



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

4th Session

Day 18

15th Assembly

HANSARD

Wednesday, October 26, 2005

Pages 551 - 610

The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, October 26, 2005****Members Present**

Honourable Brendan Bell, Mr. Braden, Honourable Paul Delorey, Honourable Charles Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Mr. Hawkins, Honourable David Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Honourable Michael McLeod, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Pokiak, Mr. Ramsay, Honourable Floyd Roland, Mr. Villeneuve, Mr. Yakeleya

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good afternoon, Members. Welcome to the House. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. McLeod.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 57-15(4): Northern Transportation Conference**

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House of the upcoming northern transportation conference to be held in Yellowknife on November 8th to 10th. It will be co-hosted by three of Canada's leading transportation "think tanks:" The Van Horne Institute, the Transportation Institute of the University of Manitoba, and the Western Transportation Advisory Council, or WESTAC.

Mr. Speaker, this conference will help focus the spotlight on the North and our transportation system. It will bring together delegates from across Canada to inform them of the immense opportunities in the North and transportation's role in achieving these opportunities. In the end, delegates will be challenged to work collectively to draft a transportation action plan.

To help develop this action plan, delegates will hear a number of presentations and panel discussions on topics such as transportation partnerships, the state of northern transportation infrastructure, the challenges facing all modes of transportation, the impact of pipeline development, climate change, and northern sovereignty and security.

Mr. Speaker, this is an impressive list of topics. To do them justice, the conference organizers have invited an equally impressive list of presenters. They have drawn from industry, academia, governments and aboriginal organizations to ensure a balanced and spirited discussion.

Mr. Speaker, we are pleased to report that officials from the Department of Transportation, along with their colleagues from Nunavut and the Yukon, have had significant input into the development of the conference themes and selection of keynote speakers and expert presenters. The Department of Transportation is also providing financial and administrative support, as well as a number of speakers. With my counterparts from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, we will be discussing the need for partnerships with the western provinces in achieving economic growth and providing improved transportation services.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, we look forward to attending the northern transportation conference and participating in what will be a challenging and enlightening forum. This will be a great opportunity to showcase the North to the rest of Canada and highlight the unique transportation issues facing us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Minister's Statement 58-15(4): National Adoption Awareness Month

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, November is National Adoption Awareness Month. This is an opportunity to recognize all those adoptive families in the NWT who have opened their hearts to children in need of families.

Adoption provides a child with permanence and security. All children need roots and a feeling that they belong to a family. This feeling of belonging affects their sense of self-worth. It helps to determine how they see themselves in relation to others and to their community.

There were 43 custom adoptions last year. Custom adoptions ensure aboriginal children in care are raised with aboriginal families whenever possible, keeping them connected to their extended family and community. Additionally, the department arranged and completed 13 other adoptions last year.

The face of adoption has changed over the years. There are children of all ages being adopted in the NWT, including some with special needs. Many hopeful adoptive parents believe that children will enrich their lives and that they have a lot to offer a child in need.

Prospective parents can be married, common-law, or single. Individuals, like a step-parent, can also adopt their spouse's children. Some prospective parents are childless, while others are looking to expand their families, or have children who have grown up and left home. Regardless, the support and security of a permanent home is paramount to any child's development, and each child in the NWT is entitled to healthy development and a loving family.

As we celebrate adoptive families, let us remember that there are children in the NWT who are eager to have a loving and permanent family. Residents interested in adoption can contact their local Health and Social Services office for more information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Minister's Statement 59-15(4): Student Financial Assistance - Building Our Capacity

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. We are living in a very interesting and exciting period, with many changes and developments happening in the Northwest Territories. In recent years, we have seen diamond mine activity in the North Slave geological area, proposed oil and gas development along the Mackenzie Valley, discussion of the potential for hydro activity in the South Slave and Sahtu areas, and progress in self-government development including the creation of the Tlicho Government. Each of these new developments brings with it the requirement for labour supply and for new skills.

Education continues to be the key to whether a person can take advantage of the opportunities that present themselves. It is no secret, Mr. Speaker, the higher your level of education, the better your chance of employment. Now, more than 70 percent of new jobs require at least some post-secondary education or training.

The Government of the Northwest Territories, through its Student Financial Assistance program, SFA, provides support for northerners to pursue a post-secondary education and encourages students to return to the North upon graduation. Each year, approximately 1,400 northerners are supported through the SFA program. These students are enrolled in a range of certificate, diploma, and degree-level programs in institutions across the country. Supporting these students is one of the most important investments we can make to ensure we have a well-educated population able to prosper and take advantage of opportunities in the North.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk with other jurisdictions, they often tell us that our SFA program is one of the best programs in the country. The funding we provide in the form of grants, remissible loans, scholarships and other loan supports is generally higher than elsewhere, and our remission program is second to none. Nonetheless, we must continually monitor how well our program is supporting the education goals of our students. In addition, we need, on occasion, to make adjustments to the program that are fair, affordable and within the overall intent of assisting students.

Effective with the 2005-2006 academic year, there are a number of changes that have been made to the SFA program that will improve support for our students. Students will now be required to complete 60 percent of a full course load instead of 75 percent to be considered full time. We have also clarified the eligibility criteria for academic merit scholarships and eliminated the restrictions that were previously in place that disqualified students from support if they were employed full time.

The changes this year are, I believe, important for supporting our students in a fiscally responsible manner. We are also considering other parts of the program that could be altered. For example, we are looking at amending the academic performance requirements of students so that oversight occurs on an annual basis

rather than on a semester-by-semester basis. We are also examining how we provide travel benefits to students with the view to providing cash rather than the current voucher system.

Mr. Speaker, each possible change will be weighed carefully to get the right balance, providing a meaningful level of support that encourages students to start and continue their studies, and providing support within our government's fiscal means. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Tribute To Young Classical Guitarist Lyndon Duong

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today in honour of a young musical prodigy in our midst, a 13-year-old recording artist...

---Applause

...who I am happy to say is in the gallery today with his mother, Hung Li. Mr. Speaker, in case some of the Members have not recognized him, he is the one who starred on CTV's Canada Morning Show this summer.

Mr. Speaker, on October 15th, Lyndon achieved a feat not experienced by many, and that was the launch of his first CD entitled Serenade. This compilation contains the recording of 12 very difficult, beautiful, timeless classical guitar pieces, some of them very well known Vietnamese songs. He performed some of them live to the enthusiastic audience who came out to the launch in big numbers, in spite of a massive snowstorm. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that this House was well represented at this event by Premier Handley, Minister Dent, MLAs Bill Braden and Norman Yakeleya.

For me, personally, it was a very moving experience to be at this launch. It was such a celebration of music, family and community, not only because it was a welcoming party of this newest, phenomenal musical talent to our already vast pool of our musical and artistic community, but it was such a testimonial to what such an extraordinary amount of discipline, determination and strong support from families can achieve for a young person, and how, in turn, endless benefits and goodwill can flow out to the whole community.

Mr. Speaker, I learned from this event that young Lyndon has been practicing his classical guitar every day for the last seven years, more than half of his young life of 13 years, at least an hour a day during the week and many more on weekends. I learned that his father, Bacai, was there for every single practice, and I know his mother would not have been too far away from them.

Mr. Speaker, it just created for me such a beautiful picture of a family surrounding this young talent and giving him love and support and all the resources he needs to be the best he can be. How lucky they are to do it and celebrate their success together.

Another important beneficiary of Lyndon's success is the Canadian Cancer Society, who will receive all profits from the CD sales. Mr. Speaker, Lyndon's father, Bacal, spoke movingly at the event and said, very adamantly, that it was very important that the family does not profit financially from the launch. Lyndon's parents moved to Yellowknife and Canada 25 years ago, with their two young children, after a very dangerous journey. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to finish my statement.

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

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you Lyndon's parents moved to Yellowknife and Canada 25 years ago, with their two young children, after a very dangerous journey, which almost cost them their lives, to find freedom and opportunities in Canada. It brought tears to my eyes when he said his good feeling of waking up in Canada and Yellowknife has never faded in all these years, and that he has tried his best to instill that appreciation to his three children. I can tell you I have known the family for 25 years, and, as an immigrant, I think I know a little bit about that feeling.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to mention that Lyndon's older brother and sister are also very accomplished. Lyndon's older brother is finishing his master's program in science, I believe, in Alberta. His older sister, Kim, is practicing law in Toronto. She was also formerly employed at the Legislative Assembly.

Let me invite the House in sending warm congratulations on this amazing achievement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Sahtu Region RCMP Special Constables

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the RCMP special constables. It is with great pride -- great pride -- for a special group of people, that I rise in this Assembly today. I wish to talk about the RCMP special constables.

For more than a century, the national force has hired local aboriginal people in our communities to assist them in their work. In 1874, when the force started, they hired 20 Metis as guides to help them to what is known in the RCMP history as "The March West." In the early days, the true value of "the specials," as they came to be known, was truly recognized. In 1905, constables were paid the sum of \$1 per day, and the specialists got \$1.50. There have been many dozens, if not hundreds, of special constables in the Northwest Territories in the last century.

There are three special constables whom I wish to recognize here in the House today: Victor Menacho, Alfred Lennie, Archie Lennie. Victor is now in the hospital. I know all Members in this House will take a few minutes to recognize him and all those special people.

Mr. Speaker, of all the true special constables I wish to talk about, for a moment, I wish to recognize service to our people in our communities. These fellows all travelled in our regions where they worked by dog team in the winter, and by boat with an eight-horse kicker in the summer. Victor Menacho was a special constable with the Fort Norman detachment from 1956 to 1962. He took care of many dogs, as many as 52 dogs a year, on a year-round basis. He fished to feed the dogs. While he was hired, he was paid \$62 a month and was given food rations of canned meat, flour, sugar, and lard. In 1957, when Victor married Charlotte Yakeleya, his food ration was doubled, and he got a raise to \$85 a month.

Alfred Lennie worked in Tulita for the force from 1946 to 1950. He took care of detachment dog teams, and he was paid only \$2 a day when he was hired, plus he got a ration of canned meat, flour, and sugar. When he married his wife, Julie Menacho, in 1947, he got a raise to \$3 per day and double rations. But with the clawbacks of that double ration, his pay was reduced back to \$2 a day.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Yakeleya, your time for your Member's statement has expired.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to finish my statement.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Even then, the feds knew how to give something with one hand and take it back with the other.

Mr. Speaker, Archie Lennie was a special constable with the Aklavik detachment from 1949 to 1952. In his police record, it contains the highest praise: that he served faithfully.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to say to these truly special people, they are our friends and our relatives, and they have the great honour of serving the world's most respected national police force. We owe a great debt of gratitude to them, and I thank the Minister of Justice for honouring them with the ceremony yesterday.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Protecting Children From Exposure To Second-Hand Smoke

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would first like to say that I am pleased that the Tobacco Control Act was introduced in this House earlier this week, and I applaud the Minister and his department for that.

That act will prohibit smoking in public places and regulate the sale and advertising of tobacco products. However, Mr. Speaker, controlling smoking in homes remains the responsibility of individual citizens. Today, I would like to make a plea to all smokers, if they won't protect themselves, at least protect children in their care from the dangers of second-hand smoke. We all know tobacco

smoke is a health hazard to non-smokers, yet the number of children exposed to second-hand smoke is very high in a large number of households in the NWT.

Every day, we see young children, or infants, in the back seat of a vehicle, and their parents in the front seat smoking away. You can see the smoke trapped in the vehicle like a capsule. The children, or infants, strapped in their car seats are forced to breathe in that smoke. It's interesting that we can ban smoking in bars to protect the workers there. You can't smoke in your own home at least three hours prior to having a contractor come in to service your furnace because they are protected by legislation from second-hand smoke, but if it's just children, go right ahead. What are they going to do about it?

Mr. Speaker, in 1996-97, nearly 1.6 million Canadian children under the age of 12 were regularly exposed to cigarette smoke at home. This amounts to one-third of all children in this age group. Research shows that 85 percent of young children who live with a daily smoker are regularly exposed to tobacco smoke. In short, if there is a smoker in the household, the chances are very high that children will live in a polluted environment.

Among the important childhood effects of second-hand smoke exposure are exacerbated asthma, ear infection, and even sudden infant death syndrome. Children up to 18 months of age who are exposed to second-hand smoke in the home have up to four times greater risk of experiencing lower respiratory tract infections including bronchitis and pneumonia. In addition, children exposed to second-hand smoke also have more upper respiratory tract infections such as sore throats, stuffy noses, and trouble getting over a cold, than do unexposed children.

Asthma is the most common chronic disease of childhood, and environmental factors play an important part in determining both onset and severity. Children exposed to second-hand smoke are at least at a 1.5 times greater risk of developing asthma compared to non-exposed children. Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement, please.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, given the serious consequences for children who are exposed to second-hand smoke, one might imagine that adults who smoke around children are unaware of the dangers. However, studies suggest that adults are aware of those risks. Mr. Speaker, we know that the best protection for children would result if the smokers would quit. In the meantime, we must make every effort to make sure that our children's health and safety are protected. Children, in particular, do not choose to breathe other people's tobacco smoke. Their right to grow up in an environment free of tobacco smoke must be safeguarded. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

Member's Statement On Aboriginal Language Literacy And School-Based Programs

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, each day that I speak in this House, I choose to speak my own Tlicho language. I do this, Mr. Speaker, because I'm proud of my culture and language.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be Tlicho, and that my children are, as well. I am hoping that they will be saying the same thing down the road, that they are proud of their culture and their language, that they are proud to be Tlicho.

Mr. Speaker, although I am fluent in Tlicho, regrettably, I am not literate. I cannot read or write in my own language. This is a problem, Mr. Speaker. As you know, many of the official languages in the Northwest Territories are struggling. All of these languages have a desire to be strengthened. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment has produced a number of documents supporting aboriginal language and culture-based programs, Mr. Speaker. One of them is People - Our Focus for the Future. Objective number one reads, "to improve support to communities to achieve their cultural heritage and language goals." This statement identifies language culture-based education as the highest ECE priority, Mr. Speaker.

The communities consulted during the review and update of ECE's strategic plan, in 2000, again reinforced the importance of having aboriginal language and cultures in early childhood in schools and in Aurora College learning centres, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, recognizing the need to increase our human resource base, the department also supports the ACEP program, the Aboriginal Language and Cultural Instructor Program, Mr. Speaker. I am proud to say that the Tlicho language is offered to all students in the Tlicho region, as well as one school in Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment at the appropriate time. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. My apologies to the House. Members, I overlooked reminding the House that the second language in the House today is North Slavey. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

Member's Statement On GNWT Support For Akaitcho Process Negotiations

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to iterate my full support, and respect, toward the Akaitcho process, and to ensure that the Akaitcho Territory Government that I, and some of my colleagues on this side of the House, will provide any assistance within our authority which allows this process to move ahead without unprecedented delays. I would expect the same level of support, and respect, for this claim process from the opposite side of the House. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, this does not seem to be the case today.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, I informed the House on the progress that has been made in the Akaitcho process

over the last month. I was glad to say that the Akaitcho process is making some headway toward reaching a final agreement in the near future, an agreement which would allow the First Nations groups in the Akaitcho Territory to become more self-reliant, self-governing, and sustainable in many areas the First Nations are lacking, such as economic development, health, and education.

Mr. Speaker, the realization of a final agreement may be put in jeopardy, or delayed, because the GNWT negotiator's personal agenda may not coincide with the Akaitcho negotiating team's agenda, or maybe for reasons not yet communicated to the other parties involved. But regardless of the tactics incorporated by the GNWT negotiating team, I find them to be unacceptable, unsubstantiated, and, more importantly, uncooperative.

Mr. Speaker, when First Nations invite the Government of the Northwest Territories to participate in their negotiation process between the First Nations and the Government of Canada, the invitation shouldn't be received as a privilege by the Government of the Northwest Territories, and it is not a right. If this privilege is deemed disadvantageous to the collective interests of the Akaitcho negotiators, it can be revoked, thus resulting in the removal of the Government of the Northwest Territories from the main table.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like our Premier to support, and oversee, a more cooperative approach by his representatives at the main table. In other words, the GNWT should always offer full unconditional support to the First Nations groups that are in land claims negotiations with the Government of Canada.

The devolution and resource revenue sharing negotiations this government is currently engaged in are very dependent on these types of relationship-building exercises, and should be, unquestionably, one of the most important topics which our Cabinet Members need to be cognizant of, and make it a priority that the concerns of First Nations negotiating teams are taken very seriously, and acted upon accordingly. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

Member's Statement On Name Change For The Hamlet Of Holman

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Hamlet of Holman for a simple request to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, to change the name of Holman to Ulukhatok, which, I understand, means a large bluff where we used to collect raw material to make willows.

Mr. Speaker, the Hamlet of Holman, and the Holman Dictionary Project, have done considerable work in identifying locations near and around Holman. Many ancestral and historic locations have already been identified and given names in Innuinaqtun by the residents of Holman.

One individual that should be recognized is Ms. Emily Kudlak, language coordinator for the Holman Dictionary Project, but, most importantly, Mr. Speaker, the elders and

the Hamlet Council of Holman. I applaud the efforts of the elders, the Hamlet and the Holman Dictionary Project in taking on such a huge task in identifying these historic sites, and providing Innuinaqtun names.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the Department of Education, Culture and Employment has a process in place to make a simple request for a name change, or whether there is a cost associated for such a request, or whether the Hamlet of Holman needs to provide more background information to the department.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I support the request from the Hamlet of Holman in their request to change their name to Ulukhatok. By changing their name to Ulukhatok, it will give the people of Holman their identity, dignity, and culture they are asking for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

Member's Statement On Samuel Hearne Secondary School Contracting Process

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise again today to speak on the continuing problems of Samuel Hearne Secondary School. I have spoken to the situation before. I have spoken to it from the community and the students' perspective, but, today, Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to it from the contractors' perspective.

I received many calls from contractors, wanting to know why there was not a public or an invitational process for the work on the piles in the school, even though it was stated publicly that this would be the process followed. The contractors were upset that this wasn't followed.

Mr. Speaker, with this being an emergency, and a lot of local contractors qualified to do this type of work, they could have all been under there. They could all have been given a block to do, and they could get it done quicker, and the students would be back in the school. They would be able to finish out their year, hopefully with no more disruptions.

Mr. Speaker, Public Works has lost a tremendous amount of credibility with their handling of the situation with the school, and the way they administered the contracts. We should do what we can to make sure that this doesn't happen again.

Mr. Speaker, even one of the premier pile repair specialists in Inuvik wasn't given the opportunity to bid on the work, and yet he has a tremendous amount of experience. We should not allow this oversight to happen. We should hold those people responsible and accountable for this. I will have questions for the Minister of Public Works and Services later. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Access To Student Financial Assistance

MR. BRADEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment talked about the Student Financial Assistance program, and some of the very welcomed changes that are being made to it. I want to congratulate the Minister, and the department, for the changes that he described to us. I know, on behalf of a couple of my constituents, these have been areas of concern. It is really gratifying to see that the attention we put on it has been listened to, and accommodated.

Mr. Speaker, there is always something else that can be tuned up. I want to bring to the attention of the Assembly a matter that is out there. It is in regard to the provision of student financial assistance to adults who are taking courses at the Native Women's Association programs here in Yellowknife, Mr. Speaker.

The contrast that I would draw here is that those adult students, who take adult basic education at the Native Women's Association, do not qualify for student financial assistance. However, if they go a few blocks down the street and take the same course at Aurora College, they can get the Student Financial Assistance program. There is a gap here, Mr. Speaker, that I think I would like to draw attention to. Over the last five years, 175 students have gone through the Native Women's Association. It is a very specific and a needed kind of service for adults who, many of them, are in difficult situations. We are reminded, Mr. Speaker, that education is a productive choice for those people who are on income support. I am sure the Minister is going to be able to give me some good answers, as he has responsibility for both income support and student financial assistance. Thank you very much.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 3, Member's statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Member's Statement On Nahendeh Housing Concerns

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Third World conditions, overcrowding, no running water, no disability access, leaking roofs, indoor household mould -- these are some of the things people are describing within our housing conditions currently in the Nahendeh and other communities across the North.

It is unfortunate that the housing concerns in Nahendeh, and other small and remote communities, have developed into a deteriorated situation. Enormous immediate investment is required to maintain even basic standards, Mr. Speaker. Most small and remote communities are far below the national housing standards. I ask why, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Why?

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Why is this government 1,400 homes short? If we calculate four people per home, we are talking about 5,000 people who need homes and who are on waiting lists.

Mr. Speaker, the housing conditions, and the costs in the territory, are at a crisis situation. This crisis situation must

be dealt with. This government must start acting tough, and not just talking tough on badly needed housing.

Housing costs in the small, remote communities are out of control, putting more and more pressures on housing assistance, and governments must respond.

During the summer, I had the honour to visit some of my constituents within the Nahendeh, and the conditions that some families are living in can even break the coldest hearts. We are not just talking about the quantity of homes either, but also healthy conditions of existing homes; for example, indoor household mould effects. These rundown conditions affect the development of children and produce fatigue in adults. If we had families in Yellowknife living in dilapidated homes, there would be such a community uproar. "How can this happen in our capital city?" would be the cry. Yet, in the regions, in my region, many families do live in these conditions all year round, Mr. Speaker. It is appalling to have substandard housing conditions in our communities in this year of 2005.

Another issue is the waiting list and overly crowded housing conditions. Studies have shown overcrowded housing conditions affect all sorts of progressive development, from education to healthy living. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank my honourable colleagues, as well. Another big issue, expressed time and time again, with no real progress, is the lack of flexibility in the home loan guarantee policies. Many feel, as well, that regional office approach is unresponsive and gives bureaucratic answers and responses.

Lastly, I have been requesting a housing forum for the Nahendeh for a while. Time and again, there always seems to be reasons for the delay. This forum would be an excellent opportunity for the regions to discuss concerns, and possible solutions. Like our Housing Corporation annual report, Mr. Speaker, the answers have to come from the ground up. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Member's Statement On Administration Of Sole Sourced And Negotiated Contracts

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this session, I have been asking many questions surrounding how the government conducts business. First, it was how the Housing Corporation went to public tender for two housing units in the community of Behchoko, and how they had a respondent fitter, which so happened to be my constituent, but the Housing Corporation cancelled this legal public tender, only to enter into negotiations at a higher price with the only company left.

Next, I questioned, at length, the Minister of Public Works and Services, over how his department sole sourced a contract for office space in Fort Simpson, contrary to their own policy. When I asked about responsibility, it was very unclear who ultimately takes responsibility because, according to the Minister, Cabinet can delegate authority on sole sourcing. With this, it makes it so convenient, and easy, for Cabinet to wiggle off the hook and blame the bureaucrats.

This is just completely unacceptable to me, Mr. Speaker. I still do not know who made the decision to sole source the office space in Fort Simpson. Was it the Cabinet? Was it the Minister? Was it the Premier, or other regional authorities? Sole source and negotiated contracts make up \$60 million that this government spends each year. This is \$60 million that does not see any competitive process. The recently released audit on the contracts with the firm Keyscarp, with the former departments of Energy Mines and Petroleum Resources and RWED, demonstrate to me, Mr. Speaker, that we have some problems.

The departments collectively spent over half a million dollars on contracts with Keyscarp that, Mr. Speaker, clearly did not always meet the government contract regulations or the FAM directive. When the audit was done, the department had very limited documentation to prove value for money.

Poor contract administration was clearly evident in the administration of these sole-source contracts. Even if sole sourcing was required because of the fact that no one else was capable of performing the contract the first year, the ongoing nature of work definitely contradicts this view. There was no evidence to justify sole sourcing of contracts for seven consecutive years. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given all of the issues, as of late, with negotiated contracts and sole sourcing, is it not time that we had a good, long and hard look at how we spend our money? We are the stewards of public funds, and we can't forget this fact.

Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the government today to examine government spending practices when dealing with sole-source and negotiated contracts. There seems, to me, to be a very grey area there of responsibility between Ministers of the government and the bureaucracy. I remain very skeptical that this type of activity is not happening in other departments. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the government at the appropriate time. Thank you.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Seniors' And Disabled Persons' Housing Concerns

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I begin, I should thank Mr. Menicoche for reading probably the

best part of my speech. He seemed to have scooped me today. Mr. Speaker, when we were on the road doing pre-budget consultations, one of the issues was the housing conditions, and how the disabled and our elders are treated under those conditions.

Many of the residents across our NWT are on fixed incomes. I am referring to the seniors and disabled people, Mr. Speaker, so they have very limited resources to spend on their homes. We heard, especially in many communities, that there was no one there to help fix those homes, let alone even if they did have the money.

Mr. Speaker, regional centres like Yellowknife realize that a lot of these seniors have fixed incomes so they can't even afford to fix these homes. So what is this government doing? We heard a lot about the communities that the only people out there that can help them are the local housing authorities' maintainers, who have to help them on their off hours because their priority is the social housing units. So good on them. They truly are the local heroes in those communities. Many of these housing maintainers do this on their off hours. I don't know if this government ever takes a moment to pause and say they are truly putting their responsibility of taking care of those folks on their backs, which it should be on the government's, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, taking care of our seniors and disabled people needs to be more than just lip service. It needs to be a principle carved into the walls of this Assembly. We need to take care of seniors and the disabled, period. That needs to be a mandate. I know Aurora College runs a housing maintainer program out there, so why are we using our local authorities to work with these housing maintainers in their training? Why are we doing things like creating a little training trailer unit to go out there and have our maintainers work, get skills, education, and help our seniors and disabled communities by helping those seniors who have leaky windows, doors that don't swing, and things like that?

Mr. Speaker, I know we can do this under the NWT Housing Corporation, but I think it has to be led by the Education Minister to start thinking outside of the box. The bottom line is, we could be doing two wonderful things and have it accomplished. As I say, skills being taught to our people at the local level and taking care of those people who need it most. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement On Birthday Greetings To Mackenzie Delta Constituents

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to wish Peter Kay, Sr. a happy 90th birthday.

---Applause

I would like to send my delayed birthday greetings to Peter on his 90th. Peter is a father, a grandfather, a great-grandfather, and also, I believe, a great-great-grandfather. Peter has lived a traditional way of life in Fort McPherson and the Mackenzie Delta area all of his life, and he has

raised a very large family. Today, Peter Kay has been a role model to all of the people in the Mackenzie Delta, the Beaufort Sea, and also in the Yukon.

Peter has made the lives better for the people in our communities just by his presence, but, more importantly, by sharing his wisdom, his culture, and also his traditional way of life. Peter is renowned that he does have a very active lifestyle by his dancing, jigging, and you can always see Peter at all the major dances, and also functions, that happen in all the communities where he makes an effort to go to Tuktoyaktuk, Inuvik, Aklavik, Tsiigehtchic, and the other communities just to perform at these dances.

I think, with Peter's presence in our communities and being 90 years young, that he has definitely touched everyone in our communities. I would also like to wish the family of Peter Kay all the best and, knowing Peter, he will have many years to come. The family and the friends of Peter will be celebrating his birthday in Inuvik on Friday at the Ingamo Hall. At this time, I would like to wish Peter all the best, and also in many years to come.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to also take this time to wish giguu Margaret Vittrekwa, who is also celebrating a birthday today, a happy birthday, and wish her all the best for many years to come. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, time has happened upon us. I am sure many people have thought about but nobody ever expected it to come to a reality. It is the fact that there are two Miltenbergers in this Legislature this week. I would like to recognize my nephew, my brother's son and heir from Hay River. His parents and his grandfather in Hay River, and his aunts, uncles, and cousins, are very proud of him, as is his grandmother, aunt, and cousins in Fort Smith. I would like to welcome him to the Legislature.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to recognize in the gallery, Lyndon Duong and his mother, Hung Li and my assistant, Cathy Olson. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have had visitors from Hay River all week in the gallery, so I have put off recognizing the two Pages from Hay River South. They are doing a wonderful job here this week, and that is Terry Rowe. He is the son of Greg and

Karen Rowe of Hay River, and, of course, Cole Miltenberger. I take full responsibility for there being two Miltenbergers here.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize the chair of the WCB Governance Council, Mr. Denny Rodgers, from Inuvik.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

Speaker's Ruling

Members, before we go on to the next item on the agenda, I would like to provide my ruling on the point of order that was raised yesterday by the Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee. Ms. Lee rose on a point of order, following comments made by the honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger, in his Member's statement. While she did not indicate the appropriate rule, or identify the offending comment specifically, your Chair, in reviewing the unedited Hansard, has determined Ms. Lee's point to be that the Member for Thebacha had contravened Rule 23(j) by suggesting she had uttered a deliberate falsehood. I quote the Member for Range Lake, from page 1174 of the unedited Hansard, "The Member of Thebacha is suggesting, somehow, that I am speaking a falsehood, or that I am somehow suggesting that he is not being a good Member, or that I am saying things that are not true."

In order to provide the context for Ms. Lee's point of order, your Chair will need to quote from Mr. Miltenberger's statement, from page 1173 of the unedited Hansard. I quote, "The Member for Range Lake made reference to an e-mail that I sent to the executive director of the day care that is currently experiencing some trouble. It wasn't addressed to her. She imputed some interpretation to that e-mail that is grossly incorrect. Referencing e-mails that weren't sent to the individual, and misinterpreting them, is not appropriate. I think it creates a false impression that is far from the truth."

To provide further context to the matter, I will now refer to the concluding portion of the Member for Range Lake's statement, and I quote from page 1166 of the unedited Hansard, "I can also tell you that I received an e-mail from Minister Miltenberger on this issue, that basically states that what I say here, or what we say, is completely irrelevant."

Your Chair is of the opinion that this is a case where, in the absence of any other factors, the House is prepared to accept two views of the same matter. In essence, there are two truths, and they are largely a matter of interpretation. Therefore, I rule that Ms. Lee does not have a point of order. In addition, I propose that this House take a further step to prevent this type of issue from being raised. I know our rules state that Members should refrain from citing documents that are not before the House, unless they are prepared to table them. In this case, the document in question was tabled later in the

day. In the future, your Chair, and the House, I am sure, would appreciate it if Members would refrain from citing from documents until they are tabled and, even then, I caution Members to be very careful in their interpretation and characterizations. In fact, I would encourage all Members to quote directly from the document, rather than attempting to summarize and paraphrase passages.

Before I conclude, I feel compelled to share some thoughts with you. In past rulings, I have cautioned Members to remain respectful of each other, regardless of their opposing views, but I'm sure that it has not done much good. Over the course of the past two weeks, your Chair has noticed an alarming number of instances, on both sides of the House, where Members have shown a complete lack of respect for each other and our institution. Members' statements have been used as vehicles to debate with one another and fire verbal volleys at each other. The language being used and, more importantly, the tone of the language being used, both in statements and in question period, is often disrespectful and inciteful.

I would like to remind Members, with all due respect to other parliaments in the Commonwealth, we are not a partisan politics political institution. Our consensus system of government demands more from each of us in our dealings with each other, both inside and outside the Chamber.

I would also like to note that the conduct of Members and the heckling that occurred at the time Ms. Lee was trying to articulate her point of order was extremely troubling. It is the duty of the Chair to decide whether there are points of order, and I would appreciate complete silence when Members have risen on points of order or points of privilege. You owe this much to your colleagues and to the Chair.

Members, when bringing a point of order to the attention of the Chair, a Member should first state that he or she has a point of order, and then wait for the Chair to recognize you to state your point of order. I also remind you that in rising on a point of order, a Member should clearly and concisely state the point of order and cite the rule or practice that has been infringed upon. It is not the time for explanation or for the purpose of clarifying something said. That will come later when the Member being complained of is called to explain or, if the Chair permits, debate on the point. Thank you for your attention, Members.

---Applause

Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 270-15(4): Hay River Museum

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, from time to time, I have occasion to visit the Public Works and Services warehouse out in Frame Lake South where obsolete and unwanted pieces of government equipment and furniture end up. Recently, Mr. Speaker, when I was out there, I had an occasion to see these very large, nice cabinets that were the cast-offs of the Prince of Wales museum. They used to use them as display cabinets in the Prince of Wales museum, but, of course, with the multimillions of dollar that have been

spent on the Prince of Wales museum lately, they don't need these anymore and they ended up at the warehouse. So I saw them there and I tried to intercept them for our poor, struggling, fledgling little museum in Hay River. Kindly, the Minister of ECE did speak to Public Works and Services and said please do give them to the Hay River museum. The Hay River museum wants them; however, I have not been able to get them to Hay River. I would just like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, in view of the very huge budget that has been expended on the museum here in Yellowknife, would he find in his heart to find \$1,433 to have these six cabinets taken to Hay River for our museum? That is the quote from Matco transport. Thank you.

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

Return To Question 270-15(4): Hay River Museum

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will do my best to see if we can help the Member out with that request.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Question 271-15(4): Liard River Ferry Service

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. My questions today are for the Minister of Transportation, with respect to the ferry services in general, Mr. Speaker. I know that the reasons for converting all the contracts over to the private sector was to get local involvement, to benefit the communities, and to get local workers. Now that this situation in Simpson is resolved to some satisfaction, particularly to the residents, and I can say, for the record, that everybody is extremely pleased that we're getting supplies and much needed gasoline back into Fort Simpson, but this raises the question of what we are going to do about the ferry services in general for the long term, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. McLeod.

Return To Question 271-15(4): Liard River Ferry Service

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the next several months, we will be taking a look at how we handle the ferry services. The issue over the Liard River ferry disruption was of concern to us. We'll also be looking at what the federal legislation allows us to do, and consider what we may be able to do. I think it's come to a point where we have to consider whether or not privatization of the services is something we're going to have to do. Is it new legislation that's required? I think we have to look at all the issues around it and make some decisions if those are required. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 271-15(4): Liard River Ferry Service

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I know those are hard questions that the government's

going to have to ask and, hopefully, get them resolved before the next shipping season. I guess the next question is, is the government going to be looking at contracting out the Liard ferry service for next year, or is it too soon for the Minister to answer? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 271-15(4): Liard River Ferry Service

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, right now, we're looking at trying to finish the season and have the resupply done for the community. We fully expect to continue operating the Liard ferry with our own forces throughout the next season, also. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 271-15(4): Liard River Ferry Service

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I guess the one other question I would like to get some resolution around is, is the Cabinet going to be looking at all the ferry services throughout the NWT, like the Louis Cardinal, Johnny Berens, and Abraham Francis? Will that all be included in their consideration? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 271-15(4): Liard River Ferry Service

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are actually quite happy in the situation we're in to allow for the resupply of fuel and other services to the communities of Fort Simpson and Wrigley. We will look at all the issues around this service, and the disruption, and all the issues that arose from this incident. It's too early to say whether we will review all the ferries. That may be something that we'll consider in the future, but, right now, we are still focused on the Liard River ferry service. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Question 272-15(4): Sole Source And Negotiated Contracts

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Premier. I questioned the Minister of Public Works and Services, at length the other day, in regard to sole-sourced contracts, and, specifically, a contract for office space in the community of Fort Simpson. Going back to Hansard of last week, when the Premier was answering some questions from my colleague from Hay River South, he was quoted as saying that people would be dealt with with serious consequences, were the words that the Premier used. This was in relation to the Keyscarp contracts that went on sole source with the departments of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources and, later, RWED for seven years. That's what the context of that was. Here we have a situation that took place in Fort Simpson recently where office space was sole sourced. I want to know who made

the decision to sole source that office space, and will they be dealt with severely. Did Cabinet know about that decision? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 272-15(4): Sole Source And Negotiated Contracts

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that the decision on sole sourcing that contract was made by Public Works and Services and that it was within the policy. So there is no other recourse to be taken now. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 272-15(4): Sole Source And Negotiated Contracts

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Premier, if they delegate the authority to sole source these contracts, do they also delegate the responsibility to deal with it when it comes up on the floor of this Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 272-15(4): Sole Source And Negotiated Contracts

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister responsible will deal with the issues around any sole-sourcing of contracts in this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 272-15(4): Sole Source And Negotiated Contracts

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my Member's statement, I'm quite sceptical that this type of activity doesn't take place government-wide. I'd like to ask the Premier if he'd examine sole source contracts and negotiated contracts. The government spends \$60 million a year in a non-competitive fashion. I'd like them to have a look at this. Examine where those dollars are going out, especially on contracts that continue year after year after year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 272-15(4): Sole Source And Negotiated Contracts

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I personally don't have time to look at every contract that we issue as a government. We do look at the policy and the delegation and how that performs. Mr. Speaker, every year we table a contract registry which is available and Members can have a look at it, as well. It is available to all Members. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 272-15(4): Sole Source And Negotiated Contracts

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to get some assurance from the Premier. I'd like to ask him, given the fact that we have this audit that's come up from the former departments that I mentioned a minute ago, the current ITI department, we have this audit in place that clearly shows that contract administration was not followed for seven years. Seven years, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Premier to have a look at this. Does the Premier agree that we should investigate this further, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 272-15(4): Sole Source And Negotiated Contracts

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, the review, the audit that was done that the Member refers to goes back a number of years. Since that time, there have been measures instituted. We have a contract registry now. The Minister responsible for the department is certainly having a good look at that report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Question 273-15(4): Seniors And Disabled Housing Programs

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my Member's statement today spoke about the problems that some seniors and disabled people on fixed incomes are faced with when they are trying to maintain their homes. I suggested the government may want to consider a portable training program that could help homeowners look after their houses, using the Aurora College's housing maintainer program, as well as trades. So would the housing Minister consider instructing his department to look at the delivery of such a program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question 273-15(4): Seniors And Disabled Housing Programs

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will definitely look at that. I mentioned in my statement the other day, we have the school program in Hay River, Fort Providence and Fort Smith through the college program. By developing a curriculum into the schools and offering the students the opportunity to construct these units, I think we already have a process in place and we should implement more of those programs into the communities. That is the goal I would like to meet. There is that proposal out there, and I think if we get more of the program taken up by other communities to do that through their education boards or councils, I think we can deliver those programs in other communities.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 273-15(4): Seniors And Disabled Housing Programs

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The housing maintainers truly are the backbone and backstop to the public housing out there to make sure that they're maintained well. Mr. Speaker, in communities that don't have contractors who can maintain furnaces, who can install windows, et cetera, those citizens have trouble, especially the seniors and disabled on fixed income. I would consider this a new backbone program created through a trailer training program that could go from region to region, including Yellowknife. So specifically to a trailer training program in concert with possibly the Aurora College housing maintainer program, would the Minister specifically look at instructing his department to look at the development of a program of that nature? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 273-15(4): Seniors And Disabled Housing Programs

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again I will commit to look at that. I do have to work in conjunction with my colleague from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment because we are talking about colleges and curriculum, and I think it's important that we do a joint effort here with regard to establishing such a program.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

Question 274-15(4): Aboriginal Languages

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. (English not provided)

Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement earlier today, I spoke about the government making aboriginal languages its priority. A question to ECE would be, will the Minister please tell this Assembly, if aboriginal languages are, indeed, the priority of this government, Mr. Speaker, why is there no scope, or sequence, to support the language curriculum for aboriginal language instructors? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question 274-15(4): Aboriginal Languages

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can say that we now require some accountability in the aboriginal language and culture funding from each of the education authorities, so we have outlined for them the kind of programming and support that we think they can use and still qualify for the funding. So we're expecting that in each region the activities will be different, but we have outlined, for the schools, what is acceptable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 274-15(4): Aboriginal Languages

MR. LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, Mahsi. (English not provided)

Mr. Speaker, given the urgency for language revitalization, can the Minister tell this Assembly when this necessary resource will be actually put into the hands of those teachers who desperately need it? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 274-15(4): Aboriginal Languages

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have a lot of programs underway that are aiming at building aboriginal language, including programs aimed at family literacy, and we work with the schools. The teaching and learning centres in each region are expected to develop the materials to support the teachers in the classroom, and that work should be done on an ongoing basis. I would expect that some of the materials are available now. If they're not all available immediately, it should happen within the next little while.

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

Supplementary To Question 274-15(4): Aboriginal Languages

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. (English not provided)

Mr. Speaker, the Minister touched on various programs that are being delivered in the regions and also in the North. I'd like to touch on the ALCP program, Aboriginal Language and Culture Program. Can the Minister explain to this Assembly why the aboriginal language and culture program curriculum is still the same curriculum that was introduced upon its inception sometime in the late '80s or 1990s? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 274-15(4): Aboriginal Languages

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have to discuss that with the college because they would be the ones who establish the curriculum for the college-level courses. It is a program that is delivered by Aurora College. My expectation would be that it is still the same basic curriculum, because the program outcomes are expected to be the same no matter where the program is delivered. The specifics in each region would be different, because each region's language and culture are different. So the teachers teaching it in those regions are supposed to reflect that in the manner in which the program is taught. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 274-15(4): Aboriginal Languages

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. (English not provided)

Mr. Speaker, considering that aboriginal language and culture is the department's first priority, can the Minister provide this Assembly a time frame in which this review will, or can, be completed so that the appropriate action can be taken to deliver this program? Mahsi.

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

Further Return To Question 274-15(4): Aboriginal Languages

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a meeting scheduled with the chair of the college within the next few weeks. I will endeavour to discuss this issue with the chair and, right after that, get back to the Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Question 275-15(4): Mackenzie Valley Winter Road Safety Programs

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Transportation about the maintenance and safety issues on the Mackenzie Valley winter road, specifically within the Sahtu region. Traffic is increasing on this road because of the resource development. My question to the Minister is, due to the increase of traffic, is the government, or department, increasing its resources in terms of prevention and promotion of safety on the winter roads in the Sahtu, and even into the area of enforcement? Thank you.

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

Return To Question 275-15(4): Mackenzie Valley Winter Road Safety Programs

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we have been doing a lot of consultation about how we can do things better on the Mackenzie Valley winter road. Until recently, the road was designed and built in the winter seasons for re-supply and, as of late, there has been a lot of traffic on these roads as a result of exploration and oil and gas activity in the area. This year, our contracts all were at a point of expiring. We did take the time and opportunity to consult with the contractors to talk about best practices, about how we can do things better. We also met with the people from the oil and gas industry over the summer and talked about how we can work in a better partnership relationship. We have come back with some changes of how we're going to approach this, and we think they are huge improvements. We will be looking at doing a better job at providing a base and using more water when we do the development of the base. We're also looking at enhanced maintenance if there is oil and gas activity in a certain section of the road. There are a number of changes we're looking at, and they will be incorporated over this winter. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 275-15(4): Mackenzie Valley Winter Road Safety Programs

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The length of time the road is open is decreasing because of the climate

change, and conditions need to be optimum to handle the ever-increasing traffic loads. I want to ask the Minister about the bridge program in the Sahtu with respect to the winter road and the status of the bridges in the Sahtu region. When is the last bridge going to be put in the Sahtu? When can I advise the members in the Sahtu about the last bridge? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 275-15(4): Mackenzie Valley Winter Road Safety Programs

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if the Member is talking about ice bridges or the regular bridges. Mr. Speaker, we still have yet to put bridges across. We have eight bridges yet to construct. One of them is on the Bear River. We are anticipating that we'll have all those bridges in place by 2009. That will bring a total of 29 bridges into the Sahtu over the past few years.

We're also looking at how we can improve and build the ice bridges at a couple of areas that are causing a bottleneck. In Tulita, we need to look at a bypass in that area, and build a longer ice bridge, and work on pumping water in that area so we can build it up and have traffic crossing earlier in the season. We also are looking at improving the ice bridge along the Deline road. So there are two areas where we will see improvements this year, and they will help us extend the season by opening earlier and closing later because we will have a proper ice bridge in those areas. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 275-15(4): Mackenzie Valley Winter Road Safety Programs

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. McLeod, for the two responses to the ice bridges and the construction of the Mackenzie Valley bridges program. I want to ask the Minister, the Mackenzie winter road was built in the 1970s, and it wasn't meant to take as much traffic as we see today. Often, we can't see very far because of the steep hills when you're driving, and the sharp curves. My question to the Minister is, can he please tell me if there are any plans to straighten out the Mackenzie winter road to alleviate the problems of the steepness of the hills and sharpness of the curves? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 275-15(4): Mackenzie Valley Winter Road Safety Programs

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, through the strategic infrastructure funding, we've identified \$40 million to the federal government, along with our territorial government investment. We know that's not going to be enough to develop and improve all the work as required on this road. We have been working on a plan called Corridors for Canada, II that we are developing and bringing forward, which identified additional resources to work on the grade work. We're hoping that will help improve visibility and safety along this road. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 275-15(4): Mackenzie Valley Winter Road Safety Programs

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, people are feeling safe. The road is pretty good. I must commend the Minister on his effort in this area, along with the Premier. In terms of that, Mr. Speaker, and the people feeling some comfort and safety, would the Minister consider, in the next couple of years, having the office of the Mackenzie Valley winter road, currently situated in Fort Simpson, moved into the Sahtu region where there would be more presence in the area? Would the Minister consider paving the ice road? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

Further Return To Question 275-15(4): Mackenzie Valley Winter Road Safety Programs

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what kind of pavement you would use on the ice road.

---Laughter

AN HON. MEMBER: Chipseal.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: We have increased our presence in the Sahtu region. We are looking at hiring more staff in the area of doing monitoring on the ice road. It would be a seasonal position. We're looking at ways we can accommodate having staff located in one of the communities of the Sahtu. Right now, the work is being done in Fort Simpson, so it's going to be a matter of having enough people to do the job, and office space, and a number of other issues around that. We are looking at it. We're not at a point where we're going to make the decision shortly, but it's something that we're considering, and we'll keep the Member informed.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

Question 276-15(4): Contract Awards To Repair Samuel Hearne School

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during the problems with Samuel Hearne Secondary School, I attended a lot of public meetings in Inuvik. One of the comments I heard in one of the meetings that I attended was that the contract would be tendered or an invitation put out to a lot of the local contractors. But in my conversations with some of the contractors, I was told that this did not happen. I would like to ask the Minister of Public Works and Services why this procedure wasn't followed and who made the decision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 276-15(4): Contract Awards To Repair Samuel Hearne School

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct. The discussions we had leading up to or following on the decision not to reopen

the high school, there were a number of meetings held and I had made a number of comments and responses to questions and concerns that we would be going out to get the work done as soon as we could, to ensure we shorten the time line for the repairs. What we did do is, on the lateral issues that the high school faces, we sought out two proposals and reviewed them. One of them was a design build, and that was the proposal that was chosen. I had spoken with the acting deputy minister of the day and referenced the fact that there was a requirement that we would be going out to repair the piles next summer, and that would be through a tender process. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 276-15(4): Contract Awards To Repair Samuel Hearne School

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In discussions I had with the contractors that called me, they informed me that the same contractor that's doing the engineering work is also doing the repair to the piles. So I'd like to ask the Minister if he would send in an independent engineer to verify that all the materials and labour was done according to the specs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 276-15(4): Contract Awards To Repair Samuel Hearne School

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the contract, as it is awarded, was a design build, again for the lateral issues. Some of those lateral issues that we were talking about also took into consideration, as I was informed later on, of the piles that were in the most extreme cases of rot. Some of those were being done this year, as well. What I will do is inform my department and have them look into the concerns being raised by the contractors around the work that's being done. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 276-15(4): Contract Awards To Repair Samuel Hearne School

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Residents in Inuvik are quite angry with the fact that this has been going on for three or four years now. It seems like every year there seems to be a problem with this school. Even during the repair of the piles, we had a small fire under the school. I want to ask the Minister, and I've asked him before, if he'll conduct an internal review, and hold those responsible accountable, and ask them to take the high road. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 276-15(4): Contract Awards To Repair Samuel Hearne School

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I have informed many of those in the community, as well as when I made a presentation to the town council, the aspects of where we ended up as a department, and the school itself and the repairs that have been undertaken, the history that is around that school was that, as Minister, I would look into this and ensure

that the credibility of the department is one of the things we have to look at restoring, in the sense of making sure that all procedures are followed, and that what we're doing is aboveboard, so to speak, so we can show to our clients, this government, the people of the Territories, that, in fact, we are doing the job that is before us, and following our own rules. So I've begun to have a look at the department itself and how we work and implement our changes, and that is still ongoing at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Question 277-15(4): Student Financial Assistance For Adult Education

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to address some questions to Mr. Dent, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, and it follows up on a situation that those adult students attending the Native Women's Association programming for adult basic education apparently find themselves ineligible for student financial assistance. The contrast here is that Aurora College students in similar straits apparently are eligible. So I'd like to ask the Minister to explain what the difference is here. Why are the students at the Native Women's Association ineligible for SFA? Thank you.

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

Return To Question 277-15(4): Student Financial Assistance For Adult Education

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is an area that is one of the concerns that we've already identified in our supports to learners in the Northwest Territories. Student financial assistance is designed for people who are taking post-secondary studies; in other words, after high school. So it doesn't matter whether they're attending ALBE courses that are the same as what are offered by the Native Women's, they wouldn't qualify for student financial assistance in the Northwest Territories.

We have some programs where we offer, if there's a one-year window that it would take to upgrade, we do cover upgrading under SFA, but it has to be a limited amount, to get somebody ready for college or a diploma program. However, the Member makes a good point, and that is that there is an awful lot of adult learners out there who aren't being supported. If they're not in income support and they don't qualify for student financial assistance, there is a lack of support. I intend to work with my colleagues, over the next year, to hopefully find some way to address this issue. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 277-15(4): Student Financial Assistance For Adult Education

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I don't have all the details available, but for adults who are really disadvantaged economically, there are some extra supports in the student financial assistance basket that can help them through, more than they are entitled to under income support. As the Minister has indicated, we do have a

major review underway of all the social programs. Could the Minister take the idea that furthering your education is a productive choice under income support? Could we use that stream to, maybe, help these people out a little bit more while they're doing their best to upgrade their adult basic education? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 277-15(4): Student Financial Assistance For Adult Education

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think the intention is to try and mix the response so that it comes from SFA. The Member is right; there is an issue with the level of support that's provided to adult learners who are not yet ready to move into post-secondary studies. So we need to work on our programs to strengthen the supports to learners who are working on finishing their high school programs, and that's what we need to do.

We are offering a considerable amount through income support. I'm not sure that the income support is actually less than SFA; it might be better than SFA already. But we have already started the discussion that we need to recognize that older students tend to have families, they tend to have more obligations and tend to need, probably, more support than young, single people. So we are looking at this, and I hope to work with my colleagues, across the House and on this side, to see if we can't address that for next year.

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

Question 278-15(4): Closure Of Fort Smith Day Care

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are to the Minister of ECE. Mr. Speaker, the day care centre in Smith has not seen any changes, as far as I am aware. I have been receiving e-mails, literally, all night long. There are people, parents, who are going to Aurora College, who have not found a replacement. For the life of me, and for anybody who is listening, we have no idea why the government is so emboldened with its position that there just cannot be any movement whatsoever -- I just don't understand this -- and why they have to insist on closing the doors. I would like to know from the Minister if he would consider, at least, reviewing the centre, reviewing the file, and keep it open until those parents find a replacement? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question 278-15(4): Closure Of Fort Smith Day Care

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been well aware of the situation with this centre. I have to say that, across the Northwest Territories, we provide support to day cares in almost every community. This day care, in Fort Smith, has received more support, likely, than others, in terms of staff time, staff consultation, staff advice, and assistance. The college has been prepared to work with them. The college has found the space and made that available. We work with them, at the

department, to provide start-up funding. The program has been well explained to them, and we're in a situation, Mr. Speaker, where we don't have a system in crisis; we have a situation where there is a non-profit society, in one of our communities, that finds it is unable to work with the level of support that we can offer. Mr. Speaker, given that, the college is working with students who might have children in that environment, and we will continue to do that. Half of the students have already been able to have their children placed in other locations, and we'll continue to support them.

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

Supplementary To Question 278-15(4): Closure Of Fort Smith Day Care

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't think anything has changed, by the Minister's answers. I have tabled the documents that I had: a letter from the Minister that tells the group that they've done everything they can and they have to get out of there; a letter from Aurora College telling them they have to turn the keys in; and, thus far, I don't have enough information to see what's going on. I'm just asking for the Minister to consider keeping the centre open until we sort this out. Why is he insisting that they have to leave the place this Friday? What is the urgency? The new day care in Smith is not happening until 2007, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Chair is going to caution Members from asking the same question over and over again. I'm going to allow the Minister to answer, but this question has been asked a number of times. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 278-15(4): Closure Of Fort Smith Day Care

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The day care is not being told...The Member has characterized the letter that I sent, to saying they have to shut down. That's not true. I didn't say that in that letter. The letter from the college didn't say that they have to get out and turn over the keys. What's happened was the day care operator has advised people that she intends to shut down on Friday. In response to that, the letter from the college says well, if you're leaving on October 28th, please give us the keys. That would be expected from a landlord who knew that the commercial space wasn't going to be operated again.

We have provided a lot of support to this operator. We provide support across the Territories. We have a lot of operators who may be struggling, but, you know, they've found a way to get by, and they're operating in places with higher costs than in Fort Smith. So at this point, we're not prepared to look at changing the program in response to one. I'm looking at getting more money so that we can change the program and provide more funding to all operators. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 278-15(4): Closure Of Fort Smith Day Care

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't see how the Minister's interpretation of that letter is any different than what the letter says and what I've been saying. The fact is, they have to move out of there this Friday. Will the Minister give a commitment now that at least the society could stay there until they dispose of the stuff, and figure out what they're going to do? Even a company in receivership gets more chance to pack up their belongings than being kicked out the very Monday after they have to close on Friday. Mr. Speaker, that's completely unreasonable.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 278-15(4): Closure Of Fort Smith Day Care

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to reiterate that Rainbow is not being kicked out of the space. They have announced that they are closing down. The landlord has said, when you close, please give us the keys. The way I understand it right now, both parties are talking to each other. This is between the college and the operator, and that's, I think, the best way for it to happen. I'm sure that between the college and the operator, they will come to an amicable and reasonable way in which to shut down, if the operator chooses to shut down.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Your final supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary To Question 278-15(4): Closure Of Fort Smith Day Care

MS. LEE: Mr. Speaker, I'm just totally amazed at how he sees the world as though everything is happening around him, and he has no role to play in it whatsoever. Mr. Speaker, I want to know, as the Minister of Education, will he send a senior official from his office, because I'm telling you, where I'm standing, I have no idea. They're not communicating at all, and there's a big difference on the Minister's side and the centre's side. So I would like to know from the Minister, will he do the honourable thing, and right thing, and sympathetic thing, and send a senior official to the centre, and see what has gone wrong, what can we do better, and what they can do to help them? Could he at least do that, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Dent.

Further Return To Question 278-15(4): Closure Of Fort Smith Day Care

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The superintendent has been involved in this issue right from the start. That is a senior person in the department. The superintendent, and the staff, have been involved with a large number of day cares in the South Slave, not just this one. They have been providing a significant amount of support to all of the operators, including this operator.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

Question 279-15(4): Akaitcho Process Negotiations

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess it's no secret to the House that some of

the Members on this side of the House had an informal meeting with some of the Akaitcho chiefs and negotiators, with respect to the Akaitcho process that they seem to be having problems with. My question is directed to the Premier, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. Some of the information that was passed on to some of the Regular Members this morning about the protocol agreement that was signed in Ottawa, and why the GNWT wasn't privy to that agreement. It really bothers me, especially being an Akaitcho resident and a descendant of Treaty 8 myself, when I hear from my negotiating team that the government's chief negotiator is conference calling in to the main table negotiations in Ottawa because he has to stay home to fix his window. Mr. Speaker, it just begs the question of where his priorities are when it comes to these land claims negotiations that the Akaitcho government is adamantly pursuing. I just want to ask the Premier what he intends to do about something which is of grave concern to the Akaitcho government about this, which is just a blatant lack of respect, I think, for the whole process, especially when an important First Nations initiative like this is making some headway. I just want to ask the Premier what his intentions are, because I know he's been briefed by the same negotiators, and I think he's met with them even today. I want to know what he plans on doing about that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 279-15(4): Akaitcho Process Negotiations

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to inform the House, and the Member, that, yes, we are privy to the protocol agreement. It wasn't signed; it was initialled. I have a copy of it; I've seen it; I've read it; I know what's in it. I also want to inform the Member that we have initialled off on it, as well, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of one of our negotiators not being able to make it to a specific meeting, Mr. Speaker, that happens on occasion. People have personal lives that they have to look after, at times. It's unfortunate that more of these negotiations didn't take place in the region where the parties are negotiating, rather than off in Ottawa. It would make it a lot easier for everyone.

But having said that, Mr. Speaker, I'm confident in our negotiators; I'm confident that they'll make it to every meeting they can. I can't say they won't ever miss one in the future, but this happens, and we move forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

Supplementary To Question 279-15(4): Akaitcho Process Negotiations

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know every negotiating party, I guess, assigns certain responsibilities to their negotiators, and they have full confidence in them. But when the other parties involved in negotiations don't have that same feeling of confidence in those negotiators, does the Minister have it within his authority to change drivers at these main tables? If he does have that authority and he's getting direction from all parties that are involved in the process, when does he

take the stand to actually change drivers in the process? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 279-15(4): Akaitcho Process Negotiations

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, certainly, I have full authority to change negotiators, change our staff who are at these tables any time I want. I have full confidence in our negotiator. He is doing an excellent job. In fact, maybe the call from the other side for him to be replaced is because he is too good a negotiator. They don't want to have someone like him across the table. So, Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of changing him. He is doing a great job for us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

Supplementary To Question 279-15(4): Akaitcho Process Negotiations

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to start splitting hairs here over somebody's competence or incompetence at the negotiating table, but I think history will show, from the Tlicho side of things, and from other land claims processes that have been taking place, this negotiator has been involved in some of those and has been removed in a couple of them. I just want to know what the Premier is planning. How is he going to assure the Akaitcho residents, and especially the Akaitcho negotiation process, that a more serious, and cooperative, approach by the GNWT negotiation team is incorporated into their agenda? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 279-15(4): Akaitcho Process Negotiations

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Probably the best statement of support, and so on, I can make to all parties, is that last week there was an interim land withdrawal protocol negotiated, dealing with federal lands through the territorial lands act. I'm prepared, Mr. Speaker, to do exactly the same thing under the Commissioner's Land Act, to sign exactly the same deal as the Akaitcho has been able to negotiate with Canada. So, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell all the people at the negotiating table, the people who will be affected, that we're prepared today to sign exactly the same deal that has been signed with the federal government. They can't ask any more, or any less, or us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Final supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

Supplementary To Question 279-15(4): Akaitcho Process Negotiations

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to know that we are prepared to take that stand, and I hope that he communicates that down the lines. The federal lands selection process, there is a little glitch in the whole Akaitcho process negotiations, just based on that land

selection authority, I guess. If the Government of the Northwest Territories is going to take the same approach as the federal government, then there shouldn't be a problem, because the federal government was a signatory to this protocol agreement, and it seems like the real barrier in the whole agreement process in the last election process is to deal with Commissioner's land within the Yellowknife municipal boundaries. So I just want to ask the Premier if he's going to take the same federal government approach to land withdrawal, why are we at this conundrum in the negotiation process with...

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. I will allow the Premier to answer that. Premier Handley.

Further Return To Question 279-15(4): Akaitcho Process Negotiations

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the Member agrees with me, that if we do the same thing as the federal government has done, that there should be no problem at all. I am prepared, and I will state it again, that we will sign the same protocols with the same provisions with regard to Commissioner's land as was initialled on the territorial lands act, Mr. Speaker. There should be no problem at all. I am prepared to do that. The only problem would be if, somehow, for some reason, the Akaitcho negotiators are asking more from us than they are from the federal government. That would be a problem. I think the Member agrees with me, let's all be fair here and be equal. We'll do what Canada does, and I think we will have progress. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

Question 280-15(4): Name Change For The Hamlet Of Holman

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Has the Minister relayed the Hamlet of Holman's request to change the name to Ulukhatok? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question 280-15(4): Name Change For The Hamlet Of Holman

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that the request for the name change is being worked on jointly by MACA and Education, Culture and Employment, because the communities asked me to change not just the geographic name, which would be Education, Culture and Employment, but the official name of the hamlet, as well, which has to be handled by MACA. The process has...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: ...(inaudible)...

HON. CHARLES DENT: Sorry, I missed something there, obviously. Mr. Speaker, the process is underway, and the issue is somewhat clouded, because there are two languages in the community, and the spelling that the community wants to have reflected in the change is an issue. There will also have to be a community vote to demonstrate that they want to make the change. I

understand that is going to be coordinated with the municipal elections in December. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 280-15(4): Name Change For The Hamlet Of Holman

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hamlet has been working on this for quite some time now, Mr. Speaker. I think I heard him say this summer, but is it possible to further that along, Mr. Speaker?

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

Further Return To Question 280-15(4): Name Change For The Hamlet Of Holman

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, the hamlet would like to hold a vote at the same time as the elections, which is in December. That's when we expect the community vote will take place, and then we will be able to move things along fairly quickly after that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Question 281-15(4): Status Of Nahendeh Housing Project

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the honourable Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, with respect to the programming that's happening in the Nahendeh riding. There were lots of programs scheduled this year, from houses to repairs. Can the Minister tell me if these will be completed in this fiscal year? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Krutko.

Return To Question 281-15(4): Status Of Nahendeh Housing Project

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, we have had a lot of work contracted out in the Nahendeh riding. We have had some logistical problems with contracts and getting people to implement those contracts. This year, we are looking at budgeting \$2.8 million, and on top of that we have allocated \$1 million to Fort Liard with regard to the mould problem in Kotaneelee. So we are dealing with these issues. At the same time, we have identified over 100 people in the Member's riding who we are delivering programs to this year. So we are doing what we can to work with the Member, and the people of the Nahendeh riding, to deal with the housing crisis the Member is talking about.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

Supplementary To Question 281-15(4): Status Of Nahendeh Housing Project

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the honourable Minister for the well-researched reply.

---Laughter

I have been getting lots of inquiries recently as to the timing of it. I know a lot of them are very important, and they are emergency programs. In Fort Liard, we have all the Kotaneelee houses that have to be repaired, and soon, because the quicker we get people back into housing, the easier it is for the overcrowding conditions that are occurring over there. Once again, if the Minister can tell me when the program will be up and running in Fort Liard. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 281-15(4): Status Of Nahendeh Housing Project

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have contracted the work out to Dragon Construction. I believe they are going to move in there in the next few weeks to start work on four units this year, and do the remaining work over next spring, and, hopefully, complete it by next summer. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

Supplementary To Question 281-15(4): Status Of Nahendeh Housing Project

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the construction, and repairs, and renovations, the clients who are involved, particularly with new houses, are concerned about adequate inspections, and inspectors, on the housing units. Does the corporation have a plan, when building houses, to have the clients involved to do the inspections? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 281-15(4): Status Of Nahendeh Housing Project

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in order for the inspections to take place, you need the project officer on site, along with the client who will be there, to ensure that they sign off all inspection documents at every level of construction, so that they know the work has been done under the proper construction guidelines, and making sure that the product, at the end of the day, has been inspected all the way through, so we don't have problems where we have units inspected after construction and realize that you have shingles on the roof that you can't see, or you don't know what's behind the walls. It's important that you do inspections at each stage. It's important to note, Mr. Speaker, that the project manager has to be on site, along with the contractor, to sign these things off at every stage. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

Supplementary To Question 281-15(4): Status Of Nahendeh Housing Project

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad that there is involvement by the contractor, and the corporation, but, quite often, Mr. Speaker, the client is going to be the owner of the home, and will make mortgage payments. Anybody who is building their home is involved in the process, as well, even if they have a general contractor building their house. This is quite

similar. So can the Minister of the Housing Corporation make provision that the clients are involved in the construction, and inspection, of their home as it's being built? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 281-15(4): Status Of Nahendeh Housing Project

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will definitely look into that for the Member, and make sure we have that with regard to the inspection documents.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Question 282-15(4): Contract Administration And Accountability

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of ITI. I would first like to thank the Minister for going forward and requesting the audit of the oil and gas contracts that took place this past summer. I must say that I find the audit quite alarming. It's quite obvious to me that the department failed miserably in performing basic contract administration. How this continued for seven years is anyone's guess. The fact that they got away with it causes me a great deal of concern. I would like to do a bit of math here. A new department, plus a new DM, plus a new Minister, plus a retired bureaucrat, equals zero responsibility. What steps is the Minister currently taking to ensure contracts administered by his department are sound and follow contract regulations? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bell.

Return To Question 282-15(4): Contract Administration And Accountability

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure the math adds up, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member for recognizing that when there was public concern, I called an audit immediately, to ensure that there was no wrongdoing, and to find out what was going on. I want to indicate to the House that we take accountability and transparency very seriously, and that's exactly why we looked into this. I would acknowledge that our contract administration was lax over that period. We have taken steps to improve that. I think the contract registry will shed a lot of light on procurement in general. I think that's a very important tool. We do have delegation instruments. I can safely say that all departments have delegated the authority for various levels of contracts down into their departments. It simply wouldn't be feasible for Cabinet to review all contracts, regardless of their amounts. So we have all done that, but it is still important to recognize that, at the end of the day, the Minister is accountable and responsible. I accept that, and will certainly account for what has happened here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 282-15(4): Contract Administration And Accountability

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Minister's math lesson. I still am of the opinion that it doesn't quite add up. The Minister spoke of the fact that the government is accountable, open, transparent, honest; all the key catch phrases. I think the contract registry belongs in FMBS. Given the fact that the Minister stood up in the House here today, and said contract administration was lax in his department over that period of time, I would like to see it moved out of there and into FMBS where it belongs. I would like to ask the Minister if he will do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 282-15(4): Contract Administration And Accountability

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the House knows, our department is currently the keeper of this registry. We've done some work with the contractor in building it, but it's simply a service on behalf of all the other departments. We provide this contract registry; all the departments contribute to it. It could be housed in any number of departments. I think committee has made a recommendation to such an effect, and I am sure this government will consider that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 282-15(4): Contract Administration And Accountability

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the Minister that it is paid for by all departments. To me, it does not belong in ITI. It belongs in FMBS. Could the Minister let me know if any direct federal funding was involved in paying for the contracts under the review of this audit? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 282-15(4): Contract Administration And Accountability

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are flipping back and forth here between a couple of issues, but if I follow the Member's line of questioning, the issue is to the Keyscarp contracts. I don't believe there was any federal funding. That was GNWT funding of about \$500,000 over a period of seven years, as I indicated earlier. I appreciate your suggestion earlier, Mr. Speaker, that we be very careful when speaking to documents that aren't in front of the House. This one isn't, but I would say that I have made it available to any Member who is interested. I have provided it to the media, and any member of the public who would like a copy, I can provide that, as well. I take your point about speaking to the specifics of the document when it's not before the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 282-15(4): Contract Administration And Accountability

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My apologies. I am trying to get in as many questions as I can here, as question period has expired. One of the more alarming things in that audit was there was a change order for the contract in 2002-03 for the amount of \$25,000. There were no reasons given for this increase, or the changes associated with that increase. Can the Minister explain to me, under what circumstances can somebody just change a sole-source contract and increase that contract by, in this instance, \$25,000? How can that happen? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 282-15(4): Contract Administration And Accountability

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Generally, for a contract of this nature, there could be a change order, and it would be approved by the same contracting authority that approved the original contract. At this point in time, it was a director level in my department. I have spoken with my deputy minister, upon taking control of the department. The deputy currently would make a decision of this nature, and I would be fully apprised of it. I think the issue here, that the audit points to, is that the change order to the contract was not well documented, and there isn't an indication of why it was done. As I have already admitted, the contracting procedure of the day left something to be desired and that's why, going forward, we've improved it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Time for question period has expired. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 8: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Return To Written Question 11-15(4): Day Care Services

HON. CHARLES DENT: Mr. Speaker, I have a return to written question asked by Ms. Lee on October 17, 2005, regarding day care services.

1. When is the last time the ECE staff went into Lutsel'k'e to look at the day care program and spaces?

The regional early childhood consultant last visited the Tinkering Tots Day Care in Lutsel'k'e on Thursday, October 13, 2005.

2. When they did, what did they find and what did they do?

The consultant met with the coordinator, four members of staff, and a representative of the Lutsel'k'e Dene Band. A range of topics was discussed, including the previous early childhood inspection; the health, safety and cleanliness of the premises; training opportunities for staff; programming ideas; and support and resources available from the consultant. The consultant also responded to questions regarding the funding

received from ECE, and provided assistance with reporting requirements.

Mr. Speaker, both the current facility and a potential new one suggested by the band were discussed. The proposed alternative space is currently a building that is in poor repair and would require a substantial financial investment to ensure it meets fire and health requirements. The consultant clarified that if the community wishes to look into the use of this building as a day care, then the fire marshal and environmental health officer would need to be contacted for direction on the required renovations.

3. What are other communities in the NWT without day care programs, and what does the department plan to do to address those?

Mr. Speaker, there are six small communities in the NWT that are without licensed early childhood programs: Colville Lake, Jean Marie River, Trout Lake, Kakisa, Nahanni Butte, and Enterprise.

Early childhood programs are initiated by local organizations in response to community-specific needs. Licensed early childhood programs are operated by local community groups. Regional early childhood consultants are available to provide assistance to all licensed early childhood programs, and to any community group that is interested in developing and operating such a program.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 8, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

Return To Written Question 16-15(4): Assistance To Hunters And Trappers

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, I am in receipt of return to Written Question 16-15(4) asked by Mr. Jackson Lafferty to the Honourable Brendan Bell, Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, regarding assistance to hunters and trappers.

1. The Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment administers the following programs in support of hunters and trappers in the Northwest Territories:

Local Wildlife Committee program aims to provide contributions to hunters and trappers associations, or band councils, that provide similar services, to assist in offsetting a portion of administrative costs in providing support for local hunters and trappers. The 2005-2006 budget allocation is \$258,000.

The Community Harvesters Assistance Program contributes to local wildlife committees to provide direct assistance to resource harvesters. The 2005-2006 budget allocation is \$473,000.

Western Harvester Support Program contributions, provided to regional or community aboriginal organizations, are matched by an equal amount by these organizations to establish harvest support programs to promote the local renewable resource economy. The total approved commitment of \$15 million was established in 1994. The balance remaining on this commitment is \$3.6 million.

The Disaster Compensation Program provides grants to eligible hunters and trappers to replace equipment lost as a result of natural disaster, excluding forest fires. The annual budget allocation is \$15,000.

The Workers' Compensation Program for harvesters is delivered in collaboration with the Workers' Compensation Board and provides support of eligible hunters and trappers who are injured or killed while harvesting renewable resources. The annual budget allocation is \$100,000.

The Fur Price Program provides grants to trappers in the form of a minimum price for selected species of fur. The program includes guaranteed advances, prime fur bonuses, and grubstakes. The 2005-2006 budget allocation is \$345,000.

Humane Trap Development provides grants to investors working on the development of human trapping devices. The annual budget allocation is \$5,000.

2. Can the department also provide additional information on registered hunters and trappers?

Persons who hunt or trap in the Northwest Territories are either land claim beneficiaries or licensed under the auspices of the Wildlife Act.

3. Can the department provide a breakdown of funding availability to, specifically, the Monfwi region?

Hunters and trappers in the Monfwi region accessed the following programs and funding for 2005-2006:

- a. Community Harvesters Assistance Program: \$99,828
- b. Local wildlife committee funding: \$31,000
- c. Fur Price Program: In addition to \$96,945 in fur sales for the 2004-2005 fur trapping season, trappers in the Monfwi region received \$37,611 in fur bonuses and \$12,390 in grubstake payments.

It is anticipated that there will be a similar program uptake for this upcoming fur season.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister of FMBS, Mr. Roland.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 68-15(4): List Of Inter-Activity Transfers Exceeding \$250,000 For The Period April 1, 2005, To October 7, 2005

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 32(1) of the Financial Administration Act, I wish to table the following document entitled List of Inter-Activity Transfers Exceeding \$250,000 for the Period April 1, 2005, to October 7, 2005. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. My apologies, Members. I skipped some items on the orders of the day. I will continue with tabling of documents. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bell.

Tabled Document 69-15(4): Status Report - Human Resources In The Corrections Service

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Status Report - Human Resources in the Corrections Service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

---Applause

---Laughter

Tabled Document 70-15(4): Provincehood For The Northwest Territories, Volume One, August 2005

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table a report Provincehood for the Northwest Territories, Volume One, 2005. This report was prepared for me by Mr. Garth Wallbridge, of Wallbridge and Associates, Barristers and Solicitors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

Tabled Document 71-15(4): Letters Of Support For A Tuktoyaktuk Access Road To A Gravel Source

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a letter that I received October 21st from a local business in Tuktoyaktuk in support of the access road to a gravel source. The second, Mr. Speaker, is a letter from the EDO of the hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk in support of the access road to a gravel source. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Tabled Document 72-15(4): Letters From Energy Wall And Building Products Ltd. To The Premier

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table two letters today. The first one is a letter from Energy Wall and Building Products Ltd., a constituent of mine, to the Honourable Joe Handley, regarding housing initiative here in the Northwest Territories, dated January 5, 2005. The second one is also a letter, dated November 22, 2004, also to the Premier, Mr. Joseph Handley, from Energy Wall and Building Products Ltd. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 13, tabling of documents. Thank you, Members. With your indulgence, I will return to item 9, replies to opening address. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

REVERT TO ITEM 9: REPLIES TO OPENING ADDRESS

Ms. Lee's Reply

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity on the Order Paper to make my reply to the opening address. I want to express some

of my observations on some of the important things that we are discussing in this House, Mr. Speaker.

I had a chance to look at the Premier's sessional statement dated October 12th. There are a few important things there, but I did not see what I wanted to talk about today, which has to do with government accountability. I guess the fact that the Minister and the Premier never really mentioned it in that statement, speaks to the lack of government accountability that, I feel, is happening in terms of how the Cabinet is addressing some of the issues that are being brought up in this House, Mr. Speaker.

The sessional statement speaks to the strategic goals of the government which were tabled on October 25th. I read, with interest, the phrase that we speak often about in this House. It says that this government's desire is to achieve the vision of self-reliant individuals and families, sharing the rewards and responsibilities of healthy communities and a prosperous and unified Northwest Territories. This government often speaks about the fact that we need to work with all of the non-profit groups, NGOs, volunteers. We go on and on about how we care about all these people out there who are working so hard to deliver programs to add to our communities. Mr. Speaker, if they are sitting out there and listening to what is going on in this House -- and I know they do because Members are getting lots of responses -- I am sure some of them are wondering, what do we really mean when we say we care about these NGOs and non-profit groups like day cares or even centres like TTC? The public is very puzzled about why Members bring issues forward that the Cabinet doesn't seem to be really listening to.

I am not interested in revisiting issues that have already been decided. I am prepared to accept that the transfer of TTC to Hay River is an issue that has been determined, and I am going to work with the Minister of Health and Social Services, and the TTC contractor, to make sure that the needs of children are addressed. However, that does not address the fact that there are people who went out to sign the petitions, and the 770 names and the workers who were being laid off who spent weekends in various places in Yellowknife, to tell the government that there are things that they have neglected to look at. They should be listening to those professionals who have given care to the children, who give care to the students, or the pediatricians, or any of the professional people who are giving advice to them. When they hear the answer in this House from the Premier that says everything we do in this House is political, so, therefore, anything political is correct, what are the people in Yellowknife and out there supposed to think?

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Premier has a very good reputation of listening to the Members and addressing the needs of Members. He's at his best when you go see him in private. You go see him in his office, and you bring an issue forward, and he will look after them, but something really funny happens when he walks into this Chamber. Once the government has announced...

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Mr. Handley.

Point Of Order

HON. JOE HANDLEY: I rise on a point of order. The Member is imputing some false or hidden motives on my part when I walk into this House. Mr. Speaker, I take great

pride in being open and cooperative with Members all the time, whether it's in this House or anywhere else. So, Mr. Speaker, under article 23, imputes false or hidden motives to another Member, I have a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Handley has risen on a point of order. I will allow debate on the point of order. Mr. Handley, do you want to speak to your point of order?

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I can't quote the Member, but she has said in private, I am honest, I am straight up, and I follow up, but when I come into this House, then I am a changed person somehow. She's implying that I don't follow up on things, that I am not honest and straightforward. Mr. Speaker, I resent being accused of having false motives as soon as I walk into this House. Mr. Speaker, I am very honest all the time. When I come into this House, I come in honest, straightforward, and I work with the Members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. To the point of order. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, I don't believe I even finished the sentence that I was saying, and I thought I was complimenting the Premier on his accessibility. So I would be really interested in hearing the Speaker's ruling on that. Thank you.

Speaker's Ruling

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Any further discussion on the point of order? Thank you, Members. It is my ruling that the Member, the Honourable Joe Handley, with respect to the remarks made by Ms. Lee, does have a point of order. The Member was referring to the Minister's conduct in the House. I would ask that the Member please remove her remarks and apologize to the House for the remarks made. Thank you. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure what words I said that I am supposed to retract and apologize for. Could you repeat that, please?

MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Lee, I can't repeat your words, word for word; I don't have Hansard in front of me. However, the Chair did detect that the Member was referring to conduct in the House of the Member. I will ask you to repeat the previous statement that was made before the Member rose on a point of order.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the best of my knowledge, when the Member for Weledeh got up...

MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Lee, I am not prepared to enter into a debate as to why it was made. I would ask, again, that the Member retract the statement made before the point of order.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I could just finish my sentence. I was trying to say...

MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Lee, I am asking the Member to retract the statement made before the point of order. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to apologize and retract the statement where I said, "...something funny happens to the Premier when he walks into this Chamber." If that was offensive to the Members of this House, and the Speaker, I am more than willing, and prepared, to retract that. I am prepared to retract any other statement I might have said that might have been offensive. That was not at all my intention, and I was only trying to get the clarification of the words.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Chair will accept that retraction and allow the Member to go on, but I caution the Member on language in the House. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, and corrected, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of people who have come and talked to me about the concerns they have, that somehow the Premier feels that everything we do is political, the Premier seems to have very little concern that we get in this House, I believe it was a tabled document, that some decisions on moving...I have already stated and I don't want to go back debating the whole issue.

I just want to speak to the importance of government accountability, and that people out there are listening to what we are saying. We do a lot of work outside of this House. The days and hours we spend in this House are only a small portion of the work that we do as a Member. So it is very important. The people are watching us from all over the Territories. I know the seniors in Aven Court watch us. I know Mrs. Teya in Fort McPherson watches us. Mr. Punch in Trout Lake watches us. There are people watching from all over the Northwest Territories, and they wonder why, when the Members on this side are bringing up issues and trying to get information about a project transfer, getting information about why a day care in Fort Smith has to close, information as to why a day care in Lutsel'e has no facilities for the kids and they cannot get operational funding, they don't understand why the Ministers are not forthcoming in giving the kind of information that we need.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that there is a lot of work we do outside of here, in committees and in public hearings. We do a lot of work. I don't know if the public knows that most of the work we are doing here has been agreed to outside of here. There is a lot of briefing that goes on in getting prepared for this, but they don't understand. That's what I am hearing from the constituents. Why is it that when we ask questions about the Beverage Container Program, or whatever it is that we bring forward, it's such a protracted process?

For example, Mr. Speaker, I have raised a lot of issues on day care services. I know that I sound very repetitive; sometimes I sound very angry. That's only because I am asking simple questions that need to be addressed and the information is not forthcoming.

As I observe what is going on in this House, I have a great concern of the performance of some of the Ministers. Mr. Speaker, the specific Minister I have concern with -- and as a Member, I believe I have the right to say -- is I used to be one of the biggest fans of the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Charles Dent. I used to think that it was his greatest strength that his approach to files is to study them, and to get to the bottom of things, and think about it. Lately, I am not sure if that's a strength of his. In fact, I am not sure if I do have as much confidence in his ability to be leading these files as I used to.

Mr. Speaker, when he was Minister of Justice, we had protracted debate in this House about what was happening in Justice. At that time, a lot of members in my constituency came and said he should resign over what's going on in the jails. I said no, he's a very thoughtful person. He likes to review his files, and he's a hard-working Member, and I know he is. We went through those justice files. Lately he's been asked questions on WCB. He says he has no control over WCB. All of his answers that he's giving in this House are more suited to an administrator of a program, rather than a Minister. I really have a problem with that, Mr. Speaker.

I used to think this was the advice he was getting from his staff. Looking at his performance in Justice and the WCB file, and recently we had a situation where I had someone who was completely homeless in my office, and they went to the ECE office and they were not able to get housing, even though they qualified for income support and they could get market rent. I went over to his office, these people are sitting in my office, and I am told by the staff we know about the file, I will call you, wait for me. You can't jump the queue. You have to wait like everybody else. I thought it was just a bad day at the office. People in his office maybe don't understand exactly what his roles are.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Mr. Dent, what is your point of order?

Point Of Order

HON. CHARLES DENT: Mr. Speaker, In previous rulings in this House, we have consistently heard from Beauchesne's that Members should be careful about allegations about people who cannot defend themselves in this House. The Member is making some allegations about my performance, and that's something that I think is allowed, but I don't think the Member should be making allegations about the performance of people in my office.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. To the point of order. Mr. Dent, do you want to expand on your point of order? I will allow some discussion on your point of order.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that under previous rulings of the Speaker, there have been a number of times that Members have been cautioned not to refer to people who cannot defend themselves in this House. When the Member refers to a member of my staff, Ministers only have, typically, one person on staff, sometimes two, so that makes them very easy to be identified. I would say that the Member, in that sense, is contravening previous rulings of the Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. To the point of order. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my intention was to only focus on the Minister's performance, and my experience in the Minister's office, so if the Minister took that as an offence, I will retract that and continue with my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. If the Chair heard you correctly, you are prepared to have your reference to staff retracted. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Mr. Speaker, I believe that's what I said.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Member is prepared to retract the statement. I will allow the Member to proceed with her statement, with the retraction of that statement. I will caution Members to not make reference to people who are not in the House. Mr. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, observing the Minister's performance in this House, the way he's been answering questions, and the way he says that he is responsible for this day care file, for example, and he gets a budget at the beginning of the year and there is nothing he can do and that's the way it is, he stated in this House that he never even tried to seek extraordinary funding from FMBS. His responses are so non-responsive and non-caring. It's not just on this file, but in so many other things I have experienced with this Minister. It's leading me to lose complete confidence in his ability to carry on this portfolio.

Mr. Speaker, there have been lots of people who have sent me e-mails about the questions and answers going on about the day care program. One of the women who e-mailed me yesterday said I am just thinking about the women in Fort Smith who are encouraged by the government to upgrade themselves and take their courses. A lot of them are single mothers, and it's very difficult for anybody to go to school, and pick up where their normal life is, and trying to upgrade their education. If they have a child along, childcare issues are very serious. This woman said to me, and she's a leader in the community, and these women are feeling very betrayed that the government will encourage them to take courses, but, somehow, they seem not willing to look into a problem.

I have never indicated in this House that any centre should be just bailed out for no reason at all. I am told that between this group and the Minister, there have been hundreds of e-mails, and letters, and communications. As I've stated, on many occasions, it's just unbelievable to me how two parties could communicate that much, in writing and in words, and have such a gap in understanding about where the problems are. I feel sympathetic to that.

I know that the Member for Hay River South has suggested maybe we should have women on the other side of the Cabinet. But, I guess, that would be a different perspective. I think we just need a sympathetic heart. Mr. Speaker, I know a thing or two about life in a household led by a single mother. Everybody here knows that I was brought up by a single mother. My mother worked really hard to bring me and my sister up. I always thought a lot of people really don't care enough. The government programs don't care, and I always promised myself that if I ever -- and I did, I put myself through school, and I tried to make it in the world -- and I promised myself that if I ever got in a position where I had any kind of influence and say on how the government treats its most vulnerable people, that I will do my best to bring fairness and some voice to these people.

I am telling you, I don't know what the reasons are. Maybe the Minister, and people in the know, would reveal this. On the basis of what I'm hearing in the House, I don't really know why it is so important that this day care centre in Fort Smith has to close on Friday. But from where I'm sitting, and what the people are hearing, this government is just sounding like... You know, they could do so much more, with a little more heart.

Mr. Speaker, this issue doesn't just apply to day care funding. Minister Dent spoke, at length, that he was planning on improving the day care program, if he could get money from the federal government. There are two common themes that play in this House, and one is Yellowknife has everything, and I guess there is some truth in that. Equity and equitable distribution of wealth is always a good political topic. Although I don't think Yellowknife has everything, and even if you have a lot of things, you have other issues that you need to contend with. But another, most popular, pastime in this House, is blaming the federal government when we don't get our way.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that as a creature of federal statute, as we are, as the NWT Legislature, and no matter how well evolved we are, and how much we have taking responsibilities in practice, we really are a creature of federal legislation. So it is important, in the many files that we have, that we get good funding out of that. What really bothers me is, while the Ministers on that side are willing to take up credit for any cent, any additional \$10, any million we get from the federal government, but when they don't get it, they're not willing to share the blame for not being able to succeed in that. That has been one of my frustrations in listening to Minister Dent going on and on about the fact that he couldn't do much about the day care program, because he couldn't win there.

Mr. Speaker, I believe political leadership is about taking responsibility and accounting for actions. We don't go to battles, like kings and queens did with swords, but we do go to meetings, and we spend lots of time making phone calls. We could go to one thousand meetings and not achieve a deal. Mr. Dent, I understand, has been making phone calls, and meeting with other people, trying to get a deal, but at the end of the day, we have to be judged by what we achieve. The fact that you do not achieve, and you do not get a deal from the federal government, cannot be used as an excuse for not being able to help with what's going on in the North.

Mr. Speaker, I have been passed a note by somebody, and I think it's somebody in the public, I don't know who it is.

But the Minister indicated earlier about how much they have done for this day care. The logical question is, if you've done so much to help out with this day care centre, why are you so anxious to see that it finishes?

Mr. Speaker, the points that I really needed to make at this juncture, and the Premier stated in his session statement that we are in our two-year stop, and it is, usually, a time when a Legislature looks into itself about what we are accomplishing. The more I sit in the House -- and I was listening to what has been going on in the last few days -- I realize that it's getting so much more difficult to have the government consent to some of the smallest changes that you would think elected officials should be able to ask for.

Mr. Speaker, the next item I want to talk about... There are about two or three items I was going to talk about, but I was only planning on speaking for about half-an-hour, so I'm going to finish my statement by saying I would like to send warm greetings to the elders in Aven Court, who I know are watching us all the time. I've mentioned them earlier, and I've mentioned some of the people in the communities.

I would like to put this government on notice, that in my six years that I've been here, I have never asked any Minister to resign, and I don't take it lightly when I tell a Minister that I have lost confidence in him. I feel very strongly about this Minister, and I mean what I say, and I'm going to continue to be hard on this Minister. I'm going to ask, and I have to see, that he has some heart, and that he doesn't just...It's just unbelievable how he sees a Minister's role as something where he just has no flexibility, no willingness to reconsider, no consideration to give any new information, a deserved look, no response to any of the e-mails or any of the public input, and that is just really sad to say. I know that this government is not going to do anything about that day care centre. It's a very sad day for the Territories and for the day care centre in Fort Smith. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 11-15(4): Beverage Container Recovery Program

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, October 28, 2005, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that the government delay implementation of the Beverage Container Recovery Program in every community without an approved depot until such time as a local depot is available. Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will seek unanimous consent to deal with this motion today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

ITEM 16: MOTIONS

Motion 8-15(4): Energy Costs And Overall Cost Of Living, Carried

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the costs of basic needs including housing, food, transportation, power and heating in the NWT have historically been well above national averages;

AND WHEREAS recent sharp increases in the price of oil will make the current situation even worse by directly raising the prices of gasoline, diesel and home heating fuel, and also by indirectly raising food, transportation and other costs;

AND WHEREAS the heating season is much longer in the Northwest Territories than in other parts of Canada, with average daily temperatures ranging from minus 1.2 degrees Celsius in Fort Liard, to minus 4.6 degrees in Yellowknife, to minus 13.3 degrees in Sachs Harbour, compared with plus 3.9 degrees in Edmonton and plus 6.3 degrees in Ottawa;

AND WHEREAS the ability of harvesters and other renewable resource workers such as commercial fishermen to continue to work on the land and water, and the ability of northerners to continue their tradition of providing healthy food for their families from the land and water, is being jeopardized by high fuel prices;

AND WHEREAS people with low incomes who are not in public housing or on income support will be particularly hard hit by the rising cost of living;

AND WHEREAS the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight heard clearly during its 2005 pre-budget consultations that addressing poverty and the cost of living is a high priority for NWT communities and residents;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that the government present a viable comprehensive strategy to address energy costs to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight at a public meeting in November 2005;

AND FURTHER, that this strategy present both long and short-term mitigating measures, possibly including: subsidies for low-income households, harvesters and other renewable resource workers, and subsistence hunters; energy conservation measures; efficiency initiatives such as promoting the use of wood-generated heat; lobby efforts for federal assistance for NWT residents, such as reduction or elimination of the federal goods and services tax; and opportunities to work with our sister territories;

AND FURTHER, that the government present a viable comprehensive strategy to address the overall cost of living in the NWT to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight at a public meeting in January 2006;

AND FURTHER, that this strategy includes both long and short-term mitigating measures to address the high costs of essentials such as food, utilities, housing and transportation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue that's highest on the agenda for every northerner, and I think for every Canadian, is what the high cost of energy is going to mean to their family, to their futures, not only this winter but in the months and years to come.

Mr. Speaker, this government has, over the years, been active in a number of areas of energy conservation, energy awareness, and, indeed, energy production. We've looked at a couple of major hydroelectricity programs that we, indeed, hope will see fruition. Indeed, we are looking at, potentially, the largest civil project ever undertaken in Canada, and that is the building of the Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this session, we heard statements from the Premier, and from each of the Ministers, on various initiatives that their departments are undertaking to address the high cost of energy, what this government

is doing about it, and what residents in the NWT could also do. Mr. Speaker, when committee members from this side of this House travelled the Northwest Territories in September, on a pre-budget consultation -- the first of its kind -- one of the overriding messages that we heard from constituents, from communities, was a concern not only for the high cost of energy, but the overall cost of living in the Northwest Territories, something that is being driven by many, many factors, and it's coming to the point where so much of our attention is focused on what we might say are the poor, the working poor, the disadvantaged, the unemployed or the unemployable. Now, Mr. Speaker, we're hearing from a new kind of constituency, and I would say this is going into the middle class, these are people with well-established jobs and careers, and they're looking at the drivers to the cost of living here in the Northwest Territories. In Yellowknife, and I think in every other community, they're starting to question how are they going to get through, and still have a standard of living, a quality of life that they can have confidence and security in.

So in putting together this motion, Mr. Speaker, and working with my colleagues on this, we wanted to put together something that would show that we're paying attention. In the short term, there may not be a lot of things we can do. But that should not stop us from doing anything. So in asking the government to come back to committee, in public forum, in November and January, Mr. Speaker, this is a demonstration from the Members who went out into the communities in September, to say we're listening.

We can't do all this on our own. It is going to require the skills, and the resources, and the energy from the various departments; and we roll this out into the community. We have the Arctic Energy Alliance, which is already engaged, and I'm pleased to see that, along with utilities, communities, to see where a really collaborative, whole effort can be made on energy costs and on the cost of living. That, I guess, Mr. Speaker, is what I hope we can see from the government when we come back for a public meeting, or a couple of public meetings, under the chair's direction of the Accountability and Oversight committee. This is not another round of public meetings or a tour of the communities again, Mr. Speaker. That has already been done, and we heard what's on people's minds. We're going to continue now with our own processes.

If there is anything new in here, Mr. Speaker, it's that committees want to open the doors to more of the kind of discourse and discussion that we have amongst each other and with government departments, and that's why we're saying, "Let's do this in public." So much of this discussion has already happened out in the communities and here on the floor of this Assembly over the last few days. We want to continue that in November, in January, and that's what we're seeking to get the government's assistance and cooperation in doing.

So that is why, Mr. Speaker, this motion was put forward. It's a continuance of what we already heard. We want to show that we're paying attention, and we want to show that we can do something to address energy costs, and the overall cost of living in the NWT. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. To the motion. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is definitely one of the ways that our committee has decided to bring to the forefront the huge issue of rising costs in general, Mr. Speaker, due to the pressures of the fuel prices, of all the natural disasters, and unnatural disasters, that are driving up the fuel prices, as a result, to the cost of living everywhere. In fact, I think the recent announcement in the press was 3.5 percent is what the growth is throughout Canada today. That's huge, especially when we weren't facing many pressures over the past many years. Talking together as Regular Members, my honourable colleague, Mr. Dave Ramsay, and I were talking about striking up a huge general committee of Regular Members and Cabinet Members to look at the energy cost scenario. But, there again, we were faced with a dilemma. Any special committee raised by this House, they're saying, is a minimum of \$1 million, and that's not another cost we wanted to pass on to the taxpayers, Mr. Speaker.

So we thought the best way to do it is to tell government that the people of the North are crying for a viable, comprehensive strategy to address the energy costs through the North. In fact, Cabinet pretty well had a theme at the beginning of our session where each and every Minister got up and stated to us, and the NWT, what they were going to do about the rising energy costs and all the forced-growth issues that we're faced with as residents of the Northwest Territories. That goes a long way, too, Mr. Speaker.

What we're asking in this motion is, can we package that? Can we come up with a comprehensive strategy that we can give throughout the NWT and say we've heard you? Our committee has travelled throughout the North and our Ministers, indeed, have done their share of travelling throughout the North, and attending the mini-meetings, and the people coming up to them saying that they're not too sure what they want to do with their business this year with the fuel costs. Indeed, running the private homes as well, Mr. Speaker.

So that's all we're saying. Come and meet with the Accountability and Oversight committee. Let's start a discussion on this comprehensive strategy. I, for one, will state, for the record, that our next meeting is November 21st and for government to have a comprehensive strategy by then, I can admit, is unrealistic. But at least we can start the debate and get our government direction set, so that the people's needs are heard and what exactly we're going to do about it. We're going to have to lay that out front, and in a public meeting. I believe that's where the demand comes from, from the public, so we have to address it in the public, as well.

So I'm very much in favour of that, Mr. Speaker, of the motion of getting the discussion started in November. The next possible meeting we're calling in January, and I think that's a good time because our next sitting of the House is February, and by then I'm sure Cabinet, and our government, will have a comprehensive plan to deliver to the people of the NWT to say we've heard you, we understand the cost of living in the North, and this is how we're going to deliver your needs.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I stand in favour of this motion and I seek to have it pass through this House with the full

support of all the Regular MLAs and all of us, as MLAs, for our people, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the motion. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that as we approach winter and people are getting their fuel tanks filled and seeing the lights on in their house more often, the furnaces come on, that there isn't any issue more important in their minds than the cost of energy. Mr. Speaker, I agree. We did, as Cabinet, talk about the cost of energy and the need for conservation and the importance of us, as a Legislative Assembly, to pay attention to this issue. Mr. Speaker, I agree that there is no more important cost.

As well, Mr. Speaker, as I travel around the communities - - and I travel to most of them every year at least once a year -- I keep hearing, particularly in the small communities, about the cost of living. It's more than just energy. It is to do with the cost of food, the cost of vegetables, of fruit, of milk, of juice, of living in the communities. That is an issue that is very important to us.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have any quarrel at all with energy as being a main issue, as cost of living being a major issue. I hear that from the communities, and I believe in my first statement in this Legislative Assembly, I referred to the cost of living as being something that we had to deal with. I've long been a proponent of finding cheaper, cleaner energy as well, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the second most important thing that we heard about today, in fact, from Members, is our accountability to the public and our need to be transparent and open with the public. Mr. Speaker, the only problem I have with this motion is the suggestion that we should do more of this kind of business with the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight, even in a public meeting. I have a problem with that because the only public who are going to have an opportunity to hear us review this kind of issue are going to be the people who live in the community where AOC are meeting.

Mr. Speaker, if it's in Yellowknife, then, yes, the energy cost is a big issue in Yellowknife. But I tell you, it's a really big issue in some of the small communities and they're not going to drive into town, into Yellowknife, use up fuel to get here, stay overnight in a hotel, to come and sit in a public meeting. Mr. Speaker, this is not enough. We have to be accountable to the public, we have to be open to the public, and, Mr. Speaker, I don't think this motion goes far enough in dealing with energy or dealing with cost of living and just suggesting we have a public meeting with the Accountability and Oversight committee. Mr. Speaker, we're prepared and we want to have an open, public debate, and I suggest that it should be in Committee of the Whole. It should be where there is television coverage; where people can see what is happening, and hear the arguments, and the points, and the suggestions, that are put forward.

So, Mr. Speaker, I have trouble with this motion in suggesting that AOC is the way that we should start doing more of our business. That's fine for us when we want to look at issues as political leaders, but when it comes to public opportunities to be there and hear what we're doing, then if we want to be fair to everybody across the Territories -- and I want to be fair to everybody across the

Territories -- then I think we should be doing it in Committee of the Whole as a first example.

Mr. Speaker, we certainly don't want to seem hypocritical and be talking about being public and so on, and then suggesting we do more work in committee rooms. I, Mr. Speaker, have trouble with this only in that it is suggesting that we do this in committee. Let's do it here where the public can see and hear what we're doing, Mr. Speaker.

As far as energy and cost of living, I agree. Those are the two biggest issues. But public accountability, openness, transparency of our government, are also big issues and I urge the people who put this motion together to consider changing it so that we deal with this issue in public in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Before I conclude my statement, I would like to ask that we do a recorded vote on this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. To the motion. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak in support of this motion. Mr. Speaker, I realize that as the Member for Nahendeh mentioned earlier that the Cabinet Ministers each made a statement on the energy issue last week, or the first week that the session opened. It was a mini-energy theme day for the Cabinet, but I don't believe that Members on this side, or the public out there, feel that was sufficient. The government focused on conservation, but there have not really been very specific ways in addressing the people's concerns about rising fuel costs and cost of living.

Mr. Speaker, the concern about the cost of living isn't just a community issue. I was handed a fuel bill by two homeowners in Yellowknife showing me that since their last bill, the cost of their fuel is at least \$200 or \$300 more. I mean, this is something that we're going to be dealing with in upcoming months, unless, of course, the world prices somehow drop in a drastic way and that drop translates into any reduction in cost of fuel from where it is now.

Mr. Speaker, I don't understand the concerns about the fact that this work is being carried out by the Accountability and Oversight committee. That is the committee that just undertook pre-budget public hearings, and it was received with open arms in every community we visited. In that exercise, nobody ever suggested that we should go to any more than the nine that were decided. We were only able to go to nine. But we can only do what we can. Perhaps in this hearing process for this bill we will choose communities that are not part of that nine. Mr. Speaker, to suggest that because you're not going everywhere that you're not being accountable, doesn't make sense at all. Mr. Speaker, that is exactly like what Mr. Dent said. If I have to help that day care, I have to help every day care. I was thinking that was like a heart surgeon saying I can't give you heart surgery on this because I'd have to give it to everybody. Well I'm telling you, you don't have to do it that way. I'm telling you if you could go to Yellowknife, you don't even have to do Yellowknife. You could just go to north, south, I mean, we do it constantly. No one would ever suggest that the Minister can't move on a file unless he goes everywhere. I fail to see the logic of the Premier saying we're not being accountable by not going to all of them.

To suggest that this motion is hypocritical in some way because we're going to go to the public and talking about this number one issue, I know there are lots of issues that are being discussed in this House, but outside the energy costs and rising cost of living as the number one issue, and we have not demonstrated in this House, during this session, that we have really done anything to present to the public what the government is about to do.

The timing of this, Mr. Speaker, was a big issue of debate in drafting this motion. There is urgency to this debate. We can't wait until the House sits in February...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MS. LEE: ...to figure out what is going on, Mr. Speaker. We have three months before that. I just fail to see any of the objections from the Premier, and that side of the Chamber, as to the objectives of this motion.

Mr. Speaker, may I just conclude by saying that this is not really asking for a lot. We're not asking the government to spend a whole lot of money. We're not asking them to give a rebate. I don't understand. It's the least we can do to try to address the concerns about the high cost of fuel and the high cost of living. The least that side could do is say good on you, AOC, go out and get it, and when you come back, we'll follow up on every one of the recommendations that you suggest. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. To the motion. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to speak to the intent behind this motion. Mr. Speaker, the cost of living is really high and we're no strangers in the Northwest Territories to knowing this, especially in the small communities. Mr. Speaker, because of a bunch of leaks in the Northwest Territories in terms of the oil and gas and the resource revenue sharing and all the other stuff that goes with it, now at the peak of the oil and gas prices, the Northwest Territories is really paying to live up in the North here. There's a high, high cost every day in the communities. We hear it, and we notice it, and we'll see it, as Ms. Lee has indicated, in the fuel bills we're going to see this winter.

Mr. Speaker, the people in the North are even thinking it might be a colder season, a longer season, and now, because lifestyles are changing, our people are becoming more and more dependent on heat and fuel. Not like the old days. Because of this lifestyle, and because people are fighting very hard to maintain that lifestyle, even that is coming into jeopardy for the trapping, and the hunting, and the use of the traditional foods. That's something that needs to be looked at.

Mr. Speaker, then we look at the poor people. The ones who are on low income and may not be in public housing or on income support.

Mr. Speaker, the people have spoken. We've done the pre-budget consultations. We heard them. I know this motion is about a viable, comprehensive strategy on energy costs, and what we're asking the government to do is on short notice, by November -- next month -- to let the people know what we're doing about a comprehensive

strategy about the high costs of energy. We are asking for this in a public forum.

I do agree with one of the speakers, I think it was the Premier, talking about it only being in Yellowknife. I don't think that's the case. I think it's going to be elsewhere. I think we have our agenda in AOC about how we see this government performing and how we see ourselves doing our jobs. Maybe after some discussion, we can bring it into the public forum. I think what the people want to hear is what type of comprehensive studies or strategies are we doing to help them with the high cost of living in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I think the real issue here is the federal government keeping us in the poor house. We talk about how much money this territory leaves to Ottawa, and how much the federal government keeps and dictates to us. We're just like little kids to them. It's time we, as a government, in terms of an energy strategy, ask the federal government why we are paying so much money. Why is it so high?

I think that's some of the discussion that may happen on this motion here. There are many possibilities. I think it's a good thing. There are a lot of good things to come out. This government has done some good things in terms of energy cost savings. It's not all bad news. There are good things we can talk about, also. But we have to stay together on this.

I'd like to say I'm in support of this motion here. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. To the motion. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, am going to stand up today in support of the motion. As some of my colleagues said before, we did travel to the communities. We did hear them complain about the energy costs and the overall cost of living. As an example, Mr. Speaker, last week, when I was back at home, we were talking about gasoline prices. A five-gallon jerry-can back in Tuktoyaktuk came out to \$33. We are seeing the increase in these prices going up. They are coming.

Mr. Speaker, take a look at Paulatuk. They are concerned that even though the NWT Power Corporation is subsidizing up to 700 kilowatts a month, they use well over that. Never mind the food that they have to buy from the local Co-op there.

I'm going to be very brief, Mr. Speaker. I will support this motion. I think we have to do something to help these people that are in need of assistance. It's going to affect the homeowners. Even myself, Mr. Speaker. I do own my own place in Tuktoyaktuk and I have already seen the costs and prices that I am paying. I think in that regard, Mr. Speaker, being a homeowner, I learned how to cut back on some of the energy costs as part of my duty, but, at the same time, we have other people who just can't afford it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm just standing today to say that I will support this motion. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. To the motion. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, am going to support the motion that's before us today. I would have preferred a joint committee between Regular Members on this side of the House and Cabinet to hash through some of these energy costs and the cost of living issues that are facing everybody in this House. I mean, it's going to be a huge issue. We've been lucky that the weather hasn't turned cold, and we've been lucky that people haven't got their first bill after having filled their oil tanks at home, because it's going to be a real shocker when they have to pay \$1 a litre -- that's in Yellowknife; it's even worse outside of here -- when they have to fill those fuel tanks and they can't afford to buy groceries, Mr. Speaker.

That is the reality we are faced with here, and I know that it's important for us here, as legislators and as Members of this House, to show the public and our constituents that we care about what is going on. We care about the high cost of energy. We care about the cost of living increases. Every time somebody turns around here, Mr. Speaker, the cost of living is going up, the payroll tax, now we have the beverage containers, we have the gasoline, we have home heating fuel, and the list goes on and on. People's disposable income is going down with it, Mr. Speaker. I think it's very important that the government look at ways to put more money into people's pockets. To me, that's the most important thing.

As I've said before in this House, I've been here two years and the government hasn't really come up with any kind of idea, or championed any kind of cause, that would actually give people a break. I'm talking about the everyday people in our communities, the people that are working. I called them the working poor the other day, and that's exactly what they are, Mr. Speaker. They go to work from 9:00 to 5:00, they come home. Once they pay the bills, Mr. Speaker, they have nothing left. They have maybe \$30 or \$40 left a month in disposable income. It's just not right and I think we should try to look at every opportunity to try to put more money into people's pockets so that they can enjoy the lives that they have. You only go around once, Mr. Speaker, and we should afford people the little luxuries in life. I'd like to see what might become of this.

Members on this side of the House have talked numerous times about resource revenue sharing and the fact that we don't have it, and our fiscal situation remains very convoluted, very uneasy. We got an announcement yesterday that we're going to be \$30 million short this year. That's going to impact us. We're going to be running on a deficit. Times are up and down all over the place, Mr. Speaker. We need some surety, and the government has to get that from Ottawa at some point in time. The government before this one and the government before that one, same issues, Mr. Speaker, and we have to try and get some closure on some of these big issues. I think in order for us to go anywhere, that is the bottom line.

The issue of not charging the GST on energy costs and fuel is a serious message that has to be sent to Ottawa. If you look at north of 60 just with the heating costs for people, the average temperature here is much less than it is in southern Canada. It's winter seven to nine months of the year, depending on which riding we represent. It's things like that that make us different. We're not a

province yet and we need to be treated a bit differently. I don't think we get the respect and the dignity that we deserve in Ottawa. I challenge anybody to tell me differently, Mr. Speaker.

I've also talked about a trust fund that could roll out from resource revenue sharing, and we recently got \$40 million, but already we're going to run out and give it out to the communities. Not that that's such a bad thing, but why we wouldn't start putting some of this money away for the future I'm not quite sure. It's things like that that are going to pay dividends down the road for the residents here in the Northwest Territories, and it should be seriously looked at.

Also, tax credits for interest paid on mortgages. Housing prices are up across the country. People are paying exorbitant amounts of money in interest on their mortgage, Mr. Speaker. Why we can't look at giving people a break on that interest portion that they pay on their mortgages? I don't understand why we don't pursue that.

It's issues for all of us. We certainly have to stand together here and make sure that we have a united front when it comes to the cost of living and energy costs. With any luck, energy costs will start to come down a little bit and ease the pain and burden on the households this winter because if they don't, we're all going to be feeling the impact of that because we're going to have constituents that, quite honestly, cannot afford to live here. We're going to lose people to southern Canada where it's not winter seven to nine months of the year and they can afford to live a little bit more. That's my big fear, Mr. Speaker, is that we are going to lose people. It would be a real shame if we do lose people and we haven't done all that we can to try to keep them here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. To the motion. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, am going to support the motion, but I do want to make some comments on it, and I do think it is a bit of a stray from how we normally do business in the fact that we say that Accountability and Oversight is going to hold a public meeting to which we are going to summon the government to present a strategy on the cost of energy. Then, a couple months later, we are going to summon them again to a public meeting of AOC to present their strategy that is going to solve the issues of the high cost of living in the North overall. It's just not the way we normally do business.

This is a consensus government. I was far more amenable to the idea of striking a joint committee between Cabinet and Regular Members and kind of brainstorming together. We didn't want to spend the money by taking it out as a travelling road show and spend \$1 million, because I think that's kind of offensive to people too. So I would have been more amenable; I don't know what kind of optics we're trying to create here. If you want to talk about a public meeting of AOC with all the Cabinet Ministers there, well that's right here. It is right here. That's it. Maybe we should convene a special sitting of the Legislature and tell our constituents in the North that we're all going to write a letter to the Commissioner and ask to

convene a special sitting of the Legislature to deal with the cost of energy and the cost of living in the Northwest Territories.

AN HON. MEMBER: In January.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: In January when it's going to be very, very pressing. I don't know. Because as far as a strategy to me, I've already sat in AOC and looked at the...We probably can't share it publicly, but we've already sat in AOC and read the government strategy on mitigating the costs of living and energy. I've already seen that document. I think most of us have.

Anyway, I don't know. It's different. It is going away from the way we normally do business. Of course, I support the concept, and I am going to support the motion, but I'd just like to say that there are some other ways out there. Perhaps having this discussion and debating this in a way...and I do agree with the Premier on the fact that having a meeting here in Yellowknife, an AOC meeting, having them come to us, we're all the same players, and only having the NGOs and those people who are very well equipped to make the slick presentations to us just here in Yellowknife and nowhere else, it loses that kind of regional territorial flavour of the people who have their real lives and sometimes seemingly small issues, but they're real to them.

After saying all that, I am going to support the motion, but I think that we need to work together. That's what I'll say. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. To the motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be supporting the motion. It's important to show to the public and prove to the public that we're doing something. It's nice that we have great briefings of an amazing amount of information behind closed doors and in those secret meetings, but it's time that we show that we're actually getting out there and doing something with that information and getting feedback from the people who need it.

We know the cost of living makes it a terrible burden to live here in the Northwest Territories, and it needs to be a priority by this government. I'm not sure how we can do it in the sense of we don't have every answer, but trying something is certainly the right way to get those answers. By proving that we're doing something, is the right way. By sitting back and letting this sort of evolve on their own, is not the right way to do it, so I'll be supporting this motion.

Another reason that it compels me to vote in favour of it is because we have to make sure we're doing something for the little guy. The little guy out there tends to just keep paying more and more taxes and getting ignored by the process. If you're a big guy and you come here and say I'll create five jobs if you subsidize me multimillions of dollars for diamond cutting plants or whatnot, we seem to find money for those things. This is something that the little guy will feel that we're going to work on to improve his life.

That's why I ran for politics, is to give people the opportunity to improve their lives and to get out there. That's why we should all be here. But it seems like government continually wants to make sure that they are there for the big guys. To me, this motion clearly says that we give a darn about the working poor. Those people are going to have to heat their houses. People are going to suffer trying to find the extra money to get through this difficult winter. This clearly says, in my mind, you have to support this because if you don't, well, again, maybe the big guy is important to them, not the little guy that elected us. So I cherish that very close to the heart. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. The Chair will allow the mover of the motion, Mr. Braden, some closing remarks. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much, colleagues. This was a very good discussion. I think, for people who are watching, maybe to help illustrate some of the way we do business, not just across the floor here, but amongst ourselves. By no means are we always on the same page. I think, though, that all of us are probably about 80 or 90 percent on the same page here.

I would just like to address a couple of things that have come up. When Mr. Handley suggested that we are somehow excluding, or, perhaps, not making fully available our proceedings to all the people and all of the communities, we can't do everything perfectly with the fullest exposure and the fullest opportunity. In fact, Mr. Speaker, most of the business of this Assembly is done in committee, behind closed doors.

When Mrs. Groenewegen said that this is a change in the way we do business, you know, you are darned right it is. It is time we change the way we do business. We have already done it when we went out on the pre-budget consultations. That was a change in the way we do business. It sure seemed to be well accepted by the people in the communities. This is a change in the way we do business.

If you look at just about every other legislature, in the Parliament of Canada, their standing committees are very open. Ours are not. I want to change the way we do business. This is a common agenda that we can share with everybody -- everybody -- NGOs, people in the communities, all over the place. Let's do something instead of doing nothing because it can't be done so perfectly, or fully, or in the best possible way.

Committee Room A is a pretty good room. There have been television cameras in there before, when the media has expressed enough interest in it. We are serving lots of notice about something. The media will be there. It is their job to communicate things. We hope we are going to be topical, and interesting enough, to attract them there.

We, as MLAs, have a job and a duty to do, to communicate what goes on here to our constituents. The fact that we are not going on another major road show to duplicate what Members heard just a couple of months ago, I don't think there is a deficiency. Should we have a special sitting of the Assembly at \$30,000 a day to run and pay for all the extra things that go on when we have

an Assembly? Is \$30,000 a day responsible? No. We are already meeting in committee. Members are already going to be here for other duties already assigned to us. Let's keep going with this agenda. My expectation is not that we will have some wonderful strategy rolled out to address energy and the cost of living. It is an ongoing agenda, but let's keep working the file. Let's open the doors, and let the people see and hear what we are doing on a more frequent basis, and on one that will help them see how we do our business, and make this place more relevant and more accessible to them.

I welcome the recorded vote that has been called for, and my chance to be seen to be supportive of this kind of change in the way we do business. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. A recorded vote has been requested. All those in support of the motion, please stand.

Recorded Vote

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Braden; Mr. McLeod, Inuvik Twin Lakes; Mr. Hawkins; Mrs. Groenewegen; Mr. Ramsay; Mr. Pokiak; Mr. Villeneuve; Mr. Lafferty; Mr. Menicoche; Ms. Lee; Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Miltenberger; Mr. Krutko; Mr. Roland; Mr. Handley; Mr. Dent; Mr. McLeod, Deh Cho; Mr. Bell.

MR. SPEAKER: The results of the motion: 11 for, none opposed, seven abstentions. The motion is carried.

---Carried

---Applause

Item 16, motions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion I gave notice of earlier today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with the motion he gave notice of earlier today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Mr. Villeneuve, you may deal with the motion you gave notice of earlier today.

Motion 11-15(4): Beverage Container Recovery Program, Carried

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the government has expressed its intention to bring into force a Beverage Container Recovery Program on November 1, 2005;

AND WHEREAS the program will require consumers to pay both a refundable deposit of at least 10 cents and a handling fee of at least five cents on beverage containers;

AND WHEREAS consumers will have to return their containers to a depot in order to have their deposits refunded;

AND WHEREAS the majority of small communities, representing approximately 20 percent of our residents, do not yet have approved depots;

AND WHEREAS the cost of groceries is already extremely high across the NWT, particularly in smaller communities that are not on the highway system;

AND WHEREAS small communities have historically had far lower average personal incomes than Yellowknife and other regional centres, and many residents of these communities are already struggling to make ends meet;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that the government delay implementation of the Beverage Container Recovery Program in every community without an approved depot until such time as a local depot is available.

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I raise and move the motion basically because I know there was some indication given in the House earlier in the week, from the Minister, that there are alternatives and options being looked into as we speak, hopefully, to how we can address the remote communities that are going to be feeling the brunt of this Beverage Container Program.

I think the motion is not to say that the recovery program is not a good thing. I fully support the program itself, but I just don't see the fairness in the program to the more remote communities in the NWT that are without licensed depots.

Basically, it is unfair, Mr. Speaker, from my point of view, because the approximately 14 communities that are going to be paying this extra beverage container cost are communities that already have higher costs for goods and services overall. They basically have a lot of lower income families and have high unemployment rates with respect to a lot of the regional centres in the NWT. So I feel this motion represents our intention to make this government a little more responsive to a lot of these obstacles that the small communities are faced with, one being just the ability to survive, Mr. Speaker. A lot of these communities struggle just making sure that there is enough food on the table, just enough fuel in the tank to keep the furnace going, making sure that they have enough money to pay the power bills. These are just some of the basic essentials that residents in these communities are faced with every day.

Now we want them to pay more for other things, like orange juice and apple juice, to which they already pay more anyway, and now we want to add an extra 10 or 15 cents to the cost, for which a lot of the residents are never going to receive a refund, or are not going to receive a refund in any specific amount of time. It might be months before they can get to a regional depot. It might be a year. A lot of them won't even see a refund, Mr. Speaker.

I am just raising this motion basically because of the issue of fairness. If we are going to be fair, we cannot treat only

76 percent of our population fairly, Mr. Speaker. We have to treat 100 percent of our population fairly. I just think that the beverage container program, right now, without any options or alternatives to these remote centres, is not displaying any intent for fairness on our behalf. I think that if this government comes up with some alternative solutions within the next few days, or the next couple of weeks for retailers, I know there are a lot of options out there that we discussed in AOC, also, that we presented to the Minister. Hopefully, he will take up a lot of those good ideas and put them into a motion before this program rolls out.

With that, Mr. Speaker, just in summary, I just think that, if we are talking about fairness and equitability, let's be fair to the smallest centres in the NWT which are going to bear the bigger brunt of this program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. To the motion. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am going to be supporting the motion that is before us today, for a variety of reasons. I agree with my colleague from Tu Nedhe, that the way the department has the program set up to date, is absolutely unfair to the smaller communities; communities where spending \$11 for a jug of juice is not uncommon. I have seen it myself when I have been to some of the smaller communities. To put the burden back on them to help pay for this program, I think is completely unfair.

I think my predecessor in this House, the former Speaker and now the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, had envisioned this program at least 10 or 12 years ago. The department had been working on this program now for at least five years. Why, one week before the program is supposed to roll out, are we stranded here? Some of the smaller communities have no idea when, or who, is going to be responsible for the program in their communities. I think it is completely unfair. I think before you go forward with a plan like this, you have to know all of the variables. Right now, Mr. Speaker, we don't know what the variables are. We don't know who is going to be delivering the program in the communities that don't have depots. We don't know what it is going to cost. We don't know what the volume of recyclables is going to be in the communities that don't have depots. There are just too many unanswered questions, Mr. Speaker, in my mind, to allow this plan to go forward.

I will be the first one to stand up here and say I support this program. I really do. I know the Minister knows I support it, and other Members in the House know I support the program. I support recycling. It will make sense in some of our communities, Mr. Speaker, but it definitely doesn't make sense to go forward with this without the full comprehensive plan of who is going to do what in each community, and what it is going to cost. That is about all I have to say for this, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. To the motion. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak briefly in support of this motion, Mr. Speaker. This item was a high priority item in the last Assembly. The legislation was passed, but it has been many years in the making to get the regulations in place and this program up and running. I am actually quite excited that we are going to see this program get started on November 1st, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to make it clear that I am in favour of the recycling program, and I know that many of the Yellowknife residents, especially those who go away to school and have any length of time living in the South, the first thing they notice when they move back is the fact that we do not have a recycling program in the North.

Mr. Speaker, I do understand that they are having some problems with this program, not only the length it took to get the regulatory process regulations written up, but I know that some members in my constituency are concerned about the fact that the fees charged will be different for types of bottles or cans. By the time we got to know the details of that, I realized it was too late to change it. I was able to inquire about other processes involved in getting the cleanup, and hygiene issues, and such. I was able to get satisfactory answers out of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The reason I am supporting this motion is the fact that I believe this is a way to get the program up and running on November 1st, but exempting those communities...Twenty percent of the communities are not going to have a depot. I want to make it clear, Mr. Speaker, that I do support the program to go ahead on November 1st in communities where they have these depots, like Yellowknife and many other places. Eighty percent of the population live in the Territories where there will be depot service available, but I have to insist that communities where there are no depots, it is just not fair for the government to be collecting fees if they have nowhere to take the bottles and cans to, and get the money back.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there is a role for the government to play. The government has to step in and spend some money to make sure that there are depots available. I am going to leave it up to the Minister to consider all options available. I understand that there is a possibility of using the ENR office, and where there are no ENR officers in some communities, maybe they could use other government employees to make sure that the program gets off the ground.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to state, before I finish speaking, that I am speaking to this motion and I am hoping that, once this gets going, years down the road, we will look back at this program as being something that was good that we did.

I would really encourage the schools all over the Territories to get involved and set up a program where they could earn some money and do a really good thing of cleaning up our environment. Mr. Speaker, I remember hearing in communities one time that, if it is too...I think, even in Yellowknife where people go out to the bush a lot, when they are going fishing, or hunting, or whatever, we do bring a lot of stuff out there. I am hoping that we will have a program that gives sufficient incentive for people to

pick up those empty bottles and cans from out-of-reach places, and this program will encourage all of us to be more environmentally conscious and environmentally friendly. I think those are the comments that I want to make. For that reason, I am speaking in favour of the motion, and speaking in favour of the program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. To the motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be supporting this motion. Simply put, this motion that we put forward shows a progressive response, because this motion speaks about fairness. How does this government think it is fair that the small communities suffer the burden that they have to carry what they can't go cash in? We have this advertisement saying that there is cash in the trash. There is no cash in their trash. It is just cash in the government's pockets, so it is cashless trash. It is tasteless trash, too. I don't think it is fair.

This motion does not restrict any community that can set up a depot. I would like to see the government, today, stand up, and maybe the good Minister of ENR will stand up and say, after today, I will pass an initiative to make sure that there is at least one government office in every darn community that will accept these containers at least once a month.

I want him to speak to this motion today. Let's hear him today. Let's hear it today that he passes an initiative immediately that this will truly be the way we will deal with this.

But there is no true plan about the 20 percent of those communities. Now we are putting an unreasonable burden on those communities for no reason at all. Nobody is against recycling here. I didn't hear one single person say recycling is bad. I didn't hear one single person say no one wants to participate in recycling. The fact is, if big cities and small towns across Canada can do it, then we can do it, too. But it is unfair, again, to put a burden on someone, in who knows what community, who can't cash in these cans. It is not fair at all. It is about equity, Mr. Speaker. The bottom line is, this does not stop communities like Yellowknife to hold a depot, or whatever regional centre, to have these things. This is a progressive position that talks about fairness. That is all. We are not about putting burdens on people. So instead of moving at the speed of government, as I say, which is pretty slow some days, I think we need to move quickly on this decision that affects the little people, the real people out there who can't truly turn their trash into cash, as the Minister likes to say. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I am certainly speaking in favour of this motion, principally for the reason that my colleagues have already outlined. That is one of fairness. The government says it will achieve enough depots, and enough coverage, that 80 percent of the population of the NWT will have access to the complete service. That is terrific. It is the 20 percent out there who are really disadvantaged that I really feel a strong duty to stand up for.

Mr. Speaker, the program, as we originally worked it in the previous Assembly and in this one, and that the folks in the various departments, was a good one. Now there are issues about not being able to fully implement it on time. I am ready to live with some extensions to that time so that we are able to get it right in those communities that haven't yet been able to set up a depot.

Let's stick with the plan. The Minister has guaranteed us that he is going to make sure that a depot is opened. I believe his words of the other day were something to the effect that "I have just sent a note up telling our folks to get ready. We are now in the recycling business." That is not the kind of alternative that I find acceptable, Mr. Speaker. The people with the ITI staff around the Northwest Territories already have important jobs to do. The original design, to get this kind of task handled by someone in the community, is the right way to go. Let's stick with that one and make it happen, even if it takes yet more time. The question of fairness has got to be addressed to the folks in that community. They must not be charged this fee until they have the opportunity to cash the bottles in, as I have, in Yellowknife, or someone in many of the larger centres, that same opportunity. As Mr. Villeneuve said, it must be available to 100 percent of the people of the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, I think there is going to be a temptation to press for the government to interpret this as an excuse to abandon the whole program, or defer the whole thing, until we can get it 100 percent right. That will not be accepted. I will not take on that kind of responsibility. We have worked very hard. We have invested a lot. Contracts are signed. Communities have expectations, where depots are now in place. Continue the rollout. Stick with the plan. Work with those communities that don't yet have a depot to put something in place, and will be acceptable, and will be sustainable, too, Mr. Speaker. So those are the conditions that I see prevalent here. Let's get going with this step where we are so far behind just about all the rest of Canada in living up to this pretty easy, and pretty straightforward, way of doing something to make a difference in our environment. We can, and should, proceed with what we have in place. Let's just make sure that it's fairly, and equitably, applied. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. To the motion. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am speaking against this motion. I think we cannot wait any longer to get going with this program. I represent a community where the people are geared up and ready to go. I do understand the difficulties of trying to do a partial implementation on this. There are all kinds of reasons why a partial implementation, only in the centres that have depots, is not practical. The Minister has said that he is going to have a mechanism in place in every community for the start of the program, so let's hold his feet to the fire. Let's let it go, and then watch him figure it out. He has made the commitment here in the House, so now we will let him do the dance. But I think that to try to defer this or postpone this... This is about 20 years past due now.

---Applause

To do anything that is going to defer it now...Now listen, the folks in the small communities where this is going to add something to their grocery bill, if it adds to the grocery bill the amount of the deposit on the bottles, if they can't immediately get their money back, then there is still cash in the trash. They just might not get it this instant. Maybe it is slightly deferred. Maybe it is a community organization that decides to, collectively, gather all of their recyclable beverage containers, and it comes back in a lump sum. There are lots of empty barges coming back right down the Mackenzie Valley every year that can bring all the containers back to Hay River for recycling. There is going to be a depot in Hay River. They can come right back down the river. I don't know how they are going to do it, but I cannot support anything that is going to see any deferral of this. It is long past overdue. Let's get on with it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. To the motion. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to this motion, I have stated on the record that I believe it is the right action. It is the wrong time for this government. We are having some resistance from some of the Members here. I believe in the recycling business, Mr. Speaker. It is going to be another six days before this program is going to be implemented officially in the Northwest Territories. In six days from now, we will re-evaluate or reassign officers in our communities who have officers in our communities a new role, garbage collectors.

---Laughter

They are going to be paying out the money to the people. Some of the communities are not equipped to have the recycle facilities to implement this program. It is six days. Do you know how much work we get done in six days here? Imagine the communities. In some of these communities, it is going to create a lot of confusion for the ENR officers and for the communities. In some of these communities English is not a first language. They have to explain this in Slavey, Gwich'in or Tlicho. It is easy for larger centres where the primary language is English. They can understand, and they can do the program. It is easy for them. They don't have to translate into...It is not confusing. They have a high cost of living in those small communities. We know what it is going to cost in the small communities. We know the prices we pay.

I think it is going to be a lot of confusion. Twenty-five percent of the population is left out. Eight communities are going to be approved to have these facilities. Twenty-three communities are not going to have these facilities. With 33 communities in the Northwest Territories, 23 communities are not going to have it, and only eight are going to be approved for this program here. That is a high number. Mr. Speaker, some of these communities are being penalized because we are not on the highway system, or don't have access to highways. It may be true, I am not too sure, but a commitment has been made already to previous communities about having this program. Good for them. Let them go for it. Let them do the program. The motion reads, "...delay implementation of the Beverage Container Recovery Program in every community without an approved depot until such time as a local depot is available." It says "delay." It doesn't mean stop it. Delay it, and get them in place. There are communities already in places like Yellowknife or Hay River or other places, I am not too sure. They are all set

to go. Some of those communities don't even have a facility. They don't even understand this program. They will be penalized for the containers they buy for their children or themselves.

Mr. Speaker, it says "delay." It doesn't say "stop." I support this in the principle of what the Minister is bringing forward.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. YAKELEYA: I do support him. But then he is blanketing everybody on this whole issue here, which is not fair for the people in the small communities. So, Mr. Speaker, until our small communities are ready, and aboriginal people and elders can understand it, because lots of things come in our community and put on pressure. This is another added cost that they have to be burdened with, and then put it properly into place. I would like to see that type of approach by this Minister. I do believe the Minister when he says he will work on certain things like interim measures. There is no doubt. The Minister has made some good things happen in the Northwest Territories under his leadership. I think he will do this, also, in this program. It is really hard for me to think in six days how it is going to get done, or how it is going to roll out, so I am asking for that grace time. I wanted to ask, Mr. Speaker, if I could ask for a recorded vote on this motion, to let the people know how we approach this.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to say I support this. It is not to stop the recycling program in the Northwest Territories. It is maybe more to give voice to the communities that don't have a say in this program that is going to affect their life. It is just to give a voice to them. I will leave it at that. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I, too, will be supporting this motion. The only reason for that being, Mr. Speaker, is that no one in my riding has been calling me up, or sending me any kind of indication that they support the implementation of this container program, but I have been getting inquiries, Mr. Speaker, that the time is not right to implement this. That is why I am fundamentally opposed to getting this beverage container program in place. Failing to stop it outright, Mr. Speaker, I am in favour of delaying and deferring the progress in the communities that don't have it. I know that it is great legislation. It is a good thing, Mr. Speaker. But what is going to happen to everybody within the smaller communities that have more of an impact? The average family will be paying an extra \$10 a week. That is \$520 a year, Mr. Speaker. There is something fundamentally wrong with that when they are not going to have equal opportunity to recover all their costs, Mr. Speaker.

At any rate, I think that the best I would estimate is that any family would recover probably up to 75 percent of the extra costs that they are giving to our government. That is something wrong there, too, Mr. Speaker. We are paying the government. There are other ways of doing it too. We call it taxation, Mr. Speaker. We are actually taxing our residents unfairly, I believe, Mr. Speaker. I also believe that, yes, we are so far behind our southern counterparts in terms of recycling our papers, our plastics, and our glass. It is something that the big centres and their people

deserve, Mr. Speaker. They deserve to have a place to bring all their glass, papers, and plastics, and to get rid of it, and to save. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I was thinking in terms of this legislation, it turns out that Fort Simpson -- I am proud to say -- will be considered a big centre in terms of this legislation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh! A big centre!

MR. MENICOCHÉ: So it is something that can work there. I will be happy to see the day where we are recycling paper, glass, and plastics, in Fort Simpson, where people do have three bins in their household, and are making a conscious effort. Children love it. All families love it. But it is just not going to work in the smaller communities; not today, Mr. Speaker. That is all that this motion asks, is telling government, look, there is something wrong here. Can you reconsider it? Have a good look at it and come up with something better for the smaller communities. There are lots of opportunities to examine it, if we can just take that time, Mr. Speaker, because there are lots of examples in the rural communities in other jurisdictions. In the provinces, they have many small communities like we do, and they do have a good green project. They do have a good recycling program. How does theirs work? I don't know. That is something that the government should have a really good look at. At first glance, Mr. Speaker, it is not going to work for our communities. That is why I support this motion. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the motion. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: I, too, will support the motion as presented today. Mr. Speaker, I agree with the intent of the program, but, again, there are some drawbacks with that. The people in Tuktoyaktuk, right now, do have a small program. It has been going since probably late September. Right now, they are just volunteering. In the Hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk, one person is picking up all the empty bottles, et cetera, and are storing them away. If you take a look at Sachs Harbour, Holman and Paulatuk, at the present time, there is really nothing there that they can go to. I just got a call yesterday from Sachs Harbour, asking, come November 1st, where can I get my refund? That happens. So I really believe that, like my colleague from the Sahtu said, all we are saying is to delay the implementation of the program. Mr. Speaker, I think that is all we are asking. So I will support this motion. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. To the motion. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support the motion, but I represent one of the communities that has someone setting up a system. I want to be assured that, if this motion is passed, it says here, in every community without an approved depot, it can't be done. So it is all or nothing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No way. No.

MR. MCLEOD: For someone that has set up a system in some of the larger communities that is approved, if this is delayed, then they may be out of some pocket money. They need to be reimbursed if we are going to delay this so that every community has an approved depot. So that is where I need my assurance, is that the constituents of Inuvik Twin Lakes who are doing something like this, have... They are getting set up to start on November 1st. I just want what is fair to them. I want what is fair for the smaller communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. To the motion. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, am supporting this motion. Just speaking from the smaller communities' perspective, coming from Wekweeti, and all they're speaking about, the elders or even the young ones, just interpretation will be a substantial cost. Although we say we can use ITI workers, small communities don't have ITI workers. They do, to some degree, but interpretation would cost extra money, as well. Here we are debating back and forth; an example is the Fort Smith day care issue, back and forth about the money. If we go ahead with this, it is going to create more dollars in the interpretation, just specifically on the interpretation process.

I think there is miscommunication happening here with the communities. As Calvin was saying, he got a phone call saying, on November 1st we are going to get a rebate. We are hearing that already. I was surprised, too, when I was getting those calls, because we need to explain to the public that there is advertisement happening and you get less back. But speaking from the smaller community's perspective, I don't think we're ready right now. According to this motion, therefore, the recovery program in every community without approved depots will be delayed. That means there is existing recycling areas that will continue, but without the depot that we're talking about here, the smaller communities that don't have it, and it's not fair to put the burden on them, extra costs, because we have individuals that are traditionalists that go out on the land for two or three months, and they buy \$5,000 worth of canned goods. It's going to be a substantial cost to them, too. I'm just talking about one traditionalist hunter or trapper, but there are a few of them, specifically in my region. So it's going to have an impact on them. We're certainly not ready to take on that task, at this point. That is why I'm standing here before the House. I'm supporting this motion of delay for those without a depot. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. To the motion. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank my colleagues for their concern about fairness and equity, which, as a government, we fully subscribe to, as well. Mr. Speaker, everybody is entitled to a better, clean environment, and I think that's the fundamental premise that we're proceeding on, and that we have a very, very heavy footprint upon Mother Earth already. If we don't start taking the steps to mitigate our impact, the accumulation of that footprint is going to get worse.

We estimate there are 25 million beverage containers every year in land fills, in the ditches, the streets, the bushes, wherever, in every community across the Northwest Territories. We have been somewhat slow with rolling this out over the years. It's been a complex program, and I made, what I consider, to be very serious commitments in this House yesterday about the importance of this program, and that, as a government and a Legislature, very clearly, we indicated this is a significant priority back in the 14th Assembly when this Legislation was passed, and as we've worked over the last couple years with the regulations in getting ready to roll this out.

I am very mindful, and I will be very mindful, of the concerns of all the Members that they've raised on behalf of their constituents and their communities. I've made, as I indicated, very serious commitments in this House that I did not make lightly, and I am very committed, as are all the Members here, to this program. I would also suggest that aboriginal people, for sure, don't need to be told about the value of the environment, and how we have to cherish it, and protect it, and respect the treasures that we take from it every day, and I think all northerners have that appreciation.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just want to acknowledge that I hear the concern. I know what the intent is, and I'm committed to fairness and equity. I have made some very serious commitments in this House that I intend to try to honour. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. To the motion. I'll give the mover of the motion a chance for some closing comments. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank all the Members for their constructive comments with respect to the motion. I just want to reiterate what some of the Members have said, that this motion is not to derail the program, or put up barriers to seeing the program succeed in a lot of the centres, but, basically, it just speaks of fairness, and that's all this motion is dealing with. It is just to make sure that there's fairness in the smaller centres. For the 20 percent of the population that aren't going to be able to recover any refund from the beverage containers that they use, and just from what the Minister was telling us -- 25 million containers every year -- that's 20 percent of those that are not going to see any refund. We're talking five million containers that are going to be cash in the trash for all of these small communities. That's about \$50,000 and more, that these smaller communities will be throwing away every year if we don't have an option for them to get the refund that they deserve.

I know that there are a lot of practical approaches that the government could look at to accommodate the communities that don't have depots. They're talking about giving them to the ITI officers; maybe we could just get people to drop them off at the LHOs. You know, pay your rent with your trash. There are all kinds of options that the government could look at accommodating in the smaller centres. This motion is just allowing, maybe, these smaller centres a little leeway, to give them an extension, maybe January 1, to get the other 12 communities on board with setting up local depots. I don't think it's a big thing. I think with a little enthusiasm, and a little bit of pushing from their local MLAs after this session breaks, maybe these communities, in the next month, or two

months, come January 1, 2006, every community will have a depot. I just think these smaller centres should be put on hold until the Regular Members, and the MLAs, can go back to their respective centres and actually start promoting this cash for trash. I think with that, then we can come back to the House in March and all be happy, and say hey, every community in the NWT has a depot or some form of making sure that people get the refunds that they are entitled to, and are not having their refunds all go to the landfill sites.

With that, again, I surely hope that the government can come back with some constructive alternatives for these communities to address this issue. I encourage all the MLAs to go back to their respective centres, and the communities that they represent, and encourage the local organizations, schools, NGOs, and entrepreneurs, to take this program very seriously, and incorporate it fully into their community infrastructure and plans.

With that, I thank everybody again, Mr. Speaker, and I hope we can see some fruition to this whole program in the next few months. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. A recorded vote has been requested. All those in favour of the motion, please stand.

Recorded Vote

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Lafferty; Mr. Menicoche; Ms. Lee; Mr. Yakeleya; Mr. Braden; Mr. McLeod, Inuvik Twin Lakes; Mr. Hawkins; Mr. Ramsay; Mr. Pokiak.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed to the motion, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Miltenberger; Mr. Krutko; Mr. Roland; Mr. Handley; Mr. Dent; Mr. McLeod, Deh Cho; Mr. Bell; Mrs. Groenewegen.

MR. SPEAKER: Results of the vote all those in favour, 10; opposed, zero; abstaining, eight. The motion is carried.

---Carried

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 5 on the agenda, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Return to item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

REVERT TO ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to recognize Mr. and Mrs.

Tonka, constituents from Fort Simpson, here to watch our deliberations this late in the day. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Minister's Statement 24-15(4), Sessional Statement; Committee Report 4-15(4), Report on the Review of the NWT Information and Privacy Commissioner's 2003-2004 Annual Report; and Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2005-2006, with Mr. Ramsay in the chair. By the authority given the Speaker by Motion 9-15(4), Committee of the Whole may sit beyond the hour of adjournment until it is prepared to report.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): I will call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, committee would like to consider Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2005-2006.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. After a short break, we will come back and consider Bill 11.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Good evening, committee members. We are going to continue on with Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2005-2006. Mr. Minister, would you like to bring in any witnesses?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Sergeant-at-Arms, can you escort in the witnesses?

For the record, Mr. Minister, can you introduce your witness? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, with me this evening is the secretary to FMB, Mr. Lew Voytilla.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Further to the fiscal regime, and the impact that this supp will have on some of our numbers and the performance through the year, Mr. Chairman, a bit earlier in this session, in fact, just yesterday, the Minister advised us that in relation to the uncertainty we face overall in our revenue situation, it's magnified, and I am reading from the statement he made yesterday, Mr. Chairman. "Our uncertainty surrounding our formula financing agreements with Canada for the next financial year and beyond..." There is an uncertainty there, and it's magnified by the difficulties we are having. Mr. Chairman, the Minister went on to say

that until we hear the recommendations of the federal Expert Panel on Equalization and Territorial Formula Financing, and how the federal government intends to act on these recommendations, our fiscal outlook is difficult to predict. Mr. Chairman, I hope you will permit me this question in relation to this supp and our overall fiscal situation. Could the Minister advise on the work of this territorial formula financing panel, especially the expert panel, that's looking at northern conditions? I believe we are anticipating a report from that panel late this year. Can we still expect that kind of timing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The situation we see ourselves in when we look at the supplementary appropriation, and the total amount that it is requesting authority for, and looking at our fiscal forecast in light of the information that I gave the other day, we have the reserve built to meet this, and a lot of the money is flow-through. Following further to the question about our ability to predict where we will be fiscally is a difficult one, indeed. The federal government established the Expert Panel on Equalization and Territorial Formula Financing. They are to report back to the federal government by the end of December 2005. I am aware that the expert panel has contacted federal Finance to seek an extension for that to springtime, so the spring of 2006.

On that, there are a number of jurisdictions waiting to hear what the federal government would be saying. For myself, I am looking to set up a meeting with Minister Goodale, to try to firm up our situation around formula financing and where we find ourselves today with the information we have. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess this even more compounds the difficulty that we face: a \$30 million shortfall in anticipated revenues. Today, we hear that this panel, on which so much of our immediate and long-term future has been hinged, is now going to be another three or four months late in reporting. The Minister is absolutely correct, as he said yesterday in his statement, our difficult outcome is difficult to predict.

Mr. Chairman, if we aren't going to hear from this panel until next spring, that is going to be after our budget planning process. So we will go into another year of uncertainty, where we are probably looking at a federal election next spring, which means the federal government will not be in a position to take this panel and this information in until...It seems that we are probably looking at a year from now until we potentially get any feedback on the work of this expert panel. What are we going to do in the meantime with such a precarious fiscal situation already? The panel that was going to have the answers, or at least have a map for us, we are not going to hear from for another year. Is there anything the Minister can bring to the table that says, "Here is how we can operate"? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as I stated earlier, the expert panel has made a request. I am not aware if that has been agreed to by the federal government. As the Member stated, we are definitely in a situation where predicting our future fiscal position is getting more difficult as we continue down the path of fiscal reform in our relationship with Ottawa.

The situation we are in means we are going to have to proceed in a very cautious manner. In fact, the supplementary reserve we have in place, up until February, with the passage of this one, would be fairly small. We have \$11 million identified left in the reserve, and looking at our fiscal position today, we need to try to minimize that amount to make sure we don't lose the full reserve, along with looking at a number of other options. Going forward, we will have to use our revised numbers, look again at our business plans and how we can make some adjustments to ensure we live within the means of our own policies and the fiscal environment we find ourselves in today. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: I guess, if this is a request from the expert panel, I don't think we can wait. Can we, Mr. Minister? That's the question I have. Should we be going back to Revenue Canada and saying, "No, no more delays. We cannot tolerate it. We can't continue to put things together this way. We just can't put up with another delay." So should we take that message to the federal people right away? Is that an option for us, Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as I stated earlier, one of the things, in light of the news we have, I've put a call into Minister Goodale's office to try and establish a meeting to go over a number of the issues, formula financing being one of them. The expert panel, and the work that it has been mandated to do by the federal government, is one that's across the country. So although we are in a difficult situation, that work will continue to go on, as the federal government has stated. I think we'll have to seek relief from the federal government in looking for a number of other options, and I think that's what we'll need to try to look at.

Meanwhile, we'll have to look at our numbers that we have now that are firmed up around our revised corporate tax figures, our expenditures that we had planned to make for the remainder of this fiscal year, and look at addressing our fiscal responsibility policy through our own initiatives at this point. Again, as we proceed down the path, and as we prepare for the main estimate process in the new year, we're going to have to look at that plan, because that plan was developed in a different fiscal environment that we were predicting than what has actually come out now. So we're going to have to look at that and make some adjustments. Unfortunately, for us in the Territories, it's not going to get any easier. Our work is that much more important with federal Finance in trying to seek some positive outcomes for us, and the work that we've talked about ongoing since we've taken office, and previous governments, and that's around royalty revenue sharing. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I enjoyed going through the supp, and the meetings that we've had over the last few days. I expressed my frustration to the Finance Minister at the time, that there were, and are, quite a few items in this supp that, quite frankly, I don't understand, and obviously I won't be supporting them. I will encourage other Members of this House to finally say no to some of these things.

The issue that I'd like to bring up first is that of the transfer of \$30 million from the Housing Corporation over to ECE, and the fact that now ECE is looking at hiring 11 positions. Now in the supp, Mr. Chairman, that only amounts to about \$460,000. I think there's \$183,000 in one-time costs, and about \$266,000 or \$277,000 in the costs to get us through this year. What's not in the supp, Mr. Chairman, is the fact that, on an ongoing basis, this creation of 11 new positions to look after the social policy side of things within ECE is going to cost this government \$1.2 million. To me, that's just not on, and I'm not going to mince words, or sugar coat anything. I think it stinks, and I think the government did not do its homework when looking at this transfer of funds from the Housing Corporation over to ECE. There should have been some positions that were earmarked to go along with the \$30 million, and, Mr. Chairman, there weren't. I think the onus now has to be put back on the government to go and revisit this, and come up with the positions within the Housing Corporation, or from within existing resources, to fund it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Just by some of the comments you're making right now, I think you are getting into some details. Can we have general comments to the Minister's opening address, at the moment? Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll try to keep my comments to the supp, generally speaking, and I won't be that specific, but I still think, overall, I'm not too impressed with what's before us. I can understand, and I can appreciate, a lot of it is federal money that's flowing through, and that's an obvious thing. A lot of it also has to do with the agreement that we signed with the UNW and the NWT Teachers' Association, and that makes up another substantial portion of it. The reality of it is, Mr. Chairman, that I think this government has a really, really tough time in saying no. To be honest with you, I don't know if my colleagues across the floor can spell no, from time to time, because every time we turn around, they're coming back for more money. Some of it can be substantiated, but, Mr. Chairman, a lot of it can't be. There are a number of things, as I mentioned, that are included in the supp that I'm going to try to get the rest of the Members on this side of the House to put their foot down, and to make a stand, and to tell the government that we're not going to put up with it. I don't know how else to put it, Mr. Chairman, but I look forward to going page by page, because there are quite a few things in here that I'm not going to support. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Minister, would you like to comment?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the supplementary appropriation document before us includes quite a number of initiatives. The

Member has spoken to a few of them. A large portion of this is flow-through money. For example, the community capacity building fund, that's flowing through the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, as well as a transfer of assets to the new Tlicho Government, and from those communities, and, as the Member mentioned, the contracts that we've negotiated with the unions are another significant portion of this. As well, when you look at this, there are a few areas that one may call, or describe, as being preparatory work. When we look at environmental work that needs to be done, or assessment work that needs to be done around the pipeline initiative, those are things we feel as though we're waiting for the announcement; we're also sensitive to the fact that we've been told that we're not quick enough off the mark to address the issues of community governments and the community groups when it comes to dealing with the impacts of the pipeline. So even though we're waiting for the announcement, we must, as a government, be prepared to do some of the work, as that work is ongoing at this time when you look at the statements that have been filed. Of course, everybody is waiting for the formal hearings to start proceeding, and when they do, we'll need to be ready. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just look forward to having the opportunity. I'd like to thank the Minister for that, and I look forward to the opportunity to go through this page by page, issue by issue, and expenditure by expenditure. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. General comments on Bill 11. Does committee agree to go into detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Okay, we're going to go into detail. We'll stand down consideration of the bill. We'll deal with the detail, starting on page 5 of the detail booklet. Department subject, Legislative Assembly, operations expenditures, not previously authorized, \$143,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Legislative Assembly, operations expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$155,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 6, department, Executive, operations expenditures, executive offices, and turn over to page 7, committee, total executive offices, \$1.530 million. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the things, having gone through the supp in some detail with the Minister previously -- and I had mentioned this before and I'll mention it again -- it's kind of misleading when you see a supp come before you midway through the year, like this one is, and you state numbers here. For instance, \$38,000 for the Commissioner's office, when the reality of the matter is, that expenditure is going to turn, next year, into \$117,000 per year; and the same holds true for other positions that are being added in the supp. I

don't really think it's a fair way to let us know what's really happening, because you have to go in and see that it's only until March 31st, and then after March 31st, you're hit with the big numbers, and these numbers are just partial numbers only until March 31st. So it doesn't paint the full picture for Members, and I think when the government does go out and develop a supp, they should also have an accompanying document with it that will tell us what the real costs are going to be going forward because, right now, it's just guesswork, and you have to put your math skills to use to try to figure out what it's going to cost. I think that's a shortcoming of the supp process. I'd like to ask the Minister if, in the future, he might be able to do that for us.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the supplementary appropriation document, as it is laid out before you, is following the rules, the processes established, and accounting for this year's fiscal requirements that we are asking for. Because we're asking for the money for this year, that is why this document is presented that way.

The Member is correct; by approving a number of these, it also puts a requirement for future years, or it gets added to the base, as we call it, and then that adds to the budget document for the next year as we go through it. Looking at how we can structure the report, and making changes that would identify what would be added to the base, and what is just the one-time amount, is something we can do. I think in the meetings we've had prior to this, we identify, through discussions, what can be added, or what will be added to future years. But, yes, we can have a look at making this clearer, so that Members are aware which of these would be added to future year requirements. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that would be helpful to Members, if there was something. It doesn't have to be an official document, but something that accompanies the supp, so that we can see exactly what it's going to cost into the future, and in a full fiscal year; because, right now, as I said, we only get part of the picture, and we don't get the whole story. The whole story, Mr. Chairman, is that this supp is going to cost us about \$2.2 or \$2.3 million on an ongoing basis, period. I just wanted to make that known. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Minister, do you have any comments? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, one of the other things, as is highlighted in this document, when you come to the capital portion of the document and we highlight our number, we highlight the requirement, or the ask, for this year that we're in, but we also identify the next year's requirements for however long the project will go. So we can take this same way of reporting this and include it in the rest of the document for the O and M side, as well.

As well, Mr. Chairman, the fact is, as we go forward and prepare another business plan and main estimates for this Assembly, if every item activity and the requests of

departments are looked at by this House, and requires the approval of this House. So, yes, there are things that can be added to that, but if we go into a cycle where we've got to tighten our spending practices, then a number of these initiatives may also be removed. But, as I stated earlier, we'll make some adjustments to the document so it's clearly identified when we are seeking money if it's one-time or requires future expenditures. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: That's good, Mr. Chairman, thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Page 6, Executive, operations expenditures, executive offices. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To page 6, executive offices, an area that I wanted to probe a little bit was the \$200,000 requested for contribution funding to the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council to partially offset the costs associated with the Tlicho 13th annual gathering held in Behchoko in August of this year. Mr. Chairman, I attended that event for a day and a night and enjoyed myself. It was a terrific launch for this historic event for the Tlicho people. To the \$200,000 now requested to partially offset the costs, I'm wondering if the Minister could advise what were the overall costs associated with this event, and are there any particular parts of it that have been referenced for us to contribute the \$200,000? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Member is right; this is for the request that was made to help offset the contributions for their ceremonies as the Tlicho Government coming into existence, or into law, where they can now start their journey as a self-governing nation. The request was made of us for the \$200,000, as identified. We've been informed, from their council, that they were targeting approximately \$900,000 for expenditures for their celebrations. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess at issue is not the amount that the Tlicho chose to spend -- that is not our jurisdiction -- but \$200,000 as a contribution to this. Mr. Chairman, I guess there are two things that I would like to investigate here. I would certainly want to put them in the context not at all being critical of government assisting with a contribution to an event, especially an event of this nature, but the amount of money is significant: \$200,000. I would put it against, Mr. Speaker, information that I have that suggests that in the last couple of years, in each year we have, this territorial government, through its Arts Council, in support to northern performers invested about \$70,000 a year to festivals and events across the territory. I think this went out to 10 or 12 communities. So we have a case where our government invests about \$70,000 in festivals and events across the territory, and here's one event for \$200,000. Is this appropriate? Is there any precedent for it? Where does the Executive feel that it is on good

grounds coming to the Legislature to ask for this? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I should add a little more information to this. The amount of funding that was provided was to help partially offset some of the celebrations, but, as well, to initiate their first gathering as a self-government, and help them defray some of those costs of their initial meetings. As well, this is the first self-government agreement in the Northwest Territories that has been finalized, and it is in the process of being implemented now. That is some of the consideration when we talked about working with other groups in the Northwest Territories and governments, in this situation, and the relationship we have with them. So I think the comparison is somewhat different from the one of the Arts Council, which does its work and promotes arts and crafts across the Northwest Territories. This is a one-time event of supporting them in their initial kick-off of the self-government journey that they are undertaking now, and it was in that light that this amount was agreed to be put into this document. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: So then, there's no further detail as to the particular expense or costs, or part of this that we're contributing to?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we did have discussions with the group to get some breakdown of it. We do have some of that information. I don't have it with me here tonight, but I can provide that to Members. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Chairman, is it even appropriate, or is it even within our rules to come to the Assembly for this request? I guess it's because it's after the fact. I know from my involvement with other events, or other projects, you can't come to government after you've already staged the event and spent the money, and then ask for some help. You come in before, with a detailed plan on what it is you're going to be doing, and where government can help and get involved. Here we are, as I say, the request is coming to the Legislative Assembly now three months, almost four months afterwards. Is this according to the rule book, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this is not a new practice. This happens almost every time a supplementary document is prepared. If the House does not believe this is an appropriate expenditure, they would vote it down and the department would have to eat that amount.

As well, Mr. Chairman, I did find, in my documents, a breakdown of the \$200,000 that we provided. Seventy-five thousand dollars was used for travel by air to the Tlicho communities. The travel of the legal team was about \$15,000; accommodation was \$10,000; kitchen services was \$70,000; security and operational fees, setup of equipment, et cetera, was \$30,000. We were asked for \$374,000, but we felt we could only provide \$200,000. Again, ultimately, if the House does not believe this was an appropriate expenditure, then the Department of the Executive would have to eat the costs from within. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the additional information. The Minister is right; a supplementary appropriation is almost entirely for situations, or events, or expenses, that we accrue after the fact, but this is a contribution to an outside organization. This is not a government activity like catching up on retroactive pay for a collective agreement, for instance, or paying for forest fires that we have no way of predicting. I guess that is where I would still query whether this is an appropriate expenditure to bring to the Assembly, given that it is a contribution to an outside organization, and it has that element of prior commitment to it, which I know, for any other organization that might otherwise come to government for assistance prior commitment, is an almost automatic rejection. So on that basis, again, I would query, is this in line with normal convention, and practice, for a contribution to an outside organization, even one as honoured and esteemed by this assembly of the Tlicho? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, yes, this is appropriate to bring forward to this Assembly as an expenditure. We have, in the past, provided money to a number of aboriginal organizations: the Aboriginal Summit, and so on, for funding. So we've provided funding to aboriginal groups on a number of different initiatives. This is no different from that. Yes, when the department doesn't have the adequate resources within its budget amount, we would come forward requesting that from the House. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Page 6, Executive, operations expenditures, executive offices, total executive offices, page 7, not previously authorized, \$1.530 million. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is where I'm going to start to question the government on the growth of the public service. As I've mentioned many times before, every time we seem to turn around, there's a new position cropping up somewhere. Again, this \$136,000 does not represent the full cost of a new senior advisor position based in the Department of Executive on an ongoing basis. Mr. Chairman, I think it's important to note that even though year after year, supp after supp, I seem to be saying the same thing, nobody seems to be paying attention, and that is the fact that our public service is continuing to grow.

We just signed a new agreement with the UNW, and that agreement, in and of itself, will cost the Government of the

Northwest Territories \$60 million over three years. How are we going to pay for that? Well, we're going to have to try to find ways to pay for it, and then it's compounded. The three percent increase is compounded every year, Mr. Chairman. We've got 4,400 employees. It makes up about 40 percent of our annual budget, and nobody seems to be paying attention to this, Mr. Chairman. Every time we turn around, there are new positions, everywhere we look.

Again, I think the government has a tough time saying no to anybody, no to their managers, no to their directors, no to their DMs, and try to get some work done with the existing resources that we have. Every new initiative, we rush out and we try to hire more people, and, to be honest with you, Mr. Chairman, I don't know how sustainable the growth in the public service is over the long run. Ten years from now, it might just cripple this government. It's that serious, Mr. Chairman, and I don't think the government pays much attention to that at all.

This supp is littered with positions, again. We've said it time and again, why, why are we growing in this area? I don't even agree with this, because the \$500 million socio-economic fund is for communities along the pipeline route. What about the other communities that aren't along the pipeline route, Mr. Chairman? They're not getting any of this \$500 million. Is Yellowknife getting any? Is Hay River getting any? No, they're not getting any. So why are we looking at funding this position? I'd really like to know that. That's just an aside from the fact that I don't think we should be hiring somebody else. Don't we have somebody already that could be doing this work? I don't know how many senior advisor positions we have government-wide, but it seems to me there's a couple that are in every budget, and we just keep growing and growing, Mr. Chairman. I'd like the Minister to explain why we need this position. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Member is being consistent since he has become a Member in this Assembly and raised the issues around the size of the bureaucracy and the hiring practices. I must give him that much. The fact is, when I first came in and started reviewing the request from departments for additional funding to help them become more involved and proactive in the pipeline work that was starting to happen, I told departments to go back to the drawing board and work together to come up with one position instead of everybody trying to deal with their initiatives on their own. So they try to be more coordinated within the government. We are starting to see that come through here.

The \$500 million is federal funding, but it does still impact a large number of the communities that are directly impacted by this pipeline development. We still have a responsibility to do our part and to ensure that the initiatives that are happening out there or the potential impacts are recognized, and then we are a party at the table with discussions around how that \$500 million will be implemented. I think it is, again, our responsibility to ensure that we are giving the best information possible when we are at those tables about where we think some of that funding should be spent. Recognizing we don't have the ultimate say in this, this is, again, a fund developed by the federal government and will be

implemented through a working group. An agreement has been worked out between all the groups. Ultimately, this is one of those ones that is tied to the go-ahead of a pipeline. If there is no process or no commitment to proceed with that pipeline, we would have to look at this position, then, and decide if, in fact, it was necessary to proceed depending on if it was a further delay or if the announcement was that they were not ready to proceed. This would be tied to an announcement of the pipeline proceeding. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I will tell you what the government has a responsibility to do. That is to go out and get a resource revenue deal for all the citizens of the Northwest Territories and devolution for all the citizens of the Northwest Territories and not to accept these piecemeal things from the federal government. This \$500 million, I have said it before and I will say it again, is a smokescreen from the federal government to cloud the issue of resource revenue sharing. They don't want to deal with the Northwest Territories on resource revenue sharing, and this is the proof. Mr. Chairman, it doesn't cover off all the communities in the Northwest Territories. It is 21 or 22 of the communities. The other communities aren't covered off by this.

The responsibility of the territorial government is to look after everybody and to go out and get that deal. Mr. Chairman, we haven't had any proof that that is getting any closer to being accomplished.

I also wanted to question the Minister, while I have the floor here. The position of a senior advisor would probably run in the neighbourhood of \$95,000 to \$100,000 a year. In this, the compensation and benefits are pegged at \$48,000, the breakdown that I have. Underneath the breakdown of the funds that are required, the \$136,000, there is \$75,000, Mr. Chairman, that is for contract services. Basically, what I see happening, Mr. Chairman, is the government going out and hiring a senior advisor to be a contract administrator to go out and hire somebody to do the actual work. That is what I see. I haven't been proven otherwise. I would like the Minister to explain why we would attach \$75,000 to this position just to hire another bureaucrat and get them to go out and hire somebody else to do the real work. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there are other examples in government of funding designated for specific areas to try and help those regions cope with the impacts or development training initiatives and so on. There are examples across government of that, not to the size of this one, but the fact is, again, federal funding tied over 10 years; and the potential is, whether the Member feels it is a smoke screen or not, that it will offset impacts to the northern communities. By doing that, it would further offset what we would have to deal with if this money wasn't there and this development were to proceed.

For the contracting out portion, the Member is correct; \$75,000 is for contract services. I don't have the detail of

that with me as to what they are planning and what types of contracts they are planning to enter into, but even when you look at the \$75,000 for a fiscal year, that might get you one person to do a number of reports. That is something else we would have to get clarity from the department on for further information. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am just wondering if the Minister could let us know exactly what the detail is on the contract services because I would really like to know. I am surprised that they don't have that information now considering that the pipeline is so important and this senior advisor position is so important and they don't have this type of information. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as we prepare these documents and request the departments who make their submissions to us, we do ask for the background detail. Based on the estimates they provide and the discussions that are ongoing and the importance of the initiative, we have included this one in here. I will request that information and get a further breakdown and provide that to the Member. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: It is okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Going back to page 6, Executive, operations expenditures, executive offices, total executive offices, not previously authorized, \$1.530 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 8, Executive offices, operations expenditures, Financial Management Board. Page 9, total Financial Management Board Secretariat, not previously authorized, \$1.046 million. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like us to go back to page 7. I have a committee motion I would like to move.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Back to page 6, did you say?

Committee Motion 3-15(4): To Delete \$136,000 From Department Of The Executive, Executive Offices Activity In Bill 11, Defeated

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Page 7. Mr. Chairman, I move that \$136,000 for a senior advisor position be deleted from the Department of Executive activity, not previously authorized in the Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2005-2006. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. There is a motion on the floor, but the Clerk will provide copies of the

motion. We will take a short break. Thank you. The bells will be rung when we are ready to resume. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): The motion is in order and has been distributed. To the motion. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Chairman, I am half on side with this motion. Here is where this is sort of normal around here. It is never black and white. We are always dealing in sort of middle shades of pink. I am very much a proponent of the GNWT having the capacity and the resources to deal with impacts of development. The administration of this \$500 million tenure fund is a big piece of work. I am not going to challenge the department on the need for this person. But what I am not prepared to do, and here is why I am going along with Mr. Ramsay, is just to say, okay, here is your approval. Go ahead. In such an uncertain volatile decision-making climate for the pipeline itself, we don't know if this project is real. Imperial Oil is saying it isn't economic. The federal government isn't giving any signals about whether or not they are really interested in it. We still have significant hurdles to climb before this project is a given.

Mr. Chairman, in the rest of the supplementary, by my count, among four other departments, there is \$1.16 million in other directly related pipeline activities that the government is asking for approval to spend money on. I don't want to get in the way of any of it except for the fact that we don't have a real project yet. Especially given that there is considerable focus on the regulatory decisions, the regulatory process really getting underway, and the no go on that seems to be in November, just two to three weeks from now.

Committee Motion 4-15(4): Amend Committee Motion 3-15(4), Withdrawn

Mr. Chairman, what I wanted to do is propose an amendment to this motion, if Mr. Ramsay is supportive, to say that the approval for this funding be deferred only until such time as we know that the Mackenzie Valley gas project is a real project. I am prepared to give the approval, conditional on a signal that this project is moving ahead. It is going to be in the regulatory framework either starts or doesn't, is in the middle of next month.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Mr. Braden is proposing to make an amendment to the motion. If so, can we have it in writing? Thank you.

MR. BRADEN: Okay.

---SHORT RECESS

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

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On conference with the Clerk, I found out my amendment would not be appropriate, so I withdraw my proposal for an amendment and suggest we proceed with Mr. Ramsay's motion.

---Withdrawn

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I won't prolong this much more than it has to be prolonged. I just want to say to my colleagues and to the government, it is important to take some steps to say no and to put our foot down. The government hasn't got this \$500 million yet to my knowledge. Again, it is only \$50 million over 10 years, so the \$500 million makes it sound a lot better than it is. This announcement is not supposed to come forward until the middle of November, so I would be more inclined to support something like this after the announcement is made and things are moving forward and we have the money in the bank, Mr. Chairman, instead of going forward with it like it is. I say we put our foot down with this one. This is just a start, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. To the motion. Next I have Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be voting in favour of the motion as it is being proposed. I have serious concerns. Are we really even going to get a pipeline? Every word I hear on the street says it is not coming. So I am not comfortable with anything that moves forward to continue to support a pipeline position, so I will be voting with the motion to delete it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. Next I have Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this position is needed in our regions because we are going to be affected by the pipeline. I just don't like the position being in Yellowknife. I would like to have some regional positions in our region. Mr. Chairman, unless there is something that we don't know regarding the proposed pipeline and the socio-economic agreements that may be coming down the tube, is there some uncertainty on this? Is there somewhere that we know for sure that this is going to happen? Is it not possible to have special warrants for a position like this being requested?

To delete this position within the government, it is in Yellowknife right now so it is a senior advisor position. I think they have enough staff in their department to use someone in this position. Even though it is along the Mackenzie Valley, I do support the work going in our region. I am going to vote in favour of this motion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. To the motion. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I have just a couple of points. First of all, we worked hard for a lot of months in order to get the \$500 million for the North. It is true that the money is only for those communities along the Mackenzie Valley because those are the communities that are impacted. In the same way, the diamond socio-economic agreements were basically for the communities and the people in the impacted area. You didn't see a lot of money going into other communities. There will, no doubt, be some spin-off though from this into all the Territories because this \$500 million is meant for socio-economic impact. That is everything from treatment centres to education programs to enhanced infrastructure and so on. That all saves us money because it means that we are not going to be taking it out of our little capital budget and have to spend it there, so all of us benefit from this money.

Although the pipeline is an uncertainty, it certainly does seem to be going in the right direction. I don't know which street Mr. Hawkins is listening to people on, but the signals I get are the other way. In the last couple of weeks, there has been some good progress made, and that seems to be continuing.

Mr. Chairman, we would look really foolish, in my view, to first argue for \$500 million and then, for the sake of \$136,000 have no input at all into how that money is going to be allocated. We are involved right now with Ottawa and with the regional aboriginal organizations on the coordination of how that money is going to flow into the regions. When this money begins to flow -- and I'm not sure exactly when the first payment will be made -- when that happens, then we have a seat at the regional tables to be able to have input into how that money is going to be allocated. We could have no capacity and just sit back here and let somebody else decide on the \$500 million. I don't think that is good governance, good economics, good management of money or anything else. We can always say we can do this from within, but it gets tougher and tougher with the amount of things we have on the agenda in the Executive right now to just keep swallowing up more and more responsibilities. I am not convinced that, without additional resources, we are going to be able to manage this well. It is a lot of money to manage.

Mr. Chairman, let me also say that if, for some reason, Imperial were to announce next month that they just were not going to go ahead with the pipeline, they are going to put it on the shelf, we would not be proceeding with this at all, then \$500 million wouldn't flow and we would definitely not be looking to go forward with any more of this money. It would stop when that happens. So we are not going to be giving these positions for something that doesn't exist. But as long as that \$500 million is going out, I think, as a government, we should be in there helping to manage it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Handley. To the motion. I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have given it some thought. I can't support this motion at all only because that is something that my chiefs have all been telling me. We need help. We need planning of how to spend this socio-economic funding. If this is one of the ways to address that, then I am going to have to support that because they keep coming to us and we are telling them we have millions of dollars. We don't know how to get at it, spend it, or break it up. If there is any way we can use any of our resources, and add new resources too, to help them address those concerns, I am in favour of that.

The Premier just spoke about the need for that position. If the \$500 million doesn't occur, there would be no more need for that. I believe that will be on public record. His commitment is there. We are not going to get strapped with a job that has no value to the next two years especially for our term or in terms of the government for future years. Sometimes that happens. It sounds like there is a commitment here that we are not going to get strapped for a job for nothing.

With regard to me, Mr. Chairman, I would not be supporting at all. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Question has been called. Sorry, I didn't see your hand there, Mr. Villeneuve. All those in favour of the motion? All those opposed? The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

Executive offices, not previously authorized, \$1.530 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Executive offices continued, Financial Management Board, page 8, total Financial Management Board Secretariat, not previously authorized, \$1.046 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 10, Executive continued, operations expenditures, Aboriginal Affairs, total Aboriginal Affairs, not previously authorized, \$213,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Executive continued, operations expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$2.789 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 11, Department of Finance, operations expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$228,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 12, Municipal and Community Affairs, operations expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, continued on page 13, \$28.480 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 14, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I seek consent to go back to page 13.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'm going to take issue with the \$108,000 that's being proposed for additional costs incurred for the communication and administration of the community capacity building initiative, for a number of reasons. I think I heard the Minister say that the \$108,000 was actually going to come out of interest that was going to be built up by the money that was sitting in the bank somewhere and that's how they were proposing to pay for it. I think communities need to determine their priorities for themselves, and I don't know how having somebody there and paying them this kind of money is going to help this along. I think if the government wants to do something like this, we have adequate resources in place within MACA to carry this type of work out. I don't understand for a second

why we'd want to rush out and hire somebody again in a full-time position for 2005-2006. If you look at it from outside, why can't regional superintendents or folks in the regions carry out some of this work? Why do we have to look at spending \$108,000 for the remainder of this year on a position like this when staff at the regional level can carry the work out? I'd like the Minister to explain to me why it is that we need to incur this type of expenditure when we have staff in place already. Thank you, Mr. Chairman

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it's one thing to deal with the day-to-day operations of the programs and services we have in place that, in this case, Municipal and Community Affairs deals with, with communities and community governments on a whole number of initiatives from day to day. Then we take a \$35 million fund and put it out there and are going to be working with every community as well on their interests and giving them support where we can. This puts a substantial strain on the existing staff there. The funding identified here is to help those in the regions meet those commitments. For example, \$58,000 of this is to help the regional superintendents and other staff within the regions travel to the communities to deal with the initiative that's going to be undertaken here. Further, \$10,000 of that will be used to cover one-time costs for preparation of public information materials and collaboration with the Executive. Forty thousand dollars is for program administration, and that will help Municipal and Community Affairs retain the part-time position casual employee for the period that's required. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know if much thought was given to this, but I think if we look government-wide we could probably find a MAP candidate or somebody you could transfer into this position for the time being, get the work done and send them back to their old position. I don't know if that was looked at, but that would make sense to me. I think it would give them a tremendous amount of exposure across the territory and allow them to gain some valuable insight into the communities; somebody you're grooming for an ADM position or a deputy minister position someday within government. I mean, that would be a perfect fit for them to do a job like this. I think, on the other hand, the communities that are going to be accessing the \$35 million, I think they'd appreciate the fact that that \$108,000 is going to go back to them and not being spent on this position. So, Mr. Chairman, that would be my recommendation to the Minister. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the funds identified here would help us deal with those communities to help supply them with the answers that they'd be requesting of us and to help them with their contribution agreements, with their communication materials, and to give MACA the ability to ensure that there is compliance with the policy and so that's structured around this deal, working with communities around this whole fund and how we ensure

that things flow and flow smoothly. So again, \$58,000 of this is identified for helping to deal with getting existing staff to get to communities, \$40,000 is to help off-set program administration, and \$10,000 for communications. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just ask you, Mr. Chairman, do you have anybody else on the list to speak to this page?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): No, not right now, Mr. Ramsay.

Committee Motion 5-15(4): To Delete \$108,000 From The Department Of Municipal And Community Affairs, School Of Community Government Activity In Bill 11, Defeated

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to move that \$108,000 be deleted from the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, School of Community Government, activity in the Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2005-2006.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): The motion is in order and is being distributed. I'll give the Members time to review the motion. Thank you. The motion is on the floor. To the motion. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I think it's important that the government get the message. We didn't have some success with the last motion, but this motion I think for sure...I mean, this is community money that we're going to be spending because it's interest that's going to build up on the money that's in the bank. So this money should be earmarked for communities, not to this position. I think the government should really take a look at transferring somebody into this position to conduct this piece of work for the government over the next year. This \$108,000 should go to the communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: To the motion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): To the motion. Mr. McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you for recognizing me, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to provide a little more detail on the information that was in front of us here regarding the \$108,000. We should be clear that when we're voting on this, this is an initiative that was not part of our business planning, and over the last while we've made some significant cuts to our department. In the last reduction process, we cut nine positions out of MACA, and we also agreed to reduce our travel budget by 25 percent. This \$108,000 is not a position. There is one part-time casual position that we're looking at of \$40,000. This money is so we can go into the communities, at least a good portion of the communities that are out there, that are having problems understanding how this funding is going to flow. They have requested us to come in. If we're going to go into the Sahtu or Nunakput or Nahendeh, we have to fly. We don't have those monies in our budget to travel into those communities. We didn't have this as part of our initiative at the beginning of the year. It really makes it difficult, and that's why we've budgeted \$58,000 of this \$108,000 towards travel and for hotel rooms. That's so we

can explain the program and talk to the communities and help them get ready for applying for this fund.

There's another \$10,000 for communications; we need to be able to package some of this stuff up. We need to be able to work with the communities on providing the detail. There's a lot of work in also dealing with the contribution agreements, developing the contribution agreements, providing the materials, and having that submission brought forward in an appropriate manner, and also to be able to retain the information and manage the information, so we can report on it at the end of the day. There is a significant workload that comes with this distribution of the fund. That's why we've looked at providing a one-time part-time position to be able to distribute this money. Without this money, it's going to make it very difficult. All our staff already have a lot of responsibilities, and this would have to be accommodated from within. I'm sure we probably would be able to manage it somehow, but we're not going to be able to travel to the communities; we're not going to be able to provide that information, as the communities are requiring and requesting, without this \$108,000. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. To the motion. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a quick comment, I guess. Since the Minister put some information out for us to fester over, I know a lot of the communities do have a large Municipal and Community Affairs staff who are available and totally capable of communicating what little information they do receive, anyway, from this community capacity building initiative and the administration of it. I don't see anything being cumbersome, as far as additional duties of the regional staff. I'm not sure about the numbers of these nine positions that MACA eliminated last year, but I know a lot of those positions were out in the regions. The regional staff has been cut down and the headquarters staff here seems to be growing all the time. It's kind of like a double standard, as far as I'm concerned. Cutting a bunch of staff positions in the regions and then saying we have to hire somebody in headquarters to go to the regions to do some work that should have been delegated out there anyway. I know \$108,000 is not a lot of money, and that's why I feel that I'm supporting this motion. It's not a lot of money, and I don't think there's a whole additional workload that's going to bring down the regional staff to say that they're just overworked and underpaid and all this stuff. I just can't see any rationale in supporting extra money for a position for somebody to cut cheques and deliver pamphlets. That's my take on it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll defer until the end. I'll let my colleagues speak to the motion. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My understanding, from the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs on his explanation for this funding, is the comment on our communities and our regions that it's desperately needed to get help here. We're not on a highway system. We don't have easy access. We're slowly trying to work on getting a stand-alone region. We

don't have the resources and the costs are high. The help is needed in our region. It's a huge amount of money you're asking us in our communities to administer and manage. You have accountability procedures in place that need to really be adhered to and be monitored on how we're going to do this program. The communication is not very much; it's only \$10,000. There should be more than that there. But that's your side, Mr. Minister, and your government's.

You have to remember that in our region, we're dealing with a first language being aboriginal, primarily. This is only a part-time position because it's a huge roll-up for communities to understand the amount of money coming in and how it's going to be set up. Somehow we're looking at some kind of exercise in terms of devolution; devolving some of these expenditures into our communities. In our region, the prices are going up. It costs a lot of money to fly around Nunakput also. Mr. Pokiak mentioned one time what it costs to fly around in his region in one tour. For myself, I see that this type of support that we need for our regions and communities is desperately needed. So I'll be voting against the motion here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Can I just remind Members to speak to the motion? Thank you. I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I know where my colleague is coming from in terms of a huge growth of expenditures in government, but quite often people can forget that if they want to do any consulting or ask people or deliver any programs in Yellowknife, they can just run down the block. When it comes to the regions and communities, you have to travel to do that, and it's very important to the people in the communities. Any deletions to programming I've always fought against and I'll continue to do that, especially in MACA when it comes to the School of Community Government and running the affairs of any community. To go to the communities and talk about it, often they want smooth-running communities. So anyway, back to the motion there, Mr. Chairman, it's something I will support. Sorry, I will not support. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I respect the thoughts of my colleagues on this, and I know that it's important money, but the point I'm trying to make is that I believe that government has the resources in-house to carry this work out and not come back in a supp looking for more. The Minister said that this was a part-time position, but the information I was provided says it's a full-time position. The \$40,000 that's going toward program administration, Mr. Chairman, is good until the end of March and this position is supposed to be funded...I don't know how the work can get done between now and the end of March. That's just not going to happen. I don't see how all that work could get done in that short of a time frame.

I'd be interested to know if indeed this is a full-time position or a part-time position. I can agree with the Minister that the \$58,000 and the \$10,000 communication money is something that I might be able to agree with, Mr. Chairman, but it's the position that I take issue with. When we have 4,400 employees, I find it hard to believe that we can't find one that we could slide in here and get them

some training and get them up to speed on community issues. That's my take on it, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): To the motion. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

Department of Executive, continued operations expenditures...Sorry, I'm on the wrong page here. Page 12, Municipal and Community Affairs, operations expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$28.480 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had a question on page 14 under lease associated...

AN HON. MEMBER: I don't think we're there yet.

MR. RAMSAY: Okay. Okay. My apologies, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Page 14, Public Works and Services, operations expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$916,000. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's been a long day. I'm getting ahead of myself a little bit. On page 14, the \$75,000 that's going to be provided for costs associated with a short-term lease renewal at the Lahm Ridge Tower. I'm just wondering if the Minister can explain at all why the base rental rate is going from \$181.91 a square metre to \$226.13 a square metre. Doesn't the Department of Public Works and Services know when leases are coming up and coming due, and isn't there any proactive type of activity that takes place in that department that they would know when a lease like this was coming up and try to get a rate and go forward from there, or put it out to tender or something? Why is this \$75,000 here today, Mr. Chairman, when the department should be proactive in trying to identify leases and take care of issues like this so that we don't get short-term lease renewals like this in front of us? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess all I can say to that is because of all the proactive work of Members, Members have stated how they want the opportunity for businesses to bid on the work that's happening. In this particular case, the lease was due to expire, and a number of months ago I had presented the option to potentially do a renewal of this because, again, when you look at the base rental rate to the newer rate, there's a substantial increase; and that was one of the considerations we were looking at on the fiscal side of the equation, was to see if we, in fact, could remain close to what we were paying at the old lease rate. I brought that forward as information to my colleagues. I was told that we needed to do a request for proposal on this space. That then kicked into this process where we needed to then do a short-term lease renewal until we could have an RFP ready to go. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm just wondering how much \$226.13 a square metre is over market rate? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, that is not over market rate. That is going out there and renewal of the space based on existing rates and stats we have available for rates around the city. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Well, I don't know, that's a debatable fact whether or not that's below market, Madam Chair. I won't debate that at this time, but I'm just wondering, when can we expect something to happen with this lease. Is it something the department's going to lock into, another 10-year arrangement like the last lease they had on this building? What can we expect? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, as I stated, we're going out for an RFP on this space. This will be a short-term lease until we can come up with the scenarios. There are two departments within that facility: the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and the Department of Transportation. We're working with both departments to see what their requirements are for the space, and we would then go out and seek. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Department of Public Works and Services, operations expenditures, not previously authorized, total department, \$916,000. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have a quick question on the planning and project management staff for the Samuel Hearne Secondary School. With regard to the added workload associated with re-profiling these projects, these are two more capital projects in that region, and now we're talking about the inability of the current staff to manage them. I'm assuming there are project officers there already, but what about their inability to manage these two extra projects? Maybe if the Minister could just provide me with some rationale that he must have gotten from the regional staff as to why two more capital projects on the books makes it unmanageable. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, as you will see and as has been done in the past with a number of the larger projects undertaken by this government, those would require almost a full-time staff member to deal with all the areas of the work that's required in preparing those facilities, from planning to construction, and then to final turnover to the departments. In these cases, we're looking for one project

officer, and that's identified as about \$124,000 annually from mid-November of this year through to March 2013; and, as well, a facility planner from November 2005 through to October 2006, somewhere in that area. Again, it's to deal with the fact that over the years, as you heard the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs deal with his department, when departments have undertaken reductions in the past, that has hampered the ability to take on some of the larger projects that we have ongoing. As the Member is aware, we've stepped up our capital program for this fiscal year prior to previous fiscal years due to the fact that, as has been stated on a number of occasions, when the bigger reductions were made in prior assemblies, a lot of the hit was taken on capital programs. The staff in those areas were also removed when reductions were made. Now that we're ramping back up on the capital side to deal with the backlog of capital programs or the serious state we find our facilities in, we're having to ramp that up. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a quick follow-up. I'm just wondering, I know there are some regions, for instance the Inuvik region, that are experiencing a lot of growth, and there's a lot of activity and capital projects that are being worked on and developed. But there are other areas, like the South Slave region for instance, where there is limited growth and very few capital projects in the works. If the department has actually looked from within to say that maybe they should move some project officers out of the slower regions and into the regions that are experiencing bustling economies and a lot of capital projects coming through this government to accommodate the growth, has that even been considered before we start hiring new staff and facility planners and getting new money for it? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. One of the things we've done with Public Works and Services is, to meet our targets of reduction scenarios, we initially started out in this term of the 15th Assembly to deal with our reductions through attrition where, when we had people leaving or retiring, we would not fill those positions. So through that time period, we've also let go individuals across the board, whether it's in the South Slave or in headquarters or in the northern part of the territory. What you find in Inuvik with these two projects is that these projects are replacing existing facilities. They're not new facilities. In fact, their time line or life line has been exceeded, and these projects have been on the books, but because of our fiscal situation, have continually been bumped back to the point where we find ourselves now in Inuvik of having to do emergency repairs to keep one of the facilities operational. That's why you see this coming forward as it is. Later on in this supplementary appropriation, you'll see some changes to the capital plan, as well, to try and address this situation. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just one quick point, I guess. As the Minister stated, these aren't new capital projects, so why do we need more staff to manage them?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. My point being that these are facilities on the ground. They are almost 40 years old, and their lifetime has been surpassed in the sense we are on borrowed time with these facilities, as well as with a number of other facilities. That's why, as a government, we've decided to proceed with a number of schools in the Sahtu as well as in the Mackenzie Delta to try and catch up with our aging facilities. So when it comes to actual planning and construction, again, we have staff that are on the ground dealing with the normal workload that's there, but when you throw on these large capital projects, we don't have the resources to deal with them in an adequate time frame. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Madam Chair. The \$100,000 for the acquisition and implementation of thermal scanning equipment for the use in the GNWT's old buildings, I just want some clarification from the Minister, Madam Chair. Is this the government-wide GNWT-owned buildings that you're looking at for this amount? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, this does meet the initiatives that we have tabled in the House. This is one of Public Works' portions of it; it is to increase the amount of work that we have been doing in this area to ensure we can cover a lot of our buildings that are out there and ensure they're operating efficiently, and if they're not, having to identify how we can make them more efficient. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Madam Chair. So can we expect something from your office or the shop that will be coming into our communities and scanning and checking these government-owned buildings and basically tell us, "This is how you can save more or be more effective or efficient in your energy efficiency," as part of the overall initiative set out by the government through the energy programs? Is that something that we are to expect maybe sometime within the next month or so? Will we see the Department of Public Works people come in to, say, for example, Tulita to check on the government-owned buildings? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, this is to help us to get out to communities to do a profiling of our facilities. With this funding, we're planning to purchase another camera, thermal scanning equipment, and do some more training so that we can have more people getting out there to all the communities and doing the scanning. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Minister, in terms of the thermal scanning equipment and coming into the smaller communities with the DPW staff and just looking at the government-owned buildings, because of the way this thing is rolling out, is there any way that the smaller communities could have their homes checked? I'm not to sure if I'm going above and beyond the mandate of DPW in terms of the role that they play with regard to scanning the government-owned buildings. If they're in town, would they mind looking at this place over here? Can they do something along that line? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I believe in some of the discussions early during this session about our energy initiatives, this issue had come up, and I believe we can work with the community governments while we're in a community to try and see what facilities we may be able to look at with this equipment for community governments. It's something we can work with and possibly work with MACA on as well around that initiative. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to thank the Minister for his flexibility to work with other departments and possibly work with some of the other organizations, if it makes sense in regard to following the government's overall initiative on energy programs that they want to implement. I look forward to seeing this in the communities. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Next I have Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just briefly want to say that I'm in full support of the thermal cameras. I've seen them used, I've seen the reports, I've seen the good work that they can do. I'm in full support of the government making this accessible to any community government or any type of community initiative that can get that camera working. They're worthless on the shelf if they are not being used. So you might as well get them working, but I would not like to see any initiative at the cost of those cameras. They are \$40,000 plus. I would not like to see them in unskilled hands. So I just want the assurance from the Minister if we're going to do this, that we only ensure at the highest office that this is only used by trained staff who are familiar with this material. If we lend this thing out and it gets dropped, it goes missing on an airplane, I mean these things are not that large and they get scooped up pretty quick. So I'm in support of this initiative. I think the Minister hears me clearly that I'm in favour of it getting out there and getting it used, because I think if it's gaining dust, it's useless. However, I do not want unskilled people using this camera. It's a very expensive piece of material. So I would like to hear that assurance from the Minister. Thank you. This is my only question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins, and I do believe that the Minister already spoke about the training for the people who are going to be utilizing the cameras, but I will let the Minister respond to that question. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, part of this initiative is to purchase one more camera, as well as provide training. That's one of the issues we have to keep in consideration, is it will be through trained hands that this equipment will be used in communities. So that will be one of the situations we'll have to keep track of as there are a lot of facilities across the North that can use this equipment. So that will definitely put a drain on how soon we can get to some of the communities and facilities. But, yes, we will be training, and we will be making sure that all the work is done through those that are trained. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Total department, not previously authorized, \$916,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed, thank you. Health and Social Services, operations expenditures, not previously authorized, total department, \$9.054 million. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I've got some issues with the \$50,000 that is proposed to contract a financial consultant to complete a cost analysis of the measures needed to mitigate the health and social impacts of the Mackenzie gas project. I think there might be some good work there, but it's kind of like pinning a tail on a donkey. There never has been an \$8 billion pipeline built in this territory, and I don't know how anybody going out to try to do this work would get any type of data to start it. Where do you start, and how do you even know what the costs are going to be and what the mitigating factors are going to be when it's never been built? I don't know why it's being proposed, to be quite honest with you, Madam Chair, and I'd like to hear from, if not the Minister of Finance, the Minister responsible for that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the \$50,000 that's being requested by the Department of Health and Social Services to deal with the proposed Mackenzie gas project, they're looking to contract the services of a financial consultant to complete detailed cost estimates and projections for the mitigation of those impacts on health services at the regional authority level and at community health programs. As well, detailed cost estimates on projections for the mitigation of impacts on social services, community counselling, mental health addictions, child protection, family violence at the regional and community levels as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Again, I'll stick by my contention that it's complete guesswork, absolutely complete guesswork without knowing what's at play and what's going to happen. I just don't understand, again, the need for it. I'll see if anybody else has anything to say about it before I move a motion to delete it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Health and Social Services, not previously authorized, \$9.054 million. Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to go on to page 16 and question the Minister with regard to the \$1 million identified for the Yellowknife Association of Concerned Citizens, more particularly with regard to the planning and design of the territorial dementia facility. I would like to ask the Minister why it costs \$1 million to plan and design such a facility? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, this dementia facility at this time is estimated to cost in the range of \$13 million: \$250,000 of this would be for site investigation and \$750,000 for construction document development. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm trying to figure in my mind, Madam Chair, about design and planning. I'm not an engineer myself, but doesn't the department have someone in their department who can actually do that and come out with a plan at a much cheaper price? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, for many of the projects we do become involved with, there is always a portion of the budgeted amount that goes towards design and planning, facility planning and to the point of construction documents. So you'll find that for every facility we have, there's a part of the budget that is used for that area. It is an institutional facility that would require specialist services that make sure we've got it right. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Roland, the question was, do you have anybody in-house that could do that? The short answer would be no. The answers and the questions are too long here. We're not going to get through this supp before tomorrow night. Anything further, Mr. Pokiak? Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: I'll just be brief, Madam Chair. Just with regard to the \$285,000 for the emergency and transition shelters, it's good that Inuvik and Yellowknife are getting \$135,000 between two. The \$150,000 between the 31 other communities, that's roughly a little under \$5,000 per community. Can the Minister let the public know, and these emergency and transition shelters know, that they will be entitled to roughly \$5,000 in their community? It's not a hell of a lot of money for a transition shelter. I don't even think it will pay for power for a year for any centre, but I don't think it's sufficient, and I would have like to see more monies being allocated for this important initiative to help the homeless. Just a statement. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to forward this to the Minister of Health and Social Services for a response.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. So a breakdown on the other \$150,000. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the \$150,000 is a fund that's there, on a case-by-case basis, that communities can access if they have a circumstance where they're dealing with a homeless person that's in need of some kind of support or shelter that can't be provided in the community. We had a similar fund in the program last year, and it wasn't subscribed to, but one of the issues, we think, and feedback we've gotten, is that it wasn't properly communicated as well as it should be. So this year we're taking steps to ensure that communities know that there is going to be a pot of money that they can draw down in the smaller communities if there is a need on a case-by-case basis. It's not set up to be carved up among every community. We recognize as well with this funding that there are some communities that are magnet communities in a significant way, Yellowknife and Inuvik being two of the largest ones with the most transient population, and those that would be defined as absolute homeless where they have no place to stay, and they're in the community either from the regions or they come north. Hay River, as well, is included in that. So that fund is there to be drawn down on a case-by-case basis to give communities the capacity to be able to respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Anything further, Mr. Villeneuve?

MR. VILLENEUVE: No, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Next I have Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Seeing how we've sort of jumped to page 16, I just want to take this opportunity to say I am in full support of the planning money finally being given to the Yellowknife Association of Concerned Citizens for Seniors, YACCS. They're a tremendous organization that have done a lot of work on the planning of a dementia centre. A lot of credit needs to go to the past president of YACCS, which is Al Falconer. He trumpeted this cause for a number of years to get this profile out. This is a community organization that's sort of been grassroots on this initiative. For a lot of people, \$1 million will sound like a lot of money, and it certainly is by any state, but I've come to learn, through my political experience over the last five years, that planning dollars and design dollars are not as cheap as people generally think they are. We're not designing a warehouse, we're not even designing an old age home or a home for seniors, we're designing a very specialized facility for the treatment of the disease of dementia. It requires a very specialized facility because it's one of those situations where people have very specific needs, and these dollars are going to be well spent. I have every confidence in how this organization has put forward their plan. I've looked at the design, and I think it's a tremendous project. I think I could speak at length about the kudos they deserve. I know that they are very excited. Their present president, Ann Costache, has done the good work, and they're leading as a combined force, I think that needs to have a special pat on the back for the efforts that they've delivered. That's all. I just wanted to say that I'll be speaking in favour of it, and I certainly appreciate the efforts that they've gone through, and they've done this solely on a business case. So it's nice to see a bit of a

partnership between the citizens' groups and government working together. So thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Okay thank you. I don't hear any question there, so I'm not going to refer that to the Minister. Next on my list, I have Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Madam Chair. There are a couple of things that other Members have raised that are worthy of some comment. First of all, Mr. Ramsay, in mirroring other items requested in the supp, has flagged the \$50,000 to finance a consultant on a costing exercise here for Health and Social Services. The way the bill is worded, Madam Chair, we want to contract somebody to complete a cost analysis of the measures needed to mitigate Health and Social Services impacts. I gather from that that the measures needed have already been identified. We're not engaged in sort of a scoping or a design exercise here; we already know what's needed, but we need to know more about how much they're going to cost. Is that a more sort of precise definition of what's going on here?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I have so many bookmarks going here I can't keep track; \$50,000, yes, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Anything further, Mr. Braden?

MR. BRADEN: Yes, Madam Chair. If Mr. Ramsay continues with his motion to delete, there's a further item there under program delivery support. There are two items listed, Madam Chair, \$230,000 worth of reviews and \$464,000 in nursing resources and the Nurse Practitioner Program. There's a line there that says that the net impact on the government is nil, as expenditures will be offset by revenues from Canada. Is this offset for both of those figures, Madam Chair, \$464,000 for nurse resources and \$230,000 for review, both of them picked up by Canada? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, the item for \$464,000 is the item that would be offset by federal funds. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Okay. Good to hear on the nursing side. Although, on the one above that, Madam Chair, \$230,000 for review of physician services in the NWT and patient care services, we already have before us -- and I speak with a little bit of familiarity on this from Social Programs -- a very good piece of work. The integrated service delivery model for our delivery system has just recently been circulated and it's out there. Now here we go with another almost quarter of a million dollars worth of reviews and more studies. One of the refrains that we've had here is to try to reduce, as much as possible, this sort of constant cycle of studies, and reviews, and surveys, and strategies and things, especially in the health care field, Madam Chair. Are these really essential? Do we need to put out

yet another quarter of a million dollars for surveys and, it says here in the bill, undertaking reviews, Madam Chair?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, in fact, this work flows out of a recommendation in the integrated service delivery model where it was identified as we look at changing the staffing mix, redefining acute care beds, community care beds, adding nurse practitioners, the role of general practitioners, the surgery capacity, and those types of things, that we have to take the time to carefully assess. For example, the doctors, Dr. Peachey is doing work looking at the GP requirements in Yellowknife, in Inuvik, in the communities that have GPs and specialty doctors, because there's an overlap. It's a very complex issue; the issue of sustaining surgical services in Inuvik, the issue with the nurses of the mix. We are now proposing with nurse practitioners and GPs, for example, a population of 1,400 for a GP and nurse practitioner. These are areas where no other jurisdiction has yet gone; and we're trying to do the work flowing out of the integrated service delivery model, which told us to do the extra work to get that type of technical detail so that you can finalize and be able to come back and speak with some certainty as to the accuracy of the staffing mix and the benchmarks that we're going to be eventually bringing forward for approval to this body, to Cabinet and to FMB. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Well, it's a well-informed response, Madam Chair. Even in our world here, \$230,000 to sort of study and coordinate the work of -- not to diminish their importance -- but a few dozen specialists and professionals, a quarter of a million dollars? It seems excessive, but I have no other basis other than just a sense of what the ratios are here. I don't see the value in this, given the quantity of information that we already have to deal with. I like to take the expertise that's available wisely in our own workforce so we can help sort this out. I don't know. I'll see whether any other Members, anybody else from Social Programs or somebody has a view on that one.

The third topic that I wanted to raise here, Madam Chair, was on the area of the \$1 million for the planning and design work of a dementia facility. I'm amply on record as being a supporter of this, and really pleased to see us moving to this degree of sort of certainty and commitment. The question that I have, Madam Chair, and if you will permit me to skip ahead a few pages in the supp to page 25, actually, where there is an almost identical set of projects identified, funded by federal health care dollars, for planning and design work for upgrades to long-term care facilities. Essentially, what is the difference between those long-term care facilities, which, I understand, are in many other communities and apply to seniors and those with perhaps more cognitive health issues, what is the difference between planning for those, funded by the federal government, and the territorial dementia facility in Yellowknife, funded out of our coffers? Is there any chance we could get the feds to pay for that, too?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Okay. Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. In doing further research on this, it has come to our attention that the \$1 million identified for the dementia is, as well, part of the federal dollars. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. If you don't have anything further, Mr. Braden, next I have Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Madam Chair. My question is to the Minister, in terms of the dementia facility. It's a territorial one, I believe, and I want to ask what type of plans will be put in place to ask for regional involvement in regard to this territorial facility? Right now it's being driven by the hard-working people of YACCS. So I just wanted to ask about this planning process and the involvement of regional people. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, it has been recognized by all the parties that this is a territorial facility for basically any stage clients with dementia, and the intent has been to ensure that as we move this process forward into the planning stage with these funds, to consult through the joint Senior Management Committee that we have, as well as the board chairs that work with myself on the Joint Leadership Council, and we are keeping involved in monitoring this process. But as they get information ready to move out, it will be circulated so that there is that kind of involvement. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Madam Chair. Minister, I'm not too sure of the definition and involvement of the senior management and the board chairs. I'm thinking more of the involvement of the region to have a say on this facility that they possibly one day could be using. So I'm going to leave it at that for the Minister to think about.

I want to ask the Minister another question in terms of the nursing resources in the small communities. There are some new guidelines coming out. I want to thank the Minister for his support of the nursing program now in the Northwest Territories. I understand they are working as part of the practicum in the Stanton Hospital. I hear nothing but good things from the patients that I have visited so far, about these nurses, in the hospital here. It is good to see our own people, and our own nurses in the hospital here. I would like to see how they could now come into our smaller communities that require nurses, not just at the hospital level. I want to ask that question to the Minister.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, we are, very actively, aware of the need to encourage and train northern nurses to move out of the larger centres to the smaller communities. We are working with them and encouraging them. We are trying to build a component into their training so they are more experienced with the unique issues facing community health nurses. Also, if you look through this, there is reference to we want to add two nurse practitioners to

each of the regions as well as in Inuvik, Sahtu, Deh Cho and Tlcho so that they have more capacity to be able to go to the smaller communities to provide more support. We have funding in here to allow experienced nurses to access prior learning, and to challenge for a nurse practitioner. We still have, on the table with the UNW, a request to...We have put in some suggestions of how we can better recognize some of the challenges of small communities, and better remunerate nurses in those areas. But that particular issue has never stalled out. That was one of the intents we had at one time, as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, there are actually two last issues. I am trying to roll them into one issue, Madam Chair.

The contract for the financial consultant to complete a cost analysis of the measures needed to mitigate the health and social impacts of the Mackenzie gas project, again, I like one of the comments taken from the Premier in terms of saying that, if the pipeline is a no go, then this will no longer be needed. I just wanted to ask the Minister in that type of a comment that the Premier has given. I will have some other questions some other day on this.

The last issue that I want to talk about, Madam Chair, is the allocation of funding criteria for these emergencies, and transition shelters in the North here. I see the Turning Point Shelter is \$35,000, and the SideDoor Youth Centre is \$100,000. As Mr. Villeneuve alluded to, the other communities, we have to decide how we are going to use the \$150,000. I feel that this is very unfair. I am not too sure how the funding is allocated, or what type of criteria is needed. The SideDoor Youth Centre is maybe doing some good work, but it is \$100,000 and you are giving the Turning Point Shelter in Inuvik, the whole community, \$35,000, and then you have given the rest of the other communities \$150,000 which we have to establish an allocation to draw on. It just doesn't seem fair. That is my bone of contention in terms of how this money is being distributed amongst the people of the Northwest Territories.

We have a lot of homeless people on the weekends. We have a hard time getting a place for them, so I don't understand how the SideDoor could get \$100,000, and Inuvik gets \$35,000. It just doesn't make sense. The rest of the communities have to fight over \$150,000. I don't understand the logic behind the funding criteria. I want to leave it at that. Those are my comments, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just as a point of clarification first, between the SideDoor and Turning Point; Health and Social Services is contributing \$35,000; Education, Culture and Employment is contributing \$65,000 to Turning Point. The Member is correct about SideDoor. We are looking at \$100,000. The numbers, and information, we have is that the SideDoor provides a well-used service, especially on weekends and evenings, to street kids. The government contribution in Turning Point is \$100,000, as well. The \$150,000, as I indicated previously, is not targeted by community. It is targeted by need, on a case-by-case

basis, recognizing that communities outside of the really large centres that have a very visible homeless issue and have facilities already like the YWCA, the Salvation Army, and the Turning Point, may have some homeless issues and need capacity to access funds on a case-by-case basis, which is why we set up the \$150,000. As I indicated last year, it wasn't subscribed to this year. We are going to do a better job of communicating the availability of that fund. If that fund is drawn down because there is an upsurge in need across the communities, then, very clearly, the social program Ministers will be monitoring that, and especially Health and Social Services that is going to be administering the fund. If there is a need, then we will be coming back to Cabinet. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the issue I had is with the SideDoor Youth Centre. There are lots of youth centres in the small communities that really need a lot of good money, similar to the youth centre here in Yellowknife. Even though it is a larger population, it can do good work, et cetera, the youth centres in the small communities do not receive this type of treatment in terms of the SideDoor in Yellowknife. That is what my bone of contention is. These youth centres, every time they ask the government, there is no money. The kids are sometimes homeless on the weekends because of the situation in the small communities. It is more visible. Kids are wandering around all night looking for places to sleep.

You have funding to open up these youth centres in the communities for the evenings for them. They do it here in Yellowknife, because they asked for, and got, \$100,000. We have to look after \$150,000 in the communities. I just don't see the fairness in this budget here. I am not saying that the youth centre here in Yellowknife doesn't do the job. It is doing its job, but I am saying, how do we get this funding allocated properly to show that it is being fair across the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. I take that as a comment. The Minister has already, in great detail, explained what the allocation is about. Mr. Ramsay.

Committee Motion 6-15(4): To Delete \$50,000 From The Department Of Health And Social Services, Directorate Activity In Bill 11, Defeated

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that \$50,000 be deleted from the Department of Health and Social Services, directorate activity, in Supplementary Appropriation, No. 2, 2005-2006.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. The motion has been distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Question has been called. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: I want to speak to the motion here. I want to ask the Minister in terms of previous...

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Excuse me, Mr. Yakeleya. You can't question the Minister on the motion. It is not his motion. You can speak to the motion. To the motion. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to confirm that this funding is tied, and has the same caveat on it that was expressed by the Premier previously, with other funds dedicated to the pipeline that, in the unfortunate eventuality, rare though that may be, in our hope, that it does not go ahead, that this money would not be accessed. I believe that is an accurate characterization of the Premier's commitment.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. To the motion. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Madam Chair. I support the previous two motions, and I will support this motion, too. I think, with a lot of these monies that I have been seeing in here, as Mr. Ramsay has pointed out, I think a lot of these could be done in-house. I understand the Minister and the Premier saying that if the pipeline doesn't go ahead, this money is not going to flow. I think I am correct in saying that. Right? I plan on supporting this motion, like I supported the other two. I think there is a lot of in-house staff. We have many capable people that could be doing stuff like this. I would be supporting this motion again. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Question has been called. All those in favour of the motion? All those opposed? The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

Total for Health and Social Services, total department, not previously authorized, \$9.054 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Justice, operations expenditures, not previously authorized, total department, \$2.784 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. NWT Housing Corporation, operations expenditures, not previously authorized, total department, \$520,000. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Madam Chair. Looking at the \$20,000 for having an Energy Star workshop, and I look at this \$54,000 for a continuation of further research into high energy-efficient heating systems. I can't support the \$74,000. I think all the LHO staff maintenance department, from what I know, are quite capable of doing work like this themselves. I am sure they would love to have that \$54,000 to buy high energy-efficient furnaces that they know of that work. I have seen some of these research projects where they didn't work worth a darn. If you ask anybody at the LHO level what they know works, they will tell you what works. I am sure they could use this \$54,000 to purchase proper equipment. That is why I cannot support this \$74,000. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Okay. Thank you. NWT Housing Corporation, not previously authorized, total department, \$520,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Education, Culture and Employment, operations expenditures, special warrants, \$4.066 million, not previously authorized, \$5.331 million. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess this is probably one of these issues that probably a motion will be coming forward on this one, but just the \$460,000 for the income security portion of this supplementary. There's \$183,000 one-time start-up; \$277,000, associated salaries and benefits, 11 new positions. Gee. When we went through the Housing Corporation, I didn't see 11 positions being cut when this Income Security program was transferred over to ECE. I would support it if we did see some 10.75 positions being deleted out of the Housing Corporation that used to manage this program. I don't know how the Department of Education, Culture and Employment figures it needs 11 positions to manage, to basically cut cheques for the LHOs. That is all this \$30 million transfer is, just to transfer from one department to the next, that basically gives us block funding to the LHO level. That is the Public Housing Program money.

Why they need start-up and implementation costs, I don't even understand that either, because I know the Department of Education, Culture and Employment has income support workers in the communities already that also deal with rental housing subsidies, and rents, and whatnot. I would just like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, how does \$460,000 make it seamless, as he states in here? I just don't see where he gets, or how he can substantiate half a million dollars for something like this that the Housing Corporation managed without cutting any positions or adding positions. Why the 11 positions?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, when this issue was being discussed and the transfer of the housing subsidy program moved over to Education, Culture and Employment, we had made a decision to proceed with that transfer, and also directed the Housing Corporation to come back in the 2007-2010 business plan to show where they could show a lapse in funds from this transfer. The reason it didn't happen right off the bat is they are also directed, as a result of this, to review their mandate, and come up with a new mandate. Once that is done, then they have been directed to come back to the FMB, through the business planning cycle, to identify the savings. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Yes, just a quick point, I guess. So we are going out to half a million dollars for a new mandate, and adding 11 positions because of this transfer. Why would we even consider transferring it if it is going to cost the government half a million dollars? I just don't see the logic in doing something like that. If it was going to save us a half a million dollars in the long run, then I could really support it, but, right now, I can't really

offer any support to something that really doesn't seem like it is...One full-time position, I think, would be able to handle this, but 11, I just can't see the rationale behind it. I just won't be supporting that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the position breakdown that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment is looking for under this initiative is the 7.75 positions which are identified for regional income support worker officer positions, and three are identified for headquarters. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. I have a long list of people who want to speak. Do you have anything else, Mr. Villeneuve? Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Maybe to expedite the discussion on this issue, I would like to move a motion right now. We can discuss the motion. I am sorry if I am giving the government a little bit of motion sickness tonight...

---Laughter

...but I am trying to prove a point, Madam Chair.

Committee Motion 7-15(4): To Delete \$460,000 From The Department Of Education, Culture And Employment, Income Security Activity In Bill 11, Carried

I move that \$460,000 be deleted from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, income security activity, in Supplementary Appropriation, No. 2, 2005-2006.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The motion is in order. To the motion. The motion is being circulated. I will just give a moment here for everybody to get a copy of it. To the motion. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I thank my colleagues for tagging along on some of the motions. I can appreciate that there are stands on various ones; I hope to get their support on this one. Again, I think it is important that we do send a message to the government. I think this is the most substantive issue in this supplementary that we can do just that. I don't think all the homework was done on this transfer of \$30 million from the Housing Corporation over to ECE without any positions with it. I think it was poorly managed, to be honest with you, Madam Chair. As I said, we have to put our foot down at some point in time. This is as good a time as any.

I mentioned this before, and I will mention it again. It says \$460,000 in the supplementary, \$183,000 for a one-time start-up and implementation cost, and \$277,000 for the salaries and benefits. That is just from January to March of next year, Madam Chair. What these new positions will mean is about \$1.2 to \$1.3 million on an ongoing basis. I think it is incumbent upon the government to come back with a better plan. I know they can come up with a better plan. Why aren't positions accompanying the \$30 million

from the Housing Corporation? That would be the logical thing to look at.

Madam Chair, I do hope I have the support of my colleagues on this side of the House to send a clear, and direct, message to the government, that they have to do more with what they have. They haven't demonstrated that to us yet. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. To the motion. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just with respect to the transfer of funds, and to the motion to delete extra positions, I am not too sure how we need more positions, particularly if no one has explained to me about how it ran in the Housing Corporation. If the Housing Corporation did really keep eight positions for people needed to run this program, someone has never told me. But just with respect to creating new positions, at this point, I agree with my honourable colleague, Mr. Ramsay. There is something fundamentally wrong here. It appears to me that it is not being followed through.

As well, I spoke on this issue many times, as well. Basically, it is the whole harmonization issue that is coming through here. I was fundamentally against transferring any of the housing programs over to ECE. Now it is getting even worse. We are going to transfer money over, and now we want to create a whole bunch of positions. I have always maintained, as well, that programming dollars are important. If you are going to add \$1 million in salaries, out of \$30 million, that is getting up there in terms of administration costs to programming dollars, right up to unacceptable levels. I am not too sure the Housing Corporation handled \$30 million in housing rental subsidies. I don't think they did it right with eight people, either. I thought they kind of transferred it over to the LHOs, but for ECE to do it and require seven people to do it, I am not too sure. I have always said it is better left in the Housing Corporation, and I maintain that. Just with that respect, it doesn't appear to be fully thought out. With that, I will be supporting this motion.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the motion. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Yes, absolutely, I will be supporting this motion. Mr. Ramsay has outlined, really, the principal cause of this for me. The Housing Corporation has, indeed -- we have been told this for months now -- been developing a new mandate. I still haven't seen it.

One thing that we know for sure is that the Housing Corporation will not have any responsibility for social housing. How is it that Cabinet says that we should approve half a million dollars, and that is just for about three months' worth of work? There are no positions in ECE. There is no offsetting balance in the year for the Housing Corporation, but all these jobs continue to languish in the Housing Corporation while we still don't know what the new mandate is. It doesn't take long to connect the dots on this one, Madam Chair. I will be supporting this motion. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Braden. To the motion. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Madam Chair. I think that the Minister of Finance has already indicated

that the Housing Corporation will be coming back in the not-too-distant future to talk about their new mandate, and, perhaps, some reallocation of resources in the long term. But you can't expect that there is going to be, on April 1st, a sudden transfer of the program, and that it can be delivered seamlessly without there being a period for training, and ramping up, of staff. Yes, there is always going to have to be some duplication. We are not talking about seven bodies. We are talking about because of increased workload. We are talking about, for instance in Rae, adding three-quarters of a position, so there will be part-time additions to help the staff there. We are adding some part-time assistance in Whati. We are adding part-time positions basically across the Northwest Territories, because of the increased workload for the income support staff. You can't deliver this much more of a program. We are talking about an increase in the number of clients that the staff will have to see. We are staffed, right now, based on the numbers of people that the staff see. So if you increase the numbers of clients that will go through the offices, we are going to have to staff up to deliver those services.

For the most part, we are not seeing seven people added in one community. We are seeing people added throughout the regions. It is a number of additional part-time positions that are being added, other than the three positions that are being added at headquarters. One of the three positions that we are adding at headquarters is an audit and compliance officer. We are doubling the total money that will be dealt with by income support workers. We have two compliance officers now. With the doubling of funding, we are thinking that we are probably going to have to do more compliance audits, so we are adding one more person.

Whether or not on an ongoing basis, some of the resources come from the Housing Corporation won't change the fact that we have to do the training and get the systems up and running before April 1st. It is not something that you can just move from one day it is being done this way, and the next day it is being done a different way. Members know what sorts of issues you are going to face from your constituents if the program doesn't work right on April 1st. If you really think that the income support worker is going to deliver the program on April 1st without having some experience and training, well, I think you are wrong. I think we are setting this whole thing up to fail. If that is what we are after, then fine, let's not go ahead with the training. But if we want to eventually see the economies that we might see by having a comprehensive and cohesive approach to how we deliver Income Security programs, if we want to bring all of the Income Security programs into one place so we can better plan for them, we have to take this step. This is the first step. Yes, there are some extra costs to implement a new program. It would be impossible to move forward with this without duplicating during some kind of switch-over period. We are talking about that period of time leading up to April 1st. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dent. To the motion. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I listened, quite intently, to what the Minister had to say. I didn't at one time hear the government say that it had looked at positions that are housed today at the Housing Corporation, and identify some positions to move over to ECE, which would mean that we wouldn't have to run out

and hire 11 new people. For me, that is the big issue here. The Minister can say all he wants about how it has to be seamless, and how we have to have people trained. I will tell you, Madam Chair, it came up here last week, 59 employees at the Housing Corporation. Why can't we look at moving 10 of them over to ECE to deliver this work? Is that too much to ask, Madam Chair? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Okay. Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. To the motion. Mr. Krutko.

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Housing Corporation will still have responsibility for managing the properties, through the maintenance programs that we have. We still have to maintain those properties. We'll still be responsible for collecting the rents. We will still have a lot of these responsibilities we have today.

With regard to the motion that the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment has stated, the assessment process that presently takes place with the clients will now be the responsibility of income support. Through that ongoing responsibility, they will have to take on an extra workload. We, as a corporation, will continue doing the work that we do today, by ensuring that our audits are done every year, that we do have financial accounting of our expenditures, and to maintain the properties we have, and expand those properties going forward, so we can provide housing to people in the Northwest Territories. I think the key is that the assessment portion of dealing with clients will no longer be the responsibility of the Housing Corporation. That responsibility will now be the responsibility of income support.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Question is being called. All those in favour of the motion? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

---Applause

Education, Culture and Employment, special warrants, total department, \$4.066 million, and not previously authorized, now \$4.871 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Transportation, not previously authorized, total department, \$2.514 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Industry, Tourism and Investment, operations expenditures, not previously authorized, total department, \$2.191 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Environment and Natural Resources, operations expenditures. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Madam Chair, begging your indulgence here to slow down just a little bit. There are just a couple of things I wanted to ask about on items on page 23 under ITI, if I may.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Does the committee agree that we go back to page 23, Industry, Tourism and Investment?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Okay, thank you. Please carry on, Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, colleagues. The area is strategic initiatives and the \$730,000 earmarked for the NWT Energy Corporation for feasibility and environmental studies on the Taltson project. One area of real significance to any of these hydro projects, Madam Chair, is the identification of the customer. The discussion that I've seen of late on the Taltson project has focused exclusively on the diamond mines as a customer for new Taltson power. I know that one aspect of discussion, at least in early days, Madam Chair, was whether or not there could be a connection made into the southern grid, and explore virtually the rest of North America as a customer for our power. The question I wanted to ask relates to any ongoing research, or investigation into the customer base, and can it be conclusively shown, and could evidence be provided, that the mines are where we absolutely want to go? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the work around the Power Corporation and the hydro expansion project is one that's been discussed for some time by Members in this House. In fact, there's renewed interest by the diamond mines in this area, which is something that has caused us to continue to pursue this initiative. There have been discussions in the past about looking at the southern grid, but the focus is now with the operations in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Voytilla is familiar with this file, and probably could provide more detail in that area, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Voytilla.

MR. VOYTILLA: Thank you, Madam Chair. A lot of work has been done already in looking at the environmental and engineering aspects of this project, taking it to an almost complete feasibility level, and getting ready for regulatory application. Discussions have been going on with the mines for a number of years now. Just recently, we had a follow-up meeting with the mines, and they are prepared to renew their letters of interest, laying out the amount of power they're interested in acquiring, the duration of the contracts they'd be prepared to consider, and the price range at which they would be interested in the power. We believe, based on the work we've done, that we're certainly able to provide a competitive rate to them that would result in firm power purchase agreements with the mines, and those discussions are going on. This funding here is to complete the final stages of the environmental and engineering work necessary for us to be able to commit to a particular price range, so if there is a significant need for this investment, to be able to

complete that work to be able to finalize arrangements with the mines, and the mines are still very interested.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Voytilla. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you. It's good to hear that the mines are back in the picture. In fact, it would be surprising if they weren't, given the increase in the cost of diesel. But I guess I still haven't heard a reply to my question. Again it's something I can get some more information on at another time. But have we really explored the southern markets as one that is comparable to the mines? We know that the diamond mines are going to have a finite life; the customer to the south is infinite. Another factor, of course, is the transmission line. It's a much shorter transmission distance to the southern grid than it is up into the mines. So there are a couple of big factors there that I would still like to see some information on to show that we've explored the southern market in comparison to the mines. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Power Corporation has done some work in that area, and we'll get that information and provide it to Members. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. I have next, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Madam Chair, I'd like to report progress.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Mr. Yakeleya, you have to say, "I move to report progress."

MR. YAKELEYA: Madam Chair, I move to report progress.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Madam Chair, I move to report progress.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The motion is in order. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion? All those opposed? The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

Industry, Tourism and Investment, operations expenditures, not previously authorized, \$2.191 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Environment and Natural Resources, operations expenditures, special warrants, total department, \$2.450 million, not previously authorized, \$2.241 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Health and Social Services, capital investment expenditures, not previously authorized, total department, \$1.175 million. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess we're going to be here for awhile, so I want to ask about the facilities. I want to talk to the facility in Deline, the old folks' facility. I see other facilities being listed, and we had some discussion here, and I want to ask the Minister about the planning, and designing, and upgrading of long-term care facilities, and the design work undertaken on some of those facilities. I want to ask about the Deline facility, about where it fits in this specific budget here. I just want to ask that to the Minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the request for expenditure in this area is from the Department of Health and Social Services. It flows out of the integrated service delivery model, and identifies a number of centres: Deh Cho Health and Social Services Authority, Fort Simpson Wellness Centre, as well as...Just that one at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Am I hearing correctly that these facilities are flowing out of a book that's called integrated service delivery model, and that the Deline facility is not in this integrated service delivery model manual or book, or no reference is made to this facility? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, from the information I have, this is the beginning of the work that flows out of the integrated service delivery model, but for more details, Mr. Miltenberger may be able to provide that at this time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: I wouldn't mind hearing from the Minister, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the funds that are in this particular appropriation request are to do some modifications to the Fort Simpson Health Centre; Northern Lights in Fort Smith; Woodland Manor, Hay River; Jimmy Erasmus Seniors' Home; and the Joe Greenland Centre in Aklavik. This is planning money that's going to lead the eventual required modifications to make those units more able to deal with clients that have cognitive impairments.

The Deline facility work is in its final stages, and there's a bit of review being done, and indications are that there are going to be possible options coming out of the review, that the remaining six units be converted to four independent living facilities, before that complex be converted to community space to bring together all the social programs in the community. I haven't seen the final document, but we expect it to cross our desks in the next few weeks. But

that's our understanding, so that particular facility wouldn't fit under the long-term care planning at this point.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Minister. Again, for clarification, these facilities...I'm just going to leave it at that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. We're on page 25, Health and Social Services, capital investment expenditures, not previously authorized, \$1.175 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you. Page 26, Justice, capital investment expenditures, not previously authorized, total department, \$151,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 27, Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures, special warrants, \$800,000. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Are there any other things that are going to be required to look into other special warrants or types of funding for these schools that have some modifications in regard to the court decision? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there is potential for further costs in the area of the rulings that we would have to fulfill. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Regarding the work that's going to happen because of the court ruling and because of the requirements we have to fulfill, which are legal obligations, I guess, because of the situation, would this type of future funding hinder us to put in other facilities, like the school in Colville Lake that desperately needs new space? Is that going to affect future planning because of these court judgments that are coming down to the Government of the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, on an annual basis, again, as we prepare our budgets and build our business plans, takes into account the requirements, and the student enrolment, and needs, and age of their facilities, and puts it into their plan. This is outside of that. Because it is still before the courts, it's an issue that we're not prepared to speak on at this point. But the normal planning situation that happens would work with the DEAs, DEC's, communities, and regions, and the capital planning requirements that are out there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the situation I know is sensitive. I'm just trying to get an idea as to future costs in terms of the schooling. I understand the process of needs and requirements by the departments in terms of bringing their budgets forth to the business planning cycle. I'm hearing from Colville Lake that there is a desperate need, and it just seems like we're not doing anything to take care of that. So I'm not too sure of those requirements at that time, as we just heard last week. That's my concern. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this document before us deals with the requirements the departments need, at this point, to fulfill the projects that are on their books in the fiscal year that we find ourselves in. For other facilities outside of this, I guess, at this point, we'll go to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment if he may have some details he can share with the Member on this. As we're going through this document, the departments are requesting these resources to deal with the requirements placed on them at this point in time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to confirm, we're talking about the \$800,000, is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mr. Yakeleya is looking for the big picture, Colville Lake. Mr. Dent.

HON. CHARLES DENT: Okay, so it's not even on this page. Colville Lake is still in the capital plan, as I've assured the Member in the House previously in this session. I don't have the exact numbers before me, but the plan is still to replace. We have committed to have staff visit the community to discuss the plan.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Committee, we're on page 27, Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures, special warrants, \$800,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Not previously authorized, negative \$1.952 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 28, Transportation, capital investment expenditures, not previously authorized, \$2.8 million. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a real pleasure to see a project, and if I have my information right, that's going to be completed ahead of time and on budget. The question I wanted to ask here is, of course, on the airport passenger terminal building project in Yellowknife. We're not changing the overall cost of the project, but because of advances in completion, we need \$2.8 million to spend this current year, and not next year when it was originally booked. My question, Mr. Chair, is, how is this acceleration achieved? As I say, it's good to see, but we're still sort of five months out from the end of

the fiscal year. It seems that a lot of work was done earlier than, perhaps, projected, and I would just like to get a little detail on what happened either in the construction, or the planning, or the scheduling, that caused this variance. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the information, as the Member has pointed out, is correct. The project is ahead of schedule and will be completed before the initial timeline that was laid out. So we're basically taking the money that would have been spent in the next fiscal year, and bringing it to this year. As to why it's ahead of schedule, I don't have that information available. Maybe we can have the Minister provide that at a later date. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Minister McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, I don't have the exact detail as to why they're ahead of schedule. Our contractors advise us that a lot of the work has been completed up to now, and we expect to be able to continue to move ahead. We don't want an interruption in the work. We'd like to see the contractors continue. So we're asking that some of the money that was budgeted for next year be moved forward. I think some of that may be on our own timelines that were brought forward, and maybe they were a little bit too generous, and the contractor has shown that they've been able to stay ahead of the game. They've assured us that the passenger terminal building and the CATSA portion of it will be ready by January 1st, and the project should be completed by March. So there's no good news there that we're ahead of the game, but we also need money to continue this moving forward.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Okay, Mr. Chair, I'll look forward to that information, and I think associated with it, will be the rollout of the department's plans for recouping this investment. As we have been told, this will be done through increased user fees, and the like. So it will be interesting to see how that whole project rolls out. No further questions, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Back to page 28, Transportation, capital investment expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$2.8 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 29, Industry, Tourism and Investment, capital investment expenditures, not previously authorized, total department, \$60,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you. We're now done detail. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Hawkins.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you. The motion is in order and not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress. Thank you, committee.

MR. SPEAKER: Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please? Mr. Ramsay.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2005-2006, and would like to report progress with one motion being adopted. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Do we have a seconder? The Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, orders of the day for Thursday, October 27, 2005, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
 - Motion 10-15(4), Extended Adjournment of the House to February 1, 2006
17. First Reading of Bills

18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2005-2006
 - Minister's Statement 24-15(4), Sessional Statement
 - Committee Report 4-15(4), Report on the Review of the NWT Information and Privacy Commissioner's 2003-2004 Annual Report
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, October 27, 2005, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 21:39 p.m.

