



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**5<sup>th</sup> Session**

**Day 3**

**16<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Wednesday, March 3, 2010**

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**The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Hay River North)

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(Great Slave)

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(Tu Nedhe)

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

**Mr. Bob Bromley**  
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**Hon. Floyd Roland**  
(Inuvik Boot Lake)  
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*Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Relations*  
*Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation*

**Mr. Norman Yakeleya**  
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Box 1320  
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories  
Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784  
<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Wednesday, March 3, 2010****Members Present**

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

The House met at 1:35 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey):** Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, Mr. Roland.

**Ministers' Statements**

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 7-16(5):  
A COMMON VISION FOR THE POLITICAL  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE NWT

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to update Members on the work being undertaken to advance the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly's priority of working toward a common vision for the political development of the NWT.

As Members are aware, the newly established Northern Leaders' Forum is made up of a representative from each of the regional aboriginal governments, the Northwest Territories Association of Communities, MLAs Mr. Ramsay and Mr. Krutko and myself. We initially met in July 2009 to hold preliminary discussions about working on the development of a common vision for the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to advise that the Northern Leaders' Forum met for the second time in November 2009 and we are united in our agreement to work together to develop a common vision and roadmap for the future of the NWT and build upon a solid foundation of respectful government-to-government relations. Now we need to turn our attention to formalizing our collaboration, identifying a common vision for this Territory we all call home, engaging the people we serve and learning from those who have travelled this road before us.

There is a wealth of information for us to build upon. There are national examples of how governments can work together for the betterment of all citizens. For instance, since 2005, the Council of the Federation has successfully provided provincial and territorial governments the

opportunity to identify, advance and resolve common issues and interests. All of the governments who participate in the Council of the Federation retain full authority and jurisdiction within their respective provinces and territories but are able to come together and discuss issues of national and mutual concern for the benefit of all Canadians. I believe this is what governments in the NWT can and need to do to enhance our collective ability to successfully advance key issues of importance for all Northerners.

All northern leaders expressed support to consider a similar approach, based on mutual respect and recognition, to determine the nature and extent of our future intergovernmental relationships.

Mr. Speaker, as Premier and Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, I have made it a priority to meet with regional aboriginal government leaders on a regular basis. My meetings with all the leaders, through the GNWT-Regional Aboriginal Leaders' Meeting forum (RALM) take place three to four times per year. Since taking office, we have met in the RALM forum seven times, with another meeting planned for later this March.

Our government is committed to attending the annual general assemblies of regional aboriginal governments. Over the course of the past year, Ministers and I have been fortunate to be able to attend a number of these assemblies held throughout the NWT, and look forward to the opportunity to attend more in the upcoming year.

Mr. Speaker, our government has also placed high importance on making ourselves available to meet individually with aboriginal leaders. These types of meetings provide the opportunity to address a range of matters that are of specific concern or interest to our respective governments and organizations and serve to further strengthen our one-on-one relationships.

The recent establishment of the Northern Leaders' Forum, the multilateral RALM meetings, the annual general assemblies and the numerous bilateral meetings present many formal and informal opportunities to engage with the North's leadership.

During the term of this Assembly, we have met on a government-to-government basis with aboriginal

government leaders more frequently than any other previous territorial government.

I believe that keeping open lines of communication among all northern governments and finding concrete ways in which we can work together is particularly important at times such as these. When we may not all agree on an issue. The challenge before us is to find respectful ways in which we can discuss these issues, seek common ground, and at times agree to disagree but to do so without compromising our government-to-government relations.

As I stated last session, I am fully committed to working with Members during the term of this Assembly to ensure that we achieve our goal of achieving a strong and independent North built on partnerships and to completing a common vision for the political development of the NWT. Currently the Northern Leaders' Forum is developing a plan of action to guide us over the coming months and I'll ensure that the Legislative Assembly is kept apprised of these developments.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 8-16(5):  
ELECTRICITY REVIEW UPDATE

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, electricity is an essential service in today's society. Access to affordable electrical power enhances our quality of life and allows economies to grow. Without it, we face serious challenges.

Today I would like to provide an update on one of the Government of the Northwest Territories most important initiatives: the electricity review process. In November 2009 I tabled the report of the Electricity Review Panel titled *Creating a Brighter Future: A Review of Electricity Rates, Regulation, and Subsidy Programs in the Northwest Territories*, commonly referred to as the Electricity Review. This report was distributed to all communities and key stakeholders so they could provide comments for the Government of the Northwest Territories consideration.

I am pleased to report that a number of communities and key stakeholders took us up on this offer. We have received comments from the communities of Inuvik, Yellowknife, Fort Smith and Hay River, as well as the Northwest Territories Power Corporation and the Public Utilities Board. We have distributed copies of these comments to all Regular Members of the Legislative Assembly through the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning. We will consider those comments as we work with the standing committee on the development of the Government of the Northwest Territories response.

As we develop our response, the key issue of concern to residents of communities -- high energy costs -- is at the forefront of many discussions.

It is incumbent upon our government to address this issue and achieve the objectives we set out at the beginning of this electricity review process:

- reduce costs where possible;
- distribute costs equitably; and
- ensure affordability.

When I tabled the report of the Electricity Review Panel our government proposed to develop a comprehensive response by March 2010. This response was to also consider the findings of the review of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, a report that the Premier will be tabling later today.

As all Members have come to appreciate, the development of our response is a complex undertaking. In addition to consideration of the findings of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation review, we need to ensure that any change can work for all communities, residents and utilities in the Northwest Territories. I believe all Members of this Assembly agree that it is important we take the time to get it right. That is what we intend to do.

As we embark on completing this important work, I believe we need to make the choices that will strengthen the entire Northwest Territories. This includes access to affordable electricity for all our communities and our residents.

That is the task before us as we set a course for the future. The Ministerial Energy Coordinating Committee will continue to work closely with the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning to develop our government response. We have achieved a great deal of progress to date and I am confident that we will be in a position to release our response by May 2010.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 9-16(5):  
UPDATE ON FEDERAL-TERRITORIAL  
HOUSING DISCUSSION

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the decline of funding from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the challenges this decline will cause in the delivery of the Public Housing Program, as well as the potential negative impact on the condition of our housing stock.

There are clear signs that core need continues to be on the rise in Canada and in our own Territory. Earlier in this session I tabled the results of our

housing needs portion of the 2009 NWT Community Survey showing that we continue to experience a growth in core housing need. This is in spite of investments made by the federal government and our own government over the last five years through the Affordable Housing Initiative, the Northern Housing Trust, as well as Canada's Economic Action Plan, all of which saw funding matched by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

Since the NWT Housing Corporation came into being in 1974, federal funding and cost sharing of the construction has been the norm. Canada as a whole has approximately 630,000 social housing units, with 2,400 of these houses in the NWT. Many of the agreements to fund the O and M of these houses nationally will be ending in the next several years.

In the Northwest Territories, the federal cost share portion of funding for the operating and amortization costs for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation public housing portfolio is declining, and will lapse entirely by 2038. The funding reductions began in 2003-2004, with reductions increasing each year as additional project agreements expire, resulting in a significant financial shortfall to the GNWT. By the year 2038, the impact to the GNWT will be a shortfall of \$348 million dollars in O and M funding.

It has been estimated that an annual ongoing capital replacement budget of \$35 million is required to implement the government's strategy, through the NWTHC, of replacing detached public housing units with multiplexes and retrofitting units twice during their design life. A capital replacement budget of \$35 million annually does not, however, address the requirement for new housing stock to alleviate core need or the impact of new family formations.

Based on the 2009 NWT Community Survey results, it has been estimated that approximately an additional 2,755 new units are required in the NWT to address existing core need. This number is larger than our entire current public housing stock of approximately 2,400 units, and clearly, under our current means, we are not able to meet the demand for public housing to all residents who require it. The decline of the federal funding will further hamper our ability to adequately house our residents.

In response to the impact of reducing federal support for housing nationally, the provinces and territories are working towards the development of a business case for Parliament to consider the reinstatement of public housing subsidies as part of a national housing strategy. I have raised specific NWT concerns on the future delivery of federal housing funding at tri-territorial discussions and most recently during the FPT Housing Minister's

Conference in December 2009. Those concerns have focused on:

- the need for more public housing in the NWT;
- the need for increased O and M funding in support of public housing;
- support for funding formulas that are not based on per capita calculations; and
- the design of housing programs by the NWT that reflect the importance of housing need in the NWT.

The three territorial governments are also working collaboratively to develop a northern approach to address the high incidence of core need in our northern jurisdictions.

Mr. Speaker, our government is also taking proactive steps to mitigate the reduction in federal support towards the operation of the 2,400 public housing units. The NWT Housing Corporation, over the past several years, has invested significant federal and GNWT capital resources in renovating and replacing detached public housing with energy efficient, multi-family housing units such as triplexes and fourplexes. These units are more economical to construct and are more cost effective to maintain, especially when the utility costs are taken into account.

As well, in order to minimize the impact of the declining CMHC funding, the NWT Housing Corporation extends the design life of each public housing unit from 25 to 50 years by performing complete retrofits. These retrofits are performed 20 years after construction and again at 35 years after construction. Public housing units are planned for replacement after a period of 50 years. Units that are looked after and properly maintained will see their lifespan extended and will reduce pressure on the O and M budget. Likewise, improved payment and collection of arrears will offset some of the losses suffered from the declining CMHC funds.

The NWT Housing Corporation is working on a strategic plan, as well as a 20-year capital needs assessment. A major component of these plans will outline our efforts to address the infrastructure deficit and work to reducing core housing need across the NWT. We plan on sharing our strategic plan with all Members before the end of 2010.

While the impacts to date on GNWT revenue and expenditures have not been excessive, it is clear that the reduction in CMHC and federal investments will begin to be more acute in 2010-2011 with the expiration of a broad range of federal funding initiatives and programs aimed at housing. This, coupled with ever increasing energy, O and M, and construction costs, will be a significant challenge to the NWT in the immediate future.

While we have seen great progress made in the development of new supply over the last several

years, it is also clear that the number of Northerners living in core housing need continues to be a problem that governments must tackle in a planned and strategic way. Through the proactive approaches I have outlined today and with a renewed strategic focus, I am hopeful that our public housing and homeownership programs will continue to serve our residents in the years to come.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 10-16(5):  
MINISTER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Jackson Lafferty will be absent from the House today and tomorrow to attend the Council of Ministers of Education meeting in Toronto.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Colleagues, before I go on with the business of the day I would like to draw your attention to and acknowledge a very special day in the House of two of our Members. It happens to be the birthday of the Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee, and the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert McLeod. Happy Birthday to both of you.

---Applause

Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

### Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
TRIBUTE TO KEN HUNT OF HAY RIVER

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to use my Member's statement to pay my respects to a Hay River resident who recently passed away.

James Kenneth Hunt passed away, surrounded by his family, in Hay River this past Sunday. A celebration had marked his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday last year and a celebration and remembrance of his life will mark what would have been his 91<sup>st</sup> birthday in a service planned for Hay River tomorrow.

Ken had a full and interesting life. He started his career with the Hudson's Bay and served in posts as diverse as Ross River and Lutselk'e in a time when the Bay manager was everything from the recorder of the local weather to a stand-in medical care provider until help arrived.

He met his beautiful wife, Peggy, on a blind date set up by friends and it had to be love, as she joined him in Clyde River where they had their first home together. They had four children: Lynn, Jimmy, Bruce and Barb. He is predeceased by his wife in 2002 and his eldest son, Jimmy, in 2009.

Ken Hunt eventually made his way to Hay River in 1955 and that became home. He was the longest-serving member of the Hay River Volunteer Fire Department and attended the most recent firemen's ball just this past December. His work career was varied because he was someone who made sure he was always busy and would step up to the needs and opportunities that came his way.

He finished his formal career as a Fisheries and Oceans inspections officer and that's where I first met him. I was 18 at the time and he never hesitated to share his opinion on just about anything. I typed his weekly handwritten reports, which he always signed J.K. Hunt, and that was the name I fondly referred to him by.

Even by that time he had had some heart problems. He carried his nitro pills in his uniform shirt pocket and that was 35 years ago, so I'm amazed at how active and involved he remained.

They say that age is a state of mind. If that's the case, then Ken Hunt never considered himself old. Never having known how to dance myself, but attending social functions that he attended, I loved to watch him dance; so light on his feet and such a gentleman.

He leaves behind a legacy of dedication to family and strong community service. This is now reflected in the lives of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** With the greatest of admiration and respect I will say that I don't think Ken would have won a congeniality contest and he had a famous licence plate on his van that would prove that. But he was good people with a strong presence and he formed an integral part of the fabric of Hay River. He will be missed. May he rest in peace.

Please join me in sending our sincere condolences to the Hunt family of Hay River.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. My sincere condolences go on to the Hunt family, that's for sure. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
LUTSELK'E CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE  
REQUIREMENTS

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to speak about capital dollars for Lutselk'e. We are coming to the end of another fiscal year and the community of Lutselk'e is once again in danger of losing out on

accessing capital funding for another year; much needed funding for infrastructure and long-overdue municipal projects.

The community has a capital plan. They have identified the projects that are a priority. Unfortunately, because of inflexible policies within the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and the process of getting much needed capital money, the community is stuck in a morass.

Currently the community has a plan that is within the acceptable amounts congruent to what a settlement council would receive. Although the community wishes to negotiate hamlet status level, they will accept the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs delivering capital directly at a settlement council status level for the interim. The department must initiate discussions with the community of Lutselk'e now, specifically the Lutselk'e Dene First Nations, to complete the transfer of assets and capital dollars as soon as possible.

Some of the projects the community is looking to get started right away are building a new youth recreation centre, a new fire hall, gravel production, stockpiling, heavy equipment such as a water and sewer truck, a loader, backhoe, dump truck, and dust control. A water truck is an essential piece of equipment for Lutselk'e. If their current water truck breaks down, they will not be able to deliver water to the homes or businesses within the community.

With the barge season almost upon us we need to take advantage at this time and confirm plans for this summer's construction season and get all the necessary equipment, supplies and materials in on this summer's barge. I will have questions for the Minister of MACA on this later.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DENTAL CARE SERVICES IN NAHENDEH COMMUNITIES

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to speak about the difficulty that people in every community in Nahendeh are having in getting dental care and treatment. Many people in our region are eligible for free dental care, but the irony is that there are no local dentists available to provide that care.

The present situation is that a dental clinic is held twice a year. As well, according to the Deh Cho Health and Social Services Authority phone directory, although a position is allocated, we do not have a dental therapist at the Bompas School.

Dentists are very important health providers for people of all ages. A dentist can identify potential problems and give advice and provide treatment to prevent problems. Of course, dentists also treat

diseases of the mouth and respond to dental emergencies.

In recent years it has become known that dentistry is necessary for complete overall health, and dental problems can contribute to other health issues. For example, there is a link between teeth and gum problems and heart disease. Thus it must be recognized how important it is to have a resident dentist. It is likely the most economical means to serve the region.

Later this afternoon I will be submitting a petition from 134 people in Nahendeh requesting a full-time dentist and office in Fort Simpson. This dentist would serve all the communities of Nahendeh. Also, the other communities in my riding have a petition in the works. Unfortunately, I won't be able to file those petitions in the House with the days that we have left.

In Nahendeh we are in great need of regular dental checkups and follow-up treatment. I would urge the Department of Health and Social Services to assist in establishing a resident dentist in our region.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MEDICAL TRAVEL SERVICES FOR ULUKHAKTOK RESIDENTS

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When you live in a small, isolated community such as Ulukhaktok, air travel is the only lifeline all year round. There is no road to the community for assistance. When constituents have to leave for medical travel conditions, they have to wait for the next flight. Most of the time they're sold out; they get bumped. The government must act to fix this problem.

During my last visit to the community of Ulukhaktok, the community brought up a very serious concern regarding patients who have appointments with specialists in Inuvik. Most of the time the patients cannot make their appointments due to Aklak's small aircraft and the lack of seating. They are dealing with serious medical conditions, and when they can't make their appointments, they have to wait for the next round of visits.

Mr. Speaker, there are only two seats saved for medical travel for patients out of the community of Ulukhaktok. Recently, a constituent received open-heart surgery in Edmonton. The nurse who takes care of the travel in Edmonton said it would best for the patient to go to the hospital closest to the home town. His wife told the nurse sending him to Inuvik didn't make any sense as it would mean longer travel time and the high possibility of getting bumped due to Aklak's small aircraft. Had he been sent to Yellowknife, this would have saved all parties physically and financially.

They had to fly him in from Edmonton to Yellowknife and then into Inuvik, wait in a transient centre for the weekend, and then off to Ulukhaktok on Monday, when they could have just stopped off in Yellowknife and flew him out on Saturday. There's definite seating with First Air's planes, they're adequate, they have washroom facilities and would have saved both parties the time, and patients who have serious surgery would not have to go through so much discomfort.

Over the years I have raised many concerns regarding the GNWT's medical travel policies and the ways suitable for small and remote communities. All over the years the Minister has found many excuses to defend the aircraft policies. What people in the Nunakput community of Ulukhaktok are asking is for this government to be creative, not so much with the excuses, but to be creative and implement our recommendations and the concerns regarding medical travel, administration, procedures and policies.

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

---Unanimous consent granted.

**MR. JACOBSON:** As our communities and population ages, all the current practices are increasingly inadequate. Our elders and patients deserve more from this government. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services at the appropriate time. Thank you.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PROPOSED ROUTES FOR TALTSON HYDRO EXPANSION TRANSMISSION LINES

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we do not need another Deh Cho Bridge financial boondoggle, yet we have already sunk more than \$13 million in public money into the Taltson Hydro Project. I want to know how the public interest is being represented in the controversial and ephemeral proposed routing of the Taltson hydro transmission line to serve a single customer goal: the diamond mines. Where is the strategic thinking?

Restricting a transmission line to the east side of the lake may serve our project partners in their search for returns, but I don't see a serious consideration of public interests, interests that would accrue with an alternative routing. A west-side routing would tie in the diesel communities of Kakisa and Fort Providence, cross the bridge designed to accommodate transmission lines, and link the Snare and Taltson hydro systems. We'd have renewable energy for Avalon secondary processing and the Nico, Tyhee and Avalon mines, and a shorter route on from Snare to the diamond

mines. We'd also get Behchoko and Yellowknife on an expanded hydro grid and off diesel completely. We'd have a diversified market of hydro customers insulated from the boom and bust of being committed to just one major customer.

Mr. Speaker, the NWT Hydro Corporation strategic plan promises a "feasibility analysis and design of a potential electrical grid for the NWT." With 13 million bucks in public money invested, we aren't any closer to that strategic vision. We have a plan to run a transmission line through a national park to the diamond mines instead of building an integrated distribution network serving the entire North and South Slave. Piecemeal expansion without strategic vision is not in the public interest. Even a basic look at the \$13 million of actions to date shows that they aren't getting the big picture: the supply of power to go to where the economy is and where we can reliably predict it will be. It must go there.

The Deh Cho Bridge disaster proves the dangers of getting locked into arrangements with consortia that can lose control of their projects. Yet, here we are again linked in partnerships we could live to regret because of their lack of focus on public interests. If this goes off the rails, this government will once again be stuck with a bill for finishing a project too far along to abandon.

Mr. Speaker, it's time for this government to take control of the utilities it owns and start building for the future. I'll be asking questions...

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO SUPPLEMENTARY HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to talk about the supplementary health benefits. I know that some of the Members may be surprised that I'm talking about this, because the Sahtu communities are a majority of aboriginal communities and maybe the supp health benefits programs are not such a great concern.

Sahtu people have access to First Nation and Inuit benefit programs administrated by Health Canada. Most aboriginal people consider that this obligation flows from our treaty rights as First Nations people. The provision of a medicine chest is an obligation of the federal government, and this obligation now includes coverage of costs for drugs, eye and dental care, and some medical equipment. Metis Northerners are covered by the GNWT's Metis health benefits, which is an exact duplicate of the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program, except this is administrated by the Health and Social Services.

So what's the problem for me? Most Sahtu residents have extensive coverage. Probably the huge majority of non-aboriginal residents in the

Sahtu have coverage through their employer, the GNWT, the Government of Canada, the RCMP, Esso, Enbridge or whatever. Why should I be concerned about the supplementary health benefits? Because I want to see programs that are fair and provide to those people who are most in need.

We don't provide housing to everyone who walks through the doors. We don't provide income support to everyone who shows up at the office. We should be providing these supplementary health benefits to those who are most in need.

The Minister said that the income testing is a good way to determine that need. I think I can agree with that. If you're 65 years old and have a large income, you can find coverage through private companies. If you're 25 years old and a single mother with a child and you don't have a job, then the government should help you with the coverage. That seems pretty reasonable to me.

I don't want the Minister to return to the Members and tell us that she needs more money to provide new coverage to new clients and maintaining coverage to existing clients, or to tell Members that she has to reduce services in our small communities in order to provide the increased coverage in Yellowknife. I want her to make program changes to make the program provide services to those most in need of our help and not to cost the government more money.

Mr. Speaker, Members may not like the plans and the directions of the Health Minister, but at least she's out there trying to work with the stakeholders in trying to get something done. Let's do our part to get on with it and make the changes to these programs that need to be changed. The North is changing with our programs and needs to be changed now. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SUPPORT FOR THE NORTHERN FILM INDUSTRY

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the vision of the GNWT is strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits and responsibilities of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories.

To have a prosperous Northwest Territories we need strong economies and opportunities for Northerners to find meaningful employment. This government spends a significant amount of their time and energy trying to support industry which will help create meaningful employment in the diamond industry, as well as in oil and gas exploration.

Although most of these focus on non-renewable resources which result in short-term employment, this is important and obviously must be continued.

Unfortunately, this government does not seem to put equal or even a portion of the attention or emphasis on renewable and more sustainable economies. When we do, we tend to overburden the business with excessive red tape, as outlined in the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses recent report, Prosperity Restricted by Red Tape, which indicated that the NWT is not one of the Canadian jurisdictions taking an aggressive lead in this area.

As a government, we must place greater attention on smaller and more sustainable economies, business and industry which, although smaller than diamond mines or pipelines, will employ Northerners both today and long into the future.

One such industry which has sadly been ignored is the film industry. Prior to this session, my colleague Bob Bromley and I had an opportunity to meet with several passionate NWT-based filmmakers. These individuals are passionate about the industry and are frustrated by the GNWT's lack of understanding of the benefits of the industry to the NWT as a whole.

A film industry in the NWT has a significant number of advantages to the NWT as a whole, including, but not limited to, employment for Northerners, promotion of the NWT as a place to live, visit and/or work, engage and support other business and industry such as airlines, hotels, transportation and expediting, et cetera, and promote the culture of our great land. Yet, sadly, there is virtually no attention or support given to this industry in the NWT.

Industry, Tourism and Investment employs one half-time position. The incumbent has a number of other responsibilities which compete for attention. Evidence shows that the film industry in the NWT suffers from this mixed attention.

Mr. Speaker, we, as a government, must pay greater attention to small, sustainable economies which will employ Northerners for the long term. The film industry is an example of a small, sustainable industry with which some support can offer employment to Northerners for the long term. Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be asking the Minister of ITI some questions on this topic. Thank you.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON 2010 ARCTIC WINTER GAMES

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the next few days NWT youth, their coaches and chaperones will be packing their bags, gathering their sports equipment and boarding

planes to travel to Grande Prairie, Alberta, for the 2010 Winter Games. This event, held every two years in the circumpolar region, is the Olympics of the North and the opening ceremonies will be held this Sunday evening.

For the last several years, thousands of NWT young people have been learning new skills, training hard to get and stay in shape and practising their sport diligently in preparation for next week's competitions.

Involvement in sports and recreation activities can have a profound effect on young people and it's well known that they benefit mentally, psychologically, physically and economically from being physically active. Youth who are physically active are far healthier than those who are not. They generally live a healthier lifestyle and are less likely to abuse alcohol or drugs and often do better in school. Lessons are learned through competitive physical activity; lessons which have a positive impact on the developing character of a young person. I have no doubt that every one of our Arctic Winter Games team have benefited from their involvement in sport.

I consider myself a jock, Mr. Speaker. I will never shed my love of, or for, sports. It's given me many opportunities I would otherwise not have had and it's enriched my life through relationships and unique experiences.

Many of our young people who have participated in the Arctic Winter Games experience to date have experienced local trials and team selections, regional competitions and territorial competitions. They have already benefited from this year's Arctic Winter Games. For those who were not successful in making Team NWT this year, I say stay in shape, keep training and try again for 2012. It's only two years away.

To the members of our 2010 Arctic Winter Games Team NWT, athletes, coaches, mission staff, chaperones, parents and other supporters who will be cheering, enjoy your week with old and new friends. Do your best, that's all we can ask of you. Win or lose, you will have gained tremendously and we will be proud of you. So play hard but fair and do your Territory proud over the next week both on the sports field and off. Go, NWT, go!

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
NORTHLAND TRAILER PARK WATER AND  
SEWER REPLACEMENT PROJECT

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to follow up on a statement and lend my support to a statement made by my colleague from Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro, yesterday about the situation presently at play with Northland Trailer

Park located in her riding of Frame Lake here in the city of Yellowknife.

Northland Trailer Park is home to close to 1,000 residents, Mr. Speaker. They are sitting on top of infrastructure that should have been replaced well over 15 years ago. Just last week a section of sewer line failed and 300 feet of aboveground line was put in as an interim measure. Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, the water and sewer lines located beneath these homes is a potential disaster in the making. The infrastructure needs to be replaced as soon as possible. Has our government got any plans to house these families and individuals should the worst-case scenario present itself?

Mr. Speaker, we need to help facilitate the replacement of this infrastructure, to work with the residents, the City of Yellowknife and help find funding sources to complete the \$18 million worth of work that's required.

Mr. Speaker, our government needs to be there for our residents when emergencies arise, and in life, Mr. Speaker, emergencies do happen, whether that's in Fort Smith, Inuvik, Tulita or here in Yellowknife. As government, Mr. Speaker, we need to be watching the situation with Northland very closely. Planning has to be undertaken on how to deal with the potential emergency of health and social issues that a collapse of these pipes would cause. Mr. Speaker, I'm not trying to scare anyone. The reality is that this is an emergency and we, as a government, need to get to the table to help in whatever way we can.

To add to the complication of this situation, Mr. Speaker, the trailer park is not owned by the City of Yellowknife but the Yellowknife Condominium Corporation No. 8. The residents obviously can't take on the costs themselves and, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mayor Gord Van Tighem, Councillor Brooks and other councillors as well as the administration at city hall for advancing this issue on behalf of the residents of Northland Trailer Park, and Mr. Wade Friesen, as well, for his help.

We will need to step up to the plate, Mr. Speaker, and I'll be asking the Minister of MACA how the government plans on addressing this very real and urgent situation. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
EFFORTS TO ATTRACT  
BUSINESS INVESTMENT

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the North is a great place to live. People are warm and friendly despite the climate some days. Certainly it's a wonderful place to work and I want

more people in Canada and the world to know this, but sometimes I find it's one of the best kept secrets out there. So today I want to express my concern to the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment and encourage him to take on a new and bold step to help attract businesses to the Northwest Territories.

We've all heard about what some other provinces do to attract people and businesses. Take Saskatchewan, for example. They are recruiting young people by offering to forgive their student loans. Quebec takes step by supporting business investment, so they can be established. New Brunswick has painted itself as the ideal place for call centres.

So, Mr. Speaker, many provincial and community governments are not sitting idly by waiting for businesses to show up on their door. They are out there aggressively attracting and pursuing those types of business investments. You can find their websites that provide masses of information that help those businesses make that relocation decision. It's coordinated information that is useful in the busy climate of being in business. You can obtain information about how to attract skilled workers in that local area, cost of services, special grants, loans. It makes it really business friendly when that industry of investment starts working for their province.

Some provinces offer young entrepreneurs special mentorship programs and they certainly help them establish their businesses. Their governments know what's going on, but, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if ours realizes what we're missing out on. I can't say the Government of the Northwest Territories isn't open for business, but I can tell you the warm welcome isn't there.

Mr. Speaker, we need continued investment in our economy. All you have to do is look at our continued drop in our corporate taxes to see the signals that are there. Businesses are either not busy or people are no longer coming to the North. Mr. Speaker, I want the Minister of ITI to consider starting a task force that could advise him on ways to help attract new investment and new businesses to relocate to the Northwest Territories. Perhaps we need to provide special loans; I don't know. But that type of discussion needs to be asked: what works for business and what would attract them here to the North.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of opportunities that exist out there and I don't want to watch them go by. I will have questions to the Minister later today and we'll discuss it further then. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON 2010 ARCTIC WINTER GAMES

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to recognize some 45 athletes who will be travelling to the Arctic Winter Games from my riding...

---Applause

...Mr. Speaker. That includes cultural events such as dancers, such as the Gwich'in Dancers from Aklavik who are led by Annie Buckle, as well as the people who are participating in the Dene Games. We also have Stephanie Charlie who is going to be participating in hockey, which is again breaking the ice to get the athletes from the smaller communities to be involved in the larger teams.

One of the big achievements we had this year was with snowshoeing, biathlon and cross-country skiing where the Hanthorn family, which consists of six individuals, made the NWT Ski Team. Again, it shows that dedication, commitment and also hard work pays off. It shows that small communities can compete in these large events.

The majority of the athletes that are going are in snowshoeing. Mr. Speaker, it shows where there is commitment, volunteering of their parents, the community, their support and the individual who takes the time to put in the effort, make the team and help each other through this challenge.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to pass on my support to all the athletes, wish them well and make us proud, realizing that some 45 people representing the Northwest Territories at the Arctic Winter Games are from two of the communities in my riding, Aklavik and Fort McPherson. I am not leaving out Tsiigehtchic where they do have one athlete going for Dene Games.

With that, I would like to wish them all the best and I look forward to seeing all of them in Grande Prairie at the Arctic Winter Games.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Welcome everyone in the gallery today. I hope you're enjoying the proceedings. It's nice to have an audience in here. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

#### Oral Questions

##### QUESTION 23-16(5):

##### NORTHERN FILM INDUSTRY OPPORTUNITIES

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As outlined in my Member's statement, as a government we must place greater focus and attention on small, sustainable and local economies. The NWT film industry would support

employment, cultural promotion, highlight the NWT as a potential place to work, visit and live, yet there's little or no GNWT support for this industry. Clearly ITI doesn't recognize the value of this industry. Filmmakers in the NWT would like an opportunity to demonstrate the value that this industry does have to the NWT.

As such, they would like the GNWT to facilitate an independent review of the film industry to highlight the potential advantages here in the Northwest Territories. Would the Minister commit to facilitating such an independent review? I believe that if he did, the Minister will be very surprised at how many benefits this industry will bring to the Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member will be pleased to know that I have already committed to do an independent review of providing support to the NWT film industry. Your fellow colleagues have already indicated the need for that and we're very pleased to be able to undertake an independent review.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** That is very good news. Building upon this review, some of the NWT-based filmmakers would also like an opportunity to meet with the Minister himself to help him understand the impact this industry could have on the Northwest Territories. Would the Minister also commit to meeting with a small delegation of these NWT-based filmmakers, myself and my colleague Mr. Bromley, to discuss the industry in hopes of helping the Minister better understand the industry as a whole?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Recognizing that most Members don't like us to use consultants, we'll be doing this review in house. We'll be pleased to meet with the independent filmmakers and MLAs Bromley and Abernethy. I'd also like to inform the Member that, and of course your colleague MLA Hawkins, we are having NWT Film Week at Northern House I believe next week.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** I'm sorry, I forgot to include my colleague Mr. Hawkins. Obviously he should be there as well. Lastly, I'm glad you're going to be doing the review, but I think it's very important that we get outside-of-the-government input as well, not just the filmmakers, but other industries and people that would benefit from the industry. I was hoping I could get the Minister to commit to going well beyond just the filmmakers themselves.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** I'll be pleased to accept any suggestions that the Member may have. We were intending to look at what other jurisdictions were doing, as well, to see what we could incorporate.

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

QUESTION 24-16(5):  
DENTAL CARE SERVICES IN  
NAHENDEH COMMUNITIES

**MR. MENICOCHE:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to follow up on the demands of my constituents in Nahendeh and my Member's statement with regard to the residents coming up with a petition and public showing of the need by the constituents of Nahendeh to establish a dentist office or a dentist in the community of Fort Simpson to serve the region. I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services how my constituents and myself can work towards establishing such an office in Fort Simpson.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the concerns of the people from Nahendeh as I have heard a lot of that when I did a regional tour with the Member. The fact is that dental service is not a service provided by the GNWT. It is one that is administered by the non-insured health benefits. Our health authority there does provide assistance in this regard, but we have had very difficult times attracting dentists. Whenever we put out interests in contracts, we just are not getting enough interest. None of the northern dentists have applied to practice there. I believe Deh Cho Health was able to get a contractor from Quebec. With the contractor in place, with a dentist in place I'm hoping that they can catch up and do more visits into the Nahendeh.

**MR. MENICOCHE:** That's exactly the issue that the constituents have shared with me, is that there are just lengthy delays in travel to and fro to get their needs met and often they have to wait several days. Especially when someone has a toothache, it's not a very good situation. However, in terms of medical travel to get to Yellowknife or Hay River in the case of Fort Simpson, who covers that cost?

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Dental services are the responsibility of the federal government under NIHB Program, as it is the federal responsibility to provide dental care to our aboriginal residents all across Canada, including the NWT. Where there are medical emergencies, if it's medical it could come under GNWT responsibility. We do respond to medical emergencies and we do cover for medical travel. I think part of it is billed to NIHB and part of it is covered by GNWT.

**MR. MENICOCHE:** I think, if anything, the cost of the medical travel... I don't know if there can be some research done. Perhaps the Minister can work with the office of the federal Minister with

regard to health and social services and NIHB. Will the cost of the medical travel balance off with establishing a full-time dentist in the community of Fort Simpson?

**HON. SANDY LEE:** I believe this issue is not just about cost, it's about shortage of dentists. Their services are at a high premium. They mostly work in the private sector. They choose where they're going to work. Having said that, I am willing to undertake this issue and see what we can do. I'd be happy to discuss it with my federal counterpart to at least stress the point of the importance of dental services that NIHB provides in our small communities and what room there is for us to see if they can step it up a bit.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased that our Minister is willing to raise that the next time she meets with the federal Minister. Also, as they work towards it there must be some creative solutions, like providing incentives of getting a private dentist into the region. Often when that is the case, they are able to take up the workload of NIHB. I'm glad the Minister is willing to do that. Will she raise the issue the next time she meets with the federal Minister?

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Yes, I will undertake to do that.

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

#### QUESTION 25-16(5):

#### PROPOSED CHANGES TO SUPPLEMENTARY HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Health and Social Services. I want to ask her questions on the Extended Health Benefits Program. I want to ask the Minister what the total costs are of the existing Extended Health Benefits Program.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We spend about \$8 million for non-aboriginal residents of the Northwest Territories. We spend a couple of million dollars for Metis health. The aboriginal residents of the Territories receive their extended health benefits through NIHB, which is a federal program.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I want to ask the Minister a technical question. How much does it cost the government to top up payments for people who already have 80 percent coverage of their drugs and earn large incomes?

**HON. SANDY LEE:** I don't believe we have our stats broken down into that detail, but it is true under our current system that those with employer insurance, whether they work for the government or whatever third-party insurance they have, if they are over 60 they get a top-up. Nobody else would get the top-up. Same for those with chronic conditions. If they have private insurance they will get a top-up. But because our system basically covers 100 percent of it all, they come straight to us.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Will the Minister implement a program which supports low-income earners without coverage so that these people and their families can get assistance with the cost of their drugs, visits to the dentist and costs of eyeglasses?

**HON. SANDY LEE:** The consultation that we are doing right now on the basis of the public discussion paper we have out there is geared toward having a discussion about that, explaining what our extended health benefits are doing right now. Right now anybody who is over 60 or with a specified condition that is on the list gets 100 percent coverage no questions asked, as long as they have NWT health care. What the program does not provide is for those who are not 60 or who are not eligible for the specified medical condition and they do not have insurance coverage. Even if they don't have any insurance coverage, they can't access any top-up or anything like that.

What the public discussion paper states is why don't we roll this all into one program where the benefits will stay the same. We do want to still offer extended health benefits, but we need to look at who should access this fund. We're not talking about eliminating anybody from the program, but those with the ability to pay, perhaps could help us with that. That's part of the discussion. Everybody will get a fair chance to have access to benefits, but their ability to pay should be a factor, as well as other factors. The information we give out here says that in fact the ability to pay, an income level does not discriminate by age. There are high-income earners and low-income earners of all ages. We want to have that thorough discussion with the public.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Interesting response in terms of the health benefits. In my Member's statement I talked about the various programs the federal government has for aboriginal people, the GNWT has for the Metis people, and now we're talking about the non-aboriginal health benefits here. I would like to ask the Minister, if we don't do anything, would these benefits that are extended exceed the other benefits that people have such as the ones that we're talking about, the ones who do have the

ability to pay. That's what I'm looking at in this program here. Will that exceed what the aboriginal and Metis people are going to be getting if we do allow this program to be wide open?

**HON. SANDY LEE:** I think it's important for people to know that the NIHB Program is completely separate from extended health benefits. That is a federal program and what happens there would not have a bearing on what happens with extended health benefits. This is our GNWT program. This is extra health benefits that we provide to our residents above and beyond what's normally considered under the Canada Health Act. We have some of the most generous programs. We cover prescriptions, vision care and dental care for our seniors. We cover 100 percent of specified conditions.

We are not talking about reducing benefits, but what we are saying is we need to recognize that income level is quite similar in all age groups. There are people who are young and who are making low income and there are people who are older with high income, and we are saying let us look at income as one of the threshold questions and see how we can make the system more fair and equitable. We are wanting to listen to the people about what they have to say about this, but it is something that we need to have discussion on. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

QUESTION 26-16(5):  
LUTSELK'E CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE  
REQUIREMENTS

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement I spoke about the need for capital projects in the community of Lutselk'e and the inflexible policies of MACA that has not allowed Lutselk'e to access this funding for several years. Can the Minister tell me what the department can do to rectify this situation to ensure capital projects are delivered in Lutselk'e soon? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's actually a federal act that prohibits the community from owning real property under the federal Indian Act. We have been working with the community and other communities to try and find solutions so the communities would be able to deliver their capital plan, and we would continue to try to work with the community of Lutselk'e to come up with some options for accessing the capital money. Thank you.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, since this can't continue or shouldn't continue that the community is unable to access, can the Minister outline some of the options that are available or some of the options that they spoke to the community about? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, one of the options is the community can seek hamlet status or they can incorporate an interim corporation that would be able to hold real property on behalf of the community until the land claims are resolved. We have seven of the eight band communities that are already in that process, some have formed their interim corporations and some are just in the process. If you go to hamlet status, that process could take several months to get completed. If you were to form an interim corporation, that whole process could take as little as a month. Thank you.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, should the community of Lutselk'e not wish to seek hamlet status at this time or have their infrastructure held by an interim corporation, would MACA consider delivering Lutselk'e capital plan directly before another construction season is lost? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, since the introduction of the New Deal we really don't have the capacity to deliver capital projects on behalf of the communities. The department has been restructured to support the communities that want to deliver their own capital plan and if we were to do that in this particular case, I would see that as a step backwards in not being able to develop community capacity. But, like I said before, we continue to want to work with the community so they can set up an interim corporation so that they would have all the authority to make the decisions that affect their communities and not have those decisions made by the government, which is what the whole idea of the New Deal was and we're trying to get away from doing that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Your final supplementary, Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister discuss with Cabinet to see what can be done within the provisions of the acts, like within provision of the Indian Act, within the provisions of the NWT Act, to allow the community to receive interim appropriations for capital projects for this coming construction season? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can commit to having that discussion with my Cabinet colleagues; however, I will encourage the community to take the responsibility, take the first step in forming an interim corporation, then the money would be able to be flowed to this interim corporation and they

would look after the projects on behalf of the community until land claims are settled. But this would give the community the authority, so I would encourage them to do that. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 27-16(5):  
NORTHLAND TRAILER PARK WATER AND  
SEWER REPLACEMENT PROJECT

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of MACA and it gets back to my Member's statement where I was lending my support to my colleague Ms. Bisaro, who yesterday raised the issue of Northland Trailer Park. I'd like to ask the Minister of MACA, potentially, we have close to 1,000 people that could be left homeless. We have safety issues, health issues and a variety of social issues that could present themselves to this government in a real way. I'd like to ask the Minister of MACA if the situation in Northland in the city of Yellowknife has ever been brought up at the Cabinet table by himself or any other Cabinet Minister. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my time as Minister of MACA, which has been about a year and a half now, I have not had this discussion with Cabinet. I've had some conversations, are we able to do this, but MACA is not mandated to fund corporations or private landlords for the provision of water and sewer infrastructure. Thank you.

**MR. RAMSAY:** So, Mr. Speaker, what I'm hearing the Minister say is the government would rather just wait until a potential disaster happens and these pipes fail, these residents are left homeless, and we have the health issues and the social issues that will be certainly a burden on this government. Are we waiting for that to happen and how come we aren't being proactive, Mr. Speaker, in dealing with this situation? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I think nowhere in my answer did I say we'd rather wait until something happens before we act on it. This is a private corporation within a municipal boundary. We will work with the city if we have to try and find some solutions to ask MACA to fund it. I think with our \$168,000 in extraordinary funding, I don't think that will get us very far. Thank you.

**MR. RAMSAY:** When we need to find money, obviously, the government's quick. We just approved \$15 million in a supp for the Deh Cho Bridge last week. I find it kind of ironic that we have a potential situation here that could impact close to 1,000 people. I'd like to ask the Minister what

mechanisms does the department have at its disposal to address an emergency situation like the one that could present itself very near in the future with Northland Trailer Park. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, again, I say this is a private corporation within municipal boundaries and if it ever came to an emergency such as that the Member's describing, then I think we'd be working with the city to see how we can take care of the problem in conjunction with the city. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Your final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't hear the Minister close the door to looking at some possible solutions and working with the residents and the City of Yellowknife. I'd like to ask the Minister if he could perhaps designate somebody in his department to spearhead those efforts with the City of Yellowknife and the residents of Northland Trailer Park so that the government is up to date and up to speed on what exactly is happening there in finding potential solutions. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, we continue to monitor the situation because we know it's a concern to Members across. We will monitor it if we have to work with the city to find some alternative funding arrangements, whether it be, you know, there's the gas tax money that the city receives, there's the capital formula money that the city receives. This is a private corporation and if we were to start that process for one, who's to say that in a small community if you own an apartment and the water and sewer goes, that the government will pay for it. This is privately held land within a municipal boundary. Like the Member said, we'll continue to monitor the situation and see what advice and any part we can play in it. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 28-16(5):  
PROPOSED ROUTES FOR TALTSON HYDRO  
EXPANSION TRANSMISSION LINES

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to follow up on my Member's statement earlier today. With the money being spent on Taltson, we could have built Lutselk'e and Whati mini-hydros, had them half paid for and started community residents on 50 years of reduced power costs. Instead, we have a plan for building the world's longest extension cord to a dead end with a one-industry client base. This is the kind of sound management that put us on a \$180 million hook for a bridge. Why has the shareholder -- that's us -- permitted the Hydro Corporation to pursue any system development without an electrical grid analysis and long-term plan completed? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NWT Hydro Strategy, we've put that in front of this House. It's a public document. We know we've got to continue to do some work. There are future plans for having the interconnectivity as the Member discussed.

Specifically on this project, as the Member is aware from his own past work in a government department, it takes a lot of preparation that goes into getting to a point where you have a project that you can bring to the environmental phase and that process. Before you can sign agreements, you need to know what that final environmental piece would be so if there are changes required to a project, that will potentially change the outcome. The Member is right; it's in the neighbourhood of \$13 million that we've done this work on the Taltson and we'll continue to look at that and negotiation is underway on that piece.

We looked at options of running the lines alternate routes for the Taltson Hydro Facility, but doing that added more money to the project and this project has always been one where it's going to be the power purchase agreement that makes it happen or not happen. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** There is still no real plan in place and what have we got to show for the work that's been done so far? The Hydro Corporation has promised feasibility, analysis and design for a potential electrical grid. Where is that? What is the status of its development? Why is this majority shareholder permitting its corporation to concoct multimillion dollar schemes without a business plan for the development of our electrical system?

So, Mr. Speaker, we've talked about hydro strategies and so on, but we have never seen any work come forward. When we have asked questions, it's been written off out of hand. We've asked for prices on alternatives and it's treated leisurely as if we are in left field. So where is the real work that's been done here, Mr. Speaker?

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** The Member is aware we have shared the information about alternate routes on the Taltson Hydro Project. We have shared the information about where the breakdown is. For example, out of that \$13 million, \$2.2 million, or 17 percent, went to engineering; \$3.1 million, or 24 percent, went to environmental; \$4.6 million, or 35 percent, of that funding went to the regulatory process and the partnership agreement; \$1.3 million, or 10 percent, has been spent in that area, and legal and finance makes up the rest of that area. We've shared the updates on this project, where it's gone. We've pushed to see if the alternate routes are more feasible. Again, it comes to the ability to make this project finance itself on

the sale of electricity. If we want to, as a government, go alternate routes, then let's take a look at that. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I am talking about public interest. I'm talking about this government representing the public and getting a deal that will support our economy. Yes, we've done good work on that project. The problem is the front-end thinking is missing. Where is the public interest? I have a feeling there are all kinds of organizations lining up to partner with the Government of the Northwest Territories. I mean, how could they not enjoy the millions? Everybody else seems to be. So I'm saying where is the front-end thinking, Mr. Speaker? Where is the vision?

We're talking hydro, we're talking a 50-year time frame and I want to know where the thinking is to make sure the public interest is... When we get in bed with these partners, we seem to be ensuring them big returns. Where is the public interest being looked after in this equation? Thank you.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** The thinking on this is thinking about building capacity with our aboriginal partners across the Northwest Territories. Unfortunately, the Member doesn't put more weight and bearing on that piece of it. We do, as the Government of the Northwest Territories. We will continue to do that.

We have looked at this project and this project has been built on a pure case of a business model. If we want to establish more to it, then we can do that.

Members of this Assembly have the Hydro Strategy. If we want to take particular pieces of that and put the emphasis on that, then let's sit down and work that process out. We know it's got to change as we go forward, but this one project has been designed on a business case of having a client to sell the product to. On that basis, it's gone forward. It's been laid out. It's been through Members' updates and briefings and we'll continue to do that.

Ultimately, a decision on this project is going to be based on agreements in place that make it profitable. Thank you.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure it will be profitable to our partners. What I'm talking about is public interest. So, yes, I would like the Premier to commit to a re-examination of the more costly alternatives, but the one that actually goes forward with the public interest addresses multiple goals rather than services a single provider that we hope is going to be there long enough to help pay for the system and put it around the west side where we know there are permanent customers

waiting to use that power in a responsible way over the long haul. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** To get the key pieces in place and make the final connections, we need to have a client to sell this to. This project is about building the economy of the Northwest Territories. It is about reducing our greenhouse gas emissions across the Northwest Territories. This potential project, if it were to go ahead and be completed, we're talking 700 direct jobs during this phase, 230 indirect jobs, building a shareholder base and building capacity within our aboriginal corporations in the Northwest Territories. That's the forward thinking. That is building the economy and spreading it out across the Northwest Territories, in fact, by limiting our own impact on greenhouse gas in the Northwest Territories. So if this project goes, and it will go only by the fact that it's a business case model, if we add more to it, then we lose the business case and there is no project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 29-16(5):  
NORTHLAND TRAILER PARK WATER AND  
SEWER REPLACEMENT PROJECT

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are addressed to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. I want to follow up on some of the questions that were asked and answered yesterday with regard to Northland Trailer Park. The Premier yesterday, when I asked him a question about what existed out there to assist the Northland group, stated, and I quote from Hansard: "There are a number of emergency funds that are out there." So I'd like to ask the Minister if he could elaborate and list those funds for me. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I'll take that question as notice.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 30-16(5):  
EFFORTS TO ATTRACT  
BUSINESS INVESTMENT

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today I was raising the issue of finding ways to attract businesses to the North, to create investment opportunities for all. My questions will be directed to the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Today I'd like to ask him, as my first question, what programs and services

does his department offer that target specifically to attracting businesses to relocate in the North, to be established in the North. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Bob McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Member seems to want us to take on the provinces and he seems to think that the provinces are doing a great job. I agree that the provinces are doing a great job, but they have significantly more resources to work with.

The Province of Alberta, for example, has trade missions around the world. They have their own aircraft fleets that they can fly around to attract businesses. They have tax credit programs and tax initiatives. They have funding so that they can subsidize businesses to locate into their provinces.

The Member also mentioned Saskatchewan, where the Government of Saskatchewan is subsidizing student loans. I think what he's suggesting is an approach that would wreck all of the programs that we've worked so hard to develop. I think he's suggesting that we should get rid of the Business Incentive Program and I think that he's suggesting that we should be funding Southerners to come and move up here.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Well, I'm really sorry that the Minister of ITI only heard that, because that's not what I said. I suggested perhaps taxation is the right approach. I'm not necessarily sure. This government has foregone many taxes on the diamond mines as they were established and started producing. It's not unusual for this government to find creative ways. What I'm really asking the Minister is if he can show me and explain to this House what programs we offer to attract business and investment in the Northwest Territories. If we don't have a specific program targeted at that focus, would he consider establishing a program in a process that works for the Northwest Territories but doesn't necessarily try to compete or look like Alberta in the sense of size?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Our focus has been mainly to invest in and help develop northern businesses and northern entrepreneurs. We also have funding to promote the Northwest Territories as a great place to invest in. We have limited resources, so as much as we can, we use the media to multiply the effects of the money that we spend in that regard. We do work with businesses that are interested in moving up here and I think that our predominant approach is to develop our northern workforce and our northern businesses.

**MR. HAWKINS:** The Minister knows I respect him very much, but I think he's missing the point that I'm after. I don't mean this in a mean way, but the reality of our funding agreements and our budget

are tied around federal grants. Those federal grants are tied specifically to population and growth. So 75 percent of our budget plus or minus is based on federal grants. At \$22,000 per person, that's a lot of money. A hundred people in the Northwest Territories could mean over \$2 million of just federal money, not talking about tax, not talking about what they bring. I'm only asking the Minister if he would consider the approach of starting a program that could look at attracting new businesses to the Northwest Territories and that will bring new people as well.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** If the Member is wanting to know what we were doing to attract people to move to the Northwest Territories, he should have asked that. The Minister of Finance did announce in the previous budget that we are undertaking a program to attract more people to come and work and live in the Northwest Territories. So we are working and signed an MOU with diamond mines, we have set targets to increase the number of workers that live in the South and getting them to move north. We have also signed on to immigrant nominee programs so we can get people who are moving to Canada to come and work in the Northwest Territories, recognizing what the Member has said, that for every person that moves to the Northwest Territories, that results in significant increases to our territorial formula financing.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Minister straying from the real point of the whole discussion here, which is the fact that we need a program to help attract business to invest in the Northwest Territories. That is where our population is sort of sprung off or where the opportunity lies. Would the Minister consider establishing some sort of task force program that reaches out into industry to bring industry here in the Northwest Territories as I talked about in my Member's statement? Whether it's call centres or attracting new business and whatnot, there are so many opportunities I don't have the time here today to say them all. It's about a program that reaches out and attracts business to the Northwest Territories. I think that really needs to be looked at. Would he commit to looking into that process?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** The Member will be pleased to know that I do have a ministerial advisory panel made up of the leading figures of business and the leading associations in the Northwest Territories. I will pose that question to them.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

QUESTION 31-16(5):  
MEDICAL TRAVEL SERVICES FOR  
ULUKHAKTOK RESIDENTS

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my Member's statement was regarding medical travel from the communities of Ulukhaktok and the surrounding communities that I represent. Will the Minister commit to working with the various departments and agencies and programs to implement changes to provide to the communities an improvement in the administration of medical travel to prevent future patients from having to wait in their communities or transient centres while in pain?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is the first time that I've heard the specific facts that the Member has stated. I will be happy to work with the Member and see how we can improve that.

**MR. JACOBSON:** This is the second time I've brought it up. We can look at Hansard from last year. When a patient is in pain in our communities, they must be flown out on the next flight no questions asked and to the nearest hospital. There is no reason that is good enough to have patients suffer needlessly, especially when it is due to overbooked planes. How does the Minister expect people to wait in their home communities in severe pain before a medevac is warranted?

**HON. SANDY LEE:** The Member is right; I am aware of the situation where the patients waiting were bumped off, but I was not aware that there are only two seats assigned. I was not aware that there were seat assignment situations. By and large we do move a lot of our residents around to receive the care that they need and obviously we can always do better, so I will undertake to review how we deliver that and where we can improve it, we will do that.

**MR. JACOBSON:** In the community of Ulukhaktok they have two airlines that fly in there: Aklak Air going into Inuvik and First Air that flies here into Yellowknife. Would the Minister let the patient have a choice regarding where they go for their hospitalization or checkups? A constituent told me a similar situation that at the time they had to wait due to cancellation because of lack of passengers. Will the Minister take the initiative to make coordinated alternative arrangements for scheduled medical travel flights had been cancelled?

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Yes, if services can be provided either in Inuvik or Stanton, I will ask the staff to make sure that they consider both options. Also, yes, I agree with the Member that we do need to do more and better to have a more smooth transition of patients, that we need to keep better

track of what's being cancelled. Just better coordination. That is something that my deputy minister and I are focusing on, because we are reviewing the Medical Travel Program. I hope to report back to the Member on how we can improve that.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

QUESTION 32-16(5):  
PROPOSED CHANGES TO SUPPLEMENTARY  
HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to speak regarding the Supplementary Health Program. I have to agree with my colleague from the Sahtu that we do have to have some limitations on what we provide here. I know a lot of people talk about the different programs, but I think we have to have programs that are consistent across the board. We have the NIHB for aboriginal health care and we have the Metis Health Benefits Program. But I think we have to ensure that whatever they're prescribed for in those different programs, we have consistency in how it's being delivered.

I would like to ask the Minister if we are going to also look at those other programs to ensure they are compatible for each other and we don't have one program that's a Cadillac versus something that's a Volkswagen. I'd like to get some assurance from the Minister that we will look at the programs and that they are fair right across the board and that those programs are compatible with each other.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NIHB programs are set up and administered by the federal government. I understand they have a panel of people who review the program. I think some people might not be aware that their program guidelines are quite strict. There are lots of things that they do not cover and that we hear from all the time. If we were to consider any changes to that, it's a completely different process and we would not have much say in that anyway.

I'm willing to convey and communicate any concerns that the Member might have. Any changes to the Metis health benefits are something that would have to be dealt with between our aboriginal and Metis governments.

I think what's important for us to focus on is that we have the Extended Health Benefits Program for non-aboriginal residents of the Northwest Territories. I'm not sure if it is a Cadillac, but it is very generous, because we understand that it is an

important program and we do want to make sure that people who need it receive that.

The way it's set up right now, there's absolutely no regard for one's capacity to pay. So we have a very strange situation where somebody making \$150,000 with a private insurance coverage gets a top-up or dental plan and eye care plan and 20 percent covered, whereas we could have a situation of a 30-year-old mother with two kids just making enough money to not qualify for income support, no private insurance, and they have to struggle to pay for dental care and eye care for their children. What we are saying is let's have a dialogue about this, keeping the benefits we have, but can we be more fair about the access that people could have to this program.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Can we have some order in the House? I asked a question of the Minister and I'm having problems hearing her answer.

Next question to the Minister: is there is a prescribed list that Health Canada has regarding NIHB benefits? I'd like to know if we are going to have a prescribed list for supplementary health so that we have consistency in regard to what programs are going to be offered, who is getting the program, and making sure we have a fair process. I think that's what I'd like to ask the Minister, but more about ensuring that we have consistency in these programs.

I have to agree with you that there has to be some sort of threshold, whether it's regarding income thresholds or whatever. The same thing applies to NIHB programs through the Indian branch. If you have a benefit with the government or whatnot, they'll take that off before you're allowed to access the Non-Insured Health Benefit Program.

I'd just like to get some understanding from the Minister that we also will be looking to these different programs to ensure that they are compatible and that we're not having something that's basically more lucrative than what's being offered to other programs we already have.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** The Member is absolutely right; we want to have consistency across the programs that our extended health benefits should be in line with what is covered under NIHB. The improvement to NIHB, if needed, should be advanced as well. But those programs should go up together. I'm not sure if our extended health benefits are much more lucrative than the other.

The point is, we need to open this discussion so that people understand what the extended health benefits are. These are extra benefits that are being provided and there are some people in our system who are not able to access that at all. Should we not be considering how we could bring them on? That's the discussion we're having.

**MR. KRUTKO:** In most of our programs we do allow for some sort of income testing, regardless if it's the Fuel Subsidy Program in regard to the seniors maintenance repair program. So we do that already in existing programs. I'd just like to know if we're also going to be looking at the whole area of looking at income testing and, more importantly, so that they all conform with other programs we have which are income tested.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Right now my focus is on working on the Supplementary Health Benefits Program so that there is fairness and equity in that. I need people out there to know that the government's plan and intention is to provide coverage to those who need it, that we will continue to provide the Extended Health Care Benefits Program and we will continue to work and have programs that are comparable, if not better, than what's provided in the rest of Canada. But in the rest of Canada there are no extended health benefits that either don't charge premiums or has some kind of user pay and there is a very strict income testing. Not only do they test income, they look at all of your assets before you could ask the government to pay for your drug coverage and eye glasses and dental.

So, Mr. Speaker, for people out there, I don't want the seniors or anybody to think that they're going to have their benefits taken away. What we are saying is that anybody who can't afford it, the government should still be there to look after them, but we do want to build in an incentive for people to look at insurance and private insurance first. We don't want to be in a situation where we have a built-in incentive for people to get out of insurance coverage when they already had it because our plan is more lucrative, and also that we need to build in some personal responsibility to our extended health care benefits, because it is very important, it is very valuable, it is very expensive, and it has to be a partnership between our residents and our government. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 33-16(5):  
AVAILABILITY OF TRADITIONAL FOODS  
IN NORTHERN HEALTH FACILITIES

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just want to follow up with the Minister of Health and Social Services. The Minister did indicate to the House that March is National Nutrition Month. I want to ask the Minister in terms of going back to the issue of having traditional foods at the Stanton Territorial Hospital and other facilities. I want to ask the Minister in terms of instructing her officials to start looking at possible ways of having the traditional foods such as fish, for example, starting to be served at the hospital for

clients who are of aboriginal descent who are at the hospital there.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Ms. Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I did undertake to look into this last week. I have to be honest; I haven't had a chance to have a direct discussion on that issue as of yet, but I will undertake to talk to my deputy minister, who is also the PA of the hospital, as well as the Aboriginal Elders Advisory Committee there and see how we can accommodate providing fish and other traditional food at the hospital. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I look forward to if there is any type of update the Minister can give later on.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke to the chair of the Elders Council, Mr. Paulette, and he said that they are very much in support of this. Actually, after we had our discussion here in the House, Mr. Paulette called me and said that the jam is in terms of the bureaucracy in the system and how to get this traditional food into the system. So that's why I'm asking the Minister if she can have some discussions with her officials to clear the way to get the issue of the fish into the hospitals, in terms of probably within a month or so.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Yes, I will do that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

QUESTION 34-16(5):  
MEDIA BRIEFING ON THE  
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've got a question for the Minister of Transportation. Earlier today a media release went out that there will be a press conference or media event held this afternoon at 2:30 at the Lahm Ridge Tower. I'd like to ask the Minister -- we have media facilities here at the Legislative Assembly -- why that event was held off site at the Lahm Ridge Tower and not here at the Legislative Assembly, pertaining to the Deh Cho Bridge. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, good question, indeed. Mr. Speaker, usually, if there's going to be a briefing of a political nature or the Minister is going to be involved or MLAs are going to be involved, we'd hold it here. This is a technical briefing provided by our staff, our officials, and it's more convenient to have it at that facility. That's the reason for holding it there. Thank you.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, it must be quite a popular event considering I haven't seen much for media here in the building today. I'd like to ask the

Minister whether or not Members could be given a copy or a transcript of what transpires at the media briefing, technical briefing that was held this afternoon so that we can compare what the government's telling the media and what they're telling us. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, there is some suggestion in that comment. However, Mr. Speaker, we've given the information to the Member already. He has it. We could give it to him again. It's the same briefing we provided to the Members yesterday. Thank you.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister whether or not the financial disposition of the project will be discussed during this technical briefing with the media. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, this is a technical briefing on the construction of the bridge and that's what the contents of the briefing will be referred to. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Your final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm a bit surprised that the government wouldn't be talking about the financial disposition of the project. I'd like to ask the Minister who's providing the briefing. Is it the deputy minister of the project management team at this technical briefing? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** The Members have requested that we provide more information to the public and the Members have requested that we have better communication. We're trying to do that. We have informed the Members that we would do a technical briefing. We have worked hard to get it prepared. The information will be provided by our officials, including the deputy ministers. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 35-16(5):  
MEDIA BRIEFING ON THE  
DEH CHO BRIDGE FINANCIAL DATA

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister of Transportation when the department and the government plan on having a briefing with the media on the financial disposition of this project. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We haven't scheduled such a briefing as of yet. Thank you.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, most of the issues surrounding this project are financial in nature, and I think it would be incumbent upon the government

to schedule a briefing with the local media here in the Northwest Territories to let the public know what exactly is happening with this project. I'd like to ask the Minister, if a briefing hasn't been scheduled, when might a financial briefing be available to the media. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** We've made a number of commitments in this House to provide information and briefings. We will continue to honour that. Once we get all the pieces of this project confirmed and the plans laid out, we will commit to doing that. Thank you.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, when might that be? Are we talking a week? Are we talking a month? Are we talking three months, Mr. Speaker? I'm wondering if the Minister could be a little bit more specific when the government is going to have all the pieces wrapped up so that they can go to the local media with the financial situation that is at play with the Deh Cho Bridge Project. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** We don't have a date scheduled for a briefing of that nature, but I would expect it to be by the end March that we would have provisions and be ready to provide that kind of detail. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 36-16(5):  
CONSULTATION ON CARIBOU  
CONSERVATION MEASURES

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of ENR. I want to ask the Minister regarding the deal with the Yellowknives First Nation on the caribou issue. The Minister did indicate to the House that there was an offer and I want to know if the offer was taken. Is there a deal or no deal?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That process is underway. In fact, I've been involved in some communications this afternoon about that very issue and there's been contact with the Yellowknives and the deputy. I am hopeful there will be a re-engagement and we'll be able to show some progress here in the near future. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** In terms of showing some progress in the near future, is there a time frame between the two parties and seeing if we can come to an arrangement that is satisfactory that would put this issue to rest until a long-term solution is found?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** I'm hopeful at this juncture that there will be a discussion between the Yellowknives, Chief Sangris, and the deputy

minister and we'll see if we can come to a meeting of the minds.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The time for question period has expired. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

### Petitions

#### PETITION 1-16(5): DENTAL SERVICES IN NAHENDEH

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition dealing with the matter of dentistry services in Nahendeh.

Mr. Speaker, the petition contains 150 signatures of Nahendeh residents and, Mr. Speaker, the petitioners request that the Department of Health and Social Services take the steps necessary to establish a full-time dentist position in the community of Fort Simpson. Thank you very much.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Roland.

### Tabling of Documents

#### TABLED DOCUMENT 6-16(5): REPORT OF THE NWT POWER CORPORATION REVIEW PANEL, JANUARY 2010

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document titled NWT Power Corporation Report of the NTPC Review Panel, January 2010. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

### Motions

#### MOTION 1-16(5): ELIMINATION OF HANDLING FEES FOR THE COLLECTION OF MILK CONTAINERS UNDER THE NWT BEVERAGE CONTAINER PROGRAM, CARRIED

**MR. BROMLEY:** WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories has recently expanded the NWT Beverage Container Program to now include milk and milk substitutes and liquid milk and milk substitutes product containers;

AND WHEREAS Members of the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly have identified a vision and goals for the Northwest Territories that references healthy, educated people with a focus on prevention by promoting healthy choices and lifestyles;

AND WHEREAS the NWT Food Guide clearly identifies the need for children and adolescents to consume up to four servings of milk or milk substitutes each day to aid in the development of strong bones and teeth;

AND WHEREAS milk contains some naturally occurring and healthier forms of sugar, and also contains nutrients such as protein, calcium and Vitamins A and D;

AND WHEREAS drinks with added and highly refined sugar generally don't have such healthy nutrients and are higher in calories because of all the extra sugar which can lead to weight gain, tooth decay or other health risks;

AND WHEREAS it is widely acknowledged that residents of the Northwest Territories already contend with an extremely high cost of living;

AND WHEREAS the changes to the Beverage Container Program include the introduction of a refundable deposit and a non-refundable handling fee on milk containers that will increase costs and negatively impact individuals and families who rely on milk as a nutritious staple;

AND WHEREAS the handling fees, which makes up approximately 43 percent of the total surcharge, are non-refundable and will lead to increased costs for all consumers;

AND WHEREAS approximately 30 million beverage containers were returned in 2009 and only 1.5 million milk containers are projected to be returned in 2010, which would be less than 5 percent of all containers returned under this program;

AND WHEREAS the government is already providing financial assistance to NWT-based municipalities, organizations, businesses and individuals to develop innovative, alternative and progressive methods of recycling paper products;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that the Government of the Northwest Territories take immediate action to alter the Beverage Container Program by eliminating the collection of the non-refundable handling fee for milk containers and provide a corresponding and suitable level of financial assistance to the Environment Fund, if required, to assist in covering program expenses and improvements to waste reduction and recovery programs. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's Nutrition Month and I think it's a good idea to piggyback a boost to nutrition onto a great new green initiative and I want to start by saying I really appreciate adding milk containers to the Waste Reduction Program. It's something that's been called for by our public and this is good of the government to respond.

The unintended side effect, though, Mr. Speaker, is to tax nutrition and that is one unintended result, because there is a price spread between the amount of deposits paid on milk containers and the amount refunded. Milk or equivalent products is the single most nutrient for our children and one that we do not want to become less accessible than it already is in our communities.

We heard in my colleague Mr. Menicoche's statement this morning about dental health and how that's related to other health issues, that we do have programs out there that are directly addressed by accessible milk for families.

By the government's figures detailing the revenues, rates of returns and operating costs, the total cost of closing this price gap would be about \$70,000 to \$75,000. We don't want to tax nutrition and we don't have to if we assign the funds already approved to eliminate this effect.

In the recent budget, we approved an additional \$400,000 towards food programs in ECE. So the money is there and can be assigned to meet this comparatively minor cost, I suspect, in any department.

The government wants the commitment made in the Environment Fund for programs to be revenue neutral. This is a good goal which, overall, I think we all support and I certainly do, but we also have a record and a precedence of subsidizing costs through programs like the Wastepaper Product Recycling Program. There is an initiative there where we support the development of recycling and reusing those products and keeping them out of the waste stream. So we are on good record of having a precedent here.

Mr. Speaker, we have the funds approved for enhancing nutrition, we have the precedence of the Wastepaper Program, we have the opportunity to apply approved resources directly to ensuring nutrition and preventing the added cost of basic living for our families, basic and healthy living for our families. So thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be closely following any further debate.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I will go to the seconder of the motion, Mr. Yakeleya, Member for Sahtu.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Mr. Bromley for bringing this motion to the floor. I certainly will be supporting it. I would like to speak about the elimination of handling fees for the

collection of milk containers under the NWT Beverage Container Program, Mr. Speaker.

Under the existing NWT Beverage Container Program, when residents return their beverage containers, they receive a refund. Their refund is only about 60 percent of the amount the resident paid for the container. Some of the remaining funds go to support environmental issues.

We know that drinking pop is bad for our population. The sugar in pop leads to cavities and in some cases the need for dental surgery has been noted.

Also, the sugar leads to sugar diabetes, which is prevalent in our communities. It offers no nutrition, while contributing to obesity. Thus I have no problem with the surcharge for drinking pop, especially since the money goes to an Environmental Fund.

Milk has been added to the list of refundable beverage containers and when returned they should reduce the cost of milk a bit. Milk is the single most important nutrition to healthy development and the benefits of our youth in the communities. It is of great importance to the adults and seniors to maintain their healthy bones. Northerners should not be required to pay any type of surcharge for milk, especially in the small communities of the Northwest Territories.

In Tulita, two litres of milk costs \$5.75. I hate to list the cost in Ulukhaktok or Colville Lake or any other small community. I do not support any increase to the cost of milk anywhere and I do support any reduction to costs that recycling milk cartons will provide in the Sahtu and other communities in the Northwest Territories.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to compliment the Department of ENR on their campaign to encourage people to recycle milk beverage containers. I think it's very catchy. I think it's Wash and Squash. There are very colourful ads all over the place encouraging our people in the Northwest Territories to add these beverage containers to the list of containers that we pay a deposit on and then receive a refund on when we take them back. It is very catchy and I think it's catching the eye of people.

However, I want to thank the Member for Weledeh for bringing forward this motion, because I think it is consistent with a message that he has been very clear about in this since he came here. That is the importance of milk in the diet of children in the Northwest Territories and particularly in the remote communities where transportation plays a part in making the affordability of milk products very, very high. We want those to be the beverage of choice

for people with young families. Anything we can do as a government to make that more affordable, I think this is a very small thing, a small gesture, a small token. But I think that when you look at the overall impact of it, it's very positive.

I come from Hay River where we have a Dental Surgery Program in our hospital and how many times we have seen people come there to receive dental surgery with their little children who are being put under general anaesthetic to have all their teeth removed. We have seen this over and over again. How many times have I, as a mother, been at functions where I have seen people put everything from Coffee Mate mixed with water, to pop in babies bottles? These are the more affordable things. So anything that we can do to send a message from this government to encourage people to buy and feed their children milk products is something.

Although this won't cost us a lot of money, it will go a long ways and I thank the Member for bringing forward this motion and I support it 100 percent.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. To the motion. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the outset I would like to say that I support this motion and I'd like to thank Mr. Bromley for bringing it forward. I also want to say that I support the recycling efforts of this government and the Minister of Environment and the program that he is monitoring and expanding over the years. Anything that we can do to increase the recycling within our Territories is a good thing.

That said, I don't support an increase in the price of milk. I think that this motion is a halfway point between recycling containers but also not causing it to be an increase in the cost for our residents.

I think it's well known that I support milk. I've supported the idea of a milk subsidy over the last couple of years. I totally agree with the comments made by my colleagues about the importance of milk in the development of a child, and through the young years of children for their healthy growth and development it's extremely important.

One of the things that this government has put in place is a Healthy Foods Initiative and part of that Healthy Foods Initiative is the policy that milk is a good healthy food. It's an integral component of a program that we have, but at the same time through the recycling we're saying yes, this is very important and we want to try to keep the costs down for people and encourage them to eat healthy foods and use healthy foods, but we're adding to the cost of that healthy food. That doesn't do anything for the general cost of living. That again is an initiative that this government keeps saying we are working on. In order to do something about the

cost of living but also and to the recycling, we have to have a different way of approaching this particular problem.

I think what we can do, as Mr. Bromley has suggested, is look at a different way of funding. There's going to be a certain loss of revenue in this particular program. It's going to be anywhere from \$75,000 to \$100,000, I think, at the most. That's not very much money. There already is a fund of \$400,000 identified in the Department of ECE budget. It's easy to transfer some money out of there.

I have another suggestion for the Minister and for the department. I think what we can do to recoup that \$75,000 is to add an extra non-refundable recycling fee to our pop bottles and pop cans and liquor bottles. We have added to sin taxes in the last year or so, so I think I consider those somewhat sinful. Certainly liquor is sinful. I think if we want to recoup that \$75,000, let's add five or 10 cents to every pop can and liquor bottle. I think that would go a long way and would certainly offset the revenue that's going to be lost by giving the full costs back to people that are recycling milk containers.

That said, I am in full support of the motion and I encourage all my colleagues to vote in support as well.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak in favour of the motion and will be voting that way. Regretfully, we've got two important initiatives that are clashing here. One, of course, is recycling and the other one is the most important, which I believe was a priority at the start of our government to reduce the cost of living. In this case, because of our recycling initiative, we are imposing a fee on milk cartons and milk bottles.

I think the ultimate goal of our Assembly, the cost of living, should take priority. So I am supporting this motion to not increase the cost of recycling milk cartons or at least trying to minimize the cost.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I won't talk about all the important things that my colleagues have already raised when it comes to supporting this motion, but obviously I'm going to support the motion. I would like to thank the mover of the motion, Mr. Bromley, and the seconder, Mr. Yakeleya, for bringing it forward.

The big thing for me is the cost of living. I'd hate to see our government forcing people an increase,

even as small as this might be, onto the backs of residents. The recycling is good and, as others have said, the effort of ENR to get milk containers into the Waste Recovery Program is admirable. However, I believe the \$70,000 to \$75,000 it's going to cost the government spread out over the whole year is not a big sum of money. The government should be taking that on, not the consumer, not the folks that are trying to get this healthy, nutritious product like milk to children and families around the Northwest Territories. I do support the motion.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. To the motion. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like my colleague Mr. Ramsay said, I am supporting the motion. I am really happy that we're getting full-fledged support on the Regular Members' side. The cost of living in the communities is high enough that we do not need another for milk products and that. In my home community of Tuk I think it's \$22 for a four-litre of milk. I think passing this on to the people in the smaller communities, we're going to be always hit first.

I'm in full support of the motion and I thank my colleague Mr. Bromley for bringing this up. You have my full support.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Speaking to the cost of living, if there was one reason to consider on that level, the cost of living is certainly not something to brag about in the Northwest Territories. Adding the service fee to an important product such as milk seems to be a bit of a shame. I wish the government from ENR had seen that this does not help people in that form. I realize it's a noble cause, trying to bring the containers back for recycling and I think that's important, but to see that they're going to keep it on such a critical product that's so important to the health of people, I have no other choice but to imagine why wouldn't I want to support a motion like this.

To another issue of nickeling and diming our territorial residents in every form, it still relates back to the fact that the cost of living is a difficult challenge that many of us face. Adding that to the mix, of course.

On the last principle of health, I think it's one product we need to continue to champion in ways to make sure it's affordable and accessible to all our people of the North. With that, I will leave us with the thought that if this was a road to show people a method of discouraging a particular important product of milk, it seems like this is the

one that they have taken. This motion speaks loud and clear to the fact that we need to find ways to make sure that healthy products are encouraged and certainly embraced by our constituents. Allowing them to have the full return of the deposit seems to be not just the right choice, but the only choice.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support the motion. Obviously I think recycling of these containers is a positive thing for our environment. Doing that without adding more cost to already high costs of living in small communities, although it's not a major cost, does add a little bit to the cost that's already too high for the individuals to afford. So this will at least keep the costs the same as it is now, for now.

I guess the only issue that I have is that hopefully the people in the smaller communities will have the opportunity to recycle, that there are depots available for them to take these recyclable containers back to. I will support the motion, because the intent of the motion is to not increase the costs of milk products across the small communities.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. To the motion. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we did the review of ENR's budget, the Member for Weledeh raised the issue about the handling fee. At that point I indicated that, yes, we will look at that and, yes, we will look at suggestions similar to those made by the Member for Frame Lake about possible additional cross-levies on pop or alcohol.

I think we would all agree that having a healthy environment and having healthy families and children are two very compatible goals and we intend to make sure that we maintain both initiatives.

I have heard very clearly what the Members are saying. I just reiterate the commitment I made when we were doing the budget for ENR, that we are going to move on this. Folks are now looking at it and in the coming weeks we should be able to come up with a plan to address that concern.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I will allow the mover of the motion closing comments. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to start by recognizing the commitment made by the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, which I very much appreciated and encouraged me

to get this motion going with the good support of my colleague Mr. Yakeleya.

In summary, this motion is all about controlling the high cost of living. It's about building strong minds and bodies. All of this while being environmentally responsible. What it takes is a small, low-cost investment for returns on all these fronts: social, economical, and environmental.

So I want to thank everybody for their support and request a recorded vote. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The Member is seeking a recorded vote. Madam Clerk, all those in favour of the motion, please stand.

#### Recorded Vote

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF OPERATIONS (Ms. Bennett):** Mr. Bromley, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Menicoche, Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Krutko.

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

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF OPERATIONS (Ms. Bennett):** Ms. Lee; Mr. Miltenberger; Mr. Roland; Mr. McLeod, Deh Cho; Mr. McLeod, Inuvik Twin Lakes; Mr. McLeod, Yellowknife South.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Results of the recorded vote: 11 for, 0 opposed, 6 abstaining. The motion is carried.

---Carried

The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 11, petitions, on the orders of the day. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted.

#### Petitions (Reversion)

##### PETITION 2-16(5): DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF RESIDENTS AFFECTED BY FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER (FASD)

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to present a petition dealing with the matter of diagnosis and treatment of residents affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Mr. Speaker, the petition contains 749 signatures of NWT residents.

Mr. Speaker, the petitioners request that the Government of the Northwest Territories implement medical diagnosis and specialized programs and treatments for the residents affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

#### Motions

##### MOTION 2-16(5): ADULT DIAGNOSIS OF FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER, CARRIED

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS NWT health and social services covers the cost of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) assessment for children and not adults;

AND WHEREAS many cases of FASD in children are going undiagnosed because of the lack of awareness and stigma associated with the disorder;

AND WHEREAS undiagnosed children are growing up and struggling with physical, intellectual and behavioural difficulties in adulthood;

AND WHEREAS the government is committed to working with residents in an effort to help them live healthy and productive lives;

AND WHEREAS adults who may have undiagnosed FASD are ineligible to receive support and programming available only to those who have been diagnosed with FASD;

AND WHEREAS improper diagnosis often leads to inappropriate care, increased risk of secondary disabilities, and missed opportunities to connect individuals affected by FASD with the programs and services that will provide the support needed to promote optimal functioning and provide a better quality of life;

AND WHEREAS accurate diagnosis can speed up the development of effective prevention practices and contribute to more accurate estimates of incidence and prevalence;

AND WHEREAS with proper assessment and care, many people with FASD can lead happy and productive lives, with the right supports, approaches and services;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that the Government of the Northwest Territories establish assessment services for adults who may have FASD;

AND FURTHER, that a multidisciplinary team based on the examples of the Territorial Assessment Team or the Child Development Team at Stanton Territorial Hospital be developed to provide these assessment and diagnostic services in the NWT;

AND FURTHERMORE, that programs and supports for individuals and families living with FASD be

enhanced and be available to NWT residents who need these services;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the government provide a response to this motion within 120 days.

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

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the goals of the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly is healthy, educated people. One of the activities identified under the goal is to improve support for children and adults with special needs and disabilities. FASD is a reality with the Northwest Territories. Unfortunately, there are many adults who remain undiagnosed in the Northwest Territories and are therefore ineligible to receive support and programming available which is available to people who have been diagnosed as children. As a result, these undiagnosed individuals may face greater challenges than those individuals not suffering from FASD or those who were diagnosed and have been able to take advantage of programming.

As a result, these individuals may find themselves more reliant on social programs and income support in order to maintain a basic standard of living. This is unfortunate, given that with a little support these individuals could develop knowledge of their condition and skills to overcome their challenges, which will give them a better quality of life and possibly avoid the necessity to access income support, thus saving the GNWT money over the long run.

The GNWT does not support or facilitate the assessment of adults. The GNWT does support the assessment of youth. Unfortunately, many cases of FASD in children are going undiagnosed because of the lack of awareness or stigma associated with the disorder. Once these undiagnosed children leave their parents' homes, become adults and enter the world of employment and new responsibilities, they face additional challenges. Unfortunately, if they seek to understand their challenges, that they can attempt to overcome them, the GNWT is not willing to help. This isn't so in other jurisdictions. Alberta, as an example, recognizes the value in helping their citizens and offers adult assessment for FASD to their residents.

As a government, we need to follow Alberta's example and offer this level of support to our undiagnosed residents. With proper assessment and care, many people in the NWT with FASD can lead happy, productive and independent lives. Let's do the right thing and support FASD assessment and diagnosis services, as well as treatment for adults in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. I'll go to the seconder of the motion, the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I second the motion. I feel that Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder is a very costly disorder to the Government of the Northwest Territories. It's very costly to the health system, the justice system, and the education system.

The diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder would be a great initiative on the part of the government when we realize how many people are actually affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and how much it costs. Perhaps the diagnosis would allow the government to do more in the area of prevention of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Unlike most disorders and spectrums, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder is 100 percent preventable. So, hopefully, with the diagnosis of the adults now, we would be in a better position to do something about prevention. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. To the motion. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very briefly, I'm in total support of this motion. Adult diagnosis is a gap we've overlooked and are seeking, through the good work of my colleagues here, to fill. We're missing an opportunity to help people in many ways that, really, we are responsible for as a government.

This is a huge issue for the Northwest Territories. We learned during our visit to Alberta, the ministry down there, that there are great strides being made in assessment and working with the people with FASD, and particularly with adults, new research going on there. So with proper diagnosis, families, individuals, all of us can benefit in many ways.

So I totally support this motion. I will be voting for it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank my colleagues for bringing this motion forward. I am in full support of this motion. Recently, I think the Department of Health and Social Services announced a bit of a focus on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, and I fully support that. But, you know, throughout the government we tend to put a focus on children, particularly with FASD, and that focus needs to be expanded to include adults.

I think it's well documented, I think it's known that adults with FASD can lead extremely productive lives if they're given certain supports. First of all, they need to be diagnosed. Once they're

diagnosed, they can be given supports through various organizations, whether it be government or non-government organizations, but with minimal support, very often people with FASD can lead extremely productive and extremely successful lives.

One of the things that I think that treating people with FASD and allowing them to become productive members of our society is going to have an impact in a financial way on this government or on any government. You know, we're going to see a reduction in our health and social services costs, because there is going to be less of a strain on our health and social services facilities.

There is quite likely to be fewer residents who are incarcerated, because FASD people with the proper treatment can learn the need to manage their lives in a way that keeps them out of jail. And I would think there is going to be a reduced draw on income support, because people are going to be employed within the community, within the workforce and they, therefore, are going to be able to support themselves. So even just those three things are going to be a financial benefit to the government.

It's been mentioned already, and I would just like to reiterate, there's a gap in the services that we provide at the moment with regard to FASD and I think there's a bit of a leaning towards filling that gap, but we certainly need to make sure that we include adults in both the diagnosis and in the provision of services and treatments for adults with FASD.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I am totally in support of this motion and, again, I encourage my colleagues to support it as well. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I will go to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a formal motion in the House is a recommendation to the government, we will undertake to respond to this motion within the timeline provided. In the meantime, I would like to just advise this House about the fact that we do offer a continuum of services for adults with developmental disabilities, including FASD. Access to these services is not dependent on a diagnosis. The types of services that we provide include day and work programs, adult respite, employment enhancement programs, group homes and supported living programs. Access to these services is obtained through health and social services authorities across the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, if individual needs are complex and require more intensive supports that may not be available in the NWT, referral for condition by the Out-of-Territory Placement Committee is also an option exercise. We do have a number of adults

currently receiving treatment and services as a result of FASD.

Mr. Speaker, there would be a requirement for significant funding and clinical capacity in order to conduct adult diagnosis. It is also important to note that in Canada, only a very few clinics offer diagnostic services for adults. Most of these serve persons from only their own communities. For example, in Alberta two private clinics offer diagnostic services for adults. A privately funded full assessment in one of these clinics is approximately \$3,500. These are not insured services, Mr. Speaker.

Through our partnership with Canada-Northwest FASD Partnership, we are actively involved in current research on best practices and diagnoses and service delivery. This research is imperative as it will assist in the future development of service available across the life continuum.

Mr. Speaker, once again, we do provide a number of services to adults with disabilities, including suspected FASD. We support the NWT Council of Persons with Disabilities who offers advocacy, support and referral services to persons throughout the NWT and through organizations like the Yellowknife Association for Community Living. We do have lots of persons with FASD, whether or not they are diagnosed. I think everybody is aware of the new initiative that we have started with the children.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate what the Member has to say about this very important issue. It's very complex. It is worth taking a look at and we will be responding to the motion. Also, I'd also like to just state that as this is a recommendation to the government, we will be abstaining from the motion. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. To the motion. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank my colleague Mr. Abernethy for bringing this motion forward. We know there have been many advances made in the ability of health care providers in the diagnoses of FASD. Mr. Speaker, it is challenging enough for people who live with challenges to function and this is one avenue, one opportunity to bring the presence of this disorder in our society into the light and perhaps also remove some of the stigma that is attached to it. It is for the benefit of everyone. I thank Mr. Abernethy for bringing this forward. I support it 100 hundred percent. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. To the motion. I will allow the mover of the motion some closing comments. Mr. Abernethy.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank my colleagues for supporting this motion.

Just for the record, young men and women in the Northwest Territories who have failed to be diagnosed as children who wish to be diagnosed do not receive support in getting that diagnosis from the GNWT. I know of several situations where that has occurred and the government has not stood up to help these individuals.

I attended and met with individuals in Alberta who are actually doing adult assessment FASD or adult assessment for FASD and they are finding huge benefits and advantages of doing these types of assessments in Alberta in that it helps individuals get off social assistance, because they're able to access programs that help them understand their limitations and overcome them and succeed. That's what we are talking about here today. That's what we would like this government to do. That's all I have to say on that and I would like to request a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member is requesting a recorded vote, Madam Clerk. All those in favour of the motion, please stand.

#### Recorded Vote

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF OPERATIONS (Ms. Bennett):** Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Menicoche, Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Bromley.

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

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF OPERATIONS (Ms. Bennett):** Ms. Lee; Mr. Miltenberger; Mr. Roland; Mr. McLeod, Deh Cho; Mr. McLeod, Inuvik Twin Lakes; Mr. McLeod, Yellowknife South.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The results of the recorded vote: 11 for; none opposed; 6 abstaining. The motion is carried.

---Carried

The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 8 on the Order Paper.

---Unanimous consent granted.

### Written Questions (Reversion)

#### WRITTEN QUESTION 3-16(5): ADDICTION TREATMENT OPTIONS AVAILABLE IN THE NWT

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

With respect to the numerous concerns about availability and access to treatment programs and services offered here in the NWT, could the Minister please provide the following:

1. List of all treatment programs offered that the territorial government plays a role in either financially or in any other form of partnership capacity for the past three years and for the upcoming business cycle year.
2. And further, please provide the detail to each treatment program in a form that outlines it with respect to financial contribution, type of addiction being treated, capacity of program, attendance, program objectives, and by location of program.
3. And finally, supply all detailed work that has been studied for the past five years with respect to success rates.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 5 on the Order Paper.

---Unanimous consent granted.

### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery (Reversion)

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize my constituent departing from the gallery, Dr. Beverly Wilson. I'd also like to recognize the board members that are there from the Centre for Northern Families: Brea Denning, Jessica Mace and Arlene Hache and possibly the youngest member I have seen in our gallery so far. Also, I'd like to recognize Craig Yeo, my constituency assistant. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 18, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

### First Reading of Bills

#### BILL 1:

#### AN ACT TO AMEND THE VETERINARY PROFESSION ACT

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Veterinary Profession Act, be read for the first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Veterinary Profession Act, has had first reading.

---Carried

The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

#### BILL 2:

#### AN ACT TO AMEND THE DENTAL AUXILIARIES ACT

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Dental Auxiliaries Act, be read for the first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Dental Auxiliaries Act, has had first reading.

---Carried

The Government House Leader, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### BILL 3:

#### MISCELLANEOUS STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2010

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 3, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010, be read for the first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 3, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010, has had first reading.

---Carried

The Government House Leader, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### BILL 4:

#### AN ACT TO AMEND THE SOCIAL ASSISTANCE ACT

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act, be read for the first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act, has had first reading.

---Carried

The Government House Leader, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### BILL 5:

#### APPRENTICESHIP, TRADE AND OCCUPATIONS CERTIFICATION ACT

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Bill 5, Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification Act, be read for the first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 5, Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification Act, has had first reading.

---Carried

Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Item 21, report of Committee of the Whole. Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Orders of the day for Thursday, March 4, 2010, 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. Acknowledgements
8. Oral Questions
9. Written Questions
10. Returns to Written Questions
11. Replies to Opening Address
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
  - Motion 3-16(5), Referral of Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project to Committee of the Whole
  - Motion 4-16(5), Extended Adjournment of the House to May 11, 2010
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
  - Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Veterinary Profession Act

- Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Dental Auxiliaries Act
  - Bill 3, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010
  - Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act
  - Bill 5, Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification Act
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  21. Report of Committee of the Whole
  22. Third Reading of Bills
  23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, March 4, 2010, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

