness sake, I ask this government to change those policies. Don't work against my elders. Help my elders. I want to ask the Minister what type of policies now that he starts to look at to change these policies, so that I can go back, and anyone can go back to the elders and say your family members can help you, and live with you and stay with you without being looked over by the government. When will you do that?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: As the Member said, there's a requirement for increase in home care, but it's just one area where there could be a decrease if the elders were allowed to have family members. We agree, also, that family members staying with elders do prevent elders from going into long-term facilities, which are very expensive. The alternative I think that this government needs to look at and will be looking at, is to make sure that program policies that prevent elders from getting assistance in their homes because of the risk of losing programs that they should be getting, and subsidies that they should be getting, will be looked at by the three departments mentioned earlier.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister when will his department work with the board that's responsible for the Aven Manor Centre to look at the change of policies where the communities now can bring in traditional

caribou food and moose, traditional meat into that centre. I have five elders or so that are just dying to eat their traditional foods. The policy right now says no, you can't. I know they're willing to help. When can we get that done so I can tell people you can send fish to this long-term care facility? Our people want to eat it right now. They are just dying to eat their traditional food. When can the Minister help me on this one here?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The department is looking at that now. We have already had communications from the Member that this was an issue. We looked into the storage of the food, the country foods and so on. I've asked the department, specifically Health and Social Services, to look into that issue at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. I want to recognize the clock for oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 37-17(1):
TREATMENT OF ADDICTIONS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was a little disappointed by the final answer of the Minister of Health and Social Services and I still don't believe that they're going to tackle the issue. I'm going to ask him in this particular manner regarding the challenges of the detox and addressing those types of issues. What is the Minister willing to do differently this term that has not been done any other term, to move this file forward? I can assure you, addiction problems have not decreased; rather, they have increased in the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As indicated, the Member is referring to addictions. The intention is to move to prevention. That is different. We are tripling the amount of money that is focused in on prevention of addictions. That is different.

MR. HAWKINS: I've made many calls to Health and Social Services and their suggestion, if you have a crack problem or a meth problem, is to go to either the Tree of Peace or Salvation Army or even be sent to Nats'ejee K'eh in Hay River. You have to fail there first, before you can seek treatment in a southern facility that is appropriate to your specific illness to be addressed. I've never found that we've encouraged people to fail the right way before we choose to address their particular issue. Is there going to be a new, updated methodology as to who we deal with people with serious alcohol and drug problems rather than just telling them to go to a program and fail before we address it?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The department is doing a review of the Nats'ejee K'eh Treatment Centre at this time. I'm expecting to be reviewing the report within the next couple of months. In as far as expecting that we have to have people fail at Nats'ejee K'eh before we send them elsewhere, I'm not sure that's a policy of this government. What I do know is that we do have a committee that looks at out-of-territory placements for addiction issues that cannot be addressed at a treatment centre at Nats'ejee K'eh.

MR. HAWKINS: Maybe the Minister could explain to the House how Nats'ejee K'eh treats people who have pill problems, who have crack problems, who have meth problems under the present, or I should say under the current design and focus that Nats'ejee K'eh provides as the only treatment centre in the Northwest Territories.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I don't know the specifics of how Nats'ejee K'eh deals with various addictions. All addictions and all individuals with addictions are pretty independent and very individualistic. Some people who have those issues can be assisted at the treatment centre in Hay River. However, some can't. That's why we have the out-of-territory placement committee and they will review those so that if there are people with addictions, that option is available to them to apply for a treatment facility outside of the Territories, and we have a committee that will look at that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: I'd like the Minister to provide the information, if he would, on how many people have gone to the southern placement of detox centres and how many people have actually applied and been refused to attend. What alternative methods have they been given as a particular recommendation? I would affirm or assert, in this particular case, that more people have been denied appropriate treatment than have received the focus they should have.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I'll have the department put that information together for the Member and provide it.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Item 8, written questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 1-17(1):
MORATORIUM ON EVICTIONS DUE TO
PUBLIC HOUSING ARREARS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

1. How many people in public housing units have been served with eviction notices in the last three years?
2. How many tenants are affected by the recent announcement on the moratorium regarding public housing arrears?
3. Will the Minister provide me with detailed plans, processes and procedures to assist people who have arrears, to start paying their housing debts?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Mr. Lafferty.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 7-17(1):
2010-2011 AURORA COLLEGE
ANNUAL REPORT

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled "2010-2011 Aurora College Annual Report."

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 15, notices of motion. Mr. Yakeleya.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 18-17(1):
SETTING OF EXTENDED SITTING HOURS
BY SPEAKER

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, December 12, 2011, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting days and hours as the Speaker, after consultation, deems fit to assist with the business before the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Mr. Bromley.

Motions

MOTION 16-17(1):
BILL C-10, SAFE STREETS AND
COMMUNITIES ACT,
CARRIED

MR. BROMLEY: I would like to move the following motion.

WHEREAS Bill C-10, Safe Streets and Communities Act, was recently considered by the Parliament of Canada;

AND WHEREAS Bill C-10 will restrict the availability of conditional sentences and impose new mandatory minimum sentences for certain offences;

AND WHEREAS the severity of these measures will lead to fewer guilty pleas and plea bargains, more trials and more appeals, resulting in additional court administration and legal aid costs;

AND WHEREAS these measures will lead to more and longer incarcerations, resulting in additional operational costs to the territorial corrections system and the need for new or expanded correctional facilities;

AND WHEREAS Aboriginal people are already disproportionately represented in our prisons, and mandatory minimums and restrictions on the use of conditional sentences will only worsen this situation;

AND WHEREAS these measures will lead to the incarceration of more youth, who, as a result of being fully immersed in prison culture and isolated from cultural and family support, will be more likely to reoffend;

AND WHEREAS there are well-established links in the Northwest Territories between crime and social issues, including poverty, inadequate housing, addictions, low employment rates, mental health issues and cognitive disabilities such as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and residential school trauma;

AND WHEREAS the 16th Legislative Assembly in August 2011 passed a motion recommending that the Government of the Northwest Territories begin research to examine options and potential benefits for introduction of a mental health court diversion program as an adjunct to the NWT court system;

AND WHEREAS, given these circumstances, diverting funding from measures aimed at rehabilitation and addressing the root causes of crime to measures aimed at punishing offenders will not ultimately make Northwest Territories streets and communities safer;

AND WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories does not have the fiscal capacity to fund the costs of Bill C-10 without diverting funding from other programming aimed at rehabilitation and addressing the root causes of crime in our territory;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that this Legislative Assembly urges the Government of Canada to recognize the special implications that Bill C-10 will have for the Northwest Territories;

AND FURTHER, that this Legislative Assembly urges the Government of Canada to put in place measures to mitigate the costs of Bill C-10 to the Government of the Northwest Territories for additional court time, legal aid services,

incarcerations and corrections infrastructure, and to provide funding for measures to address the root causes of crime;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Government of the Northwest Territories act promptly to design, fund and implement comprehensive programs integrated across relevant departments to prevent and divert offenders that might enter the justice system in order to avoid many of the justice and other costs government and people must bear resulting from the impacts of Bill C-10.

MR. SPEAKER: There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the motion points out, the federal legislation will have an even higher impact on our citizens than elsewhere. The NWT has the highest or nearly the highest incident rates of many minor crimes. Typically, we have worked with these first time offenders and small crime offenders to get them back on track, but now with the two-year minimums, there are serious consequences. Of course, one of the results will be, as mentioned in the motion, the loss of culture, the loss of these young people being embedded in their family and community life where they can develop responsibly and be put back on track, and, of course, they will be associating during long periods of time, with these two-year minimums, with criminals that have much more serious and complicated backgrounds that can again lead them down the wrong path over that two-year period that they are incarcerated.

The expectation of higher not guilty pleas than appeals, of course, will have major and direct costs. We know that, you know, you try to hire a lawyer to participate in GNWT's justice system and it's just about impossible these days. Legal Aid is always struggling to find legal expertise. The potential for soaring costs that will result from this aspect alone has serious potential to overload an already overloaded system.

The more and larger incarcerations have obvious direct costs. Our facilities are already burdened with full capacity and we don't have additional capacity. We know that our fiscal situation is very challenging right now. We don't have the potential or capacity to really put in place more facilities to deal with this burgeoning potential load of convicted offenders resulting from this legislation.

The Aboriginal people in the NWT already make up a disproportionately high number of those in our correctional facilities, in our courts and in contact with our police. Our correctional facilities are already filled beyond capacity. With no infrastructure money in hand, they can't be expanded, and the point is, we don't want to pack the jails as a solution to our social ills.

I also want to point out that this government is doing its part. As we heard from the Minister of Health and Social Services earlier today, there is a good effort – I believe the Minister of Justice has talked about this too – a good effort towards prevention and diversion of people away from the justice system to reduce the burden on the public purse and the toll of damage across society.

This motion calls upon the federal government to recognize the additional costs it will levy upon us, and to work in partnership with us to effectively handle the challenges that will be a consequence of this legislation by providing us with the resources to be able to do that.

In summary right now, I will be supporting this motion and the positive, cooperative approach it proposes. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. To the motion. The Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My comments are somewhat similar to those of my colleague. I feel that this motion is a necessity. As we've heard, Bill C-10 includes new mandatory minimum sentences and it includes tougher sentences, particularly for young offenders, among other changes there. It is expected that it will put more people in jail for longer and it will increase the cost of administering justice at both the provincial, territorial and federal levels. I feel that it will cripple an already overloaded court system. It will increase the number of people that are sent to jail. It will make our prisons more dangerous for both inmates and guards, and it will increase the length of sentences.

I am particularly disturbed with the minimum sentence component because it removes any flexibility on the part of the judge to treat the cause of the crime. It forces them to treat the crime only. As Mr. Bromley stated, I think, earlier, there is no ability to get to the root causes of the crime. That is what we need for our people. There is no opportunity to divert people at the court process from going to jail. A minimum sentence means they have to go to jail. There is no opportunity for us to deal with a person's addiction. If the crime has been perpetrated because of an addiction, there is no opportunity to deal with that.

There is little evidence to support that this approach will show that it has shown to be successful and that it will reduce crime. There is not an opportunity to allow first offenders or people that have committed minor offences to attempt to be rehabilitated or attempt rehabilitation. We are going to have increased pressure on our court resources because there will be more trials in the NWT. We already have fairly stressed court resources, I think. Our government will have to redirect our inadequate resources which are currently going to essential programs and services for all Northerners,

to building and expanding correctional institutions to deal with the higher incidences of people that are having to go to jail.

We have many federal prisoners who are kept in northern institutions so they can be closer to their family and their culture. So that is going to put an even greater strain on our correctional facilities. Our NWT correctional facilities are currently crowded. It means, because we are already crowded, more people means we have to build more facilities. We absolutely cannot afford to build more facilities than what we are already currently considering.

For me, I am really concerned because, at this point, we absolutely have no idea what the cost of this bill is going to add to the cost of this government. It is a large concern. A number of people have spoken out about this. I would like to quote from our NWT Senator Nick Sibbeston who, in the Senate a little while ago, stated: "Institutions that are not focused on substance abuse treatment, rehabilitation and education in a safe environment will increasingly resemble southern prisons where criminals are warehoused in overcrowded conditions, and where violence and danger are a way of life for both inmates and staff."

Aboriginal people are already overrepresented in correctional facilities, both throughout Canada and here in the North. In Canada, Aboriginal people represent 4 percent of our population, but they represent 20 percent of our correctional facility population. In the NWT, again I would like to quote from Mr. Sibbeston: "It is well known that Aboriginal people are badly overrepresented in our prisons in the Northwest Territories. In 2008 and 2009 they represented 88 percent of the jail population. Mandatory minimums and the restrictions on the use of conditional sentences will only make this worse."

I would like to also quote from the Ottawa Citizen in mid-November: "I can definitely say that the root of the crime in this city is not evil people we need to lock up, it is people with addictions, and history of abuse and mental problems who need treatment. These issues are not going to be cured with incarceration." This was said by Stephen Mansell, the president of the Nunavut chapter of the Canadian Bar Association. He is a member, as well, of the Iqaluit City Council and he was talking about his own home community, Iqaluit.

I agree with the Government of Canada that we need to get tough on crime for serious crimes and for serious offenders and repeat offenders. Particularly, in my mind, drug offences and sex-based crimes are particularly important that we come down hard on people who commit these crimes, but I don't feel that we should be bearing down hard on first offenders and people who are doing things like a 16-year-old who gets caught with a marijuana joint.

I would like to quote once more from the Winnipeg Free Press in early December: "The federal government is not only ignoring the Supreme Court of Canada in its own research but is ignoring what all Canadians know: that poverty, lack of housing and clean water, and education and training, and the fallout from residential schools all contribute to crime within Aboriginal communities. Instead of putting money into improving living conditions and rehabilitation programs, the government appears content to make jails the residential schools of the 21st Century."

The whereases in this motion say it all for me. The operative clauses are a plea to the Government of Canada, in my mind, to recognize the NWT's unique situation, to recognize the implications that Bill C-10 will have on the NWT, and it is a plea to the Government of Canada to help us with the implementation of Bill C-10. It is a fact. It is going to be coming, but we need assistance.

I urge all Members to support this motion. We need the assistance of the Government of Canada to help us mitigate these costs. I urge the Government of the Northwest Territories to listen to the last clause and put comprehensive programs in place to deal with root causes of crime. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I will allow the seconder of the motion to speak on the motion. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the mover, the Member from Yellowknife, Ms. Bisaro, talking about the importance of the federal government here in the Northwest Territories on the impact of this crime bill in the Northwest Territories and the realities that it will have on us in the North here.

Looking at this crime bill, the scary part is that the bottom line is that it means people who offend will have longer times in correctional institutions and more people will stay in there. Little will be done to educate them, work with them on rehabilitation into society. It is taking them away from their culture. It means that is going to be harder for the youth and it means that nothing much is going to happen in our communities. This government here will possibly be left to look after the children. Do we build more houses or health centres, or nurses or doctors, or do we really have to build these facilities to house our people? It speaks to a bill that doesn't look at the realities of the Northwest Territories.

Shame on the federal government for doing stuff like this. Is this the one way for us to look at in our communities to the devolution deal where they say, well, if you sign the devolution deal, you should deal with the impacts of Bill C-10?

We need more money coming to the Northwest Territories, but then, because we have a legal

obligation, it doesn't mean that now we have to build more correctional institutions.

I don't know. This bill is not very good. I hope the Minister can work with his colleagues to convince the federal Minister to say we need to look at other alternatives to this crime bill. It is not going to work in the Northwest Territories and it is not going to work in the future. We need to make some changes. The residential school days are over. You cannot take the people again in a legal process away from their culture, and from their families and their teaching. Those days of punishment are over. Some people will continue to be in this system and they will stay in the system, as much as we try and work with them. There are other ones that could make it out. We need to work with the young ones. That is the reality.

This bill here needs to be looked at. I hope the Minister will take this to the federal Minister and talk about the hard impacts it is going to have on my people. I fully support this legislation. I ask the federal government, just because you have the mandate, you have the votes in the Senate, you have the votes in Parliament. It doesn't mean you need to ram this bill here that is going to have severe impacts in the Northwest Territories.

I ask Members and I ask the Minister, along with his Cabinet colleagues, to really look at this bill and the impacts. I am really afraid that if it is coming down to not following this or not building schools or more houses or other facilities, that we are going to make some tough choices. We have to follow the federal legislation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. To the motion. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to support my colleagues in this particular motion. I understand very well, and in some respects I acknowledge the need for a conservative agenda where it is a law and order type of government.

There are issues of crime that need to be tackled, and tackled harder, but it's very difficult out there who believes on a typical process, everyday process, that more jail time, longer jail time really solves the root causes of crime. Very few people would argue that particular situation.

I agree with colleagues that have said serious crime needs to be addressed differently and perhaps even longer or in a harsher sense. That probably does make sense. I'm not a believer that bigger jails, tougher jails solve the crime problem.

As I highlighted in my questions today, addiction is a real problem. That is a solution right there. If the government refocused its efforts on tackling the root of crime rather than punishing people at the end of the process, we would be doing a true service in a Canadian fashion. One with heart, one with empathy, rather than, as I said, in a punishing

sense and the law and order type of government we have in Ottawa now.

Probably what's becoming apparent is I clearly don't agree with the approach taken by the federal government. In this particular case we see yet another colonial example, where they are going to offload a direction and probably quite a financial burden on all provinces and territories across this land. I could be mistaken, but I have not heard how this government, be it territorial or any other provincial government, is going to pay for this particular program.

So it's like coming up with a new solution, a new format with no plan on how to implement it other than the fact that we are coming up with stiffer fines, longer jail times, we are going to put more people in jail and we are going to figure it out as we go along.

I have yet to hear – and if there's only one, I still say I have yet to hear – but I haven't really heard a lot of people in favour of this from a provincial government point of view or a territorial government point of view. Who is the loud majority on this particular issue that says we need more jails, and longer jail sentences and more punishment?

I think this sets us back away from the type of people we want to be. We want to be a very humane type of people and I think this sets humanity back, in a Canadian context.

I think this government needs to draw a line in the sand, whether we do it nervously or with some courage and confidence, but this government needs to draw a line in the sand with some courage to say we will refuse to pay these extra costs unless the federal government supports us in these particular efforts, because these are not costs directed by our own choices. These are costs directed to us. This is not developed here for the people of the Northwest Territories by the people of the Northwest Territories. It's being told to us in a prescriptive sense, you will now do this, you will now punish people harder and I don't think that's right. I don't think that that's the solution.

I just want to tie it together and finish off by saying this: Many amendments have come forward to make alternative solutions through an amendment process as options to this bill, but they were all refused. The question is: Are they leading with a future in mind or are they leading with the fact of a lot of unknowns? Canada is barely keeping itself up, due to good prudent management that we've had for decades. It's keeping us off the cusp of falling into a recession, which many countries find themselves going towards.

By burdening provinces and territories with a huge amount of costs that are still so unknown, this is not good fiscal management for the Canadian books, for the Canadian taxpayer, for the territorial

taxpayers. So I would urge caution to the federal government that if they do proceed on this particular process, they have to come up with a plan to pay for it. I consider it clearly and definitely unfair that the territorial taxpayer could be on the hook for this federal initiative that we do not want. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. Minister of Justice, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We understand the sentiment of this motion. The department itself has expressed some concerns with Bill C-10 and the cost that will be downloaded to the Government of the Northwest Territories once Bill C-10 becomes a reality. To that end I have set up a meeting with the federal Minister of Justice for this Monday. I'm going to be bringing forward the concerns of the department and the Legislature at that meeting and we will be working to try and find some opportunities to mitigate some of these costs here in the Northwest Territories. In addition, I will be meeting with committee later today to discuss these potential implications of Bill C-10 so that I can take that information with me, as well, when I meet with the Minister on Monday. However, given Cabinet convention and that there is a specific request of the Government of the Northwest Territories on this motion, we will be abstaining. I and my Cabinet colleagues will be abstaining from the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. I will give a final, short supplementary to the mover of the motion. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This new legislation removes flexibility for how best to deal with an offender. They all essentially become the same under the new law, especially new offenders and young offenders. It brings additional costs that detract from our resources and capacity to deal with the more fundamental need of supporting our people towards a healthy lifestyle that helps divert offenders from the costly justice system.

This new legislation will exacerbate the already overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in our correctional facilities. It will lead to burgeoning costs in many ways, as detailed by my colleagues. This legislation presents us with some realities that need to be faced, however. Support from the Government of Canada will help us meet these realities.

We are clearly committed to doing our part on the prevention and diversion in track. We need a partnership on meeting the impacts of this legislation on the people and Government of the Northwest Territories.

Some of us disagree with Bill C-10 but we recognize the realities of its impending

implementation. Let's support our Minister as he heads to Ottawa in seeking cooperative work to deal with the new costs of Bill C-10.

I would like to request a recorded vote.

RECORDED VOTE

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The Member is seeking a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Bromley, Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Dolynny, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Moses.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining from the vote, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. McLeod – Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. McLeod – Yellowknife South, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. SPEAKER: Results of the vote: all those for, seven; opposed, zero; abstentions, six.

---Carried

Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 2-17(1), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates 2012-2013, with Ms. Bisaro in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): I call Committee of the Whole to order. We have one item before us, Tabled Document 2-17(1). What is the wish of committee? Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. It is the wish of the committee to continue with Tabled Document 2-17(1), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates 2012-2013. We'd like to commence with the departments of Human Resources and Justice and, if time permits, MACA.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you very much. With that, we'll take a short break and reconvene. Sorry. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Okay. We will have a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Alright, committee. We will reconvene Committee of the Whole. We have agreed to start with the Department of Human Resources and Tabled Document 2-17(1). I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Human Resources if he has any witnesses. Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Yes, I do, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you. Does committee agree that we bring in the witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Sergeant-at-Arms, please bring in the witnesses.

Thank you. Minister Abernethy, would you introduce your witnesses, please.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. On my right is Ms. Sheila Bassi-Kellett, the deputy minister of Human Resources; and on my left is Michelle Beard, who is the director of strategy and policy. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Minister. I would like to now open the floor to general comments on the Department of Human Resources. Are there any general comments on the Department of Human Resources? Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to ask the Minister, in the proposed infrastructure for this purpose, the department now is going into an electronic era of doing their business and they are going to be shortly going through phasing out the existing manuals or manual for the government department. Just like us in the Legislative Assembly, we have these iPads now, not so many of these big 4 or 5 inch binders.

I want to ask the Minister just for a very backup to the security. You know, sometimes our satellite system, our electronic system is not as reliable as we hope it would be. You know, there's always a chance that sometimes things go down and information gets lost or there are organizations or people out there that love to explore systems and that. I just want to ask very quickly if he can give me a brief response to the security of what we're doing here with the infrastructure that's being planned for this department to improve the efficiencies with the staff to do their business. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. With respect to the digital aspects of our GNWT human resource systems, we have been moving in that way for some time. We have PeopleSoft, which is our main human resource management system, and we, in the last couple of years, have added some additional modules to that. One of them was eRecruit, which is now used for all staffing actions in the Northwest Territories and has proven to be quite effective.

In this capital plan what we're proposing is putting in our ePerformance module into PeopleSoft, and it's kind of the perfect time to do it, because we are updating PeopleSoft in '12-13 and it fits as sort of

the perfect time to bring in ePerformance as well. We'll have the staff on site to do the upgrade of the PeopleSoft and they'll be able to do the ePerformance as well.

ePerformance is kind of an interesting module. Right now all our performance management is done by paper. It's all tracked on paper and it's really hard when you've got as many departments as we do and as many staff, to ensure that we're getting the performance appraisals in on a regular basis and tracking them. This ePerformance module will give us that capacity to provide greater statistics, greater monitoring and greater use, which will benefit our employees in the long run.

You also mentioned manuals. We're not getting rid of manuals. We're still going to have policies and procedures that we have to follow and utilize in the Government of the Northwest Territories. We may print less copies. We'll be able to display more of them on-line than we currently do. All of them we'll be able to put on-line, so we'll probably get away with a little less paper, which I think is good for the environment, good for the department and good for the people.

With respect to reliability and data security, I'll pass that on to Ms. Bassi-Kellett to provide you a little bit of information on the reliability and security that we do employ within the department on our data.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Ms. Bassi-Kellett.

MS. BASSI-KELLETT: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Certainly, the Department of Human Resources works very closely with the office of the chief security officer within the Department of Finance that looks at governing the access and the limitations to access that are required for security purposes. It's very important for us to make sure that all of the security processes are built in. We take very, very important care of that function, given the sensitivity of the information that the Department of Human Resources deals with. We make sure that information is encrypted, it's backed up, it's securely managed, and we do that in collaboration with the office of the chief security officer. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Ms. Bassi-Kellett. Is committee ready to go to detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Alright, committee. If we would turn to page 2-2. The infrastructure investment summary page. We will defer this page until we have considered the whole department. Does committee agree that we will defer this page?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): We'll turn to page 2-4, Human Resources, activity summary, human resource strategy and policy, infrastructure

investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, \$300,000. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Madam Chair, I see the numbers are quite substantially reduced to the actuals in the main estimates in 2011, 2012, 2013. Is this the final asking of this department on this specific initiative? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. The previous year's estimates, I understand, are for the shift scheduling software that we put in previously. That was an item that we worked on in '11-12. The '12-13 item of \$300,000 is specifically for ePerformance and there will be \$300,000 next year as well.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Minister, for the explanation. With some of these future expenditures, are the regions also being upgraded in their computer capacity to be in line with the ePerformance or eRecruitment? I think that's pretty well, but a lot of the communities also do not, and I appreciate the sensitivity. A lot of our communities also of Members do not use their computers or operate on their computers. Sometimes, for some odd reason, they still prefer the good old post a notice on a billboard and read it from there. But sometimes this hasn't always been the case here. I just want to ask the Minister to ensure my residents in the Sahtu are aware of some of the challenges that they come into. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: This is part of a corporate IT system. PeopleSoft runs across the entire Government of the Northwest Territories to all communities. All employees enter their time in the Northwest Territories and utilize the system, so wherever the system is available now, ePerformance will be able to be used. As far as increasing capacity, that's something that we're always trying to work with our Public Works and Services colleagues to make sure that we have the bandwidth and the IT IS/IM resources we need to continue to run systems of this nature in all communities.

MR. YAKELEYA: I have one more question, Madam Chair. Because of the technology we are entering into and the support, I hope, and a larger, bigger picture from the federal government, are we receiving any type of federal funding to help us with this change to the electronic era of doing business within government? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We haven't received any federal money to help us with our internal human resource management system, no. We haven't received any money federally to help us with our human resource management system. It's an internal system to the Government of the

Northwest Territories and we fund it with GNWT dollars.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you. Anything further from Members? Any questions on this page, 2-4? Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to follow up a little bit on the questions about the ePerformance module that will replace the existing manual performance evaluation process with an expectation of efficiencies. I know that there are concerns about performance appraisals and, certainly many of us have spent time in government and know that the frequency of appraisals and so on were not very reliable, that the results of the appraisals didn't follow through to appropriate action and, you know, whether good or bad, appropriate action or recognition and so on. I just can't help but wonder if we're relying more and more on expensive software where it is really a people issue. PeopleSoft takes away from people.

Can the Minister tell me what we are doing to ensure that people are dealing directly with people, and that there is a real human approach and solution to dealing with those issues? I just can't imagine how an automated process and performance evaluation is in any way a benefit, except if it is a voice recording that can capture what you are saying and your discussions with your employee. What can the Minister tell me to explain why we are going to this automated route when what we need are people dealing with people? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. An ePerformance module is a tool that an employee and an employer can use when they are assessing the performance. This in no way, shape or form should take away from two people talking about progresses, and steps they can take to improve performance and start talking about where they want to go in the future by way of succession. But it does give us a way to formalize them in a standard document that we can use and track over time and compare to each other over time.

When we are talking about a paper system, often it was hard to track these over time to ensure that there was consistency. This system will also give us some indication as to how many are being done and how often, so that we can, as managers in the departments, go out and encourage their staff to actually complete these with their supervisors. For more of the specifics I will pass it to my deputy, Ms. Bassi-Kellett.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Ms. Bassi-Kellett.

MS. BASSI-KELLETT: Thank you, Madam Chair. As the Minister has pointed out, effective

performance management does integrate a number of different things. It is people talking with people, absolutely. Effective management is supported by tools like performance management tools such as this one. We really know that in doing an effective performance management system, we really need to integrate individual work planning and goal setting to make sure it aligns and supports corporate goals of the department and the Assembly overall. We look at performance objectives as well as the ability to recognize excellent work that is done by many members of the public service and also to identify developmental needs and opportunities should they arise as well.

ePerformance is a tool that will help us to standardize a lot of this, to give the guidance to managers as they are working with their staff to be able to look at this. It provides a template that does have flexibility for managers to be able to build in some of the unique needs that they may have in managing their staff, but also does provide for that standardization and for the greater efficiency that will come from having this on line. In turn, the Department of Human Resources is able to track and analyze a lot of the information that comes in, to ensure that we are aligning the supports that are in place for members of the public service with a lot of the needs that are out there, whether or not they are developmental training needs or others. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Ms. Bassi-Kellett. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Madam Chair, I appreciate that is a good description of the system, but the key weaknesses have been identified. It doesn't seem to deal with the frequency of the performance reviews. Once reviews are complete, they are not given the attention they deserve and a strong performance is unrecognized. Those need to be dealt with.

Again, it is no surprise in the House that I am becoming increasingly skeptical of our huge investments in software, especially when we need people jobs and we are continually bringing efficiencies that supposedly reduce personnel costs here. What will this bring us over and above a good word processing program and a bring forward system that any individual could set up? I use, and I'm sure we all use, some form of that. Thank you.

MS. BASSI-KELLETT: What this system does is it is a module of ePerformance that builds on the current system that GNWT employees and members of the public service are very familiar with now, which is the PeopleSoft system. It enhances and builds onto that practice that people have currently a good, sound knowledge of.

The support for managers in doing and completing meaningful performance appraisals is something

that we continue to support, that we continue to always seek to improve. There is a lot of great work that is done right now in recognizing and tracking the positive work of staff by managers, and certainly staff see these as being important developmental opportunities as well. We want to continue to enhance the way staff see those.

There are a number of different things that are a complement through the ePerformance to the existing PeopleSoft system right now. We know there will be reduced paper use. We know there will be better and much more informed tracking of the documents as they flow through the system. We want clarity around that. We don't want duplication of performance appraisals being held, for example, in a file in a manager's office, in a program department office as well as in Human Resources. We are able to streamline the way that that information is held, maintained and utilized so that we will be able to build on it, then to look at compiling this information factually so that we can do the analysis to look at where our needs are in the future for the development of members of the public service. Thank you, Madam Chair.

MR. BROMLEY: Madam Chair, I have no further questions. I would just ask the Minister to be alert to possibilities for some common sense approach that will avoid these high IT costs that the government seems to be generating. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Any further comments or questions on Human Resources? Human Resources, activity summary, human resource strategy and policy, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, \$300,000. Are we agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you. Committee, we will turn to page 2-2. Human Resources, department summary, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, \$300,000. Does committee agree we have concluded consideration of the Department of Human Resources?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, committee. I would ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses out of the Chamber, please.

Committee, we will move on to Department of Justice, page 7-2, section 7 in your document. Does committee agree we will start the Department of Justice?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Okay. Does the Minister have any witnesses he wishes to bring into the House?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Yes, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Does committee agree to bring the witnesses into the House?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Minister Abernethy, would you please introduce your witnesses for us.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. With me today are Bronwyn Watters on my left, the deputy minister of Justice; and on my right, Kim Schofield, who is the director of finance.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Welcome to the witnesses. Committee, we are on page 7-2, Justice, department summary, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, \$702,000. We will defer this summary until we have completed the department. We will now move to page 7-4. Justice, activity summary, services to government, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, zero. We will move on to page 7-6. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I missed the general comments part there, but if I may, I am concerned and I think it has been well established in the past that there is some urgent need to deal with the women's correctional centres and we have some serious catch-up to do there. There is some serious crowding in existing facilities, very serious. I'm just wondering what the thinking on that is. I would have thought that would have been a priority. I realize we're in a very strapped situation this time around and decisions are being made, but I'm wondering why it's not here and where it sits, what the plan is. That's it for now.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. My apologies for omitting opening comments. Mr. Abernethy, did you wish to respond?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. As a Regular Member in the 16th Assembly I had an opportunity to tour the female facility and also participate in a number of briefings on what the government needed to do with respect to the female facility in Fort Smith. It's certainly something that's a priority for the department. We need to get it done. It's already gone through the design phase. We're pretty much ready to go. It's a financial issue. As the Minister of Finance has continually said, we're strapped for cash right now. Until we have some free room, we have to keep trying to get it onto the books and we will keep doing that as a department. We need to get it done.

MR. BROMLEY: Just to follow up, have we done any planning? Do we know what we want to build?

Do we have land lined up? Where are we? How fast can we move once we do get the resources to be able to put in an actual facility?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: A planning study has been completed for the proposed territorial women and girls correctional centre in Fort Smith. Land has been selected and I think we're close. We need money. Basically the plan is done, and the land is selected and we're working with the department now to find out how to get it done, get the facility built.

MR. BROMLEY: I'm wondering if we have a design for the facility, if we've actually got that. I want to introduce my last one as the Arctic Tern Facility and our youth facility generally. I'm wondering what the plans are. Is there a budget to deal with that situation this year, that facility? Are we going to get rid of it or tear it down? What's happening with Arctic Tern and what are we doing with our youth offenders in terms of current and long-term planning?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: With respect to the future facility in Fort Smith, the planning study has been done, and it includes a needs analysis and operational plan, a facility program and a schematic design. We've already got that done. A rough cost-estimate of Class C. So we're ready to go. When some money identifies, we'll be standing in the line, asking for those dollars for that facility.

With respect to the Arctic Tern facility in Inuvik, a report came out in the 16th Assembly about the facility and how it's not suitable as a corrections facility due to security concerns, doors being able to shut and whatnot. The result of that is the facility has been surplused out of the Department of Justice. It is now a Public Works and Services asset and they will dispose of it accordingly. Most recent reports say the foundation is still an issue, the doors still don't close and whatnot to meet the standards of a secure correctional facility. That has been given to Public Works and Services.

MR. BROMLEY: And the people? The young offenders? Have we got a situation figured out for how we're going to house them? Are we in a holding pattern right now? Are we planning a more permanent facility or program for them?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: As per the briefings in the 16th Assembly, we've moved the youth female offenders to the North Slave Young Offenders Facility. Currently, there's only one in there, at the North Slave Young Offenders Facility. One female; sorry. With respect to the future facility in Fort Smith, it will be for both women and female youth.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Are there any other opening comments for the Department of Justice? Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. One particular issue is the investment in the Fort Smith

program. I don't say this in the context of I don't think the program shouldn't be expanded or better accommodated. I'm just wondering about the timing of this particular investment with regard to, obviously, the recent passage of Bill C-10. Shouldn't the department be looking more towards a longer strategy, rather than trying to fix things for the short term? It would make sense, in my view, that the future programming, which is a significant unknown right now, should be addressed first.

I guess the question to the Minister would be: Why wouldn't the department pause at this second to re-evaluate its plan and see how to accommodate properly for the future? I hate to see money being spent on a useless program that is not needed in about a year or two years, so we've wasted the money. That's the type of evaluation and consideration I'm asking for.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to go to Ms. Bronwyn Watters for some of that answer. To start off with, the planning that is being done for the facility in Fort Smith, the women's facility does include a significantly larger capacity to deal with future trends that have been predicted within the department. I'll go to Ms. Bronwyn Watters for a more comprehensive answer.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Ms. Watters.

MS. WATTERS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, the planning for the proposed female correctional centre includes long-term planning that is intended to serve long term, looking at the potential for an increased number of women and girls in custody, which of course is very likely with the new bill. So we are looking at that.

Our current arrangement with the girls at the North Slave Youth Centre is only temporary. It is good for now. It is fine for now. We have additional staff that were transferred down from Arctic Tern to look after the girls separately, but should the facility become full, then it would obviously create more difficulties. The plan for the new female facility in Fort Smith is intended to meet long-term needs.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Ms. Watters. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. On a separate issue, I think I heard the Minister say that there was one female inmate at this particular time within the custody services under the GNWT. Does the department have an estimate as to what one inmate costs the system in the context of full costing? At the same time I'd like to know to what Nunavut would pay the Northwest Territories for us to house one inmate in our facility. If I could get that breakdown between the two numbers.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. We have one female youth in custody in the North at the youth facility here in Yellowknife. We have 11 female adults in custody as well. With respect to the cost for Nunavut to house somebody in one of our facilities, I'm going to go to Ms. Watters for that.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Ms. Watters.

MS. WATTERS: Thank you, Madam Chair. We certainly have the invitation to Nunavut to send their female offenders. To date we do receive a few female adult offenders. We tend to receive many more men. Our current count from Nunavut is 16 men who were sentenced and nine men in remand; a total of 25 adult males from Nunavut in custody. We do not currently have any youth from Nunavut. This has been a fairly typical pattern. We do not receive a lot of youth. They don't have the need to send their youth out.

I don't know whether that addresses the Member's question or if you want further information.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Ms. Watters. I think the question was: What would it cost for us to send somebody to Nunavut to be housed? Ms. Watters. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would maybe appreciate if I could probably take a second stab at it, rather than interpretation. I'd like to know the cost Nunavut would pay us to house one inmate. If they want to provide that, I'd like to start with that particular fee.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Ms. Watters.

MS. WATTERS: Thank you, Madam Chair. The cost for housing a Nunavut offender or the amount that we receive is \$266.74 per day.

MR. HAWKINS: Now, on that note, when we house one offender in a particular facility, what would it cost per day to house that particular offender per day in our facility? In other words, we would have to have security, somebody at the gate, somebody at the door, somebody to cook, somebody to clean. We would have to have the full costing of that particular facility, because we can't run them empty. That said, would the department be able to provide that detail?

MS. WATTERS: The costs that we charge Nunavut are actually based on actual costs. It's important, though, to realize that the cost that I just gave you is an average. There is certainly very much variation between facilities, because the larger facilities with the greater capacity have greater economies of scale, so the cost is lower. The average is as I gave you and that is calculated based on what it really costs us to house an inmate.

So, effectively, a charge to Nunavut is simply cost recovery.

MR. HAWKINS: I'm sure with...Yeah. Okay. What I'm getting at is housing one inmate, even if I take your fee of \$266 per day as just a rough estimate, even if I round it up to \$300 per day, we're still talking about the cost of about \$120,000 a year to run a facility for that specific person on the basis of what they bring in for cost. Now, I ask you what is the cost to run that facility when we have to staff it. In other words, are the costs coming in justifying the expense to keep the doors open? I wonder, if we're keeping the facility open for one person, would it not make economic sense to transfer this person to a southern facility rather than to keep the full facility open for one person.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. The question that was asked earlier was how many youth female offenders we have in custody. We have one. That female offender is at the youth facility here in Yellowknife which also contains male youth. So there isn't one person in that facility; there are a larger number of individuals. There are seven individuals in that facility here in Yellowknife, not one. I'm not sure if that clarity changes the question.

MR. HAWKINS: It does in this particular case, not realizing they were in a mixed situation. Then it would go to the point of does the department provide an evaluation of where becomes the breakeven point where we choose to house our own inmates at a significant cost or can we consider sending them to another particular facility, if need be, outside the territory and we pay that direct cost. In some cases it may be cheaper for us to pay – by way of a simple example, if I may – \$120,000 to house an inmate in Alberta where it costs us \$3 million to keep the facility open for that one inmate per year. The point is, what type of cost-benefit analysis do you do and how do you identify our breakeven point?

Having a jail in a community, be it Yellowknife or any other smaller community, yes, recognizes economic development, it keeps people employed, it provides services, it draws in business, et cetera, but when our ship has to be running on tight margins, does no one ever consider value for money? As I pointed out, there will be a breakeven point where we say to ourselves it's more efficient to run it in this particular manner.

I don't need to remind the House at length, obviously, about Arctic Tern, about the efficiencies of how that facility was run and built under the circumstances when the federal act was changed, but yet it was rammed through many Assemblies ago that that facility was needed even though the act changed and then it was out of date by the time

it was built. I just wonder is that analysis taking place. We could be spending money more efficiently and more appropriately, although this is the Justice department not the Health department. I mean, we could be diverting money appropriately to prevention. You know, when somebody says where's the money coming from. You know, here are examples of gaps that should be taken into consideration. To the point, and certainly the question: Does the department do a cost-benefit analysis on these types of matters, and if they do, will they be willing to provide it to Members? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We haven't done necessarily a cost-benefit analysis, but the department has a mandate to keep its offenders in the Northwest Territories close to their homes and close to their family, close to their culture where their family can get to them and visit them. There are other things that we have to factor in, as well, as in will other jurisdictions take our offenders.

Most jurisdictions are faced with exactly the same challenges we're faced with, which is overcrowding. For us to try to go to other jurisdictions and stick some of our offenders there can prove to be quite complicated. But the main reason we haven't done the cost-benefit analysis like the Member is talking about is our mandate, is let's keep our Northerners close to home; let's keep them in programs that are culturally relevant; let's keep them in programs that are specific to the Northwest Territories geared for residents of the Northwest Territories. Those are important aspects of our mandate and we want to maintain that, recognizing, as well, like I said earlier, will other facilities in other jurisdictions be willing to even take our people when they've got the same issues we do, which is overcrowding.

The facilities that we have, the youth facility here in Yellowknife has greater capacity than we currently are utilizing, and if Bill C-10 comes, we imagine that some of those spots will disappear, so that facility will likely be used to a greater extent, which is another motivation for building the facility in Fort Smith, which is to help us get the youth female offenders out of our facility here in Yellowknife and back to Fort Smith.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Next on my list is Mr. Dolyunny.

MR. DOLYUNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. My question is obviously for the delegation here for Justice here, to maybe give some clarity to some of the expenses regarding to IT here. More specifically, from what I see here and have done some research and have been provided, we have I believe it was called a courts information system and an offender management system. One of the notes of question, I notice that I'm not sure if any of these are being hosted within our TSC

environment, and if so, why, and is it done cheaper outside that environment?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm not actually sure I understand the question 100 percent. We do have internal systems in the Government of the Northwest Territories within the Department of Justice both in courts and corrections and we do maintain those programs in house. Those programs are getting quite old and we are going to need to look at upgrading those programs shortly. But I'm not sure I fully understood your question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Mr. Dolynny, I'm not quite sure where you are. We're on general comments, so if you're on a specific page, if you could wait until we get to the specific page. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Sorry, Madam Chair. I couldn't hear that. To clarify my question here for just opening comments here, is the in-house cost of doing IT services more cost effective than doing it in a TSC environment?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. For many of the IT programs that are being supported within the GNWT, we are part of the IT whole system, supported by the TSC, our general, sort of, normal programs. The programs where we're not supported by them in the same way would be our courts program and our correction programs. Those are specific, similar to many programs that exist in Education and similar to many programs that exist in Health and Social Services that are administered by the department. We do the same with our court program and our corrections program.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would ask the Department of Justice if there is any reason why they wouldn't create a cost-benefit analysis to ask themselves where they're getting good value for money when considering balancing the costs of carrying offenders and the costs of findings alternative options. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Madam Chair, over the last four years I've heard many Members in this House talk about the programming that they'd like to see in corrections facilities and they talked a lot about culturally specific programs. To consider moving inmates outside of the Northwest Territories

means that those inmates will not have culturally relevant programming.

I believe the mandate of this department is a good mandate and keeping our offenders in the North to benefit from our programs, including our cultural programs, is the way to go. I'm not sure that there would be much support for actually sending our inmates south when they're not federal inmates. They're territorial inmates with sentences of two years less a day. It would require a mandate change on the department to consider housing our inmates in the South.

MR. HAWKINS: Well, I'll ask it this way: Is there anything to prohibit the Department of Justice from providing an alternative solution such as a southern institution if it was seen as that was considered a relevant option to send an inmate to? Is there anything to prohibit that? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: There's nothing to prohibit, but it would cost money to do that analysis and I think our money could be better spent on programming for the residents of the Northwest Territories and the facilities that we do have.

MR. HAWKINS: Okay. Then on one hand you'll say that it's better to have local programming even though it may be a lot of money, but we don't know this for sure, of course. Yet, on the other hand, you'd say we'd like to see our money spent specifically to help people. I mean, quite often I've heard calls for on-the-land programs, but yet the first answer is we don't have any money. What I'm asking for is what harm has it done to do an analysis to ask ourselves the cost of running – and I'm talking about the smaller type of facilities where we only have a couple of inmates potentially, be it now or certainly in the short term – to ask ourselves the question, which is why would we allow a facility to run in a manner that we're not spending our money efficiently. I mean, many times I've heard my colleague from the Sahtu say, look, all we need is a couple hundred thousand dollars. We can put a camp in some community. We can get people out on the land. He talks about a better way that they could connect with both their culture, their spirit, get away from some of the troubles and refocus in on the important values of life. I couldn't agree with him more. But yet, every year, time after time the answer always is we do not have any money. We like your concept but never have any money.

Here I'm providing an option and providing a suggestion that an analysis could ask ourselves are we running our facilities efficiently. On one hand, we'll hear, well, we have a mandate but there's no, you know, culture programs. It's like you're using that as the wedge item. There are a lot of things to consider and I recognize that. I think that a cost-benefit analysis would ask ourselves what makes sense. When we have one colleague will say this is a better way to connect with our constituents in a

culture-based way, you know, you can't use it against us one day and then use it for us the next. I'm asking what would stop the department from asking themselves, through a cost-benefit analysis how do we evaluate good use of money. We often heard from this Member many times on this side of the House about efficient use of money. Has that changed now that he's a Minister? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The Member must not be aware of some of the programming that we do offer, and we do offer a number of on-the-land programs. There's a program in Fort Good Hope that we utilize to place inmates over the last couple of years and there are other programs that we utilize as well.

As far as changing my stripes, I don't believe that's the case. I am still interested in prudently managing finances in a responsible way and that's what we're talking about here. We know we've got facilities where the count goes up and down. We've got high count, we've got low count. Mostly we've got high count. Most of our facilities are full to capacity, often overcapacity. We've got a youth facility that has one female offender in it, but it's got a number of male offenders in it and that number changes in our youth facility on a fairly regular basis. In fact, our count changes daily.

Spending money to do a cost analysis as to whether or not sending some of our inmates south doesn't seem like a prudent use of our money here in the Northwest Territories. I would rather spend that money on more of our community programming. I would rather spend the money on some of the lands programming than do a cost analysis about sending somebody south. If we were to send, say, our one female offender south when we do have a place to put her here, she would not benefit from the programming that is designed for Northerners that the male offenders in the same facility have access to. So we would be actually doing that person a disadvantage.

I think our mandate is a good mandate for supporting Northerners in our northern facilities. I am not particularly interested at this time spending a whole lot of money to do a cost-benefit analysis as to whether or not sending our people south is in the best interest of the people, the department or our bank account.

MR. HAWKINS: I appreciate the Minister's platitudes about trying to be heroic on a territorial level. I am sorry. Can someone give him a flag of the territory? On one hand he is interested in spending money in a prudent way, but there is no way of saying that we are. Why would we keep a facility open for one inmate? That is kind of the point, which is it doesn't make an economic sense. There has to be a breakeven point that makes sense, and let politicians make the political decisions as to where it is. Ultimately the issue

comes down to if the politicians don't have the facts it is difficult for us to make these types of decisions.

That is kind of why I am asking what is stopping the department. If the Minister just doesn't want to do one because he just doesn't want to do one, maybe he is afraid of the fact that we would see quite a disparity of numbers. Perhaps that is the issue, but that is why I am asking, let's do the numbers. Why be afraid of the information? Thank you, Madam Chair.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The Member keeps referring to the fact that we have a facility with one person in it. I just have to state again – we said it several times – we have no facilities with one person in it. All of our facilities have large numbers of people in them. We have a facility, a youth facility here in Yellowknife that houses both youth male and youth female. At this point we have one female offender in that facility, but it is still a facility and it still has a number of people in it.

I am interested in fiscal responsibility. I have sat, in the last four years, in front of this department during business planning where we are discussing exactly the types of things my colleague is suggesting, which is prudent use of money where we have seen what this department has spent and how they spent their money and how they ensure that there is money available for programming. I would suggest that when it comes time to do business planning, maybe the Member should take a look at the business plan provided and we can dig into these types of questions at that time. We are talking about capital right now, Madam Chair.

MR. HAWKINS: We are talking about investment in capital for further growth and we have to ask ourselves at the same time, is this good management of money. Ultimately it comes back to the question of good fiscal responsibility would look at this and ask these types of questions and allow the political types of decisions left up to the politicians. That said, it ties it all together. Then we make the decision on policy because we believe in them. Under fiscal and responsible point of view, what is to stop the Minister for asking the cost of these? If you want to invest in capital facilities, we need to understand how it benefits us over the longer haul. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: It would be very difficult for us to determine what the per day cost to different jurisdictions are with respect to their facilities, but it still comes down to the bottom line: Will we be able to ensure that our residents have northern specific programming that we, as territorial politicians, have indicated in the past that we want?

In every jurisdiction the cost is different per facility. We know that. We also know what our costs are and we are planning based on future needs, what we know or what we predict will be the number of

inmates coming down the pipes in the future, including with things like Bill C-10.

Right now we don't actually have any facilities in front of us and we are continuing to plan and making decisions based on what we believe is going to happen in the future with respect to our actual corrections facilities.

MR. HAWKINS: For us to support further investment in capital initiatives, we should have a context as to what the true costs are. That is why I keep coming back to it. We have to evaluate a longer term strategy with the focus on where our money is better spent.

Again, we have alternative measures that have always been called upon. Maybe they need more support, more bolstering. What money is being kept away from alternative options because maybe money isn't being spent efficiently?

That goes back to the point of using a cost-benefit analysis. I didn't ask to do an evaluation of other jurisdictions. I am not sure where that came up from. I suggested that, if it made sense, other jurisdictions can take inmates at a certain cost. The point being is that we should know what it costs us. That is the day-to-day business. When someone comes with a capital request, we should also have an assessment as to what it costs. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: It appears to be a bit of a contradiction. I'm not sure if I fully understand. If the Member wants us to do a cost-benefit analysis, we are going to have to know the costs that exist in the southern jurisdictions. That was where that comment came from.

When we are planning our facilities, we have to go through a number of processes to determine the costs. To do those analyses, we also have to identify what all the costs in the facility will be, including the human resources and all the other costs that are going to come down the pipes. That needs to be part of our planning process. This department, as all the other departments, do that.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. I would like to remind Members that we are discussing the 2012-13 Capital Estimates. I have been granting quite a bit of licence here, but we are trying to talk about the capital estimates. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Minister mentioned Bill C-10. I want to just follow up very quickly, because, obviously, according to the discussion earlier in the House today – and I know the Minister is well aware and working on this – there are costs associated with this legislation. Just for efficiency, I will ask two questions right away here. Is there any work that the Minister has done on costing of likely new infrastructure needs resulting from the impacts of Bill C-10 that he can report on today? When might be the earliest point

when we would expect such needs to materialize as a result of Bill C-10? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: When I became the Minister of Justice I asked the department to do a bit of an analysis and start an analysis on what we think the implications of Bill C-10 will be, and some of those implications could conceivably be increased capacity requirements in our different facilities, a new pod possibly, the adult facility here in Yellowknife, but also the facility in Fort Smith which is already designed to be a little bit larger than the facility that is there now, as well as the old female facility in Inuvik.

As far as the costs of the facilities, Mr. Bromley, anything we toss out now will be kind of a real shot in the dark. We have some Class C estimates on the Fort Smith facility which is around \$35 million. The cost to expand the North Slave Correctional Facility – and I would be happy to take you out there if you haven't already had a tour – there is actually an area on the North Slave Correctional Facility where we can add a pod. It was always designed with the ability to add a pod, should the capacity requirements ever increase at the North Slave Correctional Facility. Those plans are in the pipe. We know what we have to do to increase that, but I can't tell you what the cost of adding that pod would be right now.

The department is doing some analysis as part of their analysis of the impacts of Bill C-10 which will hopefully have some of that information, but we haven't been able to absolutely quantify that yet. But we know the Class C estimate for the facility in Fort Smith is around \$35 million.

MR. BROMLEY: The second question was: When might be the earliest point where we would expect the need for such structures resulting from the impacts of Bill C-10 to materialize? That is obviously important for the planning side of the equation. I appreciate any response the Minister might be able to provide. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: This is actually one of the areas that we have been struggling with, is trying to figure out actually when we are going to start feeling the impacts of Bill C-10. I am not 100 percent sure, but we understand that parts of Bill C-10 could be implemented as early as six months from now, half a year. It is hard to say, but we are attempting to quantify it. As we get more information and we feel closer to that, I am happy to share that with committee, absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Are you done, Mr. Bromley? Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Madam Chair. I had one quick question. When it comes to building capital projects such as infrastructure like the jails that

we're going to house people in, do you ever do any consulting with other departments, such as the Department of Health, to work on treatment centres, as well, or transition phase components to that building, rather than work on putting two infrastructures in a community? It would be better money and cost effective to have the same water and sewage system put into one building where on one side would be a transition back into society or partly working with a treatment centre. So when buildings like this go up, we can actually add on to infrastructure and cut down on costs for other capital projects in years to come. Does the Department of Justice, when they do look at buildings like this, consult with other departments on how they can better serve people of the North than the spending of dollars that this government does?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm not aware of whether or not the department has had many consultations with the Department of Health or any other buildings on how we can achieve economies of scale in our construction. We do know that we have specialized buildings, just like Health has very specialized buildings. As far as utilities, there may be options to do something like that and that might be a better question for Public Works and Services.

With respect to the building in Fort Smith, we are trying to achieve some economies of scale by tying into some of the heating and utilities systems that exist in the facility that is going to stay in Fort Smith. There are going to be two facilities in Fort Smith, a male facility and a female facility. We're looking at finding ways to utilize some of the mechanical systems to reduce our costs, reduce our footprint when we actually get around to constructing the facility in Fort Smith.

With respect to the conversation about the economies of scale between the departments, I'm happy to talk to my colleague, the Minister responsible for Public Works and Services, to see what kind of opportunities exist in the future, absolutely.

MR. MOSES: No further questions. I just think it would be in the best interest of both departments to work together on how we can serve, especially with a lot of the discussions earlier today on mental health and addictions, how we incarcerate a lot of people into the systems. That when we do build facilities, we offer buildings that offer services that would cut down our costs that can go into other areas. Just a general comment.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Are we done with general comments as opposed to general questions? We can move on to detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Okay. We will start with page 7-4, Justice, activity summary, services to government, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, zero. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Page 7-6, Justice, activity summary, legal aid services, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, zero. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Page 7-8, Justice, activity summary, court services, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, \$338,000. Are we agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Page 7-11, Justice, activity summary, community justice and corrections, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, \$364,000. Are we agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Page 7-14, Justice, activity summary, services to public, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, zero. Are we agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Page 7-2, Justice, department summary, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, \$702,000. Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Does committee agree that we have concluded consideration of the Department of Justice?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Minister. Thank you to your witnesses. I would ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

The next department on our list is Municipal and Community Affairs. We have some time left on the clock. Do we want to start with opening comments? All right. Committee is agreed. Oh, we need witnesses first, don't we? Yes. Thank you. Mr. McLeod, do you have witnesses you wish to bring into the Chamber?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, I would, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Sergeant-at-Arms, would you escort the witnesses into the Chamber?

Welcome, witnesses. Mr. McLeod, would you introduce your witnesses for us, please.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Madam Chair. On my left I have Mr. Tom Williams, deputy minister. On my right is Ms. Eleanor Young. She is the assistant deputy minister of regional operations.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Is committee agreed that we will have opening comments, not opening questions, thank you, and on the capital budget, not the operations and maintenance budget?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): We are agreed. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. As MLA with the most communities, as I travel to the communities the leadership often ask me about capital planning transfers. They're very grateful for it and part of the New Deal is that the communities are able to make their own decisions about when and where to buy their capital or to build buildings, et cetera. They're often a little leery about the O and M formula. I think I raised it with the MACA Minister in the last Assembly and I think they said there was some kind of review happening in terms of the formula financing for O and M. In fact, I think, for example, the community of Jean Marie, I think all their existing building assets get transferred over to them April 1st and they're very concerned that there may not be enough O and M money attached to it. They feel that while it was a great idea, now the communities are stuck with the buildings, especially in the smaller communities. They have extra additional costs of bringing in plumbers and carpenters to help with their repairs, or boiler mechanics, et cetera. I'd just like to know once again if that review is going to be taken for the formula financing for O and M as it's related to the capital buildings being transferred to the communities and any new buildings that they do build.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Member is correct; there is a review that's happening right now. We're hoping to have the work completed by April 1st. When we do the budget session in May/June, I think that's when we're looking at the O and M budget for next year. Some of our findings we may be able to incorporate into the May/June budget session.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Are there any further general comments on the Department of MACA? Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I need to raise again the need for building standards for our communities. Most if not all jurisdictions in

Canada provide this and, somewhat mysteriously, this department or this government resists that responsibility. Yet the communities, if you read the resolutions and so on of the Northwest Territories Association of Communities, want building standards and they want support in inspection of such infrastructure and assistance in that.

My general comment is when, oh when, will we get building standards for our communities that will help them enjoy the sorts of efficiencies and operational savings that GNWT, for example, enjoys with our 25 percent better than national model Energy Building Code standards?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's a discussion that the Member and I have had before. I've said the communities do a very good job in planning for and their buildings as up to standard, if not above standard, as possible. If the Member feels that we as a department or we as a government need to come up with standards that we set that the communities have to follow, even though they're building all their buildings according to code and according to standards, because they realize it would be beneficial on their part and some significant savings, too, if they were to design their buildings above standard, it's a discussion that I'll commit to the Member that we'll have with the communities. I still believe they're doing a very good job and I think we've seen examples of that before, where some of them are incorporating biomass heating into their plans and some are taking residual heat off another building. We've seen pretty good examples of some forward thinking by the communities. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate the Minister's offer to take this forward to discuss this with communities. I just want to emphasize that I'm not asking for anything exceptional; I'm asking for the norm, and am mystified by the resistance to what has obviously been proven to be useful across Canada.

Again, I appreciate the Minister's offer and I look forward to the results of that discussion, and I urge him to take a look at the resolutions of the NWT Association of Communities on this subject. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I think that was just a comment. Alright, committee, any further general comments on Municipal and Community Affairs? Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have a couple of comments. We were talking on just the building design. One of my constituent communities had expressed a desire to see if there could be some discussions perhaps explored. I'm not familiar if those discussions have taken place. I'm talking about the Hamlet of Enterprise. They've indicated an interest to see if it is possible to look at maybe

making an addition to their hamlet office to see if there could be at least some possibilities of maybe placing some additional rooms to the hamlet office to house a temporary school. I wonder if the Minister or the department has perhaps engaged in discussion with the community of Enterprise whether there are at least some points of consensus to see if further discussions could take place.

I understand there's a leadership election in the community of Enterprise. However, what I've thus far heard consistently is that there is a need for a school in Enterprise, and if perhaps the other department, Education, could maybe coordinate that so that maybe MACA could at least engage in discussion with Enterprise. Perhaps that's been done, but I just wanted to know if there were discussions that have taken place.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Madam Chair. As far as I know, we haven't had any discussions with Enterprise yet on their desire to build an addition onto their office building. However, I mean, we have to be careful here. If we're talking that they want to convert this into a school, then we may have to include the Department of Education into the discussions. I'll commit to the Member that I will follow up on it and see if any discussions have been started and what's the wish of the folks in Enterprise. We'll get as much information as we can and I'll share it with the Member.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Can we move on to detail, committee?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Page 4-2 is the department summary. We will defer that until we have considered the full department. Can we move to page 4-4, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, regional operations, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, \$28.002 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, community operations, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, zero.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Page 4-8, we are agreed. We'll move back to page 4-2, Municipal and Community Affairs, department summary, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, \$28.002 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Does committee agree we have concluded consideration of Municipal and Community Affairs?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): We are agreed. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Madam Chair, I move that we report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): I will now rise and report progress. I would like to thank the Minister and his officials for their attendance. If the Sergeant-at-Arms would escort the witnesses out of the Chamber. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: May I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please. Ms. Bisaro.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Tabled Document 2-17(1), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates 2012-2013, and would like to report progress. I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Do I have a seconder? The honourable Minister Lafferty.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Bennett): Orders of the day for Monday, December 12, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.:

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

16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

17. Motions

- Motion 18-17(1), Setting of Extended Sitting Hours by the Speaker

18. First Reading of Bills

19. Second Reading of Bills

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

- Tabled Document 2-17(1), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates 2012-2013

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Monday, December 12, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 13:58 a.m.

