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Pages 335 to 362

**The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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**Hon. Paul Delorey**  
(Hay River North)

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(Tu Nedhe)

**Ms. Wendy Bisaro**  
(Frame Lake)

**Mr. Bob Bromley**  
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**Yellowknife, Northwest Territories  
Friday, February 15, 2008**

**Members Present**

Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bromley, Hon. Paul Delorey, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Krutko, Hon. Sandy Lee, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Michael McLeod, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Hon. Floyd Roland, Hon. Norman Yakeleya.

The House met at 10 a.m.

**Prayer**

Prayer.

**Speaker (Hon. Paul Delorey):** Good morning, colleagues. Welcome back to the House.

Members, before we begin today, I would like to draw your attention to the Canadian flags that are on your desks, marking National Flag of Canada Day.

Applause.

**Mr. Speaker:** February 15<sup>th</sup> was declared National Flag of Canada Day in 1996. It is the day Canadians are encouraged to take the time to consider all that our flag has come to represent since it was first raised over Parliament Hill in 1965.

The red and white maple leaf flag has become a powerful and prominent symbol of Canada. It is recognized all over the world as the flag of a people who cherish the ideals of democracy, freedom, justice, diversity and equality.

It is a particularly fitting day to celebrate not only our flag but also the grand and beautiful country that we live in.

Thank you, Members. Item 2, Ministers' statements, Ms. Lee.

**Ministers' Statements**

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 16-16(2)  
AKLAVIK H. PYLORI  
SCREENING PROJECT

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services, the Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services Authority, and Capital Health Authority in Edmonton are working with the leadership and residents of Aklavik to investigate the incidence of H. pylori infection in the community.

A team of 25 health professionals and researchers from Capital Health and the University of Alberta, working together with the employees of the G.N.W.T., spent four days in Aklavik in February. They took tissue samples from 300 persons — every consenting adult in the community.

These tissue samples will be examined for evidence of the H. pylori infection. This bacteria can occur without symptoms and can lead to ulcers, indigestion and stomach cancer.

The samples were sent to a lab in Edmonton where they will be analyzed thoroughly. This extensive project is known as the Aklavik H. Pylori Project, and it will be completed by 2010.

Residents in Aklavik have long expressed their concerns about the high rates of stomach cancer in their community. One family lost five members to this disease. In the N.W.T. the rate of stomach cancer is twice that of the rest of Canada.

The project has received \$220,000 in grants and contributions from a wide variety of organizations. I'd like to thank the community of Aklavik, especially nurse-in-charge Rachel Munday and all of the staff at the Susie Husky Health and Social Services Centre. I'd also like to thank the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Canadian North, Public Health Agency of Canada, Inuvik Regional Hospital, Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services Authority, MLA David Krutko, Chief Charlie Furlong, Mayor Knute Hansen, and Dr. Tom Guzowski of Stanton Territorial Hospital. I also thank the Edmonton Capital Health doctors, the Olympus scoping technicians, and the University of Alberta.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the project leader, medical director Dr. Bob Bailey from Northern Health Services Network, who secured the funding, and lastly, Dr. John Morse, who had an idea more than ten years ago that turned into this important project.

Applause.

**Mr. Speaker:** Item 3, Members' statements, Mr. Menicoche.

## Members' Statements

### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONSTITUENT CONCERNS REGARDING POSSIBLE IMPACT OF PROPOSED FISCAL STRATEGY

**Mr. Menicoche:** Mr. Speaker, many constituents have asked me to make their concerns about the proposed cuts known to the government. They have asked me to stand up for them and prevent the government taking the simplistic approach to cost-cutting by laying off employees, as announced by the Premier to the media.

Mr. Speaker, this is a fear that's out there in the public, a fear that is founded on previous experience with spending cuts. Until this government proves to us that their cost savings are not simply achieved by layoffs, I must speak for my constituents and urge the government to make wise decisions.

Mr. Speaker, cuts to the G.N.W.T. workforce are a short-sighted solution to a complex problem that may save money in the spur of the moment and will look good on the books, but in the long term, it will cost the government lots of money.

Employees are valuable. Corporate knowledge is valuable, not to mention that perhaps you didn't see that when you rehire somebody, it costs \$100,000 by current estimates to retrain somebody new.

Job cuts create lots of damage and achieve little. We should not put more financial pressure on families than they already have. What does a family who loses one or all of its income do to cope? They will cut out recreational programs and eat less healthy but cheaper.

There will also be a secondary economic impact to our communities. The private sector suffers, too, from less disposable income, causing a trickle effect — less employment and training opportunities and more people leaving the North. Ultimately, all these effects cause more pressure on our social system.

Here are the words of two of my constituents that bring the message across loud and clear:

"Cuts only help in the immediate. In the long run, they cause further decay to any society."

"Employment is essential to self-pride and a healthy standard of living."

Let's ensure that no one loses any job, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi cho.

### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INUVALUIT REGIONAL CUP HOCKEY TOURNAMENT IN INUVIK

**Mr. Jacobson:** Mr. Speaker, it's the IRC Cup weekend. It's the Inuvialuit Regional Cup Hockey Tournament in the Beaufort-Delta this weekend.

I just wish all the players and the families that are driving down to have a safe, fun-filled weekend to spend time with their families and friends that they haven't seen during this past winter.

We have eight teams in the "B" Division and five teams in the "A." And I just wish all the best to all the players and to have a safe, fun weekend, and support just seeing them all. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TRIBUTE TO VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER

**Mr. McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, to rush into a burning building once and pull somebody out is quite an accomplishment. To do it twice is an amazing feat. To actually do it three times is unheard of. I want to use my Member's statement today to honour a man who — three times — has gone into buildings that were burning to pull people out.

Vince Sharpe of Inuvik, 60 years old, former firefighter, back in November went into a trailer that was burning and pulled one person out. Once he got him out, he was told there was another one in there. He went back in on his stomach in a smoke-filled building and pulled a second person out.

He's done it a couple of times before, Mr. Speaker. In 1978 he took a lady in a wheelchair out of a burning log home. In 1974 he rescued a baby from a burning building.

I think it's important, Mr. Speaker, that as an Assembly we recognize the accomplishments that some of these people put forward. A lot of it just flies under the radar.

I wanted to use my Member's statement today to bring tribute to Mr. Sharpe and also plan on nominating Vince Sharpe for a couple of awards, because I think acts like this unselfish bravery — going into burning buildings to rescue people — shouldn't go unrecognized. And I will do my part.

So I would like to ask the Assembly to join me today in commending Vince Sharpe on the rescues that he has done. A few people owe their lives to him, and he should be recognized for that. Thank you.

Applause.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
LIBERAL SENATORS' VISIT  
TO NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Senators who will be making an attempt to travel to the Northwest Territories and travel throughout the North in regard to the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut and look at the issue of poverty in the North and especially in aboriginal communities. It is important that the Northern leaders, the representatives, MLAs and our government work with them to come up with some ideas on how to deal with poverty in aboriginal communities.

The thing that appalls me the most is who is not taking part in this journey: the Conservative Senators who totally refuse to take part. They say it is a waste of money and a waste of time. I find that to be appalling. As a government and as part of our government system, the Senate plays an important role as a chamber of second thought. But yet, Mr. Speaker, that is an appalling state when the Conservative Senators refuse to travel, saying that it is a waste of time and money. So who are we — another country?

It is important to deal with the issue of poverty, especially in aboriginal communities and especially here in Canada, where statistics show that aboriginal people in Canada live in poverty, similar to Third World countries.

I would like to state for the record: next time we come to a federal election, we've got to remember the slogan "ABC: Anybody But Conservatives."

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
SUPPORT FOR ENERGY SAVINGS  
AND SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE

**Ms. Bisaro:** I am sorry that I didn't hear you for the loud applause.

In my short time here as MLA, we've talked much about energy, the environment and climate change. It is accepted that as human beings, we are hurting our house — our planet. Some say that we are destroying it.

It is also accepted that we can take actions to reduce the hurt. Members have discussed many of these actions: building codes and standards, reducing energy consumption, less hurtful energy sources, water conservation to name just a few. I sense a willingness on the part of this government to take action, but I see no indication of any comprehensive plan.

I know; I know: "It is early yet; we're developing the budget and so on and so on." But as this government prepares the 2008-2009 budget, it is a

necessity that energy savings and sustainability be a cornerstone of the document.

We need to take a page from the book of the city of Yellowknife, which has just been named a number one city, by the way. It has taken a few years, but the city of Yellowknife has committed to energy planning and action. Currently some \$500,000 is earmarked for activities related to the energy plan.

We need to follow their excellent example, Mr. Speaker. Not only do we need a coordinated energy plan for the government of the N.W.T. that covers all aspects of energy, climate change and environmental protection, but we need an energy coordinator to implement and manage the plan.

Taking this bold step is not something we have to do on our own. There are many N.W.T. organizations and individuals out there who are willing to assist in the development of a plan.

We must establish a working committee and an energy and sustainability planning committee with public representation from industry and interested individuals and organizations. I believe the Arctic Energy Alliance is one such organization which can provide excellent advice and support for such a planning committee.

This is a long-term strategy, but we must include it in our first budget in order to reap any kind of rewards in the life of this Assembly. We can guarantee financial savings by being proactive. We can guarantee environmental savings through being proactive. The time to act is now.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
RECOGNITION OF CONSTITUENT'S  
MUSICAL ACHIEVEMENT

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize my constituent Mr. Tyler Hawkins of Hay River for his outstanding talent achievements in the music world.

Tyler Hawkins began his music lessons on multi-stringed guitar when he was just eight years old. He received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from York University with Honours in Performance in 1990. Since then he has been working as a teacher and a private guitar instructor in the Northwest Territories.

This weekend we'll see another dream realized, as through Tyler's leadership, we will host what I hope is just the first N.W.T. International Lute Festival.

I encourage everyone to take advantage of this amazing opportunity to see and hear such rare internationally renowned talent coming to a small northern, remote town like Hay River. This weekend's events will include performances on Friday night at École Boréale, Saturday night at the

Pentecostal church, and a meet-the-artists workshop at the Back Eddy at 1:30 on Sunday.

We will welcome a performance by Michel Cardin and Tyler Hawkins on Friday night at École Boréale. Saturday night's offering will include a performance by Nigel North. Nigel North was initially inspired into music at age seven by the early '60s instrumental pop group The Shadows.

Nigel studied classical music through violin and guitar, eventually discovering his real path in life, the lute, when he was 15. Basically self-taught on the lute, he has for over 30 years developed a unique musical life which embraces activities as a teacher, accompanist, soloist, director and writer. For over 20 years he was a professor of the lute at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London. From '93 to '99 he was a professor at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin, and since January 1999 Nigel North has been a professor of lute at the Early Music Institute at Indiana University in Bloomington in the U.S.A.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly a rare occasion to have such internationally renowned talent in our community of Hay River. I would like to thank Tyler Hawkins for all of his efforts in bringing this together. I would ask my colleagues here today to congratulate Hay River on being the host of the N.W.T. International Lute Festival. Thank you.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONDITION OF ACCESS ROAD TO DETTAH

**Mr. Bromley:** Mr. Speaker, the people of Dettah have resided here since time immemorial. They form a community which has seen much change, and they have tolerated much deterioration of their environment: the water, the air quality, the health of their nearby food resources like fish and waterfowl. They are holders of a unique and valuable way of seeing our world. Yet despite this and despite their proximity to the capital, the 11-kilometre gravel road to their community remains as unsafe or worse as the road to Behchoko was before the recent resurfacing of that highway.

The road to Dettah was last resurfaced with chip seal that was about as thick as a poker chip. This road receives much less traffic than the adjacent Ingraham Trail, with its tens of thousands of B-trains and so on. Despite this, and not surprisingly, the chip seal of the Dettah Road had a brief lifetime, measured in months. Having had frequent experience driving the Dettah Road, I can personally attest to the road's unsafe condition. Several times, though driving at moderate speed, I found my car wanting to crow-hop into a sideways shuffle down the road — an unsettling and certainly unsafe experience as a result of the corrugated and rutted surface.

Mr. Speaker, I am not asking for 100 kilometres of resurfacing here. I simply ask that we give the people of Dettah their due and provide these patient people with an appropriately resurfaced — and reconstructed, if need be — and safe 11-kilometre road to their community.

I will be asking the Minister of Transportation questions on this. Mahsi.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REGULAR MEMBERS' INPUT IN PROPOSED FISCAL REDUCTIONS

**Mr. Ramsay:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak today about the budget reduction exercise currently underway by the government.

I'm very concerned over the way the government is handling the communication effort on the reduction and, eventually, the reinvestment strategy and the fear that this is causing our employees.

What I've heard from the public and Members of this House was that we should thoroughly examine our spending through zero-based budgeting exercises which would analyze our spending so we could take some corrective action on where we spend our dollars. Had this been done, we would have had solid information on which to make decisions.

As a Member of this House the government's plan to reduce spending by \$135 million over the next two years requires a tremendous leap of faith on behalf of myself and Members of this House. I can appreciate where the government is coming from, because I've been saying for the last four years that our spending is not sustainable over the long term. However, since Christmas, rumours abound on what, where, who and how much is going to fall under the government's axe.

I just want to publicly state today for the record what I know. This week our committees finally received the targets that the government was setting for the departments: a \$135 million reduction over the next two years, with \$75 million being reinvested into strategic initiatives. Regular Members have not gotten any level of detail on what's on the chopping block. There may be some panic in the public service, but the reductions still have to be vetted through our standing committees and the Regular Members of this House.

We need to ensure that as Regular Members our ideas and input for both reductions and reinvestment have to be taken seriously by this government. In our consensus style of government, Regular Members have the majority in this House, and I want the public and the public service to know that when it comes to reductions, our input, our thoughts and our ideas will be taken seriously by this government.

The reality is that so far Regular Members on this side of the House seem to be on a need-to-know basis and are being treated that way by the government. I want to let the public service know and let the public know that when the battles are to be fought, the Regular Members will be here to defend the reductions we don't agree with, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON AFTERCARE TREATMENT PROGRAMS

**Mr. Hawkins:** Mr. Speaker, as always, I try to regularly make special mention that it is Red Friday.

Today I feel compelled to speak again to the issue of aftercare and follow-up for clients with addictions. I must confess that I am perplexed by the Minister's answers to the questions earlier this week. A finer defence of the status quo I've never seen. As the Minister stated, individual responsibility is a major component of recovery in healing from addiction. I do not disagree with that statement. What I find puzzling is the Minister's harsh resistance to what seems like a simple, inexpensive yet potentially very beneficial service — a mere phone call, Mr. Speaker.

The transition from a residential treatment program back to the community can be very difficult, full of pitfalls and temptations to return to addictions. Follow-up with a client lets the person know that there's still someone who cares even though they are no longer in treatment. If the client knows in advance that someone will be checking up, this in itself can be a motivator to stay on course in his or her rehabilitation. An individual can be responsible, but for many of us, encouragement and support help bolster our resolve. I think this is what we usually call being human.

Mr. Speaker, one follow-up call could make the difference for a recovering addict who is struggling with feelings of isolation and social pressures. Success and effort are paramount in dealing with the biggest problems that are causing our social ills in this Territory. Poundmaker's Lodge does this. Bellwood Health Services, a leading addictions-treatment program in Toronto, does this. Why can't we do this? Why can't we expand our ability and help the people the way we want to?

Mr. Speaker, aftercare is the key to successful recovery, and this government needs to ensure that a comprehensive aftercare program is made available to our residents. They need to be aware of it, and the lines of communication need to go two ways, not one way, as the Minister's letter directs it to go.

In closing, I want to make a clear point. We've gone far beyond the question of this costing too much

money. It has now become clear: it's strictly a position of stubbornness.

**Mr. Speaker:** Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery, Mr. Menicoche.

#### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

**Mr. Menicoche:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize three people from Fort Simpson that are in the gallery today: Mr. Sean Whelly, who acted as my official agent, his son Brendan Whelly, and Alex Scharf, who is teaching at our Thomas Simpson Secondary School. Welcome here, and see how we do our work. Mahsi cho.

**Mr. Speaker:** I'd like to welcome everybody who's in the gallery today to the House. I hope you're enjoying the proceedings. It's always nice to have an audience in here.

Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions, Mr. Hawkins.

#### Oral Questions

##### QUESTION 84-16(2) AFTERCARE TREATMENT PROGRAM

**Mr. Hawkins:** Mr. Speaker, I highlighted a number of good places that treat addictions, and they do follow-up. In Minnesota my office has spoken to people at Aftercare Services Agency, and they do follow-up treatments. Bellwood highlights and red-flags people that they need to continue to follow-up through phone calls.

Mr. Speaker, has Health and Social Services in any way done any type of analysis on how much good a follow-up treatment program would do for people by a mere phone call?

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** Mr. Speaker, my two-page letter, which the Member tabled, was in follow-up to the questions that he asked in the first session. If you read that letter in totality, it does state that we do all the work that needs to be done between pre-treatment, the treatment issues, post-treatment, aftercare.

This government in the last five years has spent millions of dollars. We have hired over 40 community wellness workers as well as mental health and addiction coordinators, and they're actively in the healing process of anybody who comes to their attention. I believe that the program covers all of that, so I'm a little puzzled as to why the Member feels that we're not doing that sort of work.

**Mr. Hawkins:** Well, you know what? Maybe the problem is solved because there must be two

different letters. My two-page letter says: "It is Poundmaker's practice to make follow-up calls directly with their clients, partly as a way to evaluate their programs and the outcomes.... Community staff" — referring to the G.N.W.T. — "do not consider this follow-up call to be part of the aftercare program."

That is exactly the opposite of what the Minister just said.

Why is the follow-up call not considered part of the aftercare program, and would this Minister stop being stubborn and say, "We'll look into this, and we can make this happen"?

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** Mr. Speaker, I state again that there are follow-up processes, that there are aftercare programs within our alcohol and drug addiction programming. I'm saying to the Member again: we do that already. That is my answer. I am not being stubborn; I am giving the answers. We do that work already, and the workers that we have in our communities do that already.

**Mr. Hawkins:** Again I cite that we're probably reading from two different two-page letters, because this letter also says that they encourage me to advise my constituents that they call, and they have to initiate some obligation on their part. So this is a one-way letter, not a two-way letter, which I talked about. Communication. Communication works both ways. The Minister keeps reaffirming, "We do this," but their letter proves they don't.

Would the Minister look into this program and have a chance to maybe review this letter that she's written to me?

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** Mr. Speaker, as I stated two days ago in referring to that letter, there is another paragraph in that letter which shows a very client-focused, case-management approach where any resident from the Northwest Territories who gets to go to any kind of treatment program, before they are discharged, are encouraged to work out an aftercare program. They have a say in who could help them with their aftercare and to stay in the sober-for-life program, whether they be friends, whether they be addiction workers, whether they be AA programs. They work out the package, and they work with the workers.

So in the broader terms we're doing that. We are already doing that, and it's very client-focused. It's a two-way healing process. It's a life-long process, and our government is with them all the way.

**Mr. Hawkins:** We again seem to be reading from a different letter, because the letter I have here says that they have to take individual responsibility, that it's basically up to the individual. This one-way letter continues to cite exactly the opposite of what the

Minister says; although the letter says that if they want to call, it even provides a phone number.

Would the Minister re-evaluate her department's position on this? I'm telling you: everything she says referencing that it's a two-way communication process is not in this letter.

**Hon. Sandy Lee:** Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to help the Member read that letter. The paragraph before the paragraph that he's quoting, which he is reading out of context, I say again, speaks about case-management approach and two-way approach. The part that the Member is quoting is about the responsibility of the client to contact, but that is only a little part of what you'll have to do, and that is a part of a client-focused and client-driven recovery program that is very, very important for anybody who wants to combat their addiction for life.

#### QUESTION 85-16(2) CONDITION OF ARENA IN LUTSELK'E

**Mr. Beaulieu:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. This week I spoke about the problems Lutselk'e is facing with the arena. Today I would like to ask follow-up questions to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, this matter is very serious for the community. It seems the community is getting frustrated with each passing day. Would the Minister commit to meeting with me and the community to get an accurate update and assessment of this matter?

**Hon. Michael McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, the Member has raised, on a number of occasions during the session, concerns about recreation and recreation facilities in his community, and more recently raised and highlighted some concerns brought to him by the community of Lutselk'e. We've had people in the community over the last while and have been working with the community on putting some training programs together — ice-making and other things — to help support them.

There still seems to be some disconnect in terms of some of the funding arrangements and some of the support they think they need. I'd be glad to sit down with the Member and community members if that's the desire, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Beaulieu:** Would the Minister commit to making a visit to Lutselk'e with me to discuss arena operations and other related matters pertaining to the arena?

**Hon. Michael McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, I would be glad to visit the community with the Member. In fact, over the last year we had tried to get into the community on two different occasions, and both times we were weathered out. I feel we owe a visit

to that community. I would be glad to accompany the Member to the community and have meetings and discussions around these issues and others that the Member would like to bring forward.

QUESTION 86-16(2)  
G.N.W.T. PUBLIC SERVICE REDUCTIONS

**Mr. Ramsay:** Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Premier. It gets back to my Member's statement, where I was talking about the reduction exercises currently underway and the information that's flowing through to departments and not necessarily getting through to the Regular Members on this side of the House.

I've become aware of one department where they are doing hiring on a case-by-case basis. It's not necessarily a hiring freeze but a case-by-case basis, and hiring has to be approved by the deputy minister. It's a big change, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to ask the Premier if that is a government-wide instruction on case-by-case hiring. Because there are many people out there in the public trying to get a job with the G.N.W.T. and they need to know this type of information.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, in responding to the Member's question, he also stated in his Member's statement about the planning and timing. For the record, let's put it on this table the fact that in a consensus-style government, I have agreed with Members that we would make a budget happen by May-June. That reduces the amount of time we can go back and forth. So that is problematic in the way of trying to do business in a new fashion.

As to the specific area of the department the deputy minister is reviewing, it is the process we are following. Because, for example, Mr. Speaker, as a government we're working with the goals that we've set as the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly, and there are new initiatives. We wouldn't want departments to be hiring in an area that would not be supported in the years to come. That is why we're doing this process, and it is government-wide.

**Mr. Ramsay:** It's very interesting to hear the Premier say that, because — and I get back to the information sharing here — the first I heard of a case-by-case hiring policy in one department — this is the Department of Health and Social Services, and I'll single them out — was through a constituent, Mr. Speaker. Now, I'd rather hear from the government that the government has taken that angle and they are going to go on a case-by-case basis.

I'd like to ask the Premier: has the Premier instructed deputy ministers government-wide to only go through hiring on a case-by-case basis? What are they basing their...? The jobs like

teachers and nurses: are those case-by-case as well, or is everything case-by-case, Mr. Speaker?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, the way we reviewed this is the Department of Human Resources and the Ministers brought concerns to the table. For example, we had different departments reacting in areas that were shutting down certain hiring positions. So that is not the situation. We are using a consistent approach now, and that is where departments are going out for hiring. Before an actual hiring occurs, it goes back to the deputy minister for review to ensure that it's aligning with the work that's starting to happen. We wouldn't want to hire a position and then six months from now that position is not going to be part of where we're going as the government of the Northwest Territories. That is why that direction is being used.

**Mr. Ramsay:** They're making that determination on what's going to be necessary six months from now or required six months from now, in isolation, because we haven't had that level of discussion on what's going to be a requirement six months from now. Mr. Speaker, I do get calls from constituents who are trying to apply for positions with the G.N.W.T. I want to ask the Premier: when was the Premier going to let Members of the House know that the policy has changed in terms of hiring employees for the government of the Northwest Territories? When were they going to let us know that?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Let's be clear: we're still hiring. But we're doing it in a way.... The policy has not changed, but what we're doing is, as departments go through their hiring process — through Human Resources, and the message is now to all deputies... Before a hire actually happens, we need to do that review, because departments are aware of what initiatives we've been working on to try to bring forward new initiatives for the government of the Northwest Territories, and departments are aware of what targets they've been given. They're doing their work as to what areas may be offered up for cost-savings and cost-saving measures. So that's where this comes into focus.

**Mr. Speaker:** Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Mr. Speaker, the government seems to be taking this reduction exercise as a licence to pretty much do what they want. I mean, we haven't known about this. And again, that gets back to my point: if you're going to make decisions, especially like that, I mean, let us know.

My last question would be on timing, Mr. Speaker. I think there are a lot of rumours out there in the public service. I've heard numbers. I don't want to throw them around; I don't want to exacerbate the

situation. But there are rumours out there about the number of job losses. I want to ask the Premier: when can the public service and Members of this House expect some more information on the reductions — where they are at and what they're going to be?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, again, in a consensus-style government, working with Members as to the time frame and meeting the May-June target, we've had to track from that point of bringing forward a budget process. The work is going to be done to compile all that information so we can present that to Members. It will be later on this winter and early spring before we will be able to present Members draft documents of where we're going to meet our timelines and targets for the first budget to be put in place in May-June.

QUESTION 87-16(2)  
CONDITION OF  
ACCESS ROAD TO DETTAH

**Mr. Bromley:** Mr. Speaker, the people of Dettah have waited a long, long time for an appropriate road with safe conditions — actually, since I was knee-high to a grasshopper. I remember it well.

Laughter.

It was a long, long time ago. The condition of the road is taking its toll on vehicles and people's budgets. People are really extremely concerned about the unsafe conditions.

Will the Minister of Transportation sit down with the leaders in Dettah to plan and implement, at the earliest opportunity, something to address this situation and get the road properly resurfaced?

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Speaker, I too have driven the road to Dettah, and I understand what the Member is saying. I want to thank him for bringing this issue to my attention.

Mr. Speaker, as Members are aware, there are high transportation needs right across the Northwest Territories. I'm committed to looking at all requests. I too would direct my department to continue working with the leadership in Dettah and with the Member here in terms of looking at this particular need in terms of their safety. It's our priority in the department to provide safe and reliable roads for the travelling public. I would be happy to sit with the Member and also with the leadership of Dettah to look at this particular road.

**Mr. Bromley:** I appreciate that offer, and I hope that's actually a standing offer to all people of the Northwest Territories, all communities. I'm looking for a little extra attention here, Mr. Speaker. We're only talking 11 kilometres. This is something that's long overdue. The last piece of work, like I say, lasted weeks or months, and I'm hoping the

Minister will commit to meeting — himself with the leaders of Dettah — and getting this road a priority for this government.

**Mr. Speaker:** I didn't hear a question there. I must remind Members that it's time for question period, not making statements.

QUESTION 88-16(2)  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
POVERTY IN THE NORTH

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier, and it's in light of my statement. There is a Senate committee which is studying rural poverty in the northern territories. They are in the Yukon on Monday; they're here in Yellowknife on Tuesday and Wednesday; then they're going to Iqaluit on Thursday.

I think it's important, Mr. Speaker, that we as government intervene and also have a say in regard to what — especially with the cost of living in the Northwest Territories for our residents, especially in rural parts of the territories, and realizing that part of our deficit situation is just that: it's the cost of delivering programs and services and providing to communities where we don't have an economic base for people to be able to live on. I think it's important that this government also takes part in these hearings and also that they intervene on behalf of the residents of the Northwest Territories.

I'd like to ask the Premier: are there any scheduled departments or people from the Department of Health and Social Services, or EC&E, who will be intervening on behalf of this government during these hearings?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, we are aware that the Senate committee is doing a number of trips, or a trip, across Canada. I'm not sure exactly where they're stopping. We have been approached on that basis about their meeting here, and Minister Bob McLeod will be attending on our behalf.

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Speaker, I do encourage all residents of the Northwest Territories, especially here in Yellowknife.... There will be hearings at the Northern United Place on Tuesday at nine o'clock in the morning. I think it's important, even as MLAs, that we do talk about the issue of rural poverty, because it is something that affects all our residents.

Again, I'd like to ask the Premier: will the cabinet be meeting with the Senators to also, in light of other issues that we have in the Northwest Territories such as the Northern Accord and also dealing with devolution and any other problems we may have...? Has that effort been made to meet with the Senators, when they visit the Northwest Territories, to address other issues with them?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** No. We have not set up a meeting as a cabinet or other Ministers. The point of contact will be through Minister McLeod, going on our behalf of when they are sitting on this specific issue that they are travelling on.

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Speaker, I think it's very important that we do, whenever possible, have dialogue with the Upper House by way of the Senators that do come to the North, because they do have a role to play in what happens in Ottawa.

I think it's important that we do get our message to not only the MPs or the Prime Minister but also the Senators by way of influencing them on issues that we're trying to deal with. I think we have some big challenges, especially with the devolution file being where it's at.

Again, I would like to ask the Premier if he has spoken to our Senator. Will he be meeting with Senator Sibbeston if he is also a part of this panel?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** For the record, I have a lot of faith in Minister Bob McLeod and his being able to carry our message to this Senate committee.

As for the specifics with our Senator in the Northwest Territories, I haven't yet been able to get a meeting time or made contact with his office on initiatives that we are looking at.

**Mr. Krutko:** I do have a lot of faith in my cousin too.

Laughter.

I think it's important to realize that as a government and as the Government Leader in this government, your voice carries a lot of weight around here. And I think it's important that we do voice our concerns, especially in regard to the Conservative Senators who didn't make an attempt to be here.

I think, as a government, we should write a stern letter to those Senators to make them aware that we do not appreciate being put aside because of the cost and not having the time to be here. I think, as a government, we do have a responsibility to stand up to these types of statements.

I'd like to ask the Premier: will he be writing a stern letter to the Senators who did not make an attempt to come here on the basis that they didn't have time and the cost was too high?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** It's not my intention at this time to be writing a letter to the Senators who are not making the trip. Thank you.

QUESTION 89-16(2)  
G.N.W.T. PUBLIC SERVICE  
REDUCTIONS

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to follow up on Mr. Ramsay's questions with regard to the \$135 million target for reductions in government expenditures over the next two years.

Mr. Speaker, there is concern out there, and I do believe that much of it is premised on a lack of information. I'd like to ask the Premier today.... We have committees that will be looking at strategic initiatives as reinvestments. We are, as a Regular Members' caucus, looking at strategic reductions. There are many ideas that are coming out with the help of the public service, who are submitting suggestions to us as well.

I'd like to ask the Premier: would it be possible to meet the \$135 million over the next two years' reduction without bringing layoffs to the public service of the G.N.W.T.?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, the concern is being raised out there about the government's focus on reduction. There are rumours about the number of positions that may be taken out of the system, and they are just that — rumours.

We are working on putting the information together. We're looking for input from Members. We're looking for the method of how we're going to do this.

More refocusing of government across departments' initiatives will probably be brought forward and have an impact in '09-'10. Some of the exercises we have to do is going to have an impact on our employee levels because, Mr. Speaker, almost 50 per cent of our expenditures across the Northwest Territories is related to compensation and benefits. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear something encouraging from the Premier so that we could look at effecting these cuts and reductions with the absolute least impact on employees as possible.

At any given time in the public service of the G.N.W.T., I believe there's about a 15 per cent vacancy rate. I know that in some positions, it's not possible to deliver the programs and services without positions being filled. But with a 15 per cent vacancy rate, isn't there an opportunity to look at perhaps not re-staffing positions that are not absolutely essential and integral to delivering a program or service as a way of saving money in the interim?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, that is, in fact, one of the areas that we're looking at — the basing of fees within departments, of removing those types

of dollars or identified positions that are not filled, as well as attrition.

If we set a target and we know that people are retiring, then we could look at doing that. If there are areas that are not a priority but we are reinvesting in initiatives, we can see if we can transfer employees over as well.

So there's a whole number of tools we can do in limiting the impact on our staff. That is some of the work that we are looking at as we compare the strategic initiatives we want to put in place in the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly and the areas that don't fit in priorities. Thank you.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Mr. Speaker, I think measures like that and communications like that are the most prudent on behalf of our government.

We've heard that our government is not the employer of choice anymore. We know that in all various sectors of the labour market, there's extreme competition out there. I don't think that we can afford to scare anybody out of our public service and out of the Northwest Territories. We need the people we have, and we work at professional development and investing in our employees.

I would like to ask the Premier if he will clearly communicate to his deputy ministers what the policies and the rules of the government are. My fear is that in the absence of very, very clear direction, deputy ministers could use this cost-reduction exercise inappropriately. Thank you.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, as to the reason why we're moving forward in this manner, instead of a main budget being this session we're in, we're looking to delay it so that we can do the right analysis for what we bring forward in cost savings as well as investing in the new initiatives. The message has been that we need to look at that.

The earlier question today about the deputy ministers being involved in reviewing who's being hired is part of that overlap. The policies haven't changed. We're just ensuring that if we're going to go through this exercise, we don't unduly affect employees that are either just hired by us or have long service with us.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Mr. Speaker, I know, at least for myself, I want to make sure that we use government resources to impact our residents in the most positive way possible. Our public service is a huge piece out there.

I would love to hear the Premier today tell us and confirm with us that layoffs of employees in the public service will be a last resort in terms of reducing the expenditures of this government.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, we will be measured, careful in the way we approach this, and I've laid out a number of things that are under consideration.

When we look at the options that are before us, there's the impact of the delivery of programs and services to the people that are out there expecting the delivery that we say we will provide, our employees who deliver those programs, looking at vacancies, looking at attrition, looking at transfer assignments that can happen — all those tools that we will be incorporating as we proceed forward.

But I must say, as difficult as it is, the unfortunate reality is there will be some impacts. We're going to minimize that as much as possible.

QUESTION 90-16(2)  
G.N.W.T. PUBLIC SERVICE  
REDUCTIONS

**Mr. Menicoche:** I'd like to ask my questions to the Premier with regard to job cuts and the wave of terror, as we read in the headlines this morning. My honourable colleague from Great Slave was quoted on that. But that's exactly what's going on, not only in the capital but throughout the regions as well. The people are fearing for their jobs.

What I'd like to know is.... Yes, the bottom line is important to the Finance Minister, and yes, cuts are necessary. But there's got to be due diligence and due process when they're assessing job cuts. I'd like to know what kind of processes are in place or what kinds of mechanisms are being used to assess these? Mahsi.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, the biggest things we're working at is taking the appropriate amount of time to ensure that what is being advanced as initiatives or cost-saving areas is, in fact, going to be cost-saving areas. It is going to minimize the impact on the delivery of programs and services.

But the cold, hard reality is that if we don't take the necessary steps today, then we are mortgaging our children's future — and I would say mortgaging at a sub-prime level, which we don't want to see happen.

We are taking initiatives, looking at how we do this, taking the necessary time. We will be presenting Members with our draft plans as we pull those together. The work is happening. It's taking more time than we initially anticipated, but we will be having draft plans to Members in the near future.

**Mr. Menicoche:** With respect to the assessments that are going on out there, I know that government is doing the work. The Premier said all the departments and all their analysts are doing as much work as they can.

But I'm an MLA, and people are contacting me. They're saying this is happening, and that's happening. We are the front line to our constituents.

There appears to be a disconnect. Things are happening in the regions, and they're moving forward in terms of reductions. But the government is not letting the MLAs and our committee systems know. There seems to be a gap there.

I'd like to ask the Premier: has direction been given to departments to start initiating cuts beginning April 1<sup>st</sup>? Mahsi.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** No, we have not given direction to begin the reductions in the front line on April 1<sup>st</sup>. In fact, our interim appropriation is one that will keep us going at the existing levels.

**Mr. Menicoche:** In terms of all government-wide essential services such as health care, nurses, and emergency services, how will those be affected? Have assessments been done on those?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** The work is ongoing, looking at what options are being developed by departments. Every department is going to be affected by this process. The decisions we make on what is acceptable to bring forward as well as incorporating what Members would bring to the table through their work is under careful review.

At this point we are unable to put out the detail, as we're putting that together so we can go to committee, have that review, and get some feedback as to what's being presented. We're not at the stage yet where we can lay out: here is where it's going to happen, and this is how people will be affected.

The fact is, though, because so many of our dollars go through authorities such as Education, Health and Social Services, when departments are given targets, they have to work with their partners in delivery. That's probably where they're seeing information, as options are being reviewed but have not been accepted at this point.

**Mr. Speaker:** Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

**Mr. Menicoche:** Earlier in the week, in my inbox, I saw an invitation from the Union of Northern Workers to the Premier, inviting him to speak at a round-table discussion. I'd like to know what his response was to that invitation. Mahsi.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** I did receive that letter. I am reviewing what we may be able to do. Our work is in this forum. I have had contact with the president of the UNW and will continue to have contact with him as we develop our plan.

At this point I haven't responded to that letter. Once we come up with a better plan and details of that

and Members have looked at that, I can sit down and provide a briefing to their executive.

QUESTION 91-16(2)  
DETTAH ACCESS  
ROAD RESURFACING

**Mr. Bromley:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation.

Recently the government of Nunavut signed a deal with the Government of Canada — the Building Canada Fund. I believe we are negotiating a similar agreement for the Northwest Territories. And it's an opportunity to get some of these capital projects done that we've had in mind.

We've had one in mind a long time — the Dettah Road resurfacing. I'd like to ask the Minister: will the Minister commit to meeting with the leaders in Dettah to make resurfacing of the Dettah Road a high priority?

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Speaker, I will instruct my department to look into our transportation plans across the Northwest Territories, and I assure the Member here that the Dettah access road is in these plans in terms of improving the access roads right across the North. I'm working very closely with my colleague the lead Minister for the funding that the Member alluded to in terms of all of the priorities that we're being asked for. I certainly would again reassure him that I will instruct my officials in the North Slave regional operations to set up a meeting with the leadership of Dettah, and I also invite the Member to participate with me at that meeting.

**Mr. Bromley:** I would like to ask that the Minister use his influence here to make this a priority for those people who have waited so patiently for so long. Will the Minister make it a priority? I will have one follow-up at least after that.

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Member for the question and also for the encouragement to use influence in terms of all of the priorities across the North here and specifically on transportation needs, as we heard from other Members in terms of their needs in terms of transportation. I will be sitting with the lead Minister on specific funding arrangements that we're discussing today with the federal government and looking at all the needs.

Certainly, again I would, you know, take into consideration the Dettah access road as any other roads, airports or regional facilities that are being looked at in the North here to see what our best possible investments are in terms of our limited dollars. So I thank the Member, and I certainly look forward to sitting down with the leadership and the people of Dettah, either in a short time frame or

whenever you'd be able to meet, in terms of improving the safety of their roads.

**Mr. Bromley:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Minister's commitment to sit down with the people of Dettah, the leaders in Dettah, to discuss this priority.

Will the Minister work to ensure that it will be a long-lasting resurfacing this time, a little bit thicker than a poker chip and something that will actually last a number of years? I know we have the technology for that.

Laughter.

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Speaker, as Minister of the department I'm sure that any type of work that this department does will be quality work. It will be a long-lasting investment. It will be a good investment. The people in Dettah will be very happy with the department in terms of working on their roads.

**Mr. Speaker:** Final supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

**Mr. Bromley:** Mr. Speaker, that was exactly the answer I was looking for. I'm sure the people will be pleased. When can we expect this meeting to take place?

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Speaker, I've indicated to my office to check on our schedules and my schedules and, of course, the Member's. I want a schedule that we can coordinate with the leadership of Dettah so that we would arrange that meeting with the community as soon as possible. That may be within a week or so. I'll be working with the Member on setting the time and location as to when we can meet with the good people of Dettah.

QUESTION 92-16(2)  
G.N.W.T. PUBLIC  
SERVICE REDUCTIONS

**Mr. Ramsay:** Mr. Speaker, I want to pick up where I left off with my questions to the Premier in regard to hiring. I just don't want people out there in the public wasting their time applying to positions that we're not deeming appropriate or where they're not going to fit into our strategic initiatives, like I heard the Premier say earlier.

I'd like to ask the Premier: what positions currently are not deemed appropriate or fitting into our strategic initiatives, so that people aren't applying for them?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, we've heard the Member in the past talk about the growth of our government and the growth of our employees. I don't have a handle today on just what positions,

what areas of departments, are not going to fit with our initiatives. We're undertaking that work.

The jobs are still going out there for areas that we need to fill. There hasn't been a job-hiring freeze. The process still goes, but before a final hire happens, deputies are working on initiatives with their senior staff, bringing them back to our government and seeing how they fit with the cost-saving measures we're making as well as the reinvestments, to see if they would align, as a preventative sort of step instead of having to deal with it after the fact.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Mr. Speaker, I guess the fact of the matter for me is that we weren't consulted on that. I listened to the Premier state to my colleague Mr. Menicoche that no instructions had been given in terms of beginning reductions. When he was answering my questions earlier, it was obvious to me that he said that instructions had been given to department heads to begin an exercise where they would see where hiring fit in terms of the strategic plan.

So again, Mr. Speaker, it's a bit complex. It's a bit unsettling for me. I'd like the Premier to maybe explain exactly what instructions have been given to the departments.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, let's not mix the words of one response with another. We know instructions have been given to departments to meet their targets. Instructions have not been given to departments — let's separate that now; instructions have not been given to departments — to begin reductions April 1. We have not made that decision at this level. We haven't brought those forward as part of a business plan as of yet. Until we get that level of approval, we can't be going out and giving that direction to the public service.

What does happen as a normal course of business, for example, Mr. Speaker, is that when a program has been sunsetted already, when departments knew that their three-year funding was running out, whether it was part of a federal transfer or a program that a department may have initiated a number of years ago, then it's normal business as we proceed. It's not part of the reduction scenario or cost-saving measures that we're taking as a government overall.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Mr. Speaker, I'm having a little bit of trouble understanding the logic where the government tells departments that they're going to be okay hiring on a case-by-case basis in an effort to achieve reductions. We don't have to wait until April 1<sup>st</sup> to figure that out; that happened last week. That exercise is already happening. It's at play in the government departments. The instruction was given by the government without consulting the Regular Members.

I'd like to again ask the Premier: what specific instructions have been given to the departments?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, I see the path this is going down: that as a new government, as Premier, we've not shared any information with Members, that we've been withholding information. I've taken a large number of steps to be as open as possible with Members, to share the direction we're going in.

In fact, early in January I offered up the opportunity to see where we've looked at setting these targets. We've shared information. Is it complicated? Is it because the Member just disagrees with where we're going? I'm not sure.

What we were trying to do is prevent the reverse. When we heard that departments were beginning to shut down positions and not hire, we hadn't given a direction on a hiring freeze or anything of that nature, and that is not in place.

The policies are all still in place and being used for the jobs that are out there and being advertised. What we've asked for is an extra level of scrutiny, in a sense, with the deputy ministers as they're doing their work to have a final look at that to ensure that we're not going down a path that might six months later, when we come to our May/June budget session, end up laying off some employees that just were hired six months prior.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Mr. Speaker, that wasn't the path I was going down, but the Premier said it himself. Whether the information is being shared or not — we could debate that for a long time. I have a differing view of things than the Premier does, obviously.

Again, I just wanted to ask the question: are we being clear and consistent with the instructions that are being given to the departments? Are all departments being treated equally on the instructions that are being given to them? Thank you.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, the result, as the Member has pointed out, of the additional process we've undertaken at this stage is to be clear, to be consistent with every department, and I believe that they are getting the message. Thank you.

QUESTION 93-16(2)  
UPGRADE OF N.W.T.  
LICENCE PLATES

**Mr. Hawkins:** Mr. Speaker, about a year ago I raised the issue of the N.W.T. licence plate and how its tagline says, "Explore Canada's Arctic." My concern at the time with the Minister of the day was the fact that it's not truly reflective of our Northwest Territories in present times. The good Minister of

the day had agreed with me, and it sounded like the department was moving forward full steam ahead on updating the licence plate with a suggestion I brought forward, "spectacular.ca."

My question to the Minister of Transportation is: where is this project? Assuming that it's still going forward, when can we see some work that's been done on this project?

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Speaker, the polar bear licence plate is internationally known and has played a significant role over the years in promoting the Northwest Territories. I'd like to thank the Member for being persistent on this issue and for the suggestion and working with this government in terms of changing our licence plate to "spectacular." I'd like to advise the House and the Member that the N.W.T. Tourism group is working with the Department of ITI and the Department of Transportation in terms of promoting this licence plate, and it's going through its process of establishing such a logo for the Northwest Territories.

**Mr. Hawkins:** I'm glad the Minister understands it clearly that I in no way am suggesting to change the shape of the licence plate; it's only the tagline. My concern is that it's not happening soon enough. The issue, I can clearly hear, has good buy-in, but it's not moving fast enough.

My question really is: when can we see some results of this work? When can we expect to be able to see cars driving around the Northwest Territories that say "spectacular" on the back of them? When can we see that work?

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** I, too, would like to see the licence plate and the word "spectacular" on it. I will follow up on this issue with my department. I will ask the department to give me an update as to this, and I will pass it on to the Members of the House. If Mr. Hawkins would like further discussions, I'll be happy to sit down with him. I'm also working closely with my colleague from ITI in terms of advancing this issue so that all people in the Northwest Territories can be proud to have this word on their licence plates.

**Mr. Hawkins:** Mr. Speaker, this only begs one more element to this combination. Obviously it's nice to see a Minister working with a Member and hearing the cries from this side of the House — and hasn't forgotten us, by the way. But I'd just like the reassurance from the Minister that he will include the N.W.T. Tourism Association in on this as well as, as he had mentioned, the Minister of ITI. Finally, would he make sure I'm included in some type of release when they do this? Thank you.

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for the spectacular question.

Laughter.

I would ask my colleague that he and I would work on this very closely. We are working directly with N.W.T. Tourism. We're all working on this issue here. Hopefully, we would make the fact of the announcements in terms of when we could unroll this licence plate out to the people of the Northwest Territories.

QUESTION 94-16(2)  
DEPARTMENTAL POLICY REGARDING  
DOCUMENTS ACCEPTED  
AS VALID IDENTIFICATION

**Mr. Abernethy:** My question today is directed towards the Minister Responsible for Transportation.

The other day I talked about customer service and whatnot, and brought up an issue about driver's licences and how they're not accepted as ID, even though they are official ID when people want to get additional pieces of ID.

New examples have come to me since I made that statement. In one situation, a lady wanted to change her driver's licence because she got married. She brought in a certified legal copy of her marriage certificate and was told it was not acceptable, that she needed to have her original marriage certificate. So off she went home. She got her official copy, brought it back, put it on the table. They took a photocopy, handed it back and said, "Thank you very much." That photocopy is not worth the paper it's printed on. The certified copy was far more legal and acceptable.

I'd like to ask the Minister Responsible for Transportation to commit to looking at their policies and procedures to ensure they aren't creating redundancies, they aren't creating extra barriers for people, and they're streamlined and efficient, thereby saving money and whatnot.

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Speaker, the issue the Member has raised, I will be looking into it. I will be asking the department.

I know there is lots of work that has been done by the department in terms of this issue here. I will ask the department to review its policies to look at the specific issue that Mr. Abernethy is bringing up here today. I will make a commitment that I would follow up with it as soon as possible and see where we can provide better service to our people in the North.

QUESTION 95-16(2)  
REDUCED SPEED LIMIT  
ON KAKISA RIVER BRIDGE

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** My questions also are for the Minister of Transportation today.

I had a constituent who had occasion to drive to Hay River the other day and reminded me when she got here when she asked about the Kakisa River Bridge and the sign there that says, "Slow down; five kilometres per hour."

We obviously have a very serious problem with the Kakisa River Bridge. Unfortunately, we don't have an opportunity for an ice crossing or a ferry on that particular river. It needs to be fixed. It is a piece of Territorial transportation infrastructure that is obviously in disrepair. I'm worried about big trucks slowing down in a snowstorm to get down to that five kilometres per hour and the traffic behind them. It's danger.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Transportation: what is being done to address the problems at the Kakisa River Bridge?

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for raising this issue.

Mr. Speaker, the Kakisa River Bridge is in dire need of being replaced, and it is being looked at. It is an old bridge that shows some deteriorating structures to it. It is in the plans to replace that bridge.

We are asking drivers to slow down when they come to the bridge. It may be annoying to them, but they need to slow down to be safe on that bridge. I, for one, am fearful that a terrible accident may be in the waiting. I've asked my department. My colleagues here are all aware that this bridge is in dire need to be replaced as soon as possible.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Transportation: what's wrong with the bridge? Should we be worried even driving across it at five kilometres per hour? What is exactly wrong with the bridge that requires people to slow down to five kilometres per hour?

I'm just waiting for you to finish your consultation there.

What's wrong with the bridge? Why do we have to slow down to five kilometres? Should we be worried about driving on it at even five kilometres per hour? What kind of assurance can the Minister offer to the public? What's wrong with the bridge?

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Speaker, it's a precautionary measure that we ask of all public members, to slow down because of structural damages to the bridge, that they slow down when they cross the bridge at the Kakisa River.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Mr. Speaker, we ask people to slow down. If they don't slow down and something unfortunate, an incident, took place, how serious is the bridge? This is a precautionary measure, I understand. If a big truck went over it and didn't slow down, what could happen?

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Speaker, the question is on all our infrastructure systems, on roads in the North here.

We're asking as a precautionary measure for vehicles to slow down because there's some structural damage that we need to have replaced at the Kakisa Bridge. Like any other, it's not a fail-safe bridge, so we're asking members of the public to slow down when they cross the bridge.

**Mr. Speaker:** Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** I'd like to ask the Minister: is he quite satisfied that the signage leading up to the bridge is adequate to communicate to people that they need to slow down? Has he seen the signage? Is it bright enough? Does it start back far enough? Is it sufficient?

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Speaker, the bridge remains safe to the travelling public. The signage on the bridge is as much as we can do, and if we can, to do more. I'm satisfied that the signage that we have there, the message we have out for the public — to slow down when they cross the Kakisa Bridge — is there. We've been monitoring that traffic.

I myself have driven that road. I have crossed that bridge at five kilometres an hour. I myself am satisfied that all we can do now is up to the public to make wise choices, in terms of travelling all our roads in the N.W.T.

QUESTION 96-16(2)  
ALLOCATING EXPENDITURES FOR  
MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR  
FUTURE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that there have been some tenders let in the Mackenzie Delta region. Yet some of these items haven't even been approved by this House. In one case, it was deferred 'til the May-June session. Mr. Speaker, also part of those tendering documents called for materials to be delivered in 2009.

I'd like to ask the Premier: are we spending money in this fiscal year which hasn't been budgeted for in this House? Also, why is it that we are allocating contracts for next year, which is April 2009, when we're not even to April 2008 yet?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, in our processes, we are beginning our budgeting cycle. Normally, budgets would be brought in place and voted in this House for April 1 and beyond. We're coming forward with an interim process, and then May-June is the main sitting, as we've worked out with Members.

Some departments, as stated in the House yesterday, have come forward with a larger part because of some contracting issues, and those may be incorporated. But without the specifics, I am unable to give a full response.

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Speaker, the information was provided to the Government House Leader this morning, when I had a discussion with him on this matter.

Again, as a government we are going through a deficit-cutting process here. Yet the departments are spending money for the following year, when we are telling people we have to cut our budget and we have to cut programs and services. But the departments continue to put out contracts for services they don't need, almost, in some cases, two years down the road.

I'd like to ask the Premier: could he look into this situation? If this is a trend of the departments, I think that we should maybe put the brakes on that in light of the deficit situation we find ourselves in.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Again, once I have the details of those specific issues that the Member has raised, I would be willing to look into that and get the proper information to see why these are happening, if they're tied to previous monies.

Everything we put out there, there's a caveat that if departments are going forward, it's based on approvals of this Assembly for new dollars. But I would gladly sit down with the Member and get that detail.

**Mr. Speaker:** The time for question period has expired; however, I will allow the Member a supplementary question.

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Speaker, also in one case the project was deferred until we went through a line item with the Premier in regard to an appropriation in which certain items were withdrawn from the budget because they weren't classified as urgent.

I'd just like to ask the Premier: if they're not classified as urgent, why are government departments putting out contracts, and yet we're deferring projects in our budget process?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, we'll be — later on today, I hope, and throughout the rest of our session — dealing with specifics as we proceed and looking for approvals from this Assembly.

Again, for the specific areas, I need to get the details and actually sit down with the Member and see where things are.

**Mr. Speaker:** Final, short supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Speaker, the construction industry gets frustrated with government contracts when they put out tenders. They put them on the bind for one or two years where they have to hold these products, or they deliver the products a year or two in advance, yet they have to front the money.

I'd just like to ask the Premier if he can maybe look at how we're putting out contracts and work with either the Construction Association or the private industry to see if there are ways that we can do this better by way of our tendering process.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Speaker, we are in fact looking at the whole area of our contracting practices, the timing we let out our contracts, our processes that are incorporated to date. We've instructed a committee led by Minister Michael McLeod to review this process and come back with recommendations on the area of contracting and existing practices. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** The time for question period has expired.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to return to item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

Unanimous consent granted.

### **Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery** *Reversion*

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize two pages that have been serving in our Legislature this week who are from Hay River South. I would like to thank them for a job very well done. They are Mikaela Muller and Danelle Stelmack. Thank you, girls.

**Mr. Beaulieu:** I'd like to recognize and thank the Chipewyan interpreter, trainees, instructors and elders that have been here all week.

**Hon. Michael McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize today a constituent from Enterprise who is in town for business. Winnie Cadieux is a former mayor of Enterprise. I'd like to say welcome to her.

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize two pages in the House from my constituency, Brooke Edwards and Steve Gruben, who are from Aklavik and who are here this week. I'd like to thank them for coming, and I hope they enjoy their stay. Mahsi.

**Mr. Speaker:** Later on today, colleagues, I will be tabling a report from the Auditor General's office on the review of NWT Housing Corporation. I'm pleased to welcome into the House three individuals from the office of the Auditor General: Mr. Andrew Ross, Stephanie Nielson, and David Bourne. Welcome to the proceedings of the House.

**Mr. Bromley:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the pages, Alexandra and Kaitlyn, from the Weledeh riding. They've been doing a great job. It's great to see them here. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** If we've missed anyone in the gallery, welcome to the House. I hope you're enjoying the proceedings.

Item 8, written questions, Mr. Beaulieu.

### **Written Questions**

#### QUESTION 7-16(2) SPORT AND YOUTH FUNDING FROM THE MACKENZIE RECREATIONAL ASSOCIATION

**Mr. Beaulieu:** Mr. Speaker, this week I talked about funding for sports, recreation and youth programs and services from sources other than the G.N.W.T. I'd like to follow up my statement with the following questions.

Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution are both members of the Mackenzie Recreation Association. I understand that the MRA received an increase in core funding this year.

I'd like to ask the Minister of MACA:

- 1) What is the total funding that Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution received in each of the last five years from the MRA, and what was the purpose of the funding?
- 2) What is the total funding that other road access and fly-in-only communities received from the MRA in each of the last five years, and what was the purpose of the funding?
- 3) Fly-in-only communities are at a significant disadvantage to fully participate at the same level of those communities on the road system. Does the MRA recognize this, and if so, how do they address it? Do they provide travel assistance to those communities that are isolated?

**Mr. Speaker:** Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees, Mrs. Groenewegen.

### **Reports of Standing and Special Committees**

#### COMMITTEE REPORT 1-16(2) STANDING COMMITTEE ON PRIORITIES AND PLANNING

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** I would like to provide a report from the Standing Committee on Priorities

and Planning. It's a report on the 2008-2009 draft Interim Appropriation.

The Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning met to review the draft 2008-2009 interim appropriation between January 14 and 23, 2008. The draft interim appropriation included operations expenditures needed for the first quarter of the 2008-2009 fiscal year as well as a preliminary infrastructure acquisition plan. The operations expenditures are based on the 2007-2008 main estimates and do not include any new initiatives or reductions.

The committee agreed to support the operations component of the draft interim appropriation in the interest of the government being able to continue to provide programs and services without disruption, pending the approval of the full 2008-2009 main estimates.

This report should in no way be seen as an endorsement of the status quo. The committee fully expects that operations expenditures will be reconsidered in the context of our caucus priorities and that changes will be reflected in this year's business plan and main estimates.

In the course of our discussions on the preliminary infrastructure acquisition plan, it became clear to Members that an overhaul of the entire capital planning process is urgently needed.

Over time, the plan that Members vote on at the outset of the fiscal year has come to bear less and less resemblance to the reality of the work that actually gets completed. Price estimates provided in the plan are often inaccurate and out of date. As a result, Members are not sufficiently informed of the full cost of the project under consideration.

Schedules and time frames are unrealistic and do not reflect the limited availability of contractors to undertake the work. This, along with insufficient accountability for project completion, has led to substantial carry-overs from one fiscal year to the next and an ever growing infrastructure backlog.

With every day of delay, the price of addressing the backlog is inflating as construction costs are rising at a rate well above the overall Consumer Price Index. The carry-over for capital projects and infrastructure contributions from 2006-2007 to 2007-2008 was a staggering \$97 million.

Further, energy efficiency does not appear to be a consistent component of new infrastructure design. Members fear that this pay-later approach will leave us with buildings that we cannot afford to operate as fuel prices continue to rise.

Finally, the committee sees a need to revisit the overall fiscal strategy and the amount of infrastructure investment projected over the next

several years. In light of these concerns, the committee was pleased to hear that the Premier has assigned a cabinet committee to examine the capital planning process. The Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning has requested that two Regular Members participate directly in this review as our representatives.

Members also expressed concerns that some projects included in the '07-08 main estimates are no longer in the plan while some new projects appear to have been fast-tracked. The committee requested and received detailed explanations for these changes. In order to ensure that new projects are properly considered in context, the committee recommended that the government revise the plan to include only those items which absolutely require approval prior to the '08-09 main estimates and provide a justification for the need to include each of those items in the interim appropriation. The committee agreed that acceptable justification might include addressing urgent safety issues, honouring existing contractual obligations and meeting shipping deadlines for materials.

This concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning on the draft 2008-2009 interim appropriation. Individual Members may have questions and comments as we proceed. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that Committee Report 1-16(2) be received and adopted. Thank you.

Motion carried.

**Mr. Speaker:** Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents, Hon. Michael McLeod.

### Tabling of Documents

**Hon. Michael McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled *Biomass Heating System, Wood Pellet Boilers: North Slave Correctional Centre*, Yellowknife, NT. Thank you.

Document 18-16(2), *Biomass Heating System, Wood Pellet Boilers: North Slave Correctional Centre*, tabled.

**Hon. Norman Yakeleya:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled *Minister of Transportation's Annual Report to the Legislative Assembly for 2007 on the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act (1990)*. Thank you.

Document 19-16(2), *Minister of Transportation's Annual Report to the Legislative Assembly for 2007 on the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act (1990)*, tabled.

**Hon. Michael Miltenberger:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled *2006-2007 Annual Report of the Western Northwest Territories Biophysical Study*. Thank you.

Document 20-16(2), *2006-2007 Annual Report of the Western Northwest Territories Biophysical Study*, tabled.

**Mr. Speaker:** In response to Motion 17-15(4), adopted by this House on March 2, 2006, I wish to table the *Report of the Auditor General of Canada on the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Public Housing and Homeownership Programs — February 2008*.

Document 21-16(2), *Report of the Auditor General of Canada on the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Public Housing and Homeownership Programs — February 2008*, tabled.

**Mr. Speaker:** Item 15, notices of motion. Mr. Menicoche.

### Notices of Motion

#### MOTION 3-16(2) TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOCIAL HOUSING

**Mr. Menicoche:** Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, February 18, 2008, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that the Legislative Assembly strongly recommends that the responsibility for the administration of social housing be once again placed under the control of the NWT Housing Corporation; and further, in keeping with the concept of centralizing subsidy programs, that responsibility for determining the methodology of calculating social housing subsidies be retained by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment; and furthermore, that this Legislative Assembly recommend that the government provide a response to this motion within 120 days.

#### MOTION 4-16(2) UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

**Mr. Menicoche:** Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, February 18, 2008, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, that this Legislative Assembly recognize and support the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as an international legal instrument; and further, that this Legislative Assembly strongly urge the Government of Canada to respect and honour the decision of the

international community in adopting the declaration; and furthermore, that this Legislative Assembly strongly recommend that the government of the Northwest Territories formally request the Government of Canada to reverse its current position and support the declaration.

**Mr. Speaker:** Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters, Minister's Statement 1-16(2), Minister's Statement 9-16(2) and Bill 1, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

### Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** I'd call the Committee of the Whole to order. We have Minister's Statement 1-16(2), Minister's Statement 9-16(2) and Bill 1, Interim Appropriation Act, 2008-2009. What is the wish of the committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Mr. Chairman, the committee today wishes to consider Bill 1, Interim Appropriation Act, 2008-2009. The Minister has provided his opening comments, and we would like to proceed with general comments. Thank you.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Is the committee agreed?

**Some honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** With that, we'll take a short break and begin with general comments.

The Committee of the Whole took a short recess.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** I'll call Committee of the Whole back to order.

#### BILL 1 INTERIM APPROPRIATION ACT, 2008-2009

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** At this time I'll ask the Minister if he'd like to bring in witnesses.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** For the record, Mr. Roland, could you introduce your witness.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Joining me at the witness table is Mr. Sandy Kalgutkar, who is the director of Budget Evaluation for the Financial Management Board Secretariat.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome to your witness.

General comments in regard to the Minister's opening statement. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The report or response to the interim appropriation report was read into the record earlier today, into these proceedings. Just to speak to those issues in a little bit more detail.

This is an unusual budgeting year because of the Territorial election. It throws us off our normal schedule and thus the need for an interim appropriation. I think the interim appropriation from an O&M point of view can be fairly well characterized as a status quo kind of extension of previous fiscal years' operations.

I think that where we got into more concentrated discussion was around the capital that the government felt it was necessary to incorporate into the interim appropriation. Certainly, the way we are somewhat or even, I should say, extensively affected by things such as our short summer season and that some of our shipping methods in the Northwest Territories have a seasonal aspect to them as well, we were very interested in knowing which capital projects needed to be advanced and brought into an interim appropriation as opposed to an irregular budgeting process. We were able to obtain information from the government as to the rationale for including as much capital in the interim appropriation as was contained in there, so there has been some dialogue back and forth with the government with respect to the capital pieces.

Some of the things that we were concerned about not interfering with were where there was already a contractual arrangement that had been put in place for a certain project and there were obligations to meet under that. We were also obviously concerned about any projects that needed to be advanced in a timely manner because of any safety or code issues. In our capital planning criteria, of course, the protection of people and the protection of assets are very high on that list of priorities. And the other thing that we didn't want to be ignorant of, I suppose, was the need to pass things in order for materials to be shipped so that things could be built at the most cost-effective time of the year. When you start getting into winter construction and hoarding and heating and all kinds of other costs, it doesn't take long to add a lot of money onto your capital project. So those are the kinds of things that we were looking for.

Anything that could be deferred we were wanting to defer to a normal process, so we did get information back on those projects. On the individual projects I think Members will have questions and comments, but I would like to thank the government for doing some extra work for us to help us understand the need to include certain projects in the interim appropriation.

So with that focus on the capital part of the interim appropriation as well, we felt it was necessary to discuss the entire capital planning process and how we go about doing that. We feel a lot of pressure. We have limited money for capital, we have a lot of capital demands on our budget and we want to ensure that the capital planning process is such that we can assure ourselves that we're getting the most value for the money that we do have to spend and that we limit things like capital carryovers.

Also, looking at the idea that the value of a dollar today might have less value a year from now and that we don't have a crystal ball, we can't judge what other kinds of influences are going to come to bear on the price of capital projects in the future. Right now there's a lot of competition for trades people and workers for some of the building demands in Alberta. We feel in some ways that here in the Northwest Territories we've been swept up in those fast-rising costs of capital projects, and we want to look at ways of mitigating that, whether it means staging or pacing projects, I guess, in such a way that we can maximize the use of Northern contractors, maximize Northern content in those projects and certainly maximize Northern workers. If there are ways that we as a government can make decisions that will positively impact those things, those are the kinds of decisions that we want to make.

Also, in our capital planning it's been brought up — and it's a very good point, and I'm sure Members will want to elaborate on this — that we have gone away from standardized types of design and engineering on buildings, and we've put a lot of emphasis on consulting with client departments. PWS has put a lot of emphasis on consulting with client departments on what they're looking at. And then a lot of consulting is done around programming that's going to be in these facilities, and I think that in doing so, maybe we have gone a little too far the other way.

If you have a chance to build a major piece of capital infrastructure, it would be nice if it was reflective of the area. There are a lot of things that would be nice, but given the demands on our capital budget, I think we have to think a little bit more about utility, and certainly we need to think about the ongoing costs of operating those facilities. The O&M piece can soon add up in years to come, so the integration of more standardized design and engineering of buildings will help steer away from perhaps some architectural features that might cost us a lot. Also, we need to think about conservation and efficiency of buildings. We need to think about how much we need to spend at the front end to ensure that we aren't paying exorbitant operation and maintenance costs on an ongoing basis. So those are things that I think it would be very prudent of our government to consider when it comes to our capital.

With that, Mr. Chairman, like I said, I'm sure other Members have things they'd like to raise and points they would like to elaborate on with respect to the interim appropriation, so I'll leave my general comments at that. Thank you.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, as Mrs. Groenewegen has pointed out, the interim appropriation is one where it will give us time to work on our main estimates process and give us the time to do a proper review of the steps we would like to take as the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

The O&M as highlighted is fairly straightforward, as the Member has pointed out, in capturing what we require to run for the three months of this interim appropriation.

The capital plan is one where it is different. Initially a plan went to the departments, requesting what would be required in a full year, looking at the timing of our process, so that contracts could be let in a timely fashion in order to get materials ordered and construction done. So we went out with that initial process, met with committee, and after review with committee and looking at some of the items, we went back to departments to request what was required as an absolute during this time, what could be later left to the May/June budget session, and came back with the revised document and are presenting that now at this point.

As well, we're in full agreement with the whole capital plan process. As a government we've realized, in looking at the supplementary appropriations, for example, of the past government, that the final supplementary appropriation has grown significantly, a large part of that being capital carryovers for one reason or another. So we've initiated an infrastructure committee to review that whole process of looking at how we get capital done in the North, at the timing that contracts are let, the whole process of when a capital infrastructure plan should be tabled and voted on. So there's a whole number of things that will be incorporated into this process.

As well, I agree with the capital planning itself on structures, the type of design. We need to look at the way we do that and how we carry forward with that within a tight fiscal environment.

One of the other challenges we find and that the Member has pointed out is that we're challenged that many of our trades people in the North are being offered lucrative employment in other jurisdictions and, as well, contracting companies. Many of our larger companies that used to do some of our larger projects in the Northwest Territories have now moved on to other jurisdictions and are not putting in tender packages or RFPs for a number of our projects, so that is also an area of concern when we talk about competition in the

Northwest Territories. That's all having an effect on us, and we do need to deal with that. We will be coming forward with recommendations as that committee does its work. Thank you.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am in agreement with my colleague Mrs. Groenewegen in her comments, but I would like to make a few of my own. I've mentioned previously that I feel there's a necessity for us to take a different mentality in regard to our budgeting and our fiscal planning.

I spoke the other day about living within our means and establishing a budget which more closely reflects the actual costs that this government incurs over a year's period. I know this is an interim appropriation, but I want to re-emphasize that it is extremely important that we change the way we budget, in my view. I would hope to see that when we get our full budget in May/June, the numbers are much closer to reality and that supplementary appropriations become a thing of the past, used only if absolutely necessary in an emergency situation.

I wanted to comment on the Minister's remarks. He states on the first page that the capital investment expenditure amount reflects the full-year requirements for projects currently under construction, projects that need to be tendered. And then on the last page he states that the \$110.291 million in the capital investment expenditures represents a 4.7 per cent increase from the 2007-2008 capital plan.

I'm concerned that if the capital expenditures that we're approving as part of this interim appropriation are not the full amount of capital that's required for '08-09 because it's only those items which are under contract or safety measures or are ongoing, we're already a 4.7 per cent increase over last year's capital. So when the full budget comes forward in May/June, how much more are we liable to spend on capital? I would like an explanation of that statement.

To the report from committee. I totally endorse the statement that we need an overhaul of the entire capital planning process. I think that's been mentioned more than once. I just wanted to reiterate that as well.

Lastly, my concern about energy efficiency planning is that we are being proactive and not reactive. I would like to emphasize that as well. There is a statement in the report from committee which says, "Energy efficiency does not appear to be a consistent component of new infrastructure design."

I am in total agreement with that and would hope that the government would be moving forward with a coordinated plan to minimize our expenditures in terms of energy and efficiency and so on.

I will have some questions later on. Thank you.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Bisaro is correct in the process that we are undertaking. At least at this stage the interim process is a feature of how we do business. We don't see it too often in the life of a government, and this allows us to then have a very good look at the way we do our budgeting, the exercises we go through, and to make the required changes as we would like to see it as Members of the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly. That is why we are doing the interim appropriation process.

The capital plan is one where we also realize that we'll need to move ahead with key projects; for example, in areas where there's only barge service, where materials for construction need to be done during the summer operations and, as we heard from Mrs. Groenewegen earlier, the fact that building in winter drives costs up.

The 4.7 per cent increase over the '07-08 amount is due to the increased cost of materials and labour that have been estimated in the process. As well, some projects that are highlighted for safety issues for moving on with agreements that have been reached have been addressed through this process as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Beaulieu:** Something fairly quick. I'm just learning the process of appropriation. The Minister's opening remarks for the bill indicate all of the areas where the interim appropriation is exceeding one-quarter or one-third of the budget, 32 per cent of the budget. The various reasons for why these areas exceed 33 per cent of the budget all seem to be that contracts had to be put in place.

I was just wondering if the Minister could explain to me why there has to be an appropriation prior to contracts being in place, and if there wasn't another accounting method that can be used to still put the contracts in place with the understanding that the appropriation would be coming with a full budget.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, the process we used was, as Members highlighted, using one-third of the amount we would normally use during a fiscal year. The reason there are some areas of going over would be, for example, if we're going to enter leases for facilities or renew any of our existing leases through, for example, Public Works and Services. They have to enter into agreements for a full year, and it would be difficult to try to do a month-by-month process. Some of the contracts, as-and-when contracts, as we go out to people for work during the summer into the year require an annual appropriation. For Municipal and Community Affairs, for example, because they fund their regional operations in their first quarter to a large amount, that's why they'd get more of their dollars.

The exercise we go through and the reason we do that is, for example.... Well, the rule would be that without the authority to spend the money from this House, departments could not enter beyond the month-by-month situation. So no department can spend dollars unless this House has given approval, and that's been taken into consideration when there are contractual obligations that run beyond the first three months of our operation. Thank you.

**Mr. Bromley:** I certainly want to start by endorsing the comments of Mrs. Groenewegen earlier in the report from the committee. I'm in full agreement with many of the issues raised there. I think I also see many opportunities to achieve cost reductions and so on through energy efficiency and local production of energy that creates revenue and so on.

Improving capital planning. I think that's been discussed. It's well known now that we need a tune-up there, and I heard the government is going to work on that.

I also hear from constituents who are employees and contractors with the government that there's a lot of hoarding of O&M budgets to try and come in under budget, way under budget even, and so on. That is really at the cost of delivery of programs. So I think that's one highlight, one heads-up, that I'd like to see our upper managers have in mind as we go forward: to be spending efficiently and so on in there.

I also have appreciated the information provided by the Minister in preliminary discussions that have got us to this point. I have increased my understanding and answered some of my questions along the way.

I'd really like to take this opportunity to speak positively for a second here on the decision to include, to this point, funding for the territorial dementia facility. Dementia is really an incredibly sad condition that can affect people across the Northwest Territories. It's a very difficult disease and takes a terrible toll on families, often requiring 24-hour constant supervision and so on. Probably in the majority of cases this is being done by families and relatives with little support and often no respite for the caregivers. Eventually this takes a toll on the health of people doing this care, and in fact, people often end up sending these patients south at a very high expense, but it's necessary for proper care and so on.

I would like to note that in this case we have a record of non-government organizations like the Yellowknife Association of Concerned Citizens for Seniors and they are doing good work in the meantime and also doing work towards this facility, planning and so on, in conjunction with private

enterprise in town and with the government to date. So I want to recognize that and note that this is the opportunity to take advantage of the work and dedication of many of those people and organizations.

I'd also note that one of the related sister facilities, if you will, the Aven Manor residential facility for elders, hosts residents from across the Northwest Territories, including, of course, Fort Good Hope and Tulita, Fort Resolution, Deline, and many others.

The dementia facility is incredibly expensive, and it's expensive because it's meeting a highly-specialized need. Currently, in the absence of such a facility, people who are suffering from dementia are housed at actually much greater cost, in many cases in hospitals and other inappropriate but very expensive, facilities.

So I'd just like to heartily endorse the decision to put some of our capital resources into that facility. I look forward to going over the bill in more detail here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** I thank the Member for his words in this area and the interest he has for the facilities we have dealing with those seniors in the Northwest Territories — elders and working with the groups. I think the dementia facility is an example of a partnership between the government, NGOs and industry to make this possible. It's that type of program — thinking outside the box — that allows this to happen. If we were to stick to our typical process, it would be much more problematic to do this and come up with a cost-effective way of doing this type of work.

Our experience in the North has been, when we look at areas of repatriation, that if we don't have the facility in the North, we send people south for many of the needs that we can't deliver in the Northwest Territories. Bringing them back to the Northwest Territories, where we're building facilities and operating them, proves to be in most cases more expensive than doing it in other ways. But we do realize there's a growing population. There are some of these services that we can bring back to the North, at least to one community or a few if that's possible in the future. This project is one of those that aligns itself with a partnership with organizations, but it's not without its challenges. Let's put it that way. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Ramsay:** I'd like to thank the Minister of Finance, FMBS and the Premier for being here this afternoon to discuss the interim appropriation. I just have a few comments.

I don't want to go over everything. I agree with much of what my colleagues have been saying, especially when it comes to energy efficiency and the capital planning process, which I certainly would

endorse needs to be addressed. I also would strongly back up the opinion of my colleagues that Regular Members need to be included in the discussion on revamping the capital acquisition or infrastructure acquisition planning process here in the government of the Northwest Territories. We need to be at the table when that's discussed. I'm not sure which vehicle that may take. I know we need to find a way to be included and not excluded from that process.

A couple of observations, I guess, if I could. I don't want to go over everything, but the dementia facility here in Yellowknife is kind of out of the box in terms of a way of getting a piece of public infrastructure built. It's a much-needed facility, and I echo the comments Mr. Bromley had earlier. We need to move forward with this much-needed piece of infrastructure.

We seem to be always spending money on this FIS system and software and other things associated with the Financial Information System of the government of the Northwest Territories. I've been around now for five years, and it seems to me that every year there's a substantial amount of dollars, millions of dollars, being spent in this area of our operation. I have trouble understanding why we're still getting reports that are printed on antiquated, out-of-date systems. During this last summer we got a copy of the contracts report over \$5,000. It came to us in a format that they were using in the 1980s, it seems to me. Where are we spending this money on the Financial Information System?

I would agree, Mr. Chairman, that we need to spend the money, but when are we going to get the evidence that the money that we're spending is actually making a difference and we are going to have access to financial information at the drop of a dime? I'm talking about specific, detailed information that right now, to be honest with you, Mr. Chairman, I don't think we can just pull off just like that. I might be mistaken, but I don't think I am. I really do believe we need to look at this area, especially in terms of getting the information. It's going to be money well spent, but I'm just trying to understand why we're spending all the money and we're still having these reports that aren't what I think a government the size of the Northwest Territories should be producing, Mr. Chairman.

I'd just be going over old ground if I continued on, Mr. Chairman, so with that, I'll leave it at that.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** The capital infrastructure piece is one, yes, that we agree needs to be seriously looked at and to make some adjustments, possibly a complete revamping. For example, instead of doing a combined O&M and capital infrastructure project, is it more effective if we separate the two so that contractors have enough advance time to bid on a program, to get materials

sent up and delivered into those communities in a time frame that allows for summer construction, not winter construction? That review needs to happen.

We've got together the Cabinet Infrastructure Committee and we've got the correspondence from committee now requesting involvement in that, and we'll review that.

The FIS system is something that is old. It is antiquated. In fact, much of the expenditures in past years have been trying to keep that system operational. That is why you see the large amount of dollars here to actually fully replace that system. It is a mainframe system, but it does not deal with the contracts report the Member has spoken about. That is still produced out of the Department of ITI with their systems. But as we proceed forward, many of our mainframe systems and those that are across departments are to ensure that the information fits into the FIS so that we can produce those reports in a timely fashion and be able to work with a newer system.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Do the Members agree that there are no further general comments and we can proceed? Are we agreed that we continue on with page 3 of the supplementary appropriation? Clause by clause of the interim appropriation?

**Some honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Under detail, Schedule 1, Operations Expenditures, Legislative Assembly, appropriation authorized request: \$4.927 million.

Schedule 1, Operations Expenditures, Legislative Assembly, \$4,927,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Does everybody have their documents? We're on tab 1, page 3, Schedule 1, Operations Expenditures, department number 2, Executive Offices, including Human Resources, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, Financial Management Board Secretariat, \$36 million, appropriation authorized request: \$36,254,000.

Executive, \$36,254,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Finance, appropriation authorization request: \$4,234,000.

Finance, \$4,234,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Municipal and Community Affairs, appropriation authorization request: \$59,258,000.

Municipal and Community Affairs, \$59,258,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Page 4. Mr. Ramsay.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Mr. Chairman, I just have a question. It's just backing up a little bit to the department of the Executive, if we could go back there. I seek unanimous consent to go back to the department of the Executive.

Unanimous consent granted.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In looking at possible reductions, we've got the Department of Intergovernmental Relations, Aboriginal Affairs and the Department of Human Resources. Would the government not be wise to look at having one deputy minister of the Executive to oversee the operations of those departments, and not necessarily a deputy minister for each of those departments and everything else associated with that?

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Excuse me. Mr. Ramsay, could you repeat the last part of your sentence? Your mic went off.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Mr. Chairman, again, in an effort to reduce spending, I'm just wondering why we wouldn't look at having one deputy minister for the department of the Executive. Then you wouldn't require the DMs of the departments inside the department of the Executive, and you could do without ADMs and DMs at those levels as well — there and HR. Why don't we do it with just one DM? That's the question.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** The Minister Responsible for the FMBS, Mr. Roland.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, as we highlighted with the interim appropriation, we're proceeding for the status quo for the first three months. As we review how we need to budget in areas where we can save funding and look at the investments, we'll follow through on the next phase of our work. Some of that is being looked at. A number of these areas....

The Member asked about combining a couple of secretaries for departments. That is something that can be reviewed when we talk about refocusing-government, as well as looking across departmental initiatives. Again, we look forward to the Members' work that they're putting together and their recommendations. As we get our work done and provide that to Members, we expect we'll get some recommendations as well in what we've put together.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Mr. Chairman, I thank the Premier for his comments. As long as we're not leaving any stone unturned, I suppose, and we're looking at everything. That would be good. Thank you.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, the work that we're undergoing for the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly — looking at dealing with the fiscal environment we're in,

knowing we need to cap the growth, reduce our overall expenditures, and try to find dollars for reinvestment — is going to cause us to look long and hard and deep at how we do business. That work is starting. Again, we'll be working with Members and coming up with recommendations that we can bring forward to a budget process.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. We can go back to page 4, Public Works and Services, Department of Public Works and Services, appropriation authority required: \$21,029,000.

Public Works and Services, \$21,029,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Health and Social Services, appropriation authority required: \$76,349,000.

Health and Social Services, \$76,349,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Department of Justice, appropriation authority required: \$23,371,000.

Justice, \$23,371,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Education, Culture and Employment, appropriation authority required... Mr. Bromley.

**Mr. Bromley:** Mr. Chairman, I just noted in the justification here the reasoning for the renovations to the Lahm Ridge Tower that... Oh, sorry. I'm getting ahead of myself, Mr. Chairman. Excuse me.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** We are under Education. So, Mr. Bromley, if you have a question under Education.

**Mr. Bromley:** It's for capital.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Okay.

Education, Culture and Employment, appropriation authority required: \$86,516,000.

Education, Culture and Employment, \$86,516,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Department of Transportation, appropriation authority required: \$26,756,000.

Transportation, \$26,756,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, appropriation authority required: \$14,958,000.

Industry, Tourism and Investment, \$14,958,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Page 5, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, appropriation authority required: \$27,623,000.

Environment and Natural Resources, \$27,623,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Operations expenditure appropriation, appropriation authority required: \$381,275,000.

Total Interim Appropriation for Operations Expenditures, \$381,275,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Schedule 2, Capital Investment Expenditures, Legislative Assembly, appropriation authority required: \$540,000.

Schedule 2, Capital Investment Expenditures, Legislative Assembly, \$540,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Department of Executive, appropriation authority required: \$7.5 million. Mr. Ramsay.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to ask a question. I made reference to the contracts-over-\$5,000 report that comes out. I think the Minister made reference to the fact that it comes from ITI. Could we not look at, like...? If we are going to spend \$7.5 million on, finally and thankfully, getting this system up to a standard where you can actually do something with it, can't we look at migrating the reports that are generated — like that contracts report — over to FMBS so that they can print it off in a format that's useful for anybody looking at it?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, I've been informed that that is one of the areas that's targeted as a potential migration over to the FIS system. So it is one of a number of areas that we've worked with. All the departments in this... FIS is coming up with a new system that would work with departmental equipment as well as new programs, and this is one of those areas that is targeted for migration into the FIS system. Thank you.

**Mr. Ramsay:** I'm very encouraged to hear that from the Minister today. Thank you.

**Ms. Bisaro:** I wanted to ask a question relative to the FIS system. I understand that it's an ongoing project, but I would like to know whether or not there is an urgency to this project. My understanding is that these capital projects that we're looking at in this interim appropriation are those that have a sense of urgency or they're under contract or there's a safety issue required. So if the Minister could advise if there's an urgency to this project, as much as it's needed. I ask that question. Thank you.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, as the government of the Northwest Territories, while not

in the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly, we know from past experience in the last government that when systems fail, they can cause havoc in how we do business and how things are carried out. This FIS system is a very old platform. We've been nursing it along to keep it functional, but we're running out of people who actually have experience with the program that's written, and we're having to do this now for the integrity of our mainframe.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Roland.

We're under Department of Executive, appropriation authority required: \$7,500,000.

Executive, \$7,500,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, appropriation authority required: \$1,421,000.

Municipal and Community Affairs, \$1,421,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Department of Public Works and Services, appropriation authority required: \$6,534,000. Ms. Bisaro.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Mr. Chairman, I have a similar question relative to the infrastructure upgrades for the Technology Service Centre. I understand that we do have a greening program for our technology and evergreen program — or whatever the title is. However, I'm wondering again as to the urgency. There's a fair amount of money that's involved in these upgrades and server replacements, I think. So again, I ask the question whether or not there is a sense of urgency to these projects and if they cannot wait until May/June when we look at the whole capital plan? Thank you.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, in this area, we've gone to the departments to request what they would need to proceed at this stage. Quite a number of the smaller projects that make up this amount flow into either work that's been started. And that was one of the criteria: if work had been initiated in a previous year and this is a continuation of that, then they find themselves on this plan.

As well, there are a number of other areas we're challenged in. Again, it comes back to our systems and ensuring that we have the required backup components — for example, in TSC — to ensure that if there are any problems with the existing systems, we don't lose critical information regarding our financial data or human resource data.

There are a number of reasons that these are included. One is multi-year projects. As an example, at the Stuart Hodgson Building, that's a computer room upgrade. It is a multi-year project. We found from previous years, because it is sensitive equipment, we don't have the proper air

handling systems in there. This could potentially cause our systems to fail, and that is why that's going in there.

There are a number of reasons: multi-year projects that are ongoing, and ones where there is a need to move forward with these initiatives.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Mr. Chair, I thank the Minister for that explanation.

I guess I would urge the government to consider extending the time span of the Evergreen Project. If we're currently on five years, I would ask them to consider changing the term — the lifespan of equipment — to, say, six years, to try and save some money. I know that's debatable, but that's my suggestion.

I do have a question with regard to a project which doesn't seem to be an ongoing project. There are renovations to the vital records processing and storage facility, and I'm wondering about the urgency of that project.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, this project consists of renovations to the Yellowknife Records Centre to create a vital records and multimedia processing and storage area. That would go back to having adequate space and areas for our electronic systems. I don't have the background on that piece, on what stage it is in — whether it's a totally new project or, as highlighted, it doesn't have prior-year costs but may be at the point where they're needing to proceed. I don't know if the Minister would have any background on that.

**Hon. Michael McLeod:** Mr. Chairman, I believe it's an initiative to provide and create new space to enable us to have enough room for all the records and the storage that we need for the department. I don't have anything further on it.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Mr. Chair, I understand that storage is important. But again, with no prior-years' expenditures, I really wonder why this project is included in the interim appropriation and would suggest that it probably could be left until the full budget. There is no question there. Thank you.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you. Ms. Bisaro.

**Ms. Bisaro:** I'll revise my thought. I will ask the question: why can this project not be left until the full budget in May-June?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, we have gone back to all departments, requesting them to look at what is needed to proceed at this juncture and what could be put off. The department has looked at this and put it forward as needing to proceed with this work, to make sure that they do have the storage available for their records. It's something we've had a problem with within the government for years, in

the form of paper and boxes in basements. But with this updated electronic area, with all our new data and equipment, we need to have storage for that type of information and backup.

I can't give much more than that at this point. As Members are aware, if they feel there are projects here that shouldn't proceed, that is an option to this Assembly at this point: to make amendments to this document before we have a final vote.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Mr. Chair, just one last comment. It's very difficult for me to suggest that this project should be removed without knowing whether or not there's an urgency. I would just ask that we be provided with that information the next time we go through this process.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, we will get the information as we continue with this process, to ensure departments have adequate information available.

The other thing to this is, by law, we are required to keep our data and records in place, and that is part of the process as well. It is the Department of Public Works and Services that manages, for many departments, the overall data storage and media storage that we need and require for all departments.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** We are on the Department of Public Works and Services, page 6, appropriation authority required: \$6 million. Mr. Ramsay.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Mr. Chairman, just following up on my colleague Ms. Bisaro's questions. If you look at the infrastructure upgrades and server replacements, currently the government has a policy whereby if the equipment is reaching the end of five years — an evergreen policy, I think, is how they refer to it — then that equipment is considered for replacement.

We haven't had that level of discussion yet. Maybe an exercise in looking at saving some money is extending the evergreen maybe six, maybe seven years before we look at replacement. Why would we go ahead with the upgrades without having made that determination on whether we want to look at an increase in the time that we require before things are to be upgraded?

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, the area of evergreening.... In fact, when that program first was introduced to the government of the Northwest Territories a number of years ago, the time limit used to be three years. As Members of that Assembly had requested that it be extended, it was done to that limit.

Although we've got a time frame, it is not for every system we have available. Again, because of the

resources, it is done department by department. They go around and do the system replacements. In some cases they're still catching up; they're still older than the five-year window that's there. They're still catching up with that program. But it is something that we can look at extending, to see if that is a viable option.

**Mr. Ramsay:** Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the Premier, and I look forward to those discussions whenever they happen.

**Mr. Bromley:** Mr. Chairman, I also wanted to emphasize that point. I know that certainly a lot of our electronic equipment contributes quite significantly to our landfills throughout the North. It represents toxic waste in a lot of cases. Hopefully that might be addressed in some of the ongoing work through ENR. The degree to which we can reduce unnecessarily replacing electronic equipment will be a benefit to us all in many ways. I for one have never really met the capacity of any computer I've ever used, for example, and I seem to hear that a lot from my colleagues. Maybe there are some departments at least that could get by with less frequent replacement.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, as a government we do realize we need to reduce our footprint and the impact we have on the land and the environment around us and look for ways of reducing that. Yes, as it becomes more and more known, and as publications out there highlight the amount of computers that fall into landfills and the adverse impact they have, it is something we do have to consider.

A lot of this — some history here — goes back to, as Members may recall, Y2K. I believe that was the term used. When governments looked at the potential that major system failures could happen as a result of the design of these systems, many governments across not only Canada but the world had to review their situation and the backup that was needed. Through that exercise, it was realized that as the government of the Northwest Territories, we lacked.... So that if we had a major failure, whether it be one of our facilities that house our equipment or the equipment itself failed, we had little to no backup in those areas. In fact, the last government, as I highlighted earlier, ended up dealing with some of those system failures because we didn't have the appropriate backup.

Unfortunately, even though this is a new environment for doing business, a technical age, some redundancy is required as we proceed with keeping our information intact. We will look forward to working with departments to ensure we're looking at these areas. Extending the lifespan of these is an area we can look at.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Schedule 2, Capital Investment Expenditures, Department of Public Works and Services, appropriation authority required: \$6,534,000. Agreed?

Public Works and Services, \$6,534,000 approved.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** Department of Health and Social Services, appropriation authority required: \$27,562,000.

Health and Social Services, \$27,562,000 approved.

**Ms. Bisaro:** Mr. Chair, there are a number of projects related to offender facilities: the North Slave Correctional Centre, the North Slave Young Offenders Facility. They all seem to be new projects; they don't seem to be ongoing projects. I understand that the rationale is the work needs to be done during the spring and summer months. I can't debate that, but I can debate the merit of the projects.

Specifically, one that stands out is an aboriginal healing and spiritual program area. I question whether or not that's urgent enough that it needs to be included in this appropriation. If I could get an explanation from the Minister, please.

**Hon. Floyd Roland:** Mr. Chairman, the area of these projects is highlighted.. The timing of it is why it's included in this area. There are existing structures in place that do require.... Although it says there is no new money, this is work for existing features of our facilities, and would require them to be done and dealt with so that there is no further deterioration, potentially, and looking at the asset itself of this piece.

**Ms. Bisaro:** That's all, thank you.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** We were dealing with the Department of Justice. Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Mrs. Groenewegen:** Mr. Chairman, I would like to move that we report progress.

Motion carried.

**Chairman (Mr. Krutko):** We will rise and report progress.

### Report of Committee of the Whole

The House resumed.

**Mr. Speaker:** Could I have the report of the Committee of the Whole, please.

**Mr. Krutko:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 1, Interim Appropriation Act, 2008-2009. I would like to report progress. I move

that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**Mr. Speaker:** Do we have a seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

Motion carried.

**Mr. Speaker:** Before we go to Orders of the Day, I'd just like to acknowledge the Pages that have been working in the House this week. We have had two Pages from Weledeh, two from Yellowknife South, two from Hay River South and two from Mackenzie Delta.

Applause.

**Mr. Speaker:** Mr. Clerk, item 23, Orders of the Day.

**Clerk of the House (Mr. Mercer):** Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee at the rise of the House today in Committee Room A.

### Orders of the Day

Orders of the Day for Monday, February 18, 2008, 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 3-16(2): Transfer of Responsibility for Social Housing (Menicoche)

Motion 4-16(2): United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (Menicoche)

18) First Reading of Bills

Bill 4: Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2008

Bill 5: An Act to Amend the Maintenance Orders Enforcement Act

Bill 6: An Act to Amend the Residential Tenancies Act

Bill 7: Securities Act

19) Second Reading of Bills

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

MS 1-16(2): Sessional Statement

MS 9-16(2): Public Housing Rental Subsidy Survey Results and Plans for the Future

Bill 1: Interim Appropriation Act, 2008-2009

21) Report of Committee of the Whole

22) Third Reading of Bills

23) Orders of the Day

**Mr. Speaker:** Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Monday, February 18, 2008, at 1:30 p.m.

The House adjourned at 1:29 p.m.