



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Sahtu)

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Thursday, June 13, 2002

Members Present

Honourable Roger Allen, Honourable Jim Antoine, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. McLeod, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Nitah, Mr. Roland, Honourable Vince Steen, Honourable Tony Whitford.

ITEM 1: PRAYER

-- Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Please be seated. Good afternoon, colleagues. What a beautiful day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Miltenberger.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 49-14(5): Action Plan for Seniors' Programs and Services

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Members of this Legislative Assembly have recommended that the GNWT take steps to improve the programs for our growing community of NWT seniors. The government responded to this recommendation by creating an interagency working group to conduct a technical review of existing GNWT programs and services and then consult with NWT seniors. This work has been completed and the result has been the creation of an action plan outlining activities that will occur over the next year to strengthen programs and services available to seniors.

The Seniors Action Plan was released on June 5th, during Seniors' Week, with the president of the NWT Seniors' Society, Mrs. Beatrice Campbell, in the company of seniors at the annual Seniors Social Tea.

The Seniors Action Plan represents a cooperative effort by GNWT departments, committing to work together and with the NWT Seniors' Society towards a common goal: "to improve programs and social supports for seniors." In this respect, Mr. Speaker, it represents a fundamental shift in how this government has been addressing seniors' issues.

The action plan was prepared following public consultations during the spring of 2001. Seniors voiced that they generally liked many features of programs and services currently offered by the GNWT. However, seniors expressed:

- that they want improved coordination of services they need so they do not have to go to many different agencies to access them;
- the importance of program integration so that different services worked well together to meet seniors' needs; and
- that it is essential they have a voice in shaping government programs and policies that impact their lives.

Mr. Speaker, the action plan responds to these comments. It identifies ways to improve coordination of seniors' programs at the community level that include the investigation of:

- single points of entry for all seniors' programs and services;
- consolidating all toll-free lines for seniors; and
- establishing coordinating committees for seniors.

The plan also identifies key program areas that require examination to ensure they are appropriately targeted. Specifically, the report describes actions that will result in the review of:

- income assessment and financial assistance programs;
- home heating and shelter benefits;
- housing repair and maintenance;
- independent living and housing programs;
- continuing care programs; and
- extended health benefits.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, this action plan formalizes an ongoing working relationship between the government and NWT seniors through:

- a Seniors' Forum, to be held once during the term of each Assembly; and
- a comprehensive review of seniors' programs and services during the term of each Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, as this House knows, I like to move issues forward and see tangible results in the short term. The majority of activities identified in the action plan will be completed by next summer. We have already begun work in cooperation with the NWT Seniors' Society in several of the areas described in the report.

Mr. Speaker, this work has reinforced our close and collaborative working relationship with the NWT Seniors Society. The action plan builds on things we are doing right and makes adjustments to the areas that need improvement.

Our seniors deserve programs and services that will maintain and improve their quality of life, and so enrich our northern society and communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Handley.

Minister's Statement 50-14(5): Congratulations to the Graduates of 2002

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, graduation day is a big event in the lives of the individuals and their families. The festivities invoke emotions ranging from anxiety and sadness to happiness and relief. Graduation gives individuals the sense of accomplishment that comes from having reached a goal or realized a dream.

Some of the class of 2002 have faced significant challenges in their efforts to obtain a diploma, Mr. Speaker. Most have met and overcome those challenges because of their hard work, willpower, commitment and self-discipline. Graduates enjoy the support of family and friends and of teachers, school administrators and other community members. This support is invaluable and helps to instil in young people a greater appreciation of the value of community and family.

Mr. Speaker, the students who have graduated this year, whether from high school, college or university, are excellent role models. They have demonstrated the character traits and behaviour needed to set and reach a goal.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and congratulate some of those individuals. Jennifer Vane, of Yellowknife, is one of 200 national winners to receive a Canada Millennium Scholarship of \$4,000 per year for up to four years.

The winner of a second Canada Millennium Scholarship, this one awarded locally, is Ashley Woodward. She will use the \$4,000 scholarship to study forensic science at the University of Toronto. Ashley is a graduate of St. Patrick High School in Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to make special mention today of the students who graduated in Inuvik from the Aboriginal Language and Cultural Instructor Program. I understand that Liz Hansen, who coordinated the program, has done a remarkable job in reviving this vital program and building support for it in the communities. These graduates are poised to make a personal contribution to the preservation of the unique identity that characterizes the Northwest Territories. Their work will help to ensure that diversity and linguistic plurality, the threads that link our rich cultural mosaic, will continue to pass from generation to generation.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of our graduates and their achievements. To me, they demonstrate the incredible potential of the Northwest Territories. Each of them will help us to realize our full potential as a Territory, as they realize their own. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement on Providing Assisted Living to NWT Residents

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about an issue that affects a

small portion of our population, a group who often has very little to say in the quality of their lives. I am speaking of those who require continuous care or supervision. They are often aged or facing a physical or cognitive impairment. Some have fetal alcohol syndrome.

Mr. Speaker, in a needs assessment study conducted two years ago, 1,780 NWT citizens living in households were identified as having a moderate to severe disability. This figure does not include those with current mild disabilities that may escalate the number to more than 5,000, nor does it include individuals who are living in institutions or in assisted living situations in the south, away from family and a more familiar northern setting.

Mr. Speaker, it also does not include homeless individuals living in our communities who could become more productive through assisted living, those with emotional and cognitive impairment. Too often they come to our attention only as a result of a run-in with the justice system.

Mr. Speaker, recently, members of the Standing Committee on Social Programs travelled to Alberta with the Minister of Health and Social Services to visit facilities that housed NWT residents. We visited psychiatric institutions and assisted living providers and found a very dedicated group of individuals providing good service to our people.

However, Mr. Speaker, Northerners are far from home and family when placed in Edmonton or Red Deer or elsewhere south of 60.

At the recent annual conference of the Alberta Association for Community Living, the point was made again and again; individuals with severe disabilities receive far better care close to family and friends than in institutions.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, in our recent review of programs and services for seniors, the working group clearly recommends a program of support for families, spouses and other persons when the cognitively impaired are living at home.

They further recommend, and I completely agree, that the Government of the Northwest Territories must examine options for housing the cognitively impaired. Assisted living has repeatedly been proven as a sustainable approach that provides better care and a much better quality of life.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is high time that our government commit to increasing the opportunities for assisted living in the Northwest Territories. We are doing a disservice to that portion of our population which does not have its voice heard.

Providing assisted living opportunities in the North not only improves the quality of life for those facing big challenges but it makes economic sense too. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

--Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Member's Statement on Negative Impacts of Capital Project Cost Overruns

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the past few days, this government has been questioned on matters of the BIP policy and whether or not suspension for phase two of the North Slave Correctional Facility project is justified. Today I want to voice concern over this project also. However, my concerns are to highlight the issue of cost overruns on a project of this nature and how it affects communities outside of Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, the North Slave Correctional Facility was developed based on 1999 dollars. I ask, was this project intended to be completed in 1999? If the project was scheduled to be completed at a later date, why was this not a consideration?

I can fully understand the difficulty in projecting costs on any of these larger, government funded projects. However, when costs are at 28 percent, or in this case, a total of \$9.9 million over budget, it becomes unacceptable. We have cause for concern.

In the last while, we have seen too many cost overruns on too many of our projects. For example, the Laing Building was \$900,000 over project costs. The young offenders' facility in Inuvik was \$830,000 over. I understand that the Aurora College building in Inuvik is also having difficulties and will be seeking additional dollars. Mr. Speaker, I am sure if I dug deeper, we would find more examples of this nature.

I have to wonder, Mr. Speaker, who do we have developing our budgets? Why is it whenever the government undertakes projects, we think we can do it cheaper than private industry? Are we that inexperienced? Is it because we have incompetent staff? Or is it because we are being taken for a ride by the northern contractors? In any event, it is evident that this government does not have the information or answers to these questions.

When we are forced to take dollars from one area to cover this government's error in costing, it means all the people in the Northwest Territories suffer. Mr. Speaker, we need to put an immediate stop to this bleeding of public dollars. We should be spending dollars on housing, on education, on health, on economic development. Instead of overspending on jails, we should be addressing the problems associated with why people are being...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. McLeod, your time is up.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his Member's statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. McLeod, you may continue.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the more I consider the negative impacts this cost overrun has on my constituents and other Members' constituents in ridings outside of Yellowknife, I cannot in good faith support this government's request for any additional funding to this project.

This government should not be coming back to this Legislative Assembly for additional supplementary appropriations on this project. If the project cannot be completed within the current budget, then this government must consider downsizing the project or eliminating those non-essential parts of this project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement on Tribute to Lil Broadhead

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today we would like to pay tribute to the life and memory of Lil Broadhead, who recently passed away. Hay River is a small town and there had been numerous families arriving in the early days, putting down roots. They had families, built businesses and were an integral part of life in Hay River. Keith and Lil Broadhead married and moved to Hay River from Saskatchewan in 1959. They had their children, Curtis, Brenda and Kelly, established Keith's Water Service and eventually spent their time between their farm in Keg River and their home in Hay River. They had a good and full life.

They were very involved in the community and enjoyed many close friendships. We never know what the future will hold in our lives but long before death should have parted them, Keith was tragically killed in an automobile accident. Just two days prior to that, almost four years ago, Lil had been diagnosed with cancer and only given six months to live. Fortunately she defied those predictions and lived for another four years. I know that these extra months and years were full of especially precious memories for her children, grandchildren and friends.

Keith and Lil Broadhead's contribution to Hay River lives on through their children and their families. Although gone, they will not soon be forgotten. They will be long remembered as a part of a larger family of people who have made Hay River the community that it is today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Member's Statement on Great Slave Lake Commercial Fishery Conference

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring well-deserved recognition to the NWT Fishermen's Federation for the success of the Great Slave Lake Commercial Fisheries Conference held on May 10th and May 11th in Hay River.

This conference, Mr. Speaker, was very timely as it dealt with a number of issues that were very pertinent to the commercial fishermen of the Northwest Territories.

There were a number of topics discussed at the conference, Mr. Speaker. These included legislation, legislation's impact on the fishing industry, stock management and assessment, financing programs and initiatives, marketing and industry trends, current technology, and last but certainly not least, employment, training and retention.

Mr. Speaker, approximately 80 people attended the conference and participants included commercial fishermen, government officials and industry representatives. I had the distinct pleasure of attending and taking part in this conference, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to state that a number of very important initiatives were discussed.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would also like to personally thank the Honourable Jim Antoine, Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, and the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Western Arctic Member of Parliament, for attending this conference. I was encouraged by their presence and their willingness to address the needs of commercial fishermen.

I am very encouraged, Mr. Speaker, by the ongoing efforts of the NWT Fisherman's Federation to look at a creative and more cost-effective environment for harvesting on the Great Slave Lake.

Mr. Speaker, there should be training programs initiated by the Department of Education in conjunction with our right to address the very real problem of the lack of young people wanting to enter the commercial fishing industry in the North.

Mr. Speaker, the fishermen currently on Great Slave Lake are aging. There are not enough youth coming up through the ranks. I believe there should be incentives for our youth to get on board, so to speak, as I would not want to see this viable industry decline due to a lack of fishermen.

I believe it is imperative, Mr. Speaker, that we as a government should do everything in our power to assist our commercial fishermen in maintaining a longstanding, viable industry. Mr. Speaker, I intend to continue to work with the commercial fishermen to ensure that a sustainable commercial fishery is maintained. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Comments on the Business Incentive Policy

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about BIP as well. Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of controversy in the House, a lot of talk and questions to the Ministers on the elimination of BIP for the second phase of the correctional centre to be developed here in Yellowknife. I totally concur and agree with my colleague, Mr. McLeod, when he asks why are we spending too much money on building jails when we need the money for social issues such as education and housing. We are spending a lot of money on developing first-class accommodations for those who break our laws and we cannot provide enough accommodation for our people in the Northwest Territories.

When BIP was first created, Mr. Speaker, the construction industry needed a bottle to be fed. It was in its infancy. Today, Mr. Speaker, when we are experiencing unsurpassed development, everybody is busy. Our construction industry has grown up, and I believe now is the time to take the soother out that is the BIP.

BIP costs this government anywhere between 10 and 20 percent in extra costs, and that is putting a strain and a challenge to putting up houses that are badly needed in our communities. To build our schools and recreational facilities, that is an extra 20 percent to the actual cost. I believe the people of the Northwest Territories are now ready for open competition. I believe that our construction industry is ready for open competition and that the people of the Northwest Territories should pay the best price they can get.

Maybe the elimination of BIP entirely is not the answer or the way to go, Mr. Speaker, but maybe we should factor in different levels of spending. If it is anything more than a million dollars, maybe BIP should not apply. There has to be a more concentrated effort given to BIP and the implications of BIP on the social aspect of life in the Northwest Territories. I agree with the Cabinet when they made their decision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Member's Statement on Affordable Housing in Yellowknife

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak again about our cost of living battle and, more specifically, a place, particularly an affordable place, to live. The weekly newspapers, through their employment opportunities and real estate sections, go straight to the facts of this situation. There is a lot of work, Mr. Speaker, but not much choice in a place to live.

I think we are turning the corner on this. In my own riding of Great Slave, Nova Construction recently completed a 60-unit apartment building. For the first time since the construction of the Centre Square complex in 1989, we see a construction crane on the skyline here in Yellowknife as it builds the Polar Development 14-storey 100-unit apartments. It is good news. It shows that investors and builders are supporting our economy and taking up the opportunities that are presenting themselves, Mr. Speaker.

Some 223 multi-family units and apartments have been completed or approved for construction. Ninety-six single family units are being added to the housing, and my understanding is that there is an additional 200 or more units in the discussion or planning stage.

Mr. Speaker, affordability and social housing are critical issues that will not so quickly be turned around. Mr. Speaker, Yellowknife is a magnet community. It is a consequence of our strong economy. People come here for the jobs, the services and perhaps the social and medical programs they require. However, I am reminded daily that the activity and excitement in Yellowknife is a mixed blessing. There are pressures on our infrastructure, the cost of living and lifestyle choices that make it hard for those with limited resources.

A constituent called last week, a single mother with a school-aged child, who has been looking for a place to live in Yellowknife for ten months. She has very few choices. The Yellowknife Housing Authority has about 300 units in its public housing inventory, Mr. Speaker, but there are 180 people on

the waiting list for more and there is very little turnover in the existing stuff.

Mr. Speaker, while there is a great deal of optimism about our situation, there are concerns. Housing difficulties are a greater limitation on our economy and the choices our people have. I will be questioning the Minister on this issue later today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

Member's Statement on Tribute to Francis Blackduck

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, early last month, the Northwest Territories said goodbye to an individual who played a pioneer role in aboriginal politics in the Northwest Territories. Francis Blackduck of Rae-Edzo was only 55 when he died. Throughout his short but busy life, Francis worked to ensure that the rights of aboriginal peoples of the Northwest Territories be recognized and respected. As a result of his efforts, aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories, especially aboriginal youth, will be the recipients of many of the social, political and economic benefits of development.

In May, people gathered in Rae to celebrate his life. Francis was remembered as a believer and a strong defender of the rights and values of the Dogrib people. Representatives of Indian Affairs and Northern Development acknowledged in writing his ability to work well in two worlds, the world of the Dogrib people and the world of western culture.

We have a saying that when a person is grounded in their own culture but is able to understand the concerns, goals and views of other cultures, that they are strong like two people. Francis Blackduck had this strength and this gift. Francis had a long career working with aboriginal, territorial and federal governments and agencies. He was instrumental in the early 70s in establishing the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories. This organization is now the Dene Nation. He also worked with a variety of resource companies.

Mr. Speaker, whether he was working on behalf of the Dogrib people as a band councillor or interpreting and translating complex and technical environmental, mining or legal terms, Francis demonstrated his understanding of the issues -- the issues of custom, culture and economic aspirations of his people and those of others who chose to live and do business in the North.

Mr. Speaker, Francis Blackduck will be missed. Besides his political contributions, I will remember Francis for his contributions to dog mushing. He helped to re-establish this sport in the community of Rae. He was a man who was active locally, regionally and territorially. Although he is gone, his efforts have created positive benefits that will continue on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Lafferty, thank you. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Member's Statement on Competitive Compensation for Stanton Employees

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity today to talk again about the crisis at Stanton Hospital. Mr. Speaker, I just came back from talking to the health care workers at the hospital who were engaged in a walkout during the lunch hour.

Mr. Speaker, years of complaints from these workers continue to go unnoticed, and I have to urge the Minister of Health and Social Services again to come up with a plan immediately and act on this serious situation.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health indicated yesterday that he is the Minister responsible for health care north of 60, and I must wonder, if he keeps going this way and doing nothing, he may become the Minister of ICU at Fort McMurray.

Mr. Speaker, I need to hear from him, in words and action, that he understands, appreciates and values the need for an acute treatment centre north of 60 and that Stanton Hospital is the one to serve the people.

Mr. Speaker, we have learned that a lack of a competitive package for health care workers has resulted in the facility running with half of the necessary staff. I tabled the article that was published in the Yellowknifer -- staff in audiology, the laboratory and the imaging department are all working hundreds and hundreds of hours of overtime. The lack of money for capital equipment is seriously affecting the ability of the staff to conduct their work.

Mr. Speaker, the CT scan, which I said earlier in this House was purchased with money raised by the Stanton Foundation, should be running 24 hours a day but because of the shortage of staff, it is hardly running. There is only one person who can work that, at maximum.

Mr. Speaker, the specialists unit at the hospital is practically decimated. We have only one orthopedic surgeon, one general surgeon and we need one extra of each. We have an internist position that was vacant for two years and now that we have the potential of hiring somebody, she will not be able to work in the ICU.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot wait any longer. We have to come up with a creative idea to make these packages competitive so that we can fill these vacant positions so these people can have a life and continue to stay here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

Member's Statement on Passing of Alfred Thomas

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, since I have an interpreter today, I would like to speak in my language. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

(Translation starts) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On May 31st, we lost an elder, Albert Thomas. He was born in 1926 and he passed away at the end of May. I would like to say a few words about this person.

He was an aboriginal person who was born in Fort Liard. He lived a traditional lifestyle. His parents taught him very well in the traditional lifestyle. He was a very good hunter. He travelled throughout the woodlands and he did a lot of work throughout the mountains.

He was a true aboriginal person. He never spoke English. He always spoke in the Dene language. He travelled as far as Watson Lake, Lower Post, Fort Nelson. Those people speak the Slavey language so he was at home amongst those people. He trapped, he hunted, he worked effortlessly throughout the woodlands.

His son Jerome had asked him a question one time, "I wonder how many grizzly bears did you ever kill?" He said 19. "So are you ever afraid of anything?" Albert responded, "No, I am not afraid of anything in the forest. I know the wildlife. When aboriginal people go into the woods, they are not afraid of anything."

His story was not written. I just wanted to say this about him because his story was never written. Thank you. (Translation ends)

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Member's Statement on Suspension of the Business Incentive Policy

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I as well would like to voice my concerns on behalf of my constituents in Inuvik Boot Lake and the companies of Inuvik that are dismayed with the decision on the suspension of BIP on the North Slave Correctional Centre.

The fear is that this could further impact other contracts with this government that help northern companies get some of the bids, compared to their southern competitors. The concern that this government could make such a move without talking to a lot of the people in the Northwest Territories is something I felt I must relay here, as many Members have in this House.

As Regular Members, we are not connected to this decision being made, and having to deal with it after the fact makes it very difficult indeed in responding to the constituents and businesses in our communities. They have come to understand how the government does its business, and when it changes as radically as it has done in this situation, it upsets the rhythm that communities and businesses have come to accept from this government.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will be addressing this during question period. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

ITEM 4: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee Report 6-14(5): Special Committee on the Implementation of Self-Government and the Sunset Clause Report on Sunset Clause

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report on behalf of the Special Committee on the Implementation of Self-Government and the Sunset Clause. Mr. Speaker,

Introduction

Description and Mandate of the Special Committee

The Special Committee on the Implementation of Self-Government and the Sunset Clause was established by the 14th Legislative Assembly on March 7th, 2001. With specific reference to the sunset clause, the committee's responsibilities are defined as follows:

The special committee shall:

- a) In relation to the sunset clause:
 - i) Provide information to Northwest Territories residents concerning the intent and effect of section 2 of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, which is also known as the sunset clause, as to the need to address section 2 before the next election and to solicit input and options; and
 - ii) Make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly concerning the sunset clause.

What is the Sunset Clause?

The sunset clause is a section of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act. It did not exist before 1999 and was added to the act by the 13th Legislative Assembly.

As a result of amendments made in 1999, section 2 of the act now reads:

Electoral Districts

- 2(1) There are 19 electoral districts as named and described in Schedule A.

Member

- (2) Each electoral district is entitled to return one Member to the Legislative Assembly.

Repeal of Electoral Districts

- (3) This section and Schedule A are repealed on the dissolution of the 14th Legislative Assembly.

Subsection 2(3) is the sunset clause.

What Does the Sunset Clause Do?

Repeal of Electoral Districts

As explained above, the sunset clause provides for the repeal of all of section 2 as well as Schedule A of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act when the present Assembly is dissolved. This means that no election for a 15th Assembly could be conducted, since there would be no legal electoral districts in the NWT.

The federal NWT Act provides that no Assembly shall continue for more than four years from the date of the return of the writs from its election. This means that the present Assembly cannot continue to function later than January 6, 2004. After that date, unless the Sunset Clause is amended or repealed, there will be no Legislative Assembly in the NWT.

This could have various repercussions.

Two Scenarios

One possibility is that the federal government may have to step in and pass amending legislation to provide for an election in the NWT. This could only be done by an Act of Parliament. It does not appear that the federal government would have the power to prescribe the electoral districts for a territorial election except by an amendment to the NWT Act.

Alternatively, if the sunset clause came into effect and dissolved the Assembly without a way for the people to elect their representatives, a member of the public or an interest group might challenge the legality of the sunset clause under section 3 of the Charter, on the grounds that the sunset clause is an unreasonable infringement of the right to vote in an election of a Legislative Assembly.

Repercussions

Either scenario would be unacceptable to the people of the NWT. Litigation would likely be time-consuming and would not bring about a timely election. It would not be desirable to leave the fate of the NWT political evolution in the hands of the federal government.

Who Would Govern the NWT in the Interim?

It is highly unlikely that the sunset clause would be allowed to come into effect, since this would be an act of extreme negligence by the Assembly. Nevertheless, since the clause is a law of the NWT, the question arises as to who would have the authority to govern the NWT following the dissolution of the 14th Assembly in the absence of an election, if the sunset clause were left as it now is.

Premier and Ministers

The status of the Cabinet appears to be uncertain in that case. The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act states that the Executive Council, also known as Cabinet, is responsible for the overall direction and management of the GNWT. The act also provides that the members of the Executive Council are to be appointed upon the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly and hold office "during the pleasure" of the Assembly. Finally, the act provides that the Premier shall continue to hold office following dissolution of the Legislative

Assembly until the next Legislative Assembly chooses the next Premier.

Currently, Ministers continue in office between Assemblies until an election is held, a new Assembly is convened, and a new Cabinet is chosen. This is generally similar to practice in all federal, provincial and territorial governments in Canada. What is unclear is whether or not this practice could continue if the Assembly were dissolved without any arrangements for the election of a successor.

Resumption of Authority by the Commissioner

There is a very strong possibility that responsibility could shift back to the Commissioner, as "chief executive officer" of the NWT, operating under the instructions of the Minister of DIAND. Given the constitutional uncertainty of the Territories if the sunset clause were allowed to come into effect and territorial Ministers were no longer accountable to an Assembly, it is likely that constitutional advances, which the NWT has gone through during the past 30 years, could well be undone.

Governance, Claims and Treaty Negotiations Since 1999

The sunset clause reflected the disagreement within the 13th Assembly over the allocation of seats for the 14th Assembly and it was stated as intended for only the 14th Assembly. Governance issues were raised as major concerns to be dealt with before the 14th Assembly was dissolved.

In this light, it is important to review the progress that has been made in these areas since 1999:

- On January 7, 2000 the Dogrib Agreement-in-Principle was signed by representatives of the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council, the Government of Canada and the GNWT. This is a comprehensive land claim and self-government agreement. Negotiations are currently proceeding towards a final agreement.
- The Akaitcho First Nations and the GNWT signed the Akaitcho Political Accord on June 2, 1999. This was followed on July 25, 2000 by the Akaitcho Treaty 8 Framework Agreement and on June 28, 2001 by the interim measures agreement. The signatories to the two latter agreements were the Akaitcho First Nations, the Government of Canada and the GNWT.
- The Deh Cho Framework Agreement and Deh Cho Interim Measures Agreement were both signed by the Deh Cho First Nations, the Government of Canada and the GNWT on May 23, 2001.
- The Salt River Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement was initialled by negotiators for the Salt River First Nation, the GNWT and the Government of Canada on November 15, 2001. It was ratified by the Salt River First Nation in December, 2001 and is to be signed on June 21st of this year.
- A political accord was signed between the Gwich'in Tribal Council, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Government of Canada and the GNWT on October 2, 1999.
- An agreement-in-principle on self-government in the Beaufort-Delta region has been initialled by negotiators for

the Gwich'in Tribal Council, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the GNWT and the Government of Canada. Signature of the agreement-in-principle is expected to follow the conclusion of a review of it by the federal government.

- Negotiations are continuing with the South Slave Metis Tribal Council and the federal government on land and resources. Self-government negotiations are to begin when the land and resources negotiations are concluded. The GNWT signed a bilateral political accord with the South Slave Metis Tribal Council on November 23, 2001.
- Self-government negotiations are continuing with the Deline First Nation Government, the GNWT and the Government of Canada.

An Intergovernmental Forum has been established by the Aboriginal Summit, the GNWT and the Government of Canada to deal with matters like economic development, capacity building and devolution. Through the forum, a Memorandum of Intent on Devolution and Resource Revenue-Sharing was signed on May 22, 2001 by the Aboriginal Summit, the Government of Canada and the GNWT.

The above list of agreements and processes, involving federal and aboriginal parties as well as the GNWT, is impressive. In the committee's view, it indicates the good faith in which these matters are being dealt with.

How Electoral Districts are Established

The people of the NWT elected the first Members of the Legislative Assembly in 1951. The Assembly became a fully-elected body in 1975. Responsible government, meaning a shift in responsibility from the appointed Commissioner to Ministers and elected MLAs, was introduced in 1985. This placed basic political power and responsibility in the hands of the Assembly.

Representation by Population

Elected Assemblies are today based upon the principle of "one person, one vote." This has never meant absolute parity in the number of voters in each electoral district. To give only one example from outside the NWT, in 1989 electoral districts in British Columbia ranged in size from 5,511 persons (Atlin) to 68,347 (Surrey-Newton), with an average of 41,873 per district.

The enactment of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 has meant that the population sizes of electoral districts must correspond more closely to the average. This is now evident from a number of court cases. "Equality" of voting power has not been upheld, but "relative parity," balanced with a recognition of the need for "effective representation," has.

Federal, Provincial and Territorial Practices

Consistent with this, many Legislatures have passed statutes limiting the degree of variance allowed. (Federal, Provincial and Territorial Practices, Annex III)

Responsibilities of MLAs

Part of the problem in allocating electoral districts within a jurisdiction is finding a way to provide adequate representation

for the sparsely populated areas without under-representing the more populous urban areas. This problem is tied to the fact that MLAs have more than one role to play.

The first has been termed the "ombudsman" role. It is especially important for the smaller communities in the NWT. The second has been termed the "legislative" role, though it is broader than the simple enactment of legislation. It tends to be the primary representative concern of the larger communities.

Canadian Practice

Across Canada, the standard practice is to establish electoral districts after recommendations are received from an Electoral Districts Boundaries Commission. Such commissions are set up at "arm's length" from the government and Legislative Assembly and operate independently. Their recommendations are intended to be independent of what any particular political body, group or person may wish. Upon receipt of their recommendations, it is usually the responsibility of the Assembly to implement or modify the recommendations received.

NWT Electoral Districts Boundaries Commissions

NWT Electoral Districts Boundaries Commissions have been provided for by legislation. They have carried out a process of public consultation by holding hearings in communities and have reported to the Assembly. The practice of appointing a judge and two other commissioners was adopted in 1978, then followed for the next twenty years, and Electoral Districts Boundaries Commissions were held in 1978, 1983, 1989, 1993, 1997 (Nunavut only) and 1998 (western NWT only). This is more often than in most provinces or territories but reflects changes resulting from the closure of the Pine Point mine (1989 commission), correspondence of districts with the division boundary (1993) and the first post-division elections (1997 and 1998).

Advisory Bodies

Electoral Districts Boundaries Commissions in the NWT have been strictly advisory. They have had no law-making power and actual changes to the electoral districts have been through changes to legislation -- that is, made by the Assembly. Nevertheless, the process of public consultation -- and the "arm's length" relationship -- means that the recommendations of electoral districts boundaries commissions have been carefully weighed and usually accepted.

Establishing the Electoral Districts for the 14th Legislative Assembly

It was important for the committee to consider how the current electoral districts were established and the issues that arose surrounding their establishments. Annex IV provides a chronology of these events.

Public Consultation

The committee's terms of reference went beyond a study of the sunset clause and the development of a recommendation to the Assembly. The terms of reference required the committee to explain the issue and seek input and options from the public.

The committee prepared a brochure on the sunset clause, mailed it to all households and made a copy available on the

Legislative Assembly's website. As well, a full-page open letter advertisement to the public was placed in all territorial newspapers to explain the work of the committee; and radio announcements were made, in all official languages, through the CBC, CKLB, CJCD and CIVR. This was done in November of 2001. The public was invited to send its views to the committee in writing or by e-mail, and the committee indicated that it would visit those communities that invited it.

The committee attended 22 meetings in 19 communities, as listed in Annex II. The meetings were held from late November, 2001 to the beginning of May, 2002. The Members for Deh Cho, Inuvik, Boot Lake, Nahendeh, Nunakput, Sahtu, Thebacha, Yellowknife Centre and Yellowknife Frame Lake attended, and in some cases organized, the meetings held in their communities by the committee. The following MLAs also made presentations to the committee: the Members for Mackenzie Delta, Yellowknife Centre and Yellowknife Frame Lake.

The Options

In the material it prepared for public information and consultation, the committee outlined two options. As presented, these were:

Option 1:

Repeal or cancel the clause. With the sunset clause gone, the status quo will be maintained and the Assembly will no longer have to deal with a deadline. This will allow an election to be held at the end of the current term.

Option 2:

Extend the timeline on the sunset clause to allow the next Assembly to make decisions regarding the number of electoral districts in the North, and make other decisions as necessary in the future to address the progress of self-government negotiations.

More Consideration Needed

The sunset clause is an unusual legislative provision. It is not surprising that a number of people remarked that they had not previously heard of the clause, or did not understand it, or said that they needed more information and time to consider it. Some attending the meetings in Colville Lake, Fort Good Hope, Fort Providence and Tulita expressed a desire to receive more information and a chance to discuss the sunset clause further before coming to a firm conclusion.

As a general rule, those who thought more consideration needed to be given to the issues favoured option 2. The president of the Sahtu Secretariat expressed this by saying that the sunset clause should be extended to give people the opportunity to sort it out.

Repeal the Clause

On the other hand, many said they did not wish to see more time spent on this issue. A councillor in Tuktoyaktuk remarked that he did not like the idea of the government coming back to re-examine the sunset clause every four years. The mayor of Fort Smith referred to the cost, in time and money, of seeking public input on this question, and a speaker at Fort Good Hope

drew attention to the need to deal with many other issues facing communities: "These other issues are taking so much valuable time from the real problems -- social challenges facing the community." The mayor of Inuvik summed up this train of thought bluntly: "The government should repeal the clause and get on with governing."

Interpreting the Options

Varying interpretations emerged of the options presented by the committee. One speaker in Fort Good Hope described option 1 as the "do nothing" option and option 2 as "more proactive." Another speaker in Fort Good Hope thought the opposite. In Holman it was remarked that repealing the clause now, or extending it for some time in the future, were essentially the same: both were "status quo."

An Electoral Boundaries Commission

In Deline, a resident remarked that in addition to the two options presented, there was a third: to redraw the electoral districts. Others did not see this as a third option so much as a course of action closely related to the two options presented. The differences between these views of this subject may be a matter of sequencing. A speaker in Hay River asked: "Couldn't you simply repeal the sunset clause and put in an Electoral Boundaries Commission to deal with people's fear that there is no way to address electoral boundaries?"

The mayor of Holman expressed a very similar idea:

I think we would want the assurance that the Legislative Assembly would readdress the issue of electoral boundaries and not forget about it. Maybe a guarantee that this will be looked at again in the future, and go with status quo until then. Maybe have an Electoral Boundaries Commission.

Current Distribution of Districts

Of course, a number of opinions were expressed on the current distribution of electoral districts. A few people thought that their region should have another representative in the Assembly, either because of its size (geographical extent) or because its population seemed large enough to warrant it. This view was expressed in Rae-Edzo with regard to the North Slave electoral district. Speakers in Nunakput, Sahtu and Nahendeh expressed similar concerns.

Place of Yellowknife

Some expressed the idea that Yellowknife did not need so many seats and was too dominant in the NWT governmental system. In Inuvik, the chief expressed this idea:

Yellowknife has everything, all the government departments and very easy access to the government. I think we should look very seriously at the number of ridings in Yellowknife.

The idea that Yellowknife has too much access to, control over, and benefits from government -- and therefore is over-represented in the Assembly -- was found in many communities. However, the consensus at most meetings appeared to be that the current distribution of electoral districts, if not perfect, is satisfactory and does not require change at the present. The idea of an Electoral Districts Boundaries

Commission was mainly discussed in the context of an appropriate mechanism to be used at some future time, not as an immediate task to be undertaken during the life of the present Assembly.

Self-Government

The relationship between the distribution of electoral districts, the sunset clause and self-government negotiations was discussed at every meeting. In Deline, the former chief expressed his understanding that: "The purpose of the Sunset Clause was to force the GNWT to deal with self-government issues." Some presenters therefore expressed concerns that repealing the sunset clause at this time could affect self-government negotiations that are underway.

Others saw the self-government relationship differently. In Holman there seemed to be a general consensus that to wait for self-government negotiations to be completed before repealing the sunset clause could take many years. A speaker in Fort Smith thought that this report should include an emphasis on the importance of progress in self-government negotiations.

A representative speaking for the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce said that he did not understand how "the threat of extinguishing this Legislature" would speed-up self-government negotiations. A Yellowknife resident, who introduced himself as formerly one of the active members of the Friends of Democracy, said that the Assembly should repeal the sunset clause and the government should "get on with the business of figuring out about self-government."

The sub-chief for the Deninu Ku'e First Nation explained that the treaty negotiations in which her First Nation is engaged are with the federal government. The Government of the NWT is an observer at these negotiations. Her First Nation, however, wants to work out a relationship with the GNWT and does not want to see the GNWT dissolved, as the sunset clause may be taken to imply.

Summary

Overall, a range of views was heard. In some meetings the issues were discussed but the community presented no formal position. Some communities provided a letter or resolution setting forth their view. In other cases, this was communicated verbally by the mayor, chief or other representative. Some communities did not adopt a formal position.

Committee Conclusions

The committee found the sunset clause difficult to explain or rationalize.

The sunset clause is perceived by some aboriginal peoples as a safeguard for their self-government interests, and thus, as something that should not be repealed... rather, it should be left for future deliberations, perhaps the next Assembly.

The legislation does not define the issues. It provides no useful tool or guidance. It is only a threat of dire consequence if something is not done. The committee's mandate requires that some constructive action be taken to resolve or at least address the issues. The committee also suggests that it would serve no purpose to defer the problem to the next Assembly.

The committee heard that it could help resolve issues related to over and under representation. Most evident were opinions that, with the 19 ridings as we know them today, Yellowknife is grossly over-represented, while ridings such as Nahendeh, North Slave and Sahtu had too many communities for one MLA to effectively represent.

The committee heard in almost every community that the status quo distribution of 19 seats is not problematic, and that there is no immediate requirement to address boundaries for the 15th Assembly, but the reality of Yellowknife having seven MLAs upset many. The committee agrees that the NWT can improve representation issues and should take steps to set up the terms and criteria by which this can be done. The obvious mechanism is in a modernized Electoral Boundaries Commission Act.

The last time there was an Electoral Boundaries Commission in the NWT was just prior to division. With division, the Electoral Boundaries Act was repealed, as it was only intended to govern the transition to two territories. Therefore the NWT and Nunavut are the only jurisdictions in Canada that currently do not have electoral boundaries commission legislation in place. The committee feels that this should be remedied and in place for the 15th Assembly to act and set in place a new boundary system for the election of the 16th Assembly and subsequent Assemblies.

The committee does not agree that the sunset clause should be dismissed without a thorough discussion of the causes that created it and what should be done to deal with them. The committee trusts that this report, and the community consultations that led up to it, satisfies the need for discussion and review.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1 -- Repeal of the Sunset Clause

If the sunset clause were allowed to legally come into effect it would not only seriously damage the status of the GNWT within Canada but could also affect self-government and even land claims negotiations. The committee cannot recommend retaining a law that nobody wants to see brought into effect.

To defer the clause for another Assembly to consider would be simply to put off the problem of dealing with it, with the same options once more to be considered. The strongest reason for its retention would be to allow more time for its consideration. The committee does not find this to be sufficient reason.

The accomplishments in self-government, land claims and treaty negotiations during the past three years have shown that we will continue to make progress together. The sunset clause, then, is something that we should put behind us as we move on, in a positive spirit, to grapple with changes in the arrangements for the governance of our Territory. It is in this spirit that we recommend its repeal. Mr. Speaker,

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that the 14th Assembly amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act to repeal subsection 2(3).

Recommendation on Electoral Boundaries Commission Legislation

The committee is aware of the absence of any Electoral Boundaries Commission legislation within the present Territory. The enactment of such legislation is required.

The legislation should be based, in part, upon that used earlier for this purpose in the NWT. Consideration, however, should be given to:

- preparing and releasing an Electoral Boundaries Commission interim report to allow for public discussion before issuing a final report; and
- establishing a definite time period for boundaries commission reviews, such as after every second territorial election.

Practices followed in other jurisdictions may be looked to for guidelines in this respect.

The criteria to be used by the commission for the purpose of recommending electoral district boundaries should provide the maximum flexibility possible. This is to ensure effective representation for the smaller communities, including non-tax-based municipalities and recognition of the responsibilities of MLAs as both ombudsmen and legislators.

The criteria contained in section 11 of the former Electoral Boundaries Commissions Act remain relevant and should be included:

11. The commission, in preparing its report, shall take into consideration:
 - (a) geographic and demographic considerations, including the sparsity, density or rate of growth of the population of any part of the Territory and the accessibility, size or shape of any part of the Territory;
 - (b) any special community or diversity of interests of the inhabitants of any part of the Territory;
 - (c) the means of communication among various parts of the Territory;
 - (d) the minimum and maximum number of Members of the Legislative Assembly authorized by the Northwest Territories Act;
 - (e) any guidelines or criteria proposed for the consideration of the commission by resolution of the Legislative Assembly; and
 - (f) any other similar and relevant factors that the commission considers appropriate.

The committee, while reviewing provincial and territorial practices in other Canadian jurisdictions, observed that some provinces have allowed through legislation for some deviation for exceptional circumstances from the 25 percent rule. The committee is of the view that the new legislation dealing with establishing electoral districts should allow for some deviation under exceptional circumstances.

The above criteria should be reviewed for comprehensiveness and to ensure that the following are included:

1. transportation arrangements;
2. cultural and linguistic relations;
3. total population and population of voting age;
4. the boundaries of municipalities;
5. the boundaries of self-government agreement areas;
6. the boundaries of land claim settlement areas; and
7. information obtained through public hearings.

The committee did not receive any definite requests for an immediate Electoral Boundaries Commission and therefore does not recommend that one be established before the election of the 15th Assembly. The committee considers, however, that a commission will likely be required before the election of the 16th Assembly.

Recommendation 2

The committee recommends that the 14th Assembly enact electoral districts boundaries commission legislation similar to that previously in force, but with such changes as may be desirable to maximize public involvement and to ensure the effective representation of all communities.

Next Steps

The special committee is now ready to undertake the second phase of its mandate, which is to consider how the Legislative Assembly and the Government of the Northwest Territories may be impacted by the implementation of self-government. The committee is mindful that its role is not to interfere with ongoing self-government negotiations but will focus on the implications once agreements are finalized and the impact agreements will have on Legislative Assembly operating structures and procedures in such areas as legislation and appropriations.

During the second phase of its mandate, the committee will also consider how self-government may impact the Government of the Northwest Territories with respect to the functions of policy, programs, services, financing and administration over the immediate and long term. The committee looks forward to engaging in this part of their mandate, which will culminate with the committee making recommendations on transitional measures that could be implemented to prepare for the implementation of self-government agreements.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the report of the Special Committee on the Implementation of Self-Government and the Sunset Clause.

THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that the Report on the Sunset Clause be received by the Legislative Assembly and moved into committee of the whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. We have a motion. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All

those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried. The report is now moved to committee of the whole.

Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Committee Report 7-14(5): Report on the Review of the Languages Commissioner's Annual Report, 2000-2001

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to report the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight's Report on the Review of the Languages Commissioner's Annual Report, 2000-2001.

History

The Official Languages Act was passed by the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories in 1984. The act guarantees equal status for the use of Canada's two official languages for members of the public using government programs and services. The act also officially recognized the aboriginal languages spoken in the Northwest Territories.

In 1990 amendments to the act gave greater status to northern aboriginal languages and recognized the need to protect aboriginal culture through the promotion of the use of aboriginal languages. The 1990 amendments also included the creation of the position of the Languages Commissioner to be appointed by the Legislative Assembly for a term of four years.

Review of the Official Languages Act

Section 29(1) of the act required a review of the Official Languages Act following December 31, 2000. A special joint committee was established in November of 2000 to examine the effectiveness of the current legislation to protect both Canada's official languages and the aboriginal languages of the Northwest Territories. The Special Committee on the Review of the Official Languages Act will be presenting its final report to the Legislative Assembly in March 2003.

Languages Commissioner

According to section 20(1) of the act, the duties of the Languages Commissioner are:

...to take all actions and measures within the authority of the Languages Commissioner with a view to ensuring recognition of the rights, status and privileges of each of the Official Languages and compliance with the spirit and intent of the act in the administration of the affairs of government institutions, including any of their activities relating to the advancement of the aboriginal languages in the Territories.

The Commissioner has the authority to investigate any complaints made to her office or may initiate an investigation, if it is warranted. The Commissioner may also issue opinions on complaints and make recommendations to institutions as she deems necessary. If, after a reasonable amount of time, the Commissioner's recommendations have not been acted upon by the institution, the Commissioner may make a report to the Legislative Assembly.

The Commissioner is also required to submit an annual report to the Legislative Assembly. Ms. Fbbie Tatti was appointed to the position of Languages Commissioner in July of 2000.

Annual Report 2000-2001

Ms. Tatti submitted her annual report for 2000-2001, which was tabled in the House on November 5, 2001. The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight met on March 4, 2002 with the Languages Commissioner and Ms. Shannon Gullberg from the Office of the Languages Commissioner.

New Vision and Mandate

During the review of the Languages Commissioner's 2000-2001 Annual Report, it was noted by the committee that the vision and mandate of the Office of the Languages Commissioner had been significantly altered. The previous vision/mission statement read as follows:

The Office of the Languages Commissioner works to assist in the preservation, promotion and protection of the official languages of the Northwest Territories, and to ensure that the Government of the Northwest Territories departments, boards and agencies comply with the spirit and intent of the Official Languages Act as legislated.

The new vision is as follows:

Each step we have taken in language revitalization has been taken with elders and many committed and dedicated persons. Each achievement has been made by working together toward the common vision of strong, healthy NWT official languages. The Office of the Languages Commissioner must follow this cooperative approach, working together with all language communities and NWT citizens in meeting their language needs and aspirations and upholding the Official Languages Act.

The standing committee did not wish to enter into a debate on the relative merits of each vision or mandate of independent offices of the Legislative Assembly. However, committee members did feel that the Languages Commissioner should have consulted with the Legislative Assembly before significantly altering the official vision of the Languages Commissioner's office.

Establishment Of An Advisory Board

During the review of the annual report, the standing committee was informed that the Languages Commissioner had established a new advisory board in October of 2000. The committee took note that section 20(3) of the Official Languages Act provides for consultation with representatives of languages organizations not less than once a year. However, the act does not specifically state that an advisory board should be established, merely that representatives should be consulted on a regular basis.

The committee recognizes that consultation is an important aspect of the office. However, there may be concerns about the method by which members are appointed to the advisory board and the compensation for duties and travel. The committee has been made aware that an advisory board such as this is usually legislated as an official body of the government and

would therefore follow strict rules in these matters. The standing committee would like to suggest that the Languages Commissioner either continue with informal consultation or suggest legislative change to the Official Languages Act to address this issue.

Languages Commissioner – Recommendation 1

That the Legislative Assembly demonstrate their commitment to all official languages by ensuring visibility of languages throughout Legislative Assembly session with the presence of simultaneous interpreters.

Members of the standing committee took note that this recommendation is contrary to a previous Languages Commissioner's recommendation that languages services at the Legislative Assembly be reprofiled and channelled to the community level. While the committee recognizes that the visibility of languages is an important issue, it is concerned that the cost of providing simultaneous translation may be high. Some members of the committee, however, feel that the financial investment is vital in order to preserve the use of aboriginal languages. The committee requests that the Board of Management undertake a cost/benefit analysis and make a recommendation on this matter.

Languages Commissioner – Recommendation 2

That the Legislative Assembly provide adequate funds to the Office of the Languages Commissioner, whose business is language, to carry out correspondence, public communication, and meetings with the services of interpreter/translators, thus ensuring office credibility in fulfilling its goals.

The standing committee notes that the Languages Commissioner has requested \$66,120 in supplementary funding in order to translate items such as the newsletter, website, annual report and other communications. The committee notes that the Languages Commissioner received an increase of \$12,000 in her 2002-2003 budget and a substantial increase in the 2001-2002 budget. The committee is also aware that the Languages Commissioner may request access to the Legislative Assembly's language services budget for any further translation costs.

Languages Commissioner – Recommendation 3

In order to provide a consistent picture of language growth or decline across official languages groups and in order to identify critical success factors that provide a basis upon which to make well-informed decisions for language programs and policies, the office recommends the Legislative Assembly approves funding to the Bureau of Statistics, in consultation with the Office of the Languages Commissioner, to undertake socio-linguistic research every three to five years.

Members of the standing committee had the opportunity to peruse several survey options provided by the NWT Bureau of Statistics. The committee is aware that good information is essential for the protection of languages and culture. However, the committee is also aware that the Special Committee on the Review of the Official Languages Act is investigating this issue and will be presenting their report next year. The standing

committee would like to wait for the special committee's findings on this matter before making a specific recommendation on this topic.

Languages Commissioner – Recommendation 4

Considering the urgency and the need for good services in the interpreter/translator field, it is imperative that implementation and development of a comprehensive strategy for I/T training and certification becomes a priority for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in conjunction with the Office of the Languages Commissioner. This process should be completed within three years (2004) for all official languages.

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight took considerable interest in this recommendation. The committee is aware that a former Minister for Education, Culture and Employment promised in the House that this particular concern would be addressed. The standing committee is disappointed to see that, despite the passage of several years, there has been no movement on this issue. For this reason, Mr. Speaker, we have a recommendation.

Recommendation

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight recommends that the government establish a comprehensive strategy for the training and certification of aboriginal language interpreters/translators by 2004.

Languages Commissioner – Recommendation 5

That GNWT departments provide staff workshops on the act and the roles and responsibilities of the Office of the Languages Commissioner, and ensure that orientation of new employees include the Official Languages Act.

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight fully supports this recommendation and we make this recommendation, Mr. Speaker.

Recommendation

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight recommends that the government provide staff workshops on the act and that the act be included in the orientation of new GNWT employees.

Conclusion

Members of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight would like to thank the Commissioner and her staff for the annual report and presentation.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight on the review of the annual report of the Languages Commissioner, 2000-2001.

THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Committee Report 7-14(5), be received by the Assembly and moved into committee of the whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. We do have a motion but it has been brought to my attention that we need a quorum. Mr. Clerk, would you please sound the bell?

-- Ringing of the Bells

Thank you. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, would you please restate your motion?

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Committee Report 7-14(5) be received by the Assembly and moved into committee of the whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. We have a motion. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried.

Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would request unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Committee Report 7-14(5) moved into committee of the whole for today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Committee Report 7-14(5) moved into committee of the whole for today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. The committee report will be moved into committee of the whole for today. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Committee Report 8-14(5): Report on the Review of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Commissioner's Annual Report 2000-2001

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Review of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Commissioner's Annual Report, 2000-2001.

Background

The Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories enacted its first Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act on December 31, 1996. The stated intention of the act is to "promote, uphold and protect access to the information that government creates and receives and to protect the privacy rights of individuals."

The Information and Privacy Commissioner is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly, but is required under section 68 of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act to prepare and submit an annual report on the Commissioner's activities to the Legislative Assembly. Ms. Elaine Keenan-Bengts was re-appointed as the Northwest Territories' Information and Privacy Commissioner on July 1, 2000 and will serve a five-year term.

The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act provides the public with a means of accessing the information that government collects through its departments and various regulatory bodies. The legislation was also designed to place

restrictions on the disbursement of certain information in order to protect the privacy rights of individuals. The act also gives individuals the right to see and make corrections to the information about themselves.

The Standing Committee Review

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight met with the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Commissioner, Elaine Keenan-Bengts, on March 6, 2002 to review the Commissioner's annual report for the year 2000-2001.

Deemed Acceptance/Refusal Within 30 Days Amendment

During her opening comments, the Commissioner referred to her 1999-2000 annual report suggesting that an amendment be added to the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act specifying that the head of a public body would be deemed to have accepted the Commissioner's recommendation if that public body had not responded within 30 days.

The Accountability and Oversight Committee did not agree with the Commissioner's recommendation at that time and instead suggested an amendment stating that the head of a public body would be deemed to have refused the Commissioner's recommendation if that public body has not responded within 30 days.

The government agreed with the committee and is currently drafting an amendment for a deemed refusal clause.

The standing committee re-considered the issue given the Commissioner's concerns, however, and ultimately decided that the deemed refusal clause was a more appropriate action for the government to take. The standing committee will review the amendment for a deemed refusal clause once it is presented by the government.

Recommendations From the Access to Information and Privacy Commissioner's 2000-2001 Report

The Inclusion of Municipalities as Public Bodies Under the Current Act

The Commissioner noted in both her annual report and at the public review that tax-based communities currently have no legislation regulating the release of names, addresses or other private information on web pages or in other public documents. Municipal officials from both Yellowknife and Hay River have identified this as a serious concern.

The standing committee noted that the matter was referred to the Department of Justice. The committee has sent a letter asking for the department's opinions on this issue and awaits its reply.

In the meantime, the standing committee fully supports the Commissioner's recommendation that municipalities be included under territorial access to information and the protection of privacy laws. The Commissioner suggests that either new legislation should be drafted to deal with municipalities or municipalities should be included under the current legislation. The standing committee is willing to review either option at the government's earliest convenience.

Canadian Territories Considered "Federal Works"

The Commissioner pointed out that new federal legislation titled Personal Information and Electronic Documents Act that regulates the collection, storage and use of personal information in the private sector, will come into full force on January 1, 2004. As of January 1, 2001, this legislation came into effect for "federal works" and for companies who transfer information over provincial/territorial borders.

The Federal Privacy Commissioner considers the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut as being "federal works" under the act and therefore the federal Commissioner has now taken on the responsibility of investigating all complaints made in this area.

The NWT Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Commissioner would like to see the establishment of territorial legislation in order to avoid having local issues handled by a federal body.

The standing committee noted that despite a letter from all territorial Justice Ministers questioning the federal Privacy Commissioner's interpretation of "federal works" the federal Commissioner has refused to alter his opinion.

Recommendation

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories establish legislation in order to avoid federal jurisdiction in the area of privacy and access laws that pertain to the regulation, collection, storage and use of personal information in the private sector here in the Northwest Territories.

Regulation of Private Health Industries

The Commissioner is concerned that while publicly run health bodies are subject to the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, other private health companies, such as pharmacists, dentists, chiropractors, et cetera, are not. Given concerns about the practice of companies selling health information to drug manufacturers and potential invasion of privacy issues, the Commissioner would like to see legislation enacted similar to the Health Information Act of Alberta. This legislation regulates the practices of all public and private health organizations and companies in respect to the release of information, among other issues.

The standing committee agrees that there is a need to protect the public from disclosure of health information by private health care companies. This legislated protection should either be included under the current Northwest Territories Access to Information and Protection of Privacy legislation or should be a part of a new law designed to protect NWT citizens.

Recommendation

The standing committee recommends that the government investigate the possibility of either expanding the current Northwest Territories Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act or establishing new legislation to protect NWT citizens from the disclosure of personal information by private health care companies.

The committee wishes to express its thanks to the Information and Privacy Commissioner, Ms. Elaine Keenan-Bengts, for her

continued cooperation and attendance at our review of her 2000-2001 Annual Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight on the Review of the Annual Report of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Commissioner 2000-2001.

THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that Committee Report 8-14(5) be received by the Assembly and moved into committee of the whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Committee Report 8-14(5) moved into committee of the whole for today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) to move this report into committee of the whole for today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Thank you. Committee Report 8-14(5) is moved into committee of the whole. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

ITEM 6: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

Colleagues, I would like to call your attention to a visitor in the gallery. Mr. Steve Kutcher is a past district governor of the Kelowna Lions Club, and his wife, Joy, are visiting with us.

-- Applause

The unusual part, I guess, is that Steve was coming here some 50 years ago but a late spring prevented him from landing here and his job took him elsewhere, so he did not come. After 50 years he has finally made it to Yellowknife. In addition to that, they have just celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Congratulations.

-- Applause

Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again I would like to welcome my constituency assistant, Mr. John Banksland, to the gallery. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Banksland, welcome. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize an intern from RWED, Tawna Brown. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Welcome, Ms. Brown. Thank you very much for coming to our Assembly. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 5, returns to oral questions.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to Item 5, returns to oral questions. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Steen, you may return to item 5, returns to oral questions.

REVERT TO ITEM 5: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return to Question 244-14(5): Local Preference Provision of the Business Incentive Policy

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Oral Question asked by Mrs. Groenewegen on June 12, 2002, regarding the definition of "local" in the Business Incentive Policy.

The Business Incentive Policy (52.04) includes the following definitions:

Local business -- a northern business which has been resident in the subject community for the six months prior to application and in addition complies with the following criteria:

- a) maintains an approved place of business by leasing or owning office, commercial or industrial space or where applicable, residential space, in the community on an annual basis for the primary purpose of operating the subject business; and
- b) maintains a local resident manager; and
- c) undertakes the majority of its management and administrative functions (related to its operations in the subject community) in the subject community; and
- d) has applied for and received designation as a local business at least two weeks prior to the tender opening.

Subject community -- the community wherein the work is being undertaken. In those cases, where the work is undertaken outside the legal boundaries of a community, the Government of the Northwest Territories may:

- a) define "community" to include that community in any case; or
- b) where two or more communities are both very close to the work site, the Government of the Northwest Territories may define "community" to include both or all adjacent communities.

In all cases the definition of "community" shall be included in the tender documents.

Mr. Speaker, a copy of the policy is available on the government's website. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Any further returns to oral questions? Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

ITEM 7: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 246-14(5): Social Housing Shortage in Yellowknife

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question this afternoon is for the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen, following up on my statement and my concern about the continuing housing shortage in Yellowknife. Can the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation advise what steps are being taken to address the critical shortage of both quantity and affordability of social housing in Yellowknife? Thank you.

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

Return to Question 246-14(5): Social Housing Shortage in Yellowknife

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we have issued a procedural directive that would change some of the policies for the tax-based municipalities, specific to Yellowknife, that would conform to the comprehensive Affordable Housing Strategy that we had introduced in the House several months ago. This will require the NWT Housing Corporation to address the increasing demand for home ownership delivery in the city, as well as working in concert with private developers to ensure that the housing needs are constantly met. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary to Question 246-14(5): Social Housing Shortage in Yellowknife

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to see if I could explore for a bit more detail though. What is the relationship, Mr. Speaker, between the Housing Corporation and the Yellowknife Housing Authority in assessing and planning public housing needs in Yellowknife? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 246-14(5): Social Housing Shortage in Yellowknife

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The relationship between the Yellowknife Housing Association and the NWT Housing Corporation is that they are an agent of our corporation delivering the social housing program locally. One of the key points to try to put our public housing tenants into private home ownership is that we have now adopted a policy where we will work with those tenants who are at the core need

threshold income levels over the next several months to put them into home ownership programs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary to Question 246-14(5): Social Housing Shortage in Yellowknife

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that some attention is being focused directly on that client group. Could the Minister provide the Assembly with any kind of market assessment, a picture or a snapshot of what is the current and potentially the future demand for public housing in Yellowknife? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 246-14(5): Social Housing Shortage in Yellowknife

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are no certain numbers. The numbers tend to fluctuate. As you know, the migration to the larger centres is imminent with development and employment opportunities. That is why I referred earlier to the fact that our policy areas are in a constant state of flux as we try to adjust them to the constant demands. At this point I do not have any specific numbers, but on a percentile basis it is fairly high. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary to Question 246-14(5): Social Housing Shortage in Yellowknife

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the absence of any real concrete information about homeless people, or those who are in desperate need of housing, I do not have a lot to give them. I am wondering if the Minister would be able to give me some pointers on what I can say the next time a constituent phones up and says they have no place to go. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 246-14(5): Social Housing Shortage in Yellowknife

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hopefully we will be able to give certainty to those people who are making inquiries. Our Affordable Housing Strategy is now in full effect trying to meet those constant demands. As well, there are additional rental units that are coming on the market. I do not know how fast it will be, but hopefully it will alleviate some housing shortages and we will be able to meet the rest of the demands through our social housing program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Question 247-14(5): Deh Cho Road Conditions

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister for MACA. In light of the large snowfall and the problems we have had with spring runoff and the wet spring season, we are encountering a lot of problems caused by water. We have seen in the media the Bluefish Creek washout, and we have also heard that the Kakisa access roads are having extreme problems.

I just received a call from the mayor and the SAO of Fort Providence yesterday. The mayor talked to me and they are experiencing some severe problems with road conditions in the community. We have had problems with roads in the communities before. However, at this point, we do not have any gravel. Our gravel stockpile has been depleted for a couple of years now. We have not been able, even though a request has been put in, to put it on the capital plan. We do not have an engineer. We do not have the extraordinary funding we need to build and deal with the roads. To top it off, we do not have the superintendent in the region.

I would like to ask the Minister, can he tell us if there is any funding out there that Fort Providence could tap into to help them get the resources to adequately deal with the roads problem? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 247-14(5): Deh Cho Road Conditions

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in reviewing my briefing notes, I see that Fort Providence was discussing this issue with the regional superintendent as late as March 28th. At that time, it was agreed that the hamlet would develop a proposal and submit it to MACA for funding for gravel. To date, the hamlet has not submitted the request for a technical assessment of their need.

However, I did discuss this with the Member yesterday and it appears that there is a little more need for it now than there was in March, due to the spring runoff conditions.

Public Works has also advised me that they were planning to go into the community in the week of the 17th to assess what gravel sources there are in the community and put together a gravel haul with the community.

There is some funding available. What we need now is an assessment from the community and a request from the community identifying exactly how much they need. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary to Question 247-14(5): Deh Cho Road Conditions

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to hear that MACA and Public Works and Services have been attempting to address this problem. However, I am not sure if we are talking about the same problem. I know the community has been talking and made application, or has been requesting to put the gravel stockpile issue into the capital plans. However, the problem has escalated now because the roads have been

deteriorating over the last couple of weeks. There is no gravel. There are no engineers. There is no money to hire engineers.

The problem has escalated considerably. I would like to ask the Minister, would he consider sending his staff into the community to talk about the whole problem with the roads and gravel? It is all one issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 247-14(5): Deh Cho Road Conditions

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the suggestions from the Member and I will have MACA accompany Public Works next week and meet with the community on their needs. If necessary, we could do a preliminary discussion on this over the phone, but there will definitely be somebody from MACA going to the community.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

Question 248-14(5): Highway Maintenance Resources

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, everyday we see the highway maintenance staff working on the roads between Stagg River and Yellowknife, and also the Ingraham Trail. However, it seems the roads are not improving.

I would like to ask the Minister, can his department get extra resources to repair these roads to help the maintenance staff who are out there, who are trying their best to keep the roads in safe condition, but do not have enough resources? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 248-14(5): Highway Maintenance Resources

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at this time of year, as Mr. Lafferty points out, it is very difficult to do maintenance work and keep up with the problems we have on our roads as the frost comes out and soft spots develop and wash board and so on.

Right now, we are using all of the resources that we have in this area as efficiently as we can. They work some days primarily on Highway No. 3 and some days on other areas, but we are using the full resources we have. There are none that are sitting idle for no reason.

I will check with the department. If there are other areas where we could move equipment or people into this area, then on a temporary basis, we will do that. I know the roads are in bad condition, both Highway No. 3 and Highway No. 4, and it is the same with parts of Highway No. 1. It seems to be a problem everywhere.

I am not optimistic we have resources we can reallocate to this region. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 248-14(5): Highway Maintenance Resources

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the past, there was major rebuilding on the surface of these roads, but this sort of repair is no longer being done on these highways. The result is the poor surface conditions.

Can the Minister get a pilot project in a certain section along Highway No. 3 to see if it would help from further deterioration by using maybe a local contractor from Rae-Edzo or from Yellowknife? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 248-14(5): Highway Maintenance Resources

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess to answer the question I would have to know more specific information about what the Member is proposing, but we do use contractors. If there is a way of doing that within the resources we have, certainly we would consider it. I will discuss it further with the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 248-14(5): Highway Maintenance Resources

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the early 1990s, when there was a different superintendent and different people working out there, they had different ways of doing road repairs. At that time, every summer, they would have special equipment out there like packers, and they would have one-lane traffic while they are repairing one side of the road so there would not be damage while they were repairing it. They used to use local contractors. I would like to ask the Minister, can he look at maybe trying to do what they used to do in the past? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 248-14(5): Highway Maintenance Resources

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am open to doing whatever we can to improve the efficiency of our road repair and maintenance operation. If there were things that were done in the past that we could take a look at, then I would be pleased to do that. We all want the roads in as good a condition and as safe as possible. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 248-14(5): Highway Maintenance Resources

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the Minister gives correspondence to the department, would he be willing to share the same correspondence with me? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 248-14(5): Highway Maintenance Resources

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, as long as the correspondence does not indicate that it is confidential, then I certainly would be willing to share it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 249-14(5): Support for Families With Special Needs Children

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during the last session, I made a statement on the need for support for families who have challenged children, whom they are looking after in their own homes.

Subsequent to that, I did receive a response from the Minister talking about special needs support for families. It mostly was about respite care. I thank the Minister for that response.

Subsequent to that, I have had two more constituents come to me who are actually both qualified trades people, very much needed in the labour market in Hay River, both with families in the east, both with children with special needs and would like to move to Hay River. Apparently they have contacted the powers that be and have even, I think, contacted the Minister's office and been told that there is no comparable support available for their children here in the Northwest Territories. I understand from one of them that it was even suggested that perhaps they should stay where they are because that is where the financial support and resources are for their children.

Mr. Speaker, these people also were able to identify that there were comparable services available for them in Alberta. I want to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services, are we not anywhere close to being on par with other jurisdictions in terms of the support that we provide to families with children with special needs? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 249-14(5): Support for Families With Special Needs Children

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would be interested to get the specifics from the Member in terms of the feedback that these folks apparently received, especially if it was from Health and Social Services officials. It is not our practice to discourage people from moving to the North.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the services we provide for a jurisdiction of our size are comparable. While they could always use more money, we do attempt to meet all the needs of all our residents to the best of our ability with the resources we do have. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary to Question 249-14(5): Support for Families With Special Needs Children

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of these families was able to provide me with a list of what they had received in their home province. If I can just quickly list a few of them: one-on-one qualified day home assistant, four hours a day, seven days a week; special day care for autism, five hours per day, five days a week; in-home medical assessment, once a week; special dietary needs; speech therapy and pathology; and also, professional massage therapy. This is for a child with autism.

Do we have any of those things available for children with autism in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 249-14(5): Support for Families With Special Needs Children

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member has me at a disadvantage. She is quoting from a letter and a document that I have not seen, listing services at a very fast pace. I do not want to deflect the question, but she does have information that I do not have before me.

Mr. Speaker, I know that there is an autism society in the Northwest Territories. It operates out of Yellowknife and it is run by a number of very dedicated, informed parents. The programs my colleague listed off quickly do not sound familiar to me. I know that the issue of autism is dealt with mainly by the families themselves. They work with the schools. They work with the health and social services authorities in their respective areas. The main impetus for the autism society is in Yellowknife, where they have a significant number of children with autism. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary to Question 249-14(5): Support for Families With Special Needs Children

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is very reassuring and I am happy for the people in Yellowknife, but these are people who want to move to Hay River. These are people who are in areas of work that we need in the industry that operates out of Hay River. I think the reason why none of these services I listed off sound familiar to the Minister is because none of them are available to children with autism in the Northwest Territories. This is a barrier to us attracting qualified people to work here. It is also a barrier to the children who are born and raised here in the Northwest Territories who do not receive this kind of help.

Maybe the Minister could tell me, what is available now at the present time to children with autism in the Northwest Territories, and not just in Yellowknife? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 249-14(5): Support for Families With Special Needs Children

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the school system, I know there are accommodations and resources supplied to the students, one-to-one special needs assistance. I know that the school system is responsive. Depending on the degree of the autism, there are other supports provided through the authorities that are in place, with social workers and the nurses that may be there, and the other special needs people that may be available in the communities.

Mr. Speaker, if the Member wants to address the specific concerns of the folks she mentioned, I would be glad to look at that. Is this a barrier to people moving to the North? In some cases, if the needs are beyond our capabilities, that very possibly may be the case. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary to Question 249-14(5): Support for Families With Special Needs Children

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have three constituents, and I would be happy to share the specifics of the information with the Minister, but I have three constituent families right now in Hay River who are either contemplating not moving their families to Hay River or leaving Hay River because of the lack of support and services. I will share that specific information with the Minister, but does the Minister not agree that the services provided to these children in the Northwest Territories should be on par with any other jurisdiction in Canada? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 249-14(5): Support for Families With Special Needs Children

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree that our reach should exceed our grasp and that is an ideal that we strive for, and that is something every year that we try to put in the budget to keep increasing our resources to improve the level of service in all areas, to all of our constituents. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Question 250-14(5): NWT Residents in Southern Institutions

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I noted in my statement earlier today, a number of us from the Social Programs Committee travelled with the Minister of Health and

Social Services to Alberta to see how northern residents were being provided service in southern settings. Could the Minister advise the House, are there many northern residents in southern institutions, particularly those suffering from cognitive or emotional problems?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 250-14(5): NWT Residents in Southern Institutions

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we currently have 21 adults in southern facilities for various reasons. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 250-14(5): NWT Residents in Southern Institutions

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, each health and social services board is responsible for placing residents from their region in an assisted living situation, if one is needed. As I understand it, with our small population, it is difficult for them to sometimes find three or four residents to put into one setting so they can make the cost reasonable to run these places. Authorities are often forced to make southern placements. What is the department going to do to address this situation?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 250-14(5): NWT Residents in Southern Institutions

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are in the process of finalizing a draft on the Continuing Care Strategy, which I mentioned in this House a number of times. It has a number of components that relate to home and community care, supported living, independent living and facility living. We are also constantly monitoring the placements down south. I recognize, and I think the health and social services system recognizes, that there is a need to better coordinate our efforts when we place our residents in southern facilities, be they children or adults.

We are also taking the steps, through this strategy, to come up with a way that is agreeable to the authorities and to the department so that as a system, we can better coordinate our efforts the same way we are trying to improve our coordination in the areas of recruitment and retention of health professionals.

We are aware that this is an issue and we are aware that we have people down in southern jurisdictions. We also want to ensure that as we contemplate repatriation, while some may be down there because there is no room and some of them are there for some very specialized reasons, we do it carefully on a case-by-case basis. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 250-14(5): NWT Residents in Southern Institutions

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear that the department will examine each case individually because I think somebody who has been successful for ten years in a setting in the south may not benefit from repatriation, even though they may be functioning well now.

What is the timetable that the Minister is going to commit to, to try and make sure that we do not move any more people down south who could be housed in assisted living situations in the North?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 250-14(5): NWT Residents in Southern Institutions

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my intention and the intention of the Department of Health and Social Services to share these drafts on the Continuing Care Framework, the Addictions, Mental Health and Family Violence Framework and the work that is being done on those with disabilities to make sure that they address the issues that are of concern to all of us.

We have been waiting for some time for these documents. They are critical foundation pieces for any further program development within Health and Social Services. I will be looking to the Members, especially members of the Standing Committee on Social Programs, for their advice and feedback over the next coming weeks, taking into consideration the fact that we will soon be into the summer hiatus. These are critical pieces and we need critical and constructive feedback so that those drafts can be finalized and we can move forward with something that will have the support of all of the Members. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 250-14(5): NWT Residents in Southern Institutions

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe I heard the Minister say that he wanted to have things finalized by the end of the summer. I will assume that is the answer, unless I hear differently from him. Is the Minister preparing also to make a presentation to his colleague, the Minister of Finance, to demonstrate how the money that it may cost to do this can be recovered by keeping more jobs in the North and by keeping more residents in the North, taking into account such things as the transfer of funds from the federal government?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 250-14(5): NWT Residents in Southern Institutions

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance and I have offices side by

side, and I think the Minister would attest that I have almost worn a path through the carpet on my daily treks to his office, pushing and lobbying for funding for different needs in Health and Social Services across the board, be it for recruitment and retention, the disabled or the requirements for the issues that my colleague for Frame Lake has raised.

We are working, constantly justifying our steady demand and requests for funds given the pressures that are upon the system. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Question 251-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Review Process

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question at this time will be addressed to the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development and it centres around the Business Incentive Policy. We have heard many questions and concerns raised in this House, and my questions are not in the area of reinstating it for the one project but more the process involved of informing Members, and where the review for the Business Incentive Policy sits at this date.

My understanding and experience as a Member of the previous Assembly is that a review was done and we did not see much come out of that. I am not sure where that report went, but through the questions this week, I have heard that the department is once again doing a review of this and that review is about to be brought forward. I would like to know from the Minister, when will this come forward to Regular Members so that we know what is planned and what is being looked at through the department? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 251-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Review Process

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the review of the BIP is being done by the Department of RWED and has been going on since the latter part of 1999 and January 2001. It has been with the department. Extensive consultation has been done. The result of the consultation is that there is a revised BIP policy that is going to Cabinet at the end of the month. There is a Cabinet meeting scheduled for June 28th and I am targeting that date to move it to Cabinet. If it is approved by Cabinet, then shortly after that, the decision will be going to the Ordinary Members, probably through AOC or GED, one of the standing committees. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 251-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Review Process

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, it is good to know that this will be coming forward to us. One concern is that the Minister stated that Cabinet will be reviewing it and once it is approved, then it will come to Members. Would there be an

opportunity for Members, once they have reviewed it, to have input as to possible changes in direction if enough Members see points of concern? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 251-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Review Process

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it goes to Cabinet and if it is approved, it goes to the Ordinary Members. If there are changes that are required or fine-tuning, I am certainly open to that at that time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 251-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Review Process

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to fine-tuning, it is good to know that we can have some impact there, but as many Members have heard around the floor here, it needs to almost have its engine replaced. There is some pretty serious rebuilding going on here, so hopefully we will have input and know what is coming forward at that point. Again, when does the Minister expect he can bring that forward? Is it early in July or into August, in that time frame? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 251-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Review Process

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, once the decision goes to Cabinet, then it has to go through the internal administration. Probably two weeks following that, probably mid-July. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 251-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Review Process

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Regular Members have an opportunity to see not just what is being presented but also some of the work that has gone into it, some of the options that were looked at before coming up with the final product? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 251-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Review Process

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Following the decision, if it is made on June 28th, and going through the administration, the information that goes to the Ordinary Members will probably be a couple of weeks following the meeting of June 28th, mid-July. At the next opportune time, I

would not mind sitting down with AOC or GED, whoever is going to handle that, and provide the necessary information at that time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Question 252-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Issues

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Transportation. Mr. Speaker, these have to do with the BIP policy. I think all Ministers on the opposite side know how we feel about Cabinet's use of how they decided to administer the BIP policy in relation to the North Slave Correctional Centre. Mr. Speaker, there are other very important issues around the BIP policy that are happening today. I would like to ask the Minister, when it comes to major highway projects in the Northwest Territories, where are the boundaries that are set up? Who is local for bidding on these highway projects? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 252-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Issues

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think the question was, if I understood it correctly, who is eligible for consideration for the local priority. Mr. Speaker, if that is the question, under the BIP policy, there is a provision for a local status. Any company that is doing business within the municipality where they register for local status would then be eligible for projects that are connected to that municipality.

For example, if a company is doing business in Enterprise and there is a road repair through Transportation that borders on or goes through the Enterprise municipality, then the company would be eligible. In order to be eligible, they have to be doing business in that jurisdiction.

There is a registry that is kept by the BIP office in RWED. Companies fill out the application form. If that is accepted, then they are included on the registry. That registry is available through a BIP web page and registry. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 252-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Issues

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am referring more to projects on the highway outside of communities. Where are the boundaries that establish what companies can bid on those projects? If the work is outside of the communities or outside of town, where are the boundaries?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 252-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Issues

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, of course in the Territories, any business anywhere in the Territories is eligible to bid on projects. Whether or not they would get the local status would be determined by the way they had filed their application with the BIP registry.

If there is a road repair that does not border on any municipality, then no one would be eligible for the local registry. If they are a bona fide northern company registered that way, then they would get the northern BIP preference.

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

Supplementary to Question 252-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Issues

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seeing as the Minister used Enterprise as an example, I would like to ask the Minister, can he see a situation where a project is put out to tender starting in Enterprise and going anywhere from Enterprise, and having two companies identified as local on that, one being Enterprise and one being Fort Providence, but Hay River is not local on that contract? Can he see that situation happening, and would there be a problem with that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 252-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Issues

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, theoretically, yes. If a project bordered on or passed through both municipalities of Enterprise and Fort Providence, to follow the Member's example, then you could have two companies, one from Enterprise and one from Fort Providence, which would both qualify for local priority.

If that project was not adjacent to or through the Hay River or municipal boundaries, then the Hay River communities would not be considered as local under the terms of the BIP policy, as I understand it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 252-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Issues

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a tough time getting the answers on this one. Mr. Speaker, if the project starts in one community but does not border either one of them -- I am talking about proximity to the job. Can you see that? If it is only going through one and not the other, then how can it be Enterprise and Fort Providence but not Hay River? Let us say Hay River is closer to the job site than Fort Providence is. How can Fort Providence and Enterprise be eligible but not Hay River?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 252-14(5): Business Incentive Policy Issues

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, as I understand the BIP policy, and this is really within the Department of RWED, but a business that is located in a community that is in the area but not adjacent to the project, or the project is not within their boundaries, would not necessarily be considered for local preference.

Hay River could be ten kilometres away from a project, but if the project is not adjacent to it or in the boundaries, then the businesses in that community would not be eligible. How close they are really does not have a bearing under the current BIP policy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Question 253-14(5): Forest Fire Management Policy

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine, relating to his responsibility over forest fires. Mr. Speaker, it is that time of year when we see forest fires and start to smell it in the air.

I would like to ask the Minister, has the value the department uses to action forest fires changed since last year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 253-14(5): Forest Fire Management Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As far as I know, the way the forest fire management has been done by the department is going to be continued the same way they did it last year. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 253-14(5): Forest Fire Management Policy

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Minister for his response. I believe the value system they use is only if a community or a cabin or a man-made infrastructure is threatened, only then will the department action that fire.

I ask the question, how do we come up with a value system where we protect the small cabin in the middle of the forest that is going to be burnt? What is the value of the cabin then, Mr. Speaker? If you cannot use the land around your cabin, for which you built the cabin in the first place, it is not usable anymore as you cannot trap or hunt. What is the value? Why do you not just let the cabin burn so the trapper can get compensated and build in another place?

I ask the Minister, was there any consultation done with trappers and people in the communities when they came up with this value system that determines which fires they will action and which fires they will not action? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 253-14(5): Forest Fire Management Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in terms of fire management, it has evolved over a number of years since that was devolved from the federal government to the Northwest Territories. During the transfer, the communities and the different aboriginal leaders were quite involved in the whole transfer of that program from being a federal program to the Northwest Territories.

Over the years, the whole Fire Management Program has evolved. It included a lot of consultation with the communities. I think this consultation process should continue on. As you know, we do not know how the forest fire season is going to be yet. We have a few fires already in the North and we have been lucky enough to put them out fairly quickly.

Hopefully through the summer, we will be able to continue that and we do not have to get into a scenario where huge areas have to burn because of this type of policy. We have to continue to talk with the communities and if there is a concern about the value that is placed on the forest or the cabins that are out there, then we must look at it.

I do not really agree that we should just let everything burn, even the cabin, because the forest has a habit of regenerating itself over a number of years. An area may burn and we save the cabin, and in about five or six years, as things come back, you still have a cabin. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 253-14(5): Forest Fire Management Policy

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Minister that I hope we do not see large fires, since we seem to put less value on our forest and our wildlife, Mr. Speaker. We are reviewing draft acts that are looking at species at risk right now. How do we know which species are at risk when we do not even know where they are? How do we know if we are not protecting those species that are at risk if we just allow the forest to be burned?

I would like to ask the Minister, would his department go back to the communities and reassess what is valuable? A trapper for six years waiting for the trap line to come back, what is he going to do? He cannot go to another place because he cannot afford to sell or move.

If he was compensated, maybe he could go down that route. Those are the concerns and the questions that are asked of me by my constituents and Northerners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 253-14(5): Forest Fire Management Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member is asking the department to go back and look at the value that is placed on the area when there is a forest fire, and the decisions that are made to fight certain fires. Certainly we could do that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 253-14(5): Forest Fire Management Policy

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to request from the Minister that his department put additional value on those forests that are not threatened, log cabins or communities. Those areas where we know there is high traffic in moose, high traffic in other animals, and high traffic especially in caribou migration, Mr. Speaker.

This winter, the Beverly caribou herd went all the way down to Saskatchewan and then back to Lutselk'e. The caribou were very undernourished because most of their habitat has been burned.

I would like to ask the Minister, would his department undertake to reassess the value of forest areas that are heavily used by our wildlife? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 253-14(5): Forest Fire Management Policy

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of committees out there, caribou management boards and so forth. I am sure they talk about the management of the different herds that migrate from the north to the south every season, and that their habitat is important to these herds.

I think that with these boards and our department and with the whole legislation that we are talking about, the species at risk, I think there are a lot of opportunities here. With the review of the Wildlife Act as well, there will be a lot of opportunity for consultation.

As a government, when we took over the forest management from the federal government, the way we developed our program was based on a lot of consultation. It is not a fixed policy we have in how we run it. Certainly we are evolving and it will take a lot of consultation to get it right.

We have to also be cognizant of the fact that it takes a lot of money to fight all the fires. I think the way the forest management was developed, in terms of trying to fight forest fires, all these different factors were taken into consideration. Certainly consultation was very important and we will continue

to try to develop the forest management the way that people in the communities want us to take. We would do that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Question 254-14(5): Capital Project Budgeting Process

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Public Works and Services regarding project overruns, as I mentioned in my Member's statement. As we know, when there are project overruns, it affects all the projects across the board and it affects all the people in the Northwest Territories because the money has to come from somewhere to cover the cost of the overrun.

When we have huge projects, such as the North Slave Correctional Institute, and the plans are being drafted, could the Minister explain to me the process that is used for developing the construction budget? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Public Works and Services, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 254-14(5): Capital Project Budgeting Process

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the process Public Works and Services uses, we first are requested by the client department to identify a cost for a specific project. The client department normally puts forward an idea of what the project would consist of. In this case, the North Slave Correctional Institute, the department was given a basic plan and design of what the client wanted. The department then went to the consultants, as we did not have any information on file for this particular type of structure. We went to consultants down south. We received from them estimated costs for this type of a building.

We are assuming that they then gather their information based on what experience they have building those types of structures down south. In this particular case, Public Works received from the consultants prices in the range of \$35 million for this particular type of building. However, the consultants did point out that they did not have any real past experiences to base these figures on, because there was not any of that type of infrastructure in Canada, where you build a jail more towards rehabilitating prisoners rather than just holding them in as prisoners. They came forward with these prices and that price range.

We then took this back to the client department, the Department of Justice, and we told them this is what our consultants tell us is the estimate for this project. The client department then puts that into the budget and that is the figure we work with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary to Question 254-14(5): Capital Project Budgeting Process

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It seems to be rather unfortunate that some communities cannot access

infrastructure projects or capital projects, such as swimming pools. We cannot just put that as part of the plan, yet we are seeing too many projects that have cost overruns. We are well over \$10 million if all of these projects were approved. At the same time, there are other communities that cannot even get on the list.

I would like to know if the Minister could provide this Assembly with a list of the projects within the last three years that have experienced cost overruns. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. I am having some difficulty with that question, Mr. McLeod. Perhaps it would be better as a written question because it seems very detailed. However, if you are just asking if the Minister would provide that, a quick yes or no would probably be the answer. Mr. Minister, if you are comfortable with that.

Further Return to Question 254-14(5): Capital Project Budgeting Process

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can certainly provide the information to the Member. However, I cannot guarantee that I am going to get it to him in the next few days in order to assist you with the timelines of the session. However, I can provide the Member with that information.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary to Question 254-14(5): Capital Project Budgeting Process

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was hoping that the Minister would at least give us a few examples off the top of his head, however, a written list of projects will be fine.

I wanted to ask a final question regarding project overruns. I would like to know, since there are so many projects that are experiencing cost overruns, is the Minister or the department looking at a mechanism or a process to eliminate or control cost overruns on some of these projects? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Public Works and Services, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 254-14(5): Capital Project Budgeting Process

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the Member. The department continues to evaluate why our projects are going over. We try to take steps that would prevent the next projects from going over. We record, for instance, within the department, all the information that is related to a specific project.

We try to gather and do an analysis of what is causing the cost overruns, what the market was at that time. All of those things are taken into consideration. We then use that as guidelines when we put forward a price on the next project of a similar nature.

For instance, when we are constructing schools or constructing buildings for communities, we do not necessarily run into as

many cost overruns because we have information to base our figures on. The only unknown in every case is the market. We have no control over the market. In this particular case, the market was going haywire as far as price was concerned and it is causing us problems.

However, we pointed out very early in the discussions with the Members and with the client department that we did not add inflation into the 1999 figure of \$45 million. We did not take into consideration inflation, so that was one of the problems. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Question 255-14(5): Stanton Hospital Operating Budget

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in our session a year ago, the Minister of Health and Social Services was under some fire because the Stanton Territorial Hospital did not have an approved operating budget. I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services this year, does Stanton Territorial Hospital have an approved budget for this fiscal year?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 255-14(5): Stanton Hospital Operating Budget

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, all the boards, all the authorities have their budgets and we are currently in the process of finalizing the deficit reduction plans that will take all the other outstanding matters into line. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 255-14(5): Stanton Hospital Operating Budget

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am having trouble understanding. If the deficit recovery plan is not part of the approved budget, does that mean, for instance, that this year Stanton is running a surplus? The question now is how much of that surplus goes to pay off the deficit? Is that what the Minister means?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 255-14(5): Stanton Hospital Operating Budget

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in dealing with the accumulated debt of the boards, there was a process agreed to, a 60/40 split. The boards were asked to submit their deficit reduction plans to the department for review and we have been working with them. We are expecting to conclude that work by about June 15th and we will proceed to hopefully have that matter resolved by then. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 255-14(5): Stanton Hospital Operating Budget

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now I am totally confused. Let me put it to the Minister very clearly. The first response, I think he said the authorities all had approved budgets. If that is the case, is Stanton's budget for this current fiscal year a surplus budget?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the Member could clarify, is he talking about the current fiscal year, 2002-2003?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think this is the third time now, we will have to check Hansard, that I said current, but current means this year, yes, starting April 1, 2002 and concluding March 31, 2003.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 255-14(5): Stanton Hospital Operating Budget

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, then I believe the Member asked me, does Stanton have a surplus for the current fiscal year that we are currently only three months into? I am not quite sure of the question.

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

Supplementary to Question 255-14(5): Stanton Hospital Operating Budget

MR. DENT: Thank you. Clearly this is not the Minister of Finance. The question was, in the budget, is there more revenue than there are expenditures? Budget has no relation to how much has actually been spent in the first three months. I am asking about the approved budget. Is there more on the revenue side than there is on the expenditure side?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that on a roughly \$54 million budget, a slight surplus was projected.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Question 256-14(5): Eligibility for Local Preference

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will continue my line of questioning on BIP. I will direct my question to the Minister of Transportation again.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to know, who establishes whether a contract that is put out by the department for work on the highways, who determines who is local and who is not on those contracts? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 256-14(5): Eligibility for Local Preference

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, in order to qualify as local, a company fills out an application with the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development with the BIP office. When they fill that out, it is either accepted or rejected.

If it is accepted, then they become registered as local for that community in which they have applied. Then, when a contract is tendered and the results analyzed, the Department of Transportation would look at the registry and see who is registered as local for that particular contract. They would go back to the BIP registry to determine it. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 256-14(5): Eligibility for Local Preference

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Why then would a contract be issued on work, whether it starts in a community or not, but if it is between communities or out on the highway somewhere, why would there be a local established for work if it is not in a community, whether it starts there or not? If it is territorial work on territorial highways, why would anybody be listed as local? Why would they not all be listed local?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 256-14(5): Eligibility for Local Preference

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the BIP program, we would consider any contractor eligible if part of that project, even if only part of it was within a local jurisdiction, which they were registered. We would not take that project and break it into pieces under the current BIP project and say they are considered local for this two kilometres but the other 20 kilometres, no one has it. We have considered that to be one project. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 256-14(5): Eligibility for Local Preference

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That really gives me some concern, Mr. Speaker, because in the community that I represent, where the road into that community is paved and is probably not necessarily going to require any major work coming out of there for some time, how does a business from Hay River ever get a local contract on any territorial work? I would like to know that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 256-14(5): Eligibility for Local Preference

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier, if a piece of road is not adjacent to or through any local community, then it is possible that no one would get the local preference.

In the case of Hay River, or any other community, a company located in one of those communities would only get local preference if the work they were bidding on was either in that municipality or immediately adjacent to it. That is the condition under the current BIP.

I can also, Mr. Speaker, ask the Department to raise this issue with the BIP Steering Committee to look at it, but we have to operate with the BIP policy as it currently exists. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 256-14(5): Eligibility for Local Preference Policy

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Who controls the BIP registry? Where is the location of the BIP registry? Who sets local priority for contracts that are put out by the Department of Transportation? Hay River, Yellowknife? Where is it?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley -- three little questions.

Return to Question 256-14(5): Eligibility for Local Preference Policy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The BIP registry is kept in the BIP office, which is located in RWED in headquarters. There is a BIP web page where anyone can have access to it and see who is registered and where they are. It is done through Yellowknife, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The time for oral questions has ended. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to the opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

Bill 5: An Act to Amend the Adoption Act and Family Law Act

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that the Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Adoption Act and Family Law Act, and wishes to report that Bill 5 is ready for consideration in committee of the whole.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 40-14(5): Action Plan: Report on the Review of Programs and Services for Seniors, March 2002

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Action Plan: Report on the Review of Programs and Services for Seniors, March 2002. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

Tabled Document 41-14(5): Inuvialuit Final Agreement Implementation Coordinating Committee Annual Report, 2000-2001

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Inuvialuit Final Agreement Implementation Coordinating Committee Annual Report, 2000-2001.

Tabled Document 42-14(5): Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claims Agreement, Annual Report of the Implementation Committee, April 1, 2000 to March 31, 2001

Mr. Speaker, I also wish to table the following document entitled Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claims Agreement, Annual Report of the Implementation Committee, April 1, 2000 to March 31, 2001. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Clerk.

Tabled Document 43-14(5): Response to Petition 1-14(5)

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Rule 42(10), I wish to table a response to Petition 1-14(5) presented by the Member for Great Slave and responded to by the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 15: An Act to Amend the Real Estate Agents Licensing Act

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Real Estate Agents Licensing Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. We have a motion. The motion is in order. It has been pointed out to me that we lack a quorum. Mr. Clerk, would you sound the bell?

-- Ringing of the Bells

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. All those in favour, please signify. Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Bill 15 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

Bill 16: Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Bill 16, Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. We have a motion. The motion is in order. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Bill 16 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills.

Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Bill 12, Minister's Statement 46-14(5), Minister's Statement 47-14(5) and Tabled Document 35-14(5), Committee Report 7-14(5) and Committee Report 8-14(5), with Mr. Lafferty in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. At this time I will ask for a 15-minute break.

-- Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): I would like to call the committee back to order. The committee is considering Bill 12, Minister's Statement 46-14(5), Minister's Statement 47-14(5) and Tabled Document 35-14(5). We also have Committee Report 7-14(5) and Committee Report 8-14(5). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At this time, we would like to proceed with Bill 12. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Does the Minister responsible have any opening comments? Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I would like to thank you for the opportunity on behalf of all Members to present Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Elections Act. These amendments represent another step in the evolution of the electoral process in the Northwest Territories. The bill proposes to implement a number of important recommendations made by the Chief Electoral Officer in his report, *Modernizing Our Electoral Systems, A Report on the Administration of the 1999 General Election*, and supported by the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures in its report during the 4th session. The House adopted the recommendations of the standing committee and the bill before you reflects the direction of Members.

Mr. Chairman, Bill 12 will provide that the electoral event is shortened from 45 to 28 days. This will provide for a more efficient electoral process and be less intrusive in the daily lives of our citizens. In addition, Mr. Chairman, we note the importance of the right to vote given to every citizen in Canada and propose that returning officers here in the Northwest Territories also be afforded that right. We have also recognized, Mr. Chairman, that citizens, while participating in the process, have the right to exercise their displeasure and to that end we have proposed that the electorate have the opportunity to decline their ballot.

The bill, Mr. Chairman, also provides the authority to the Chief Electoral Officer to create a register of electors. This register will be a permanent database containing the information collected during an initial enumeration on each eligible elector who wishes to have his or her name in the register. The register will be in the database from which various types of lists of electors will be produced. The register will be maintained by conducting periodical confirmations of elector information contained in the register, receipt of information for other government departments and the provision of information from individual eligible electors. The sharing of elector information is also provided for in the bill with Elections Canada and municipal and aboriginal governments. Provisions have been added to govern the use of information collected about electors.

Mr. Chairman, the bill also provides for a special mobile poll for those eligible electors who, for reasons of incapacity, are unable to attend the polls, the provision of write-in ballots to be used in conjunction with the revamped voting by special ballot, and adjustments to advance polls and voting in the office of the returning officer.

For candidates, Mr. Chairman, the bill provides the right of access to buildings containing two or more residences between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. during an electoral event; provides that the candidate may have his or her photograph reproduced on the ballot; provides that a candidate may receive a return of their deposit upon the filing of their election expenses within the time provided; restricts the placement of campaign signs on public property; and provides for the removal of campaign signs at the close of the electoral event.

Mr. Chairman, the bill also eliminates the provision of proxy voting, mobile polls for outpost camps and the conducting of polls in correctional institutes. Eligible electors who are incarcerated will vote pursuant to provisions of voting by special ballot.

And finally, Mr. Chairman, the bill contains a number of minor technical and language corrections to improve the act.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I believe that the amendments being proposed will enhance the effectiveness of the Elections Act and provide to the electorate a greater sense of ownership and trust in the electoral process in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Does the Minister wish to bring in any witnesses?

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes I do, Mr. Chairman, thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses in. Mr. Handley, can you please introduce your witnesses?

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, with me are David Hamilton, Chief Electoral Officer, and Mark Aitken, director of the legislation division of the Department of Justice. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. We are now open for general comments. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do have a couple of questions for clarification that I would like to ask. First of all, I would like to indicate my support for an enhanced electoral proceeding. I think our Chief Electoral Officer has done an excellent job of helping us streamline and modernize things, and we can certainly look forward to a more efficient process.

I have two questions that I would like to pose. One of them to the Minister's opening comments, where he noted that the revisions will provide the right for an elector to have the opportunity to decline their ballot. Does this mean that in doing so, is that particular decision recorded and does it become part of the official result of an election? I will stop there, Mr. Chair, and await the reply. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, yes, it is recorded.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The other aspect of this that I wanted to find a bit more about is the register of electors. This is a very progressive move and I think something that will save, not only our particular government but potentially others that want to participate, a lot of expense in gathering information about electors.

In terms of making the information available, I was wondering if the act provides for an Electoral Boundaries Commission to access this information as well. The reason I ask that question is in relation to helping us determine the population, or the number of electors, in any given riding. This has certainly been an issue that has been dealt with in other forums, representation by population. I am wondering if this information could be available to provide a commission with current and up-to-date information about the exact number of voters in a given riding. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I will ask Mr. Hamilton to respond to this one.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Hamilton.

MR. HAMILTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The legislation as drafted is silent on whether an electoral boundaries commission could have access to a list after a general election, for example. It would depend on how quickly or how soon a boundaries commission was established and how valuable that information would be to them.

However, the only condition that is put on the sharing of information from a list -- it is very restrictive under the legislation, what it can be used for -- the information provided on the list is only supposed to be available and used for an electoral event.

There is a provision in the act that allows an elected candidate, if you were a candidate and you were elected at the next Assembly, to receive a copy of the voters list, the final voters list, as the elected Member. That list can be used by an elected Member to contact his or her constituents.

I would probably see that giving this information to a boundaries commission, of which one of its prime purposes is to look at voter patrons, voter turnout, it would be available to get this information.

Also, at the end of each election, the Chief Electoral Officer has to prepare a report that has all of the official results. It gives voter information in that as well. There is an amount of information available that a boundaries commission could have access to.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One more follow-up question. Could the Minister or Mr. Hamilton provide some idea of a timeline? Given that this provision is approved, when could this particular process of creating a register of electors be enforced and be available? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Hamilton.

MR. HAMILTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The legislation as drafted allows for a territorial-wide enumeration to create the first register within six months of coming into force of the section of the act. As soon as the act is brought into force by the Commissioner, the CEO has to, within six months, conduct a territorial-wide enumeration to create the start of the register.

The mechanisms and the processes once the act is approved gives the authority to the Chief Electoral Officer to prepare the register and the public information, the computerized databank and so on. That work is underway already as well, but needs the final approval of the House for the legal authority to create the register.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. General comments. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would also like to ask one or two questions regarding the opening remarks by the Minister. Mr. Chairman, I see the provision of

proxy voting has been eliminated. At any given time, the Northwest Territories is a very busy place, especially during the fall months of our calendar year, which means that many people in our communities travel quite a bit for meetings, conferences and other matters.

What kind of system will be in place to replace the proxy voting system for those individuals who may not be in their electoral ridings during the election? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Hamilton.

MR. HAMILTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There have been provisions added to the act to allow for special ballots. This is similar to what we instituted for the last election, with special mail-in ballots, but we are not calling it mail-in ballots. There are special ballots that individuals can apply for and receive if they are not able to be in their constituency or in their home community. This would be for mail, as well. They can be hand-delivered. They can be provided to the returning officers rather than having them sent to the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer.

We have improved the accessibility for an individual who happens to have left the Territory for medical reasons on short notice and did not have the chance to vote before they left, so we have a provision that now enhances the availability of a ballot to anybody who falls within that category, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that sounds like a time-consuming process for individuals who are otherwise already very busy, if you have to go pick up a mail-in ballot, vote and send it into one or two offices. Are there any provisions for advance polling, where an individual knows they are not going to be in the NWT or an electoral district on the day of the voting, that they could vote in advance prior to them leaving the electoral district? Once you leave the community and you go to a conference or other events, you do not want to be bothered with mail-in ballots. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Hamilton.

MR. HAMILTON: Mr. Chairman, I apologize. I probably did not get the first question. My answer did not fully address the Member's concern. There are a number of voting opportunities that individuals could use. There is not just the one polling day, so it is not that if you do not vote on polling day, there is no other opportunity to vote.

Yes, there is advance polling. There are advance polls in every community that has a population of 500 or more. There is also voting at the office of the returning officer for 12 days. So throughout the 12 days, except Sundays, you can go into the office of the returning officer and actually vote there. There is also now the special mail-in ballots, as I indicated earlier. There are special mobile polls being created for incapacitated people, people who cannot leave their home. We are allowing provisions whereby if an individual notifies his returning officer that because of an incapacity they are unable to leave their home, we are creating one day in that electoral district or in that community where the poll would actually go to that individual. That is including health care centres, senior citizens' homes, but even to an individual's home if they can demonstrate their inability to go and vote.

There are four or five various methods for individuals to vote in an election.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. General comments.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Detail.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Does the committee agree we will go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 8.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 9.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 10.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 11.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 12.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 13.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 14.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 15.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 16.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 17.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 18.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 19.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 20.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 21.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 22.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 23.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 24.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 25.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 26.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 27.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 28.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 29.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 30.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 31.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 32.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 33.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 34.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 35.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 36.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 37. Mr. Handley.

Committee Motion 23-14(5): To Amend Clause 37(2) of Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Elections Act (Carried)

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, we have an amendment to clause 37(2). This is just correcting the day. The amendment is,

I MOVE that clause 37(2) of Bill 12 be amended by striking out "Friday" and by substituting "Monday."

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister explain the significance of this amendment? Is it just that the 24th day does not line up with a Friday? If that is the case, clause 34 has the same wording referring to Friday, the 24th day.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, it appears that the Member might be correct and there is an error in clauses 34 and 35. We are not sure. I do not know what the wish of the committee is. Do you want to stand it down and return after we check it out? I do not think we can do it in our heads here. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Right now we have a motion on the floor. The mover of the motion can stand it down if he wishes. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I think we only need a few minutes to check this out to see if it is correct or if there is an error. If you wish, we could have a five-minute break and we could have it checked out.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): We will take a five-minute break.

-- Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): I will call the committee back to order. Minister Handley, can you respond to Mr. Roland's question?

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, perhaps we could deal with the motion on the floor first and then come back to this question. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): What is the wish of the committee? To the motion. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I asked a question based on the motion that has been presented, so if the information can be given to us, then we can proceed with the motion. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, in answer to the question, the wording on clauses 34 and 35 is correct, because it is dealing with a different subject matter. I will have Mr. Hamilton explain.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Hamilton.

MR. HAMILTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under sections 34 and 35, they were changed because it deals with nominations, the timing for receipt of filing a nomination which, because of our 28-day calendar, we have now moved nominations closing from Monday, the 35th day, up to Friday, the 24th day. So those dates under clauses 34 and 35 refer to the 24th day before polling.

The issue on the motion that we have before the House now is dealing technically with clause 37(2) which deals with filing when a candidate dies and you have five days after the candidate's death to hold another election. So that is for nominations five days after the death of the candidate, which happens to be the 24th day that we are proposing here, Mr. Chairman, changing it from a Friday to a Monday again.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: That is fine. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Clause 37, as amended.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 38.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 39.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 40.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 41.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 42.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 43.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 44.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 45.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 46.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 47.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 48.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 49.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 50.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 51.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 52.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 53.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 54.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 55.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 56.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 57.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 58.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 59.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 60.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 61.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 62.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 63.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 64.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 65.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 66.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 67.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 68.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 69.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 70.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 71.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 72.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 73.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 74.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 75.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 76.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 77.
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.
CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 78.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 79.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 80.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 81.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 82.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 83.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 84.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 85.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Clause 86.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Bill as a whole, as amended?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Does the committee agree that Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, is ready for third reading as amended?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Bill 12 is now ready for third reading, as amended. Thank you, Mr. Minister, and your witness. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): There is a motion on the floor. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. I will rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will come back to order. Item 20, report of the committee of the whole. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Elections Act, and would like to report progress with one motion being adopted, and that Bill 12 is ready for third reading, as amended. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Do we have a seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for Weledeh seconds the motion. All those in favour? All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS

Bill 3: An Act to Amend the Public Service Act

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is debatable. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 3 has had third reading. Item 21, third reading of bills. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

Bill 6: An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is debatable. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Bill 6 has had third reading. Item 21, third reading of bills. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

Bill 11: An Act to Amend the Liquor Act

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is debatable. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Bill 11 has had third reading. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, may we have the orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight will meet at adjournment, followed by the Special Committee on the Review of the Official Languages Act; at 9:00 a.m. Friday morning of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight and Cabinet House Strategy.

Orders of the day for Friday, June 14, 2002:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements

3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2002-2003
18. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Real Estate Agents Licensing Act
 - Bill 16, Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Minister's Statement 46-14(5), Social Agenda Working Group Report
 - Minister's Statement 47-14(5), GNWT Response to the Social Agenda Report
 - Tabled Document 35-14(5), Social Agenda: A Draft for People of the NWT
 - Committee Report 7-14(5), Report on the Review of the Languages Commissioner's Annual Report, 2000-2001
 - Committee Report 8-14(5), Report on the Review of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Commissioner's Annual Report, 2000-2001
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
 - Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Elections Act
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Friday, June 14, 2002, at 10:00 a.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

