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The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	5807
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	5807, 5809
161-17(5) – National Round Table on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (B. McLeod)	5807
162-17(5) – Capital Asset Retrofit Fund Program Update (Beaulieu)	5808
163-17(5) – Minister Absent from the House (B. McLeod)	5809
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	5808, 5809
National Pink Shirt Day (Groenewegen)	5808
Anti-Bullying Legislation (Dolynny)	5809
Elder Abuse (Moses)	5809
National Pink Shirt Day (Blake).....	5810
Fire Management Plans (Menicoche)	5810
RCMP Aboriginal Pre-Cadet Training Program (Nadli).....	5810
Devolution Legislation Communication Process (Bromley).....	5811
Support for Victims of Bullying (Hawkins)	5811
Anti-Bullying (Yakeleya).....	5812
Hay River Polar Pond Hockey Tournament (Bouchard).....	5812
Tribute to Barb Bromley (Bisaro)	5812
Condolences on the Passing of Constituents Tobie Antoine Marlowe and Vanessa Marlowe (Beaulieu)	5813
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	5813
ORAL QUESTIONS	5814
REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS	5823
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	5823
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	5824
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	5844
THIRD READING OF BILLS	5844
Bill 43 – An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act	5844
ORDERS OF THE DAY	5846

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, February 25, 2015****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Hon. Tom Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Blake, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Dolynny, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Hon. Jackie Jacobson, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Moses, Mr. Nadli, Hon. David Ramsay, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Good afternoon, colleagues. Before we start today, I'd just like to send a message to my family in my home community of Tuktoyaktuk. Yesterday was a very sad day in our home with the passing of two well-respected elders. My condolences go out to Adam Emaghok and his family with the passing of his wife, Annie. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family at this time.

With the passing of Anna Cockney, to all her family, our thoughts and prayers are with you at this time. I always say when we lose loved ones in our communities, it hurts us all. We work together and pull together to get things done for the families because of what they are going through at this time. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all at this time from this Assembly. May God bless you all and I look forward to seeing you.

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Honourable Premier.

Minister's Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 161-17(5):
NATIONAL ROUND TABLE ON MISSING AND
MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, on Friday, February 27th, provincial and territorial Premiers and Ministers, federal Ministers and national Aboriginal organization leaders will gather in Ottawa to discuss how best to collaborate and coordinate action to prevent and address violence against Indigenous women and girls.

The National Round Table on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls is an unprecedented gathering of partners from across Canada who collectively agree that concrete and identifiable actions are needed.

We know from national research and reports that indigenous women and girls are three times more likely to experience violence than any other population in Canada. We also know that good work is being done across many jurisdictions and organizations at the local, regional and national

level to change this. But, as of right now, no comprehensive or coordinated action plan exists.

The goal of the round table is to create a dialogue among all partners to develop and act upon coordinated solutions to end violence against indigenous women and girls. The discussion will focus on prevention and awareness, community safety, and policing measures and justice responses.

Careful consideration has been given to how the round table will recognize and include the views of the families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. The national Aboriginal organizations will be hosting a family gathering on February 26th. From that gathering, families in attendance will nominate four witnesses, representing the four directions, to attend the round table to share the vision of the families and provide their reflection on the discussion from the day.

Mr. Speaker, I have been asked by the national Aboriginal organizations to serve as the official chair for the round table. I am encouraged by the willingness of all levels of government to collectively engage in respectful and meaningful dialogue, set aside political differences and focus on our common goals. We have all acknowledged that work needs to be done to address the far too common tragedies of murdered and missing indigenous women and girls.

A family member of a missing Northwest Territories indigenous woman will be part of the delegation. My Cabinet colleague, the Honourable David Ramsay, Minister of Justice, will also be joining me to share the perspectives of the Northwest Territories with the rest of Canada.

The round table is the first meeting of its kind and the start of an important national conversation. I look forward to a shared national commitment to increased, ongoing collaboration and the development of regionally and community-based solutions to prevent and address violence against indigenous women and girls. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 162-17(5):
CAPITAL ASSET RETROFIT FUND
PROGRAM UPDATE

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, as our government continues to work towards achieving its goal of an environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories, I would like to highlight one of the ways that the Department of Public Works and Services is helping to ensure that we maximize investments to improve the operational performance of our existing infrastructure.

First established in 2007, the Capital Asset Retrofit Fund (CARF) Program was created to target energy efficiency investments in our public buildings. At its core, the program strives to:

- reduce energy consumption and operational costs of government facilities;
- improve overall comfort for building users;
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with the operation of our public buildings;
- increase the usable life of government assets; and
- identify new energy technologies appropriate for our northern environment.

Through the CARF Program, buildings undergo a rigorous energy audit that includes benchmarking a facility to see how its energy usage compares to other similar buildings.

Once baseline energy data is collected, Department of Public Works and Services determines which buildings will most benefit from an energy retrofit under the CARF Program. In the last four years the department has completed over 30 retrofits ranging in size from \$10,000 to over \$1 million in 19 different communities, large and small. These energy retrofit projects not only reduce our energy consumption but create much needed business and employment opportunities in our small communities.

Looking forward, the department has 19 energy projects planned for 2015-2016 in various communities. This includes retrofit projects for the health centre in Fort Good Hope, Aurora College in Inuvik and schools in Deline, Fort McPherson and Fort Smith.

Mr. Speaker, this government's investment in energy retrofits not only improves the performance and comfort of our public buildings but also generates net operational savings that we expect will make the CARF Program self-sufficient in future.

The first step in making the CARF Program self-sustaining was achieved in 2010-2011 by re-profiling \$645,000 in ongoing operational funding from the department-managed utilities savings to capital infrastructure expenditure funding.

In addition to the savings achieved in 2010-2011, an additional \$832,000 in ongoing operational savings was realized between 2012 and 2013 for a total of \$1.47 million annually, which has been redirected to permanently fund the CARF Program. By the end of 2014-2015, the department is projecting the total annual realized savings to reach \$1.72 million.

The CARF is meeting program objectives by reducing our energy consumption and lowering the operational costs for government buildings and facilities. Projects include biomass boiler installations, building envelope upgrades, installation of LED lighting and replacing building components with more energy-efficient and responsive systems.

Mr. Speaker, programs like the CARF provides our government with creative ways to maximize infrastructure investments while achieving high standards for energy efficiency which reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The results of our government's continued investment in the CARF Program will be published in the Department of Public Works and Services 2014-15 Energy Conservation Projects Annual Report later this spring. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NATIONAL PINK SHIRT DAY

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I join my colleagues in recognizing Pink Shirt Day. We're taking a stand against bullying by wearing pink today.

Pink Shirt Day had unlikely beginnings. It started with a spontaneous protest in 2007 following a bullying incident in a Nova Scotia high school. A ninth grade male student had been bullied for wearing a pink shirt, and in a gesture of solidarity, two older boys bought 50 pink shirts and gave them away to fellow students. To the organizers' surprise, the protest made national headlines. Shortly afterward, provincial Premiers began to designate Pink Shirt Day as an official day against bullying.

Bullying describes a number of acts of aggression: swearing or shouting, punching or shoving, spreading rumours, engaging in nasty practical jokes or invading someone's privacy. The effects of bullying are devastating and can last a lifetime. In extreme cases, even suicide can result.

The 2010 Minister's Forum on Aboriginal Student Achievement and, more recently, the National

Health Survey on School-Aged Children told us that students and families in the Northwest Territories are severely affected by bullying.

But there is good news, Mr. Speaker. Bullying is being taken seriously across the country and in our jurisdiction as well. Anti-bullying activities are in full swing, in part because of anti-bullying legislation that this Assembly passed in 2013. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment has launched a campaign to convey one clear message: bullying is never acceptable. Students in schools are pledging to stand up and stop bullying and also compete for prizes by creating videos, photos and art.

It will take a collective effort to stop bullying and we are on the road to change, but we're not there yet. So I am joining my colleagues in calling on every single person in the Northwest Territories to stand up against bullying. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

Ministers' Statements (Reversion)

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 163-17(5):
MINISTER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Jackson Lafferty will be absent from the House today due to illness. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

Members' Statements (Reversion)

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ANTI-BULLYING LEGISLATION

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to rise here in support of anti-bullying day. In preparing for this day, I did find myself reflecting on the work of this Assembly and asking, did we actually put a dent in bullying? Before I respond to this question, I did find myself going full circle in trying to grasp leadership on this subject.

I, like many in this room, voted in the fall of 2013 suggesting changes to Bill 12, which is the legislation, An Act to Amend the Education Act, thus making our schools safer by instilling a stronger Safe Schools Policy.

Like anything, we are politicians, not magicians. One has to truly wonder if this legislation had an impact, and without any formal survey of our education system since its inception, we are

guessing at best. Moreover, aside from what we can legislate between the hours of nine and four on school days, I can assure you that with the modernization of communication technology and the continued misuse of new social media we are destined to have an uphill battle and war on bullying. That's a given.

I live in the real world, so until such time that all children understand the hidden perils on the Internet, we will never combat bullying. Until such time as Internet trolls continue to hide in the shadows unpunished, we will never combat bullying. Until such time so-called "avatar armchair critics" continue to feel first amendment rights give them the freedom to twist our cornerstone of democracy, we'll never combat bullying.

I said I'd respond to my earlier question, have we put a dent in bullying? Like I said earlier, I have gone full circle on this subject. I am proud of what we accomplish in this Assembly, but fear we have fallen short of really guaranteeing a bully-free environment many had set out to do at the beginning.

Legislation cannot work in isolation. It requires awareness, which I think we have done and will continue to do.

However, until we have the power to enforce what is right, to punish those who inflict wrong, and to turn misuse of power into fear and remorse, we will fail on this delivery. All we can do now is wait until the right legislative trade winds draft a better Criminal Code of Canada that catches up with the reality of ever-changing technology and its misuse. And this, Mr. Speaker, may never happen. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT
ELDER ABUSE

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week, as Members know, I attended a celebration for Elizabeth Greenland who had her 95th birthday. It dawned on me at the event, when I looked around the Ingamo Hall and saw all the elders who were in attendance and the long-term care facility staff that brought all the elders from the hospital to celebrate in these celebrations – and many of them participated in the dancing and the feast – they had looks of joy on their faces, happiness, and they looked alive.

As we stand up here today on Pink Shirt Day, what dawned on me on that day was it was great to have a lot of the elders there, but we were still missing a few. We were missing some that might have been caused from death, but what I want to talk about today is the abuse and the neglect that our people

have committed on some of our seniors in the small communities.

I've brought it up before, Mr. Speaker. These can be of all natures: financial, verbal, physical, psychological. They can do things to elders that make the elder feel guilty, when we should be celebrating their life and their existence. Because our elders are the keepers of traditional knowledge, culture and language and, just as important, they have the history, stories of a past that we don't have, and this is an opportunity for us to celebrate that, to talk to them, to engage them, to help them live that life longer and more independently.

So, last week when I was at the celebrations, I was glad to see all the elders that were there. A really good suggestion or remarks that were given to me by another elder is, they said, "Listen to your elders because they don't have much time left on this earth," and to listen to the elders because they have the stories to tell, they have the information that they want to give you so you can carry it on and pass it on to your children or to other people in the Northwest Territories and to the school and education systems.

Today I just want to talk about our senior population, and I want to encourage anybody who sees any of this type of abuse on their elders in the communities, speak up, talk to the authorities, talk to people that can help, whether it's a social worker or a teacher or some type of other authority and make sure that it's addressed now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT NATIONAL PINK SHIRT DAY

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank all those who are working together to battle bullying, to the parents, the teachers, the volunteers and the students, also the RCMP and leaders throughout Canada.

The issue of bullying has come to light for a few years, but in many cases bullying has been going on for many years. As we work together, eventually we will put a stop to bullying. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANS

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This year's potential fire season is of great interest to all residents of the NWT. Minister Miltenberger was quoted on February 9th in the Northern Journal that the 2015 forest fire season is

likely to pick up where the last, considered worst in the NWT's history, left off. This is a dire warning, and residents would like our Department of ENR to be prepared, and residents and community should be prepared as well.

In Nahendeh, while we were somewhat spared in 2014, we did have a fire cross a river at Jean Marie River that was very scary. Fortunately, the winds helped and it turned out positive.

Nahendeh region has great stands of mature forests and the residents are expressing great concern about what is to come. The Minister further states, "Unless we get a lot of snow in the rest of winter and then a lot of rain, the drought codes are going to start the year as bad as they ended last summer, which does not bode well for the type of fire season we may encounter." This in particular reference of what our scientists are calling our third year of drought in the Northwest Territories.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has been hosting open houses across our territory over the last two months as an opportunity to learn more about the wildlife fire management in the Northwest Territories and talk about the 2014 wildland fire season. I am pleased that the department undertook these community consultations. It was a great job by the staff who were there and answered questions of concern that the public had.

How are we going to prepare for the 2015 fire season? Well, they should consider and listen to what is being heard from the public. I attended and heard that we should fight fires early. This can save us at a later date. A good case in point is that there was a fire some 50 miles away from Kakisa in early spring that was not actioned, and for good reason based on swamps and risk levels by the Department of ENR. Yet, because the swamps dried up later during mid-summer, the fire later became a real threat. Through the actions of ENR and God willing, the village was saved with little or no damage.

Having initial attack exercises on early fires, no matter where they are, may seem costly at first but the benefits are many. It can be used for training and testing aircraft and other equipment.

I'll have questions for the Minister during question period. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RCMP ABORIGINAL PRE-CADET TRAINING PROGRAM

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The crime rate in the Northwest Territories is eight times higher than the national average. The rate of violent crime in our jurisdiction is the second highest in the

country. That's not all, Mr. Speaker. Bullying, belittling and name calling are commonplace in our communities.

The situation is compounded by a familiar list of social factors: alcoholism and drug abuse, poverty, low educational attainment and the multigenerational effects of residential schools.

I believe life in our small communities would really improve if we had more homegrown police officers. We should be on the lookout for bright and responsible young people who want to serve in law enforcement. The RCMP has a new program called the Aboriginal Pre-Cadet Training Program. It's part of the RCMP's national strategy to recruit Aboriginal people who are interested in law enforcement. Students take a three-week training course focused on collaborative problem solving, law enforcement techniques, cultural diversity and physical fitness. After that they are posted for eight weeks at the RCMP detachments in or near their home communities. For many of these young people the program is a life-altering experience.

Aside from ensuring that young people participate in the RCMP's Aboriginal Pre-Cadet Training Program, the Department of Justice could develop its own version of this program. What I have in mind are community-based policing opportunities for young people, mentored not only by experienced police officers but also by caring and strong community elders.

To tackle the culture of crime and bullying in the NWT, we need to be thinking outside the box. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DEVOLUTION LEGISLATION COMMUNICATION PROCESS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last March the government adopted sweeping devolution legislation without one iota of public review. Members of this House insisted that a meaningful process for public input be put in place. The process now in place is pitiful. The outreach to citizenry on the seven substantive acts is limited to a few newspaper ads inviting people to go to the government website and fight their way through menus to get to a place that they purportedly can leave comments and ask questions.

Then what happens? Constituents report that the response time to questions posted to the site is glacial. A message sent on November 28th asking two questions was ignored until a resident sent a follow-up message on January 9th. Promised an answer within three business days, 10 days later she was still waiting and contacted the office again.

Finally, two months after initially posing her questions she received a reply. Hardly responsive.

Another resident had questions but, after composing them and trying to post them, was disappointed to see that they had not been posted. They simply disappeared. After a second attempt with the same results, she gave up in disgust. Again, hardly user friendly.

In response to questions in the House regarding the failure of this approach, the Premier said, "Perhaps in view of the lack of response, we could extend the process and start another communications process to acquaint people to the legislation."

Devolve and evolve, the Premier has said, I couldn't agree more. What would responsible consultation on such comprehensive land and resource legislation entail? I would suggest committee involvement, discussion papers, public meetings, an interactive process to actually engage and debate the merits of the law and where changes are warranted would be a minimum effort. Putting the onus on the public to consult a murky and underperforming website is hardly the hallmark of an open and transparent government. Where are the public meetings to discuss these comprehensive and complex new laws? Where is the much touted claim to make it made-in-the-North legislation?

In these critical areas of policy and law, our government is not only not listening but it seems completely disinterested. I ask what will this Premier do to put in place a meaningful consultation process in the eight months left in our term.

Mr. Premier, tick tock, tick tock. We are running out of time. We either go on record as failing our people and our claims of transparencies and inclusion once again or we get it done. What will it be?

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF BULLYING

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you've already heard, it's Pink Shirt Day. We should be all yelling this and bellowing it in the highest of our trumpet voices and saying we need to help join in the fight to help eliminate bullying, all types of bullying, any type of bullying. It's often a struggle carried alone, as we all know, but it should never be that way. Today many of us wear pink shirts or pink apparel to show our support for this cause.

Today is February 25th, just another day on the calendar for many. But there are others out there. Today is just another day in a long nightmare where they're struggling with a bully. Bullying affects all our lives. Bullying affects people's life outlook. It affects their friends. It affects their families. It

affects their hopes and certainly affects their dreams. Imagine being one of those bullied, feeling alone, feeling as if the world doesn't like you, that you're not worth anything.

But it should never be that way. Everyone can help stop the bullying. Let us not fool ourselves though. It is a struggle to stand up to a bully. That's why we must do it together and not let people feel alone. That is why we need everyone's help.

We've often heard that there are four main types of bullying, but it doesn't end there. We've heard about verbal bullying, social bullying, physical bullying and certainly cyberbullying. Watching someone being called names or hearing sarcasm or teasing or spreading rumors is terrible. Making one feel inferior about their cultures, their ethnicity, their race, or their religion is terrible. The power is within all of us to help support that person who is getting bullied.

Often bullies don't know that they are the problem, and that's why we need to do our work much, much harder. We must redouble our efforts, as they say, and we must find meaningful ways to help those who are being bullied and help to encourage those who are doing it to not do it anymore.

Be the voice of change. Be the friend to someone who has no friend. Let us not let this day go by as just February 25th, another day on the calendar. Let it sink in within all of us and realize that someone out there is being bullied right now, feels alone and has no friend. As I said earlier, let's be the voice of change. Let's be the friend when someone has no one.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ANTI-BULLYING

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't want to talk too long so I just wrote three lines in my Member's statement here.

---Laughter

Thank you, gracious colleagues.

This being anti-bullying day, I say to those who are bullying, "Quit it, and have a Snickers bar because it's not you."

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HAY RIVER POLAR POND HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise, too, with my nice pink shirt, but I will talk today about the spring and the effects of spring coming up.

The days are getting longer. The weather is still not getting better, but in Hay River in the next week they're starting to work on the ponds and we're going to have our next Pond Hockey Tournament.

The Pond Hockey Tournament this year is March 20th to the 22nd and those teams that want to sign up, please sign up now. You only need four people to be a team and you can come out on the Hay River rinks and skate your heart away. We're promising that there's going to be warmer weather towards the end of March and we're looking forward to the events. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TRIBUTE TO BARB BROMLEY

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today to recognize and pay tribute to a Yellowknife pioneer, a true Northerner in spirit and action. Barb Bromley passed away on February 15th here in Yellowknife. She's been described as a pillar of the community, and our community is leaning due to the loss of that pillar.

As we've heard, Mrs. Bromley came north in 1948 and never left. Her life's work was nursing, and as Yellowknife developed and grew, she advanced public health nursing services in Yellowknife and beyond. She was instrumental in starting the NWT Registered Nurses' Association and in establishing "well baby" clinics, Meals on Wheels program and immunization clinics.

Barb Bromley was also well known as an advocate and an activist. She was perhaps best known for her work in later years to advance care for seniors in Yellowknife. Aven Manor is the result of her work, and that one seniors home has grown into a community for seniors, providing many levels of care and housing for Yellowknife and NWT seniors.

Because of her personal commitment to meaningful engagement and her friendship with thousands of individuals, Barb Bromley has been described as someone who loved people, who loved working on teams and who loved to help people out. She was recognized for this work with the Commissioner's Award for Public Service in 1981 and the Order of Canada in 2001 for exceptional volunteerism.

The first bed and breakfast in Yellowknife that started in 1984 was Barb's Bed and Breakfast. Mrs. Bromley remained in touch with many of the people who stayed at her B and B. She was a people person and she was also a family person, the matriarch at the centre of a large family.

Several rituals emerged over the years. Saturday morning buns at mom/grandma/great-grandma's house and the August long weekend at Victory Lake were two of those family and neighbourhood events. The Bromley Christmas cookie exchange

party is a well-known Yellowknife social event that's been running since 1954, something I've had the pleasure of attending for a number of years.

Barb Bromley was a huge part of the history and the fabric of the Yellowknife community and she will be sorely missed. As her son Bob has said, "She was a giant in every respect, except in her physical stature."

A service will be held for Mrs. Bromley this Saturday, February 28th, 2:00 p.m. at Sir John Franklin School. This will be a chance to celebrate the amazing life of a warm-hearted, successful, positive and genuinely good person. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF
CONSTITUENTS TOBIE ANTOINE MARLOWE
AND VANESSA MARLOWE

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to send my deepest condolences to the family and friends of the late Tobie Antoine Marlowe and the late Vanessa "Dzee Dzee" Marie Marlowe. Tobie and Vanessa were both raised in Lutselk'e and lived together for over 17 years and both tragically passed away in the home community of Lutselk'e on Tuesday, February 10, 2015.

The late Tobie Antoine Marlowe was born December 10, 1978, and passed away at the age of 36. Tobie was adopted by the late Pierre and the late Helen Marlowe. He was the youngest of two brothers and two sisters. Tobie was raised in and always lived in his hometown of Lutselk'e. Tobie was affectionately called sets'i bebecho – my big baby – by his dad, Pierre, up until his last days. Tobie was fondly called "my baby brother" by sister Evelyn. Tobie was a member of the Canadian Rangers since 1999 and dedicated 18 years of service. He was employed as a caribou monitor for the Lutselk'e Dene First Nation wildlife department at the time of his passing.

The late Tobie Marlowe was well known for his joking nature, and loved being out on the land fishing, hunting and trapping, his love and respect for his family and friends, and always made special efforts to attend family functions and events and, above all, always made an effort to provide traditional food for the elders.

Tobie was predeceased by his parents, Pierre and Helen Marlowe, and brothers Ernie and Charlie. Tobie is survived by his son, Riley Tobie Marlowe; his brother Sonny; sisters Evelyn and Mary Carr; biological mother, Terri Enzoe; biological father, Joseph Catholique; half-brothers, Kyle and Andrew Enzoe; and half-sister, Monique; and many nieces and nephews.

The late Vanessa Marlowe was born March 31, 1982, and passed away at the age of 32. Vanessa has always lived in her hometown of Lutselk'e. Vanessa was well known always for being full of laughter. She was forthright. She was very protective of her family. She volunteered with the girls' group, visited everyone in the community, and she was known for remembering everyone's phone number, and she loved completing puzzles. She had a stack of completed puzzles upon her passing.

Vanessa was a stay-at-home mother and enjoyed being there for her son and family. Vanessa is survived by her son, Riley Marlowe; parents George and Celine Marlowe; five sisters, Elizabeth Boucher, Eileen Marlowe, Agatha Laboucan, Bernice Marlowe and Amanda Marlowe; her brother, Darren Marlowe; and many nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews.

Mr. Speaker, my sincerest condolences go out to Tobie and Vanessa's 12-year-old-son, Riley Marlowe, to Vanessa's parents, brothers, sisters, niece and nephews, aunts, uncles and many friends; and to Tobie's brother, sisters, biological parents, nieces and nephews, aunts and uncles and also many friends, and to all of the people in Lutselk'e. This has been so difficult for everyone.

Tobie and Vanessa "Dzee Dzee" Marlowe will be sadly missed by all those who knew them. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery, Mr. Abernethy.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pages are an integral part of the operation of this Chamber and we've been blessed to have Pages from all over the Northwest Territories come and work with us. I really do appreciate all the work that all the Pages have done and I'd like to thank all the Pages that we've had over the years and the Pages that we'll have in the future. In particular, I'd like to recognize a number of Pages who happen to live in the Great Slave riding who have been with us here since last Monday and are going to be with us here until March 12th, and those individuals are Shiri MacPherson, Chad Martin, Elizabeth Thomas and Anne Thomas. Thank you so much for joining us and thank you for all you do. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. I'd like to welcome everybody here in the public gallery. Thank you for taking an interest in our proceedings.

Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 697-17(5):

SAHTU WINTER ROADS MAINTENANCE

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This being anti-bullying day, I thought I'd try to twist my questions into questions to the Minister of Transportation in the Sahtu. Our roads are rough, rough and rough. We have 1,444 kilometres of winter roads. That's leading from Wrigley to Fort Good Hope, Colville Lake and to Deline.

I want to ask the Minister, given his recent awareness of our winter roads, especially from Norman Wells to Fort Good Hope, and the annual hand game tournament this weekend in Fort Good Hope, what is the Minister doing to fix the potholes, to fix washboard alley? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was fortunate to read the letter that was written by one of the members from the Sahtu, indicating how bad the road was and so on. We had not anticipated that the roads were that bad. We thought they would be improving.

When the Member and I drove on it, it was very early and it was rough, but the department considered that it would be improving. We recognize that we do need more money to continue to improve the winter road and that we need more money for watering and more grading cycles to be able to smooth out that road.

At this time we have a contract in place and the contractor is fulfilling their obligation. However, sometimes when we have a particularly rough winter road, it's difficult for the contractor to keep the road as smooth as we'd like it. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: For example, from Norman Wells to Fort Good Hope is 147 kilometres. It is taking people four and a half to five hours to drive that section at 20 kilometres an hour. Compare that to other highways in the Northwest Territories, it's ludicrous. You would not stand for it.

What is the Minister doing to either increase the maintenance or start the Arctic paving program and putting water on our roads so that our vehicles do not rattle apart and are not held by duct tape to get on the Sahtu winter roads?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Each year as we do the winter roads in all the areas, as we do in Sahtu, we have winter road teams. After the indication from the Member that the roads were particularly rough going into Fort Good Hope, we've deployed a winter road team. They're looking at the worst spots, and we're going to put some water on the worst spots and we're going to grade it. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, for the Minister's information, there are a lot of "worst spots" on the winter road. We also have people who are servicing the Sahtu. We have a fuel company from Hay River, Bassett Petroleum, starting to haul fuel into the Sahtu. Their operators have given a list of situations on the winter road.

From the observations of Bassett Petroleum who have been on the winter road because they're doing the fuel haul to Deline and the other communities, is the Minister taking their comments to heart to look at areas that they've indicated that need some tender loving care?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: As the Member knows, we're very approachable; the department is approachable. When we get information from Members, we do try to attend to the areas that are in the worst condition. We know that we don't have the money to improve every section of that road to what the members of Sahtu would like to see; however, we're addressing the worst areas.

As I indicated, we're approachable and we do want to fix the roads to the best of our ability with the money that we have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our winter roads can only last for three months and then they close down. I want to ask the Minister, given his assessment and the questions that we've been exchanging today and looking at this on a going-forward basis, can the Minister commit that next year we can have some type of pre-meeting with all the communities, contractors and operators and look at our winter roads and have a thorough discussion? We are still dealing with these issues from the past and it doesn't seem to be getting any better, especially now that we don't have additional funding from industry to put on our winter roads.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I will commit to having preconstruction meetings once the contractors for the winter road are selected next year in the Sahtu.

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

QUESTION 698-17(5):
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT REVIEW

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions today for the Minister of Transportation. About a year ago I asked the Minister of Transportation some questions and they were based on a commitment from the previous Minister of Transportation, a commitment he made in December of 2011, and I need to ask those questions again. The questions are around the review or analysis or a comprehensive review of the Deh Cho Bridge.

My first question to the Minister is: What is the status of the review, the analysis, the comprehensive investigation of the bridge project?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a few deficiencies on the Deh Cho Bridge that we are continuing to repair. We believe that the bridge is very, very close to addressing all the deficiencies, although we will probably continue to always do a little bit of work on the bridge. After that, my understanding is that there was a commitment to do a retrospective analysis of how the construction of the bridge went. At this point we are looking at the possibility of doing that.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for his comments. It was on February 13, 2014, when I asked the Minister whether or not the work on the bridge was completed, and his answer: "There is no further outstanding work to complete the bridge." I'm a little surprised to hear that now there are deficiencies and we can't start this analysis, this investigation, one that was supposed to be completed almost two years ago now.

To the Minister: He says now we have deficiencies and maybe then we're going to start this retrospective analysis. When can we expect results from this analysis?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I'm just looking at what is currently happening on the bridge. There are a few things that have to be completed on the bridge and that's from the original contract still today. After that, we are going to look at the analysis, a retrospective analysis that was committed in the House by the Minister of Transportation, and we will seriously look at that commitment.

As soon as the work is completed, which should be any time now, I will talk to the department and we will see about looking at starting the retrospective analysis.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. This has been a very, very long time coming. We are four years now, well, not quite four years, but we're three and a half years anyway from when the commitment was made. This was supposed to be completed in 2013. We're now in 2015.

I'd like to know from the Minister why has it taken so long for this to get started, because I gather it hasn't even yet started.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: One of the things that I have been discussing with the department has been the value of a retrospective analysis and determining whether or not it is beneficial to do a retrospective analysis. We have a functional bridge that is doing what it's intended to do. It was built within the allowable budget that was agreed to in the House. We're looking at that and we're

determining whether or not there is some value. I realize that the Members want to see a retrospective analysis. I am trying to determine whether or not there is some value in that.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a little hard to be short when the Minister is questioning the value of this analysis. This was a P3 project which went from a P3 project to not a P3 project which was fraught with problems and cost us all kinds of money.

To the Minister: It's not the value of the bridge itself, it's looking at the process and the process that broke down and determining why it broke down and what we can do to make it better. Why will he not consider that instead of the value of the bridge? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you. The department's opinion is that we would look at the value of it and if we think that we can do retrospective analysis fairly efficiently and not at a great cost to the government, we will do the analysis. The Member is right; we have not started on that, but if we make a determination that we think it is a valuable piece of information that will help us in the future and not just being done to show what has happened but something that has been done so we can learn from it, then we will do that analysis. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 699-17(5): FIRESMART AWARENESS PROGRAM

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister of ENR some questions on our FireSmart awareness campaign as we move into the new year and as move into the next few years about establishing a recognition program. I just wanted to speak of that Smokey the Bear-type campaign that is needed here in the Northwest Territories. Of course, we all know that Smokey the Bear is an advertising mascot created to educate the U.S. public about the dangers of forest fires, and one of the biggest ones is: Remember, only you can prevent forest fires. This was created in 1947 and today Smokey the Bear's message is recognized in the U.S. by 90 percent of adults and 77 percent of children. So I believe we need something similar.

I was looking at the FireSmart Program and the closest thing we have to it is called Tuktu the Caribou. I'd like to ask the Minister for an education program, what's the strategy going forward? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The Minister of ENR, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the Member will bear with me...

---Laughter

...I'll try to answer that question. If the Member has a specific example about what particular type of education program he would suggest, I'd be happy to consider that, as long as it is not too unbearably expensive. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much. I'll certainly bear with the Minister myself there. While Tuktu the Caribou is a noble name, I believe that we can also do better. There could be Blaze the Beaver, Fire-free Fox, Wise Owl, Wet Wolverine, but what I'm getting at is I believe that we need a territory-wide campaign, something that we can identify with as residents, as children to be fire-wise and to protect our environment and putting out fires as we cook, et cetera. But I believe that we need a centralized way to do it much like the Smokey the Bear campaign in the United States. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. I appreciate the Member's suggestion and I'll have a discussion with the department about how that would fit in. We're only a couple of months away from fire season. It might be something that takes a little more time than that. It might get flagged for a transition issue with the government, but we'll take a look at the Member's suggestion and his comments will have a great bearing on the outcome. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much. It is about getting back to the "bear" necessities. I'm certainly glad that he's willing to listen to it and if the Minister can speak with his officials, it's at the formative stage. It's an idea that its time has come. We have always spoken in this House lately about how much we are growing. I think a little thing like this will bring the Northwest Territories together and generate having a focus point and something we can identify with as we want to be fire smart and protect our resources.

Once again, if they could take that idea and run with it. He also committed to it. I don't have a fourth question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. More of a comment. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

QUESTION 700-17(5):

DREDGING OF THE HAY RIVER

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Minister of Transportation today. It has been at least 10 days since I brought up the issue of dredging in the Northwest Territories being a requirement and a need.

Has the Minister sent off any communication to the federal Minister responsible for dredging to deal with this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I have. Thank you.

MR. BOUCHARD: I'm going to have to pry the details from the Minister. Can I get more detailed information? Was that letter signed off, and which federal Ministers was it cc'd to and who was it communicated to? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The letter was sent to the Minister responsible for Fisheries and Oceans. He is the Minister responsible for dredging. I don't recall all the cc's, but I believe we sent a copy to the Minister of Transportation and the Minister of Public Works. Public Works Canada were the last people to put any money into dredging back in 2012, at the end of the fiscal year. That's when the last \$60,000 was spent on the dredging program in Hay River. It was essentially pointing to the issue at Hay River. There was some issue with barging and getting in and out of the port in Hay River. Thank you.

MR. BOUCHARD: The Members have been talking about dredging in the Northwest Territories. I have heard some rumours of numbers out there.

Does the department have any estimates on what the dredging costs in Hay River and throughout the Northwest Territories would be? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I don't have the number for the dredging of the Hay River port, although we do have that number at the department. I don't have the number here with me. I don't believe we have a number for all of the dredging that would be required for the entire waterway where the company out of Hay River would haul freight. I don't have that full number, but I can let the Member know what the number is for dredging the Hay River, our estimate. Also, we can get estimates for other parts of the waterway. Thank you.

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

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, I would take that information. I look forward to that.

I wonder if I could also get a copy of the letter that was sent to the federal Minister. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Yes, we can provide that letter to both Members for Hay River. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 701-17(5):
PUBLIC REVIEW OF
DEVOLUTION LEGISLATION

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just following up on my Member's statement, I wonder if I could ask the Premier, given the absolute failure of the consultation effort to date on this sweeping legislation, seven acts that we've mirrored, adopted completely from the federal government, what will be the revised consultation program that he's going to put in place? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It sounds like the Member is the only one that's declared it to be a unanimous failure. I think this public review of devolution legislation is something that's been ongoing for some time. Perhaps if I reviewed the objectives of the review, the Member might have a clearer understanding of what we're trying to accomplish.

We're trying to encourage the general public to better understand the legislative process associated with devolution, including mirroring and delegation, to have an opportunity to review devolution legislation and to ask questions of clarification, to communicate the devolved and then evolved process, to gather initial public responses, questions and suggestions about current and future devolution legislation, to provide the general public with an understanding of the legislative processes for amendment of existing bills and development of new legislation.

There have been 2,100 legislation reviews website views. Not one of them has complained about an inability to access the website and it appears the Member wants a Cadillac review version. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BROMLEY: I would just like to mention that I have probably accessed it a dozen times from my chair here, so that doesn't tell us anything, Mr. Speaker. What we need is a meaningful consultation, a meaningful interaction, a discussion back and forth.

Who is going to interact meaningfully between a screen and themselves on sweeping devolution legislation like this that is complex and so on? Will the Premier get real and get a real process in place that starts providing opportunity for interactions with our public and making this northern legislation?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We are getting real. We are real. The Member talks about a glacial response to questions that are posted on the website. There were two questions posted on the website. The first one related to directors' liabilities. The second one related to legal obligations for those wishing to bring pet monkeys to the Northwest Territories. The first question was answered and the response

posted on the devolution website and the second question was handled by ENR. I don't see where the glacial response comes in. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BROMLEY: Two questions. So we've gone from 2,100 now down to two. That's an interesting leap. What the public is demanding and has demanded...and the Premier's strategy of giving them a website to look at will work. Over time, people will lose interest, be disconnected from government and there will be no transparency as the Premier would like. Clearly, what's needed is some real interaction.

Again, when will the Premier put out a plain language version of all these acts to people and put out word when the meetings will be, where they will be and give them a real opportunity to have some input and make this our own? Mahsi.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The Member is suggesting that there's a groundswell of public who can't wait to respond and review all this legislation. I see no evidence of that. We have committed to a final summary report that will be shared with the standing committee before the end of session. If committee is unhappy with the report, they can respond to it and we will take action. Thank you.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a hard time being interested myself with the sort of response I get from the Premier. So, again, his strategy is working. The lack of interest is not real lack of interest; it's a lack of opportunity to engage. So I'm saying to the Premier, what opportunities will he provide to engage with real people on real issues and make this legislation our own?

What changes to this legislation, what evolving is this Premier going to propose on the input he's received to make it our own based on his earlier commitments, devolve and then evolve? What has he heard? What are the changes we are looking for from all those comments and where are they? Mahsi.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We will be producing a summary report, providing it to committee. Committee can respond to it. My expectation is that the responsible departments for the respective devolution legislation will review the legislation and, over time, they'll go out to the public, seek input to the specific legislation, and that will be accomplished through transition, and also, we will fulfill all of the commitments that we made to devolve and evolve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

QUESTIONS 702-17(5):
COMMUNITY CONSTABLE PROGRAM

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Today we're talking about bullying. Bullying is most prevalent in the young people population, but it's all over. My question is to the Minister of Justice. It's essential that we have peace officers, like one of the symbols that we have here in the North and across Canada are RCMP officers.

To the Minister's knowledge, have any young people from the NWT participated in the RCMP's Aboriginal Pre-Cadet Training Program? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister of Justice, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we have had folks participate in what was the Aboriginal Community Constable Program. That was a pilot project and that's since evolved into the Community Constable Program. There's another intake this coming June in Regina. We've had four applicants. Two are active and we're looking across the territory for other interested candidates to take part in that Community Constable Program in Regina. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: It's essential that relationship building happens between RCMP and the community. So as such, has the Department of Justice considered its own version of the RCMP program? I have in mind a community-based policing program where young people are mentored not only by experienced police officers but also by caring and strong community elders. Mahsi.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: It is very important that the RCMP continue to foster a strong working relationship with communities across the Northwest Territories. We've done a great deal of work in that regard helping communities establish policing plans, working with communities, the leadership of communities. We're also moving into community safety plans now across the Northwest Territories, and again working with leaders and community members. We're going to arrive at that. Through the Community Constable Program we will get constables into communities in the Northwest Territories that are going to provide the RCMP with cultural awareness and community awareness and help the RCMP in achieving their goals and objectives in keeping our community safe. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: I'd like to thank the Minister for his reply. He indicated at the outset that there have been two applicants, and I think the Department of Justice could try to assist communities to increase those numbers.

Will the Minister consider introducing a community-based mentoring project beginning with a handful of small communities? Will the Minister work with the

RCMP, other policing officers and community elders to make this happen? Mahsi.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The RCMP has recently filled its Aboriginal proactive recruiter position. The recruiter will be travelling throughout the Northwest Territories to actively recruit persons for all categories of jobs and positions with the RCMP. If the Member is aware of any people in his communities that are interested in the Community Constable Program, I'd encourage him to have them contact the RCMP or our new Aboriginal proactive recruiter so that they can hopefully get into the program this coming June. Thank you.

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

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the time for innovation is here, especially when this department has undertaken along with this government the on-the-land program, and we're kind of making it up as we go. So, there's an opportunity to perhaps reach out into the community.

Once again, will the Minister consider doing a community-based mentoring project with the RCMP so that experienced police officers and, at the same time, community elders are involved with trying to mentor young Aboriginal people to become RCMP officers? Mahsi.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The Member brings up a good point in trying to get the elders involved in the communities and the RCMP. This is something I'd like to take back to the RCMP. Of course, they are our partner in this, the Department of Justice, the RCMP and the communities, and we will get a response for the Member. I like his idea. Any way that we can encourage young people to get involved in the RCMP and protecting our communities and making them safe, that's a good step in the right direction. I thank the Member for his suggestion.

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

QUESTION 703-17(5):
PUBLIC SAFETY NOTIFICATION POLICIES

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently, there was a convicted sex offender – that's a predator, the way I view it – on the loose in Yellowknife, and they were on the loose in Yellowknife without the public's knowledge. That means women, children and even some men were at risk while this predator stalked their next prey. It was my understanding that the police knew that this person was on the prowl and that this predator was looking for their next victim, but the public was not informed.

My question for the Minister of Justice is: When does the public's interest start to matter enough

that they are informed that their personal safety may be at risk and the fact that we should finally be taking a stand that personal safety of the potential victims should matter more than the predator's confidentiality?

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is a line that, of course, the RCMP makes the decision on. They have to weigh a number of factors before they consider notifying the public. Perhaps we could engage the RCMP if Members want a briefing on how this works. I'd be happy to have the RCMP sit down with the Standing Committee on Social Programs and we can go over the hows and whys of public notification.

MR. HAWKINS: I certainly recognize the answer, which was, really, let's find someone else to take responsibility and let's pass the buck.

My question for the Minister is: What is he going to do to ensure that this policy is updated so the public's interest, the public's safety is protected over these types of predators who are let loose and prey upon the women, the children and even some men in our community?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Of course, I take the safety of our community very seriously. I will continue to work with the RCMP to ensure that communities across the Northwest Territories are as safe as they possibly can be.

MR. HAWKINS: I appreciate the Minister's quick reply of saying nothing. It hasn't said anything to the fact of what is the Minister going to do. That is the issue.

What is the Minister going to do to update the policy to ensure the public's safety matters enough that we're going to protect them with the right information so they know and can be vigilant knowing a predator is out there stalking them? I want to hear what the Minister is going to do, not pass it on to somebody else.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Whether the Member likes it or not, it is the responsibility of the RCMP. We will continue to work with the RCMP to ensure our communities are safe.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, what's the point of having a Minister if the Minister just says we'll leave it up to the RCMP? Maybe the Minister can describe his accountability line with the RCMP when we work to ensure that our public safety is put first.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: We have a contract with the RCMP. That is their job. That is their role. We respect the role that the RCMP plays for us.

Again, I will reiterate, we will continue to work with them to ensure that the best practices are in place to ensure that our communities are safe.

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

QUESTION 704-17(5):
ELDER ABUSE

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll follow up with my questions on elder abuse to the Minister of Health and Social Services. According to Stats Canada, seven out of 10 crimes against elders are never reported. There are many reasons, and we've had those discussions previously. One suggestion that I've brought up in the past is a duty to report and possibly create legislation for duty to report. When you look at the Canadian Association of Retired Persons, they make a recommendation that they can have a duty to report legislation or policy but it must be coupled with a whistleblower protection act. That's something we have.

I want to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services what steps he has taken to move forward in this duty to report, either policy or legislation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The Minister of Health, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was actually recently invited to a meeting of the NWT Network to Prevent Abuse of Older Adults held here in Yellowknife on February 10, 2015, where the NWT Seniors' Society was providing that workshop. At that time I was again asked about possible legislation, and I have already directed the department to do some research into the duty to report but also other opportunities that may exist that will make it necessary for individuals to report abuse.

I will say that, I mean, all of us as citizens have an obligation, in my mind, to report violence when we see it, whether it's family violence or whether it's abuse against adults. So if you do see abuse of our seniors or elders, please report it to the RCMP so that they can get involved and help protect our citizens and our senior citizens all throughout the Northwest Territories.

MR. MOSES: I'm talking specifically about professionals. I'm glad the Minister also agrees that all residents of the North should speak up, but under a duty to report it would protect professionals who interact with the elderly and dependent adults, and with this duty to report it would have clear guidelines for action, intervention and protection, along with adding a professional capacity to investigate such reports.

In my research, I've noticed that both Nova Scotia and Newfoundland have an Adult Protection Act. Nova Scotia's came into effect June 2014.

Can I ask the Minister when he directed his department to look into this? Are they reviewing these two jurisdictions who are leading right now in Canada?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The department will be looking at a number of different jurisdictions. I can't say off the top of my head whether they're going to look at that one, but given that they are one of the leading jurisdictions, I can say for sure that certainly after today they will be.

Part of the process here is to make sure that people are aware of elder abuse, and I think our amazing partners like the NWT Seniors' Society is doing amazing work to create awareness. But I do have to acknowledge that there is no consistent policy currently directing staff regarding the prevention, detection and response to elder abuse here in the Northwest Territories.

In 2012-2013 the department worked really closely with the NWT Seniors' Society to conduct a significant amount of research into national best practices, guidelines and policies for front-line workers in response to this exact topic, adult or senior abuse. As a part of the work to support this implementation of a new continuing care standard, which is going to go a long way to addressing some of this, the department and the NWT Seniors' Society are looking to develop territorial policies and guidelines for health and social services providers and employees to respond when they suspect or witness elder abuse. Work is happening in this and we are continuing to look at other jurisdictions for additional best practices to make sure that what we put in place is effective here in the Northwest Territories. But at the same time, if you see it, report it.

MR. MOSES: The Canadian Association of Retired Persons, also known as CARP, has a comprehensive strategy to eradicate elder abuse, and one of the recommendations that they do give – and this one I thought was quite interesting – is to create an elder abuse hotline. Because we don't have all the services and resources in the small communities especially, and I always like to refer that we have eight communities that don't even have nurses, who are they going to speak to report this elder abuse? If we had a 1-800 hotline that could be widely known across the North with the capacity to redirect to local service agencies and sensitive to cultural and linguistic needs of some of our elders in the communities, would the Minister look at creating something along those lines, or in the current hotline that we do have, have some type of portion of it dedicated to a senior support system where they can get the help that they need?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Resolving this particular challenge here in the Northwest Territories is going to take partnership and awareness, and one of the main organizations that

do incredible work in this area is the NWT Seniors' Society. We do currently provide funding to the NWT Seniors' Society to offer a toll-free line to seniors with a significant amount of information, including who they might be able to call if they are witnessing things like senior or elder abuse. We can certainly have a conversation with them to see if and how that can be expanded. But at the same time, if you see or happen to witness abuse of seniors, I would still strongly encourage you and all residents of the Northwest Territories to call the RCMP. We will continue to do this work. Thank you.

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

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know we do have a lot of individuals and professionals who do work with the senior population.

Has the Minister put any new financial resources or personnel resources in terms of providing support for our professionals to continue to work with our seniors' society, with training or any kind of other clinical support, which was also a recommendation in the strategic plan put out by the Canadian Association of Retired Persons? Has the Minister put any further support into the senior division within his department? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We had the same conversation during Committee of the Whole. There are no new dollars or additional dollars at this time. But as we can finish the continuing care standards and other documents that we're working on, we will likely be in a position where we will have to identify areas that need funding. For '15-16 there are no new or additional funds targeted to this particular topic. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 705-17(5):
SAHTU WINTER ROADS MAINTENANCE

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I had questions to the Minister of Transportation. I'd like to continue my questions. Bassett Petroleum will be doing 120 loads of delivering fuel to the community of Deline. In the assessment by Bassett Petroleum, operators of those vehicles, they're asking to see if the department is going to put kilometre markers along the road to Deline, even to have a few pullouts on that road to Deline.

Does the Minister think that's something that can be done this year in regard to these two items?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe those can be done. The Member and I talked about that when we were on the winter road and the department also noted that the kilometre

markers were non-existent and they felt that it was important that those be put in. We have the two guys up there now working on the winter road, plus the supervisor. So, I'll have the department look into placing them, maybe not one at every kilometre, but in strategic locations throughout the winter road.

MR. YAKELEYA: In the Department of Transportation, one of their objectives is safety on our highways. Certainly that applies more so with the winter roads in our communities.

As part of the Safety Program in the Department of Transportation, are there any requests or consideration for additional maintenance on our winter roads? We have about a month and six days left if the weather holds out to have our winter roads still in operation.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I think that when the department proceeded with bringing the extra monitors in, monitoring traffic and monitoring other traffic on the winter road in the Sahtu, we were doing that for safety reasons. Recognizing that on our trip into the Sahtu on the winter road, the road being rough is also a safety issue. I will go back to the department, and the department seemed very responsive when I first discussed it with them. So I will go back to the department to see if there can be money freed up somewhere within our O and M budget to maybe do some more work on that winter road in the Sahtu. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you. I've noticed how much the people in the Sahtu appreciate the Minister coming in and driving a section of that winter road and seeing firsthand the conditions that people have to drive day in and day out.

Given the limited amount of time that we have on our winter roads, given that Fort Good Hope is going to experience a lot of traffic this weekend because of the hand games, a lot of people are coming in for the hand games and a written e-mail from one of my constituents who is in the department is working that section, so people can call that Transportation person and make comments or complaints to Transportation about the winter roads. There's going to be a lot of traffic and people are concerned about the driving conditions.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: We will do what we can to try to fix the road up, maybe pay some special attention to that portion of the road. We noticed on our drive there, about half of that road is in pretty good shape. So we're probably talking about 60 to 80 kilometres of road that is rough as we get nearer to Fort Good Hope.

What we can also do is have the indication of the number or any of the people that need to be contacted to address winter road issues on the website. Then I'll have the people attend to that

winter road website to ensure that the contact people are there for this weekend. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe people who are in the Sahtu or people who are planning to go up to the Sahtu appreciate what the Minister is saying in this House this afternoon.

I want to also thank the Minister and to follow up on his commitment on a preconstruction meeting for next year.

Is the Minister also going to seek the opinion of one of the users as Bassett Petroleum operators and see if they can be a part of that preconstruction discussion as to the conditions of our winter roads? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I can't commit to having the contractors that are hauling contractors attend such a meeting, but what I can commit to is that as they continue to do their reports and giving us good indications of the driving conditions of the road that we will take those reports into consideration during the preconstruction meeting. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 706-17(5): FIRE SUPPRESSION CREWS

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since 2007 we have not had a suppression crew in the community of Tsiigehtchic. I brought this up yesterday in Committee of the Whole, but for the record I'd like to ask the Minister, will he work with the community of Tsiigehtchic to enter into an agreement to have a suppression crew in the community this coming summer? Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I listened to the Member's statement about bullying with interest. In regard to his question, the answer is yes.

MR. BLAKE: Will the Minister ensure that we have this agreement in place so that we can have a crew in the community early in the season, like June? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: In follow up on our discussion in the Committee of the Whole yesterday, yes.

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

QUESTIONS 707-17(5):

PUBLIC SAFETY NOTIFICATION POLICIES

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to once again return to the Minister of Justice, because from what I was hearing on this particular side of the House is that clearly it sounds like he's defending the status quo by doing nothing.

I'm asking the Minister maybe to explain the communication and accountability line between the Department of Justice and the RCMP. Because if we have no authority to provide policy guidance to them, what's the point of having a Minister of Justice? We should have the RCMP member sitting there answering questions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister of Justice, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The RCMP are professionals, they're experts in their field, and at the end of the day, it's their decision about notifying the public. They work with the public prosecution service. But if the Member wants me to have a discussion with the RCMP, I will certainly go back and have a discussion with the RCMP. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Well, it took five questions to get to the point of saying he will have a discussion if the Member asks for a discussion.

So, the question for the Minister this time is: What is the Minister going to do to talk to the RCMP about updating their policy about informing the public about a predator on the loose? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: As I mentioned, the RCMP are there to protect our communities. We have a number of people employed at the Department of Justice through our probation services. People are there. Policies are in place to protect our communities, protect our public. Again, some of the questions the Member is asking me today, really, I find somewhat insulting to people who are putting their lives on the line every day going to work and also keeping our communities safe. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Well, I'm really sorry I hurt the Minister's feelings, but frankly, I don't care. The reality here is that the public's interest needs to come first, not a predator on the loose. I'm not going to ask the Minister's opinion, because frankly, I don't care.

I want to know what the Minister is going to do about making sure that we have an effective policy of communication so when we have a predator on the loose in our communities preying on women, children and some men that the public are informed so they can be vigilant about this type of problem.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I mentioned it earlier, I'll say it again, I will go back and have a discussion with the RCMP. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I want to know the nature of this discussion. Is he going to call them? Is he going to talk to them and say, "Hey, how ya doing?" I want to know if he's going to take the public's interest first, or is he going to protect the institution?

I have great respect for the RCMP. It's not about that. Every one of those folks in red serge knows that I proudly believe in the work that they do. I also believe equally in the public's safety.

So, I want to hear that the Minister is going to bring them this issue and provide them some instruction that we need to ensure the public's safety matters and they're going to update it so it reflects that. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Public safety matters to the RCMP and it matters to me, and again, that discussion will happen. Thank you.

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

QUESTIONS 708-17(5):

WHISTLEBLOWER LEGISLATION

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions today for the Minister of Human Resources. I mentioned earlier, in terms of the due date of a report, it needs to be coupled with a whistleblower protection act of some sort. I know we did have the agreement on the Safe Disclosure Act and I know the department was working on creating legislation.

I want to ask the Minister of Human Resources, where are we on that legislation and when can we expect to see that legislation introduced to the House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department is looking at this legislation and considering two options. The first option is to create stand-alone legislation, in which case the department would like to see some disclosures and how the disclosures have been based. The disclosures are based on the misuse of public funds, an illegal act, gross mismanagement and a substantial and significant danger to health and safety or the environment.

Since we had the memorandum of understanding signed with the UNW, we've had one safe disclosure. Because it's restricted to that area, we're thinking maybe that's why we've only had one disclosure. Now we're looking at creating legislation, but we may actually be adding it to the modernization of the Public Service Act as opposed to stand-alone legislation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MOSES: I know we've had this agreement in place for a long time. Only having one uptake in it, that does create some alarms. Why aren't we hearing more from our employees when sometimes we as MLAs hear it from the employees on a one-on-one basis?

What kind of support is given to our employees so they have the opportunity to speak up without any kind of reprimands to themselves or their jobs? What supports are given to our employees for them to speak up, especially on the health and safety aspect with workers in the workplace? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: We have training sessions with the employees on disclosure. We have a Harassment-Free and Respectful Workplace Policy that clarifies personal harassment within the GNWT and the public service. We are trying to let individuals know that if they do disclosure in any of those areas that I spoke of, it would be a safe disclosure.

The only thing we could come up with on why there has been so little uptake is people actually don't feel safe disclosing with the public service, with their supervisors, management and so on. I too get a lot of calls where I indicate to the people that this is an opportunity if you think this is what's going on, do it this way. But their preference is to have the Department of Human Resources handle it in the way that they wish to have it handled through my office, through the deputy minister's office and so on.

We are trying to get the word out to people that there would be safety in disclosure. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: I'm glad to hear that the Minister of Human Resources, who is undertaking this Safe Disclosure Act, is in fact also hearing from employees that there are some issues around health and safety in other areas that have been identified. That means there is a stronger need or a stronger support for employees.

As the Minister responsible for Human Resources, would he make a commitment to do a campaign where our Minister of Human Resources affirms to our employees that he's behind them, to speak up and get some of these issues drawn out on the table, either in an awareness campaign on the radio or in a news release, that he commits to supporting our employees that they have the right to work in a safe and healthy environment? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I will commit to getting information out advising the public service, most likely on our website. That would indicate that we support people who wish to disclose in any of these areas. If that still doesn't generate anything, then we may go to sending out a form letter to all of the staff in the public service. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The time for oral questions has expired. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Nadli.

Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

BILL 37:

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION ACT

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Government Operations wishes to report that it is reviewing Bill 37, Financial Administration Act, and would like to inform the House that additional time is required to complete the committee review of Bill 37.

MOTION TO EXTEND REVIEW PERIOD FOR BILL 37, CARRIED

Therefore, in accordance with Rule 70(1)(1.3) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that the review period for Bill 37, Financial Administration Act, be extended to Tuesday, May 27, 2015. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 14, tabling of documents. Mr. Moses.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 204-17(5):

TWO ARTICLES REFERENCING ELDER ABUSE

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two documents I would like to table today. One is a media release that was put out on February 12, 2015, entitled "Elder Abuse – 'Duty to Report' Should be Enshrined in Law." There was unanimous agreement by CARP Poll."

The second one is a comprehensive strategy to eradicate elder abuse founded by the Canadian Association of Retired Persons. I would like to table both these documents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole

of bills and other matters: Bill 12, Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Act; Bill 38, An Act to Amend the Jury Act; Bill 41, An Act to Amend the Partnership Act; Bill 46, Deline Final Self-Government Agreement Act; Committee Report 10-17(5), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the 2013-2014 Annual Report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories; and Tabled Document 188-17(5), Northwest Territories Main Estimates 2015-2016, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order for this afternoon and ask what is the wish of the committee. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Madam Chair. We wish to consider Bill 43 and then Tabled Document 188-17(5), Northwest Territories Main Estimates 2015-2016, continuing with Environment and Natural Resources and, time permitting, Municipal and Community Affairs and Department of Lands. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): We will commence with that after a brief break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I would like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. The committee has indicated before the break that they would first like to deal with Bill 43, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. The purpose of Bill 43, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act, is to increase the short-term borrowing limit from \$275 million to \$300 million.

The amendment is being proposed in order to provide the short-term borrowing authority needed to make a \$25 million corporate income repayment on March 31, 2015. The current limit will be exceeded by approximately \$12 million once this payment is made. On April 1, 2015, the GNWT will once again be within the current limit making this a short-term cash requirement, however a necessary one. That concludes my opening remarks. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. I'll now ask the chairman of the Standing Committee on

Government Operations if he would please provide the response to the bill from the standing committee. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Standing Committee on Government Operations has been considering Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act.

Bill 43 was given second reading and referred to the standing committee on February 9, 2015. Bill 43 is a little bill with a potentially big impact. For this reason, the standing committee wanted to ensure the due diligence was exercised during the review. The standing committee provided notice to stakeholders of its intention to hold a public hearing on the bill which took place on Friday, February 20, 2015. While the standing committee did not receive any public input on the bill, a number of questions were asked of the Minister regarding the need for an increase to the GNWT's short-term borrowing limit.

A motion was carried to report to the Assembly that Bill 43 is ready for consideration by the Committee of the Whole. While this concludes the committee's opening comments on Bill 43, individual Members may have additional questions or comments as we proceed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. At this time I will ask Minister Miltenberger if he would like to bring witnesses into the Chamber.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. I'll ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses to the table.

Minister Miltenberger, for the record of our proceedings today, could you please introduce your witnesses.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have with me Mike Aumond, deputy minister of finance; and Jamie Koe, the director of the Management Board Secretariat.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. I'll now turn to the committee and ask if anyone has any general comments regarding Bill 43. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. What's the definition of short-term borrowing as opposed to long-term borrowing?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. The short-term borrowing is a borrowing that takes place over the course of one year. Long-term borrowing is borrowing that has a much longer time frame than that.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Is there a prevailing interest rate that applies to this or how does that work? Is it different than the long-term borrowing interest rates? What would be the cost these days, for example, of a \$275 million, \$300 million short-term debt? I assume it would change through the year, but if I can get a rough idea of the amount we're spending to maintain this borrowing capacity.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. We do have a cost or an interest on short-term borrowing and it's based on what the prevailing Bank of Canada rate is at any particular given time as opposed to longer term borrowing debt, which for the GNWT for purposes now is ranging anywhere from, depending on what the type of the instrument being held, is in the neighbourhood of probably 3 or 4 percent. Short-term debt is a little bit lower than that. As the Minister said, it's for those types of transactions, typically the debt is amortized a year or less than a year.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for that information. What sorts of things are eligible for short-term debt? I assume that this is not debt that is self-servicing. It's debt that we intend to simply pay off with revenues on the 1st of April of each fiscal year. What sorts of things would go into this? What sorts of things would we borrow under this short-term borrowing category?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Things like the firefighting, it could be infrastructure, it could be any requirements that come up during the course of a year that the government or the Assembly decides expenditures are required. I'll ask the deputy if he wants to add any other further type of examples.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Typically the government is in and out of short-term debt. Usually the longer we are into the fiscal year the more short-term debt we are into. As the Minister says, debt is primarily made up of operations and maintenance or programs and

service debt, infrastructure. Most of infrastructure, as well, is financed through short-term debt, as well, other than those specific ones which we have financed over the longer term. For example, we know for long-term debt we have our Northwest Territories Power Corporation debt, some debt held by the NWT Housing Corporation and, as well, the Deh Cho Bridge are examples of long-term debt. Most of our infrastructure and, again, just the day-to-day dealings of government around the programs and service debt were financed through short-term debt.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate this opportunity to learn a little bit more about this. Would it be true to say that this is a body of a potential source of funds for when we start overspending from our regular budget, or are there things that are actually put to this short-term debt regardless of the fact that we already have the dollars in our budget for other things, if you see the difference there?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: It could be both.

MR. BROMLEY: How do we decide, I guess, and just cut to the chase on the last part of that, how do Members know what we're choosing to put into short-term debt? Where is the transparency there and how can the public become informed about that during the normal course of events?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. As I said earlier, I'll start off by saying we generally start off the fiscal year in a surplus position, and the issue we're dealing with here with respect to the \$25 million corporate income tax repayment we need to make to the Government of Canada for an overpayment we received three years ago, is really literally like a one hour problem. On April 1st we will get a tranche of money from the Government of Canada with respect to our Territorial Formula Financing Grant, and we'll be in good stead, but throughout the year, particularly this year is a good example where we've had some expenditures that we have not anticipated for such as the forest fire season or the low water. Additional to that, we also, depending on the cash burn rate of the government on a program and service level, may incur some short-term borrowing. As long as the departments have an appropriation from the Assembly for those budgets they can spend that, but it's not like we pick and choose what goes into short-term debt. Long-term debt is something that we actually make a considered decision upon and it is usually brought forward to the Legislature. But short-term debt is what is undertaken to, sort of, keep the business of government going, much like an operating line of

credit is, and like I say, on April 1st at 12:01, we will be back in a surplus position.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Again, that's great. I'm getting a much better understanding. The last part of that was how is the transparency handled? Is there a website that Members can go to see what is being characterized as short-term borrowing, long-term borrowing that the public could access?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. It would be reflected over time and in the public accounts. There is no daily site available that sort of tracks that kind of day-to-day business of government. We will, as I have pointed out before in the House be coming forward once the Financial Administration Act is reviewed and passed with a borrowing plan that will be brought forward to the floor of the Assembly on an ongoing basis in the future, but at present the main vehicle would be the public accounts. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Anything further, Mr. Bromley?

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thanks for the Minister's response. Yes, that would seem to be the appropriate vehicle. So maybe I'll just ask the Minister to commit to making sure that there's come discussion and consideration in the Financial Administration Act, the new version dealing with that renewal to provide that transparency in a practical way, monthly or quarterly or something like that. I'll leave it at that. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. The borrowing plan, which will be debated and approved in the House, is a key part of the bill that's currently being reviewed by committee. So that will definitely be there. I'm assuming it will receive the full support of the Legislature. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. General comments. Next I have Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd like to welcome the department here today. As I think you heard from the opening comments, a little bill with some big impacts. I think that probably summarizes it best.

Just for the sake of time and to dig into some of the details regarding why we're here, we've heard from the Minister there were some mitigating circumstances which put economic pressures on the short-term borrowing. One of them was the

firefighting expenditure unforeseen in 2014. Has the department done a full cost accounting of this yet? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's not clear to me the question. Have we done a full cost accounting of the fire season? Have we done a full cost accounting of this proposal? If the Member could elaborate. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you. I thought I was clear, but I'll ask it again. Has the department undertaken a full cost accounting of the 2014 fire suppression season? Thank you

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. We have one of the supplementary appropriation requests before the House has the final supplementary request, which will bring to a close the fire season costs and then we've, as well, engaged in a comprehensive review that is still underway in terms of the fire season and its impacts that were discussed yesterday when we were looking at ENR's budget. One of the key areas being looked at is the administration and finance side. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you. So what we're hearing today from the Minister is that we're still writing cheques for the 2014 fire season. This full cost accounting still has not been before the House and today we're being asked to authorize borrowing of something that this committee has not seen a full vetted process and due process on. To that in itself, it seems a bit problematic. We're supposed to basically accept the fact that this process, which is still not before the House, is going to be done away with after this bill has full assent. Being the fact that this had a huge mitigating circumstance on our short-term borrowing, I find that in itself to be a bit problematic.

Moving on, Inuvik-Tuk highway, this was a project which was deemed to be an accelerated process for this upcoming year, which I would assume put some negative impact on our short-term borrowing. Can I get an update here? What impact has the Inuvik-Tuk highway accelerated program had and what effects has it had for short-term borrowing before the House? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. First, if I just may comment, this full cost accounting, the final supplementary request for the fire season to close the books was reviewed this morning in committee and is in the process to come before the House. So, that work has been done. It was in and out of committee this morning. So it's not quite accurate to say that the Legislature is being asked to take things on faith or without having seen what the costs are. We have

demonstrated that, I think, through the supplementary requests.

In regards to the Tuk-Inuvik highway in terms of the cash and the impact on our short-term borrowing, I'll ask the deputy to respond, Madam Chair, but I would point out that because we had the foresight as the Legislature to agree to advance this money, it kept the project live. They've caught up, they're on target, on time and on budget to deliver the road, which was the biggest concern and we are in the management and risk management business and we made a choice. In that case in the longer term it's going to stand us in good stead.

Madam Chair, with your indulgence, I'll ask the deputy if he could respond further in regards to the specifics of the Tuk-Inuvik highway. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Since the end of October projected to March 31st, the government expects to spend almost \$65 million on the Inuvik-Tuk highway. Against that, which we expect to get just over \$71 million in revenue from the Government of Canada as we catch up to our previous expenditures earlier on in the years. So no doubt that the \$64 million in expenditures incurred some short-term debt, we have revenues to offset that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you. I'll return to the firefighting expenditure at a point in time, but for now I'll leave it. The Minister and I have differing views in terms of what an appropriation for supplementation is and what a full cost accounting is. I think the two are two different animals of two different entities. So we'll get back to that in due course.

It looks like \$60 million did affect the bottom line with respect to short-term borrowing, which has a definite impact on the \$275 million of room that we have. Interesting when I was listening in earlier to Mr. Bromley's response and we heard from the deputy minister that as of April 1st we're back in a surplus position. I found that comment to be a bit of a concern because really I don't necessarily see it as surplus, but really that we're back into an operating room or short-term borrowing. It's as if we've got extra money to spend or that we have money to spend for operating. So maybe it's a culture thing, but surplus is not necessarily the word I'm looking for. More of a comment.

To the issue of the low rider offset that was promised by the government back in the fall of 2014, this was a \$20 million promise that later was discussed in the House. What impact did that \$20 million low rider offset at the Snare River have on this situation we have before the House?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. There are two things. I'm assured that the 13 percent rate increase wasn't put onto the backs of the ratepayers and cost about \$20,000. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: Sorry, I heard \$20,000. Can I get a clarification? Was that \$20,000?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. I'll get the deputy to be more specific. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. For this fiscal year where we provided \$20 million, a contribution agreement to NTPC for low water, which \$15 million was to be used this year, it's contribution to short-term interest expense between October when it was approved until the end of March 31st will probably be in around \$16,000. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thanks for the clarification. I would assume that a government is doing its due diligence when their times are tough, as we're finding ourselves near this fiscal cliff and wall of worry and debt wall. I'm assuming the government has gone to every one of its cupboards, department cupboards, and looked at any lapsed spending, any sunsets that weren't used, any re-profiled funds that may or could be used to help mitigate short-term cash position.

Maybe the department can explain what was done in order to really do a sweeping effect across departments in terms of trying to find that type of money that could be lying dormant in other areas that is not being profiled or used today.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. We've been practicing fiscal discipline, the use of passive restraint. We've capped forced growth at very low levels, and those levels might, in fact, be required to drop further as we move forward. With the passive restraint targets, we've done things like Finance has done, which is gone through its own operation to make sure our house was in order and things like the Territorial Power Support Program. We've laid it all out in the main estimates and all the other documents that are going to be coming out of public accounts.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Dolynny, your time has expired. I will ask committee, are there any other general comments on Bill 43? Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. The discussion has raised one other question I have. When we pay off this short-term debt on the 1st of April, it puts us into a surplus position, and I saw in the Minister's budget address we're in a surplus position for the next fiscal year. It's predicted to be a surplus of I forget the amount. But just for clarity there, does that mean we will have a surplus until we take advantage of our short-term borrowing capacity at which time our net position will be debt of some amount? Is that correct?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. On April 1st when we get our first tranche of our grant from Canada, we will have cash in the bank. We will not be in a deficit position. As we go through the fiscal year, depending on the cash burden, because it's not evenly spread out throughout the month, some months are more intense than others, we will find ourselves incurring short-term debt to do that. That's laid out in the budget papers and we've explained that to standing committee. What we are trying to do is set ourselves on a path of expenditure growth which is more sustainable whereby we mitigate our exposure to that in the future, but by the time we get into the third quarter we usually find ourselves in a cash deficit position to finance the operations of the government over the short term.

MR. BROMLEY: Just for my clarity, that means we are no longer in a surplus position at some point to the three-quarters of the way through the year or whatever. Is that correct?

MR. AUMOND: Yes. We will be in a deficit position, which means we won't have any cash available in the bank to fund operations.

MR. BROMLEY: So our Fiscal Responsibility Policy and the infrastructure principle of having 50 percent surplus available doesn't happen. It's not true at the end of the year until midnight on the 31st. A second later then we have that 50 percent available. Is my understanding of that correct?

MR. AUMOND: The Fiscal Responsibility Policy says that we must have no more than 50 percent debt to finance any given year's operations, so the debt that's accumulated in short-term debt is infrastructure, some of it. A lot of it is based around, most of it is related to O and M expenditures of government, so from a fiscal responsibility standpoint, as long as we don't exceed that 50 percent threshold for any capital expenditures in the given year, we're okay, and we've been able to keep to that in any given year.

MR. BROMLEY: Then there's the understanding that we would have surplus. Perhaps it's not in the Fiscal Responsibility Policy. Fifty percent of our infrastructure budget would be based on surplus. If

I could just get the deputy minister or the Minister to fill in that part of the equation for me.

MR. AUMOND: The government, every year when it tables its budgets, projects an operating surplus to fund its infrastructure, and we've always been able to do that, so while a portion of the short-term debt would be infrastructure, as I said earlier, the majority of it is related to operational or day-to-day requirements to fund government operations. The operating surplus, by and large, for the most part, alleviates most of the cash burden related to an infrastructure spend in any given year, and again, the Fiscal Responsibility Policy limits that debt, whether it be long-term or short-term, to 50 percent.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Next on the list I had Mr. Dolynny, but could I go to Ms. Bisaro who hasn't made general comments yet. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have a couple of comments and questions here. I appreciate the need for this bill to come before us, but it is somewhat concerning for me. We have encountered a number of expenditures which have been unforeseen. The fire season expenditure is the biggest one and the one that we were most unable to control. The \$20 million for the low water surcharge, that was a conscious decision to undertake that payment, which put us into this situation, partly put us into this situation. The other one that was a conscious decision was accelerating the payments of the Inuvik-Tuk highway, because that project was moving faster, I guess, than we had anticipated. But at the time when FMB discusses these expenditures and discusses these payments that we will enter into, is consideration given to the impact that it's going to have on our finances in terms of short-term borrowing?

For instance, with the Inuvik-Tuk highway, at the time that the decision was made to advance the payments, in that discussion, was part of that discussion the impact that advancing those payments would have on our short-term borrowing and did you look forward to this point of the year knowing that this bill was going to have to be amended because we were going to be over our borrowing limit?

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes. The impact on the borrowing limit at the time was considered along with what would be the longer term cost if we shut the project down and didn't start it up again or try to start it up later in the season or lose half of a building season. It was determined that it would make far more sense for us to advance the money, keep the project going, keep the 400 people or 500 people employed, and have that benefit up in the Beaufort-Delta plus keep the project on target and on time.

At the time as well, that predated what we knew later to be the worst fire season in our history as well as an accompanying consequential effect of the fourth year of the drought, which was the low water.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for that. It gives me some comfort, but I am concerned that we are seemingly taking on more and more expenditures and basically just saying, well, that's fine, we can borrow the money. I can say that I'm not sure if you're considering everything and, you know, do we really have to go this much into short-term debt. But I do have faith in the Department of Finance and I do have faith in the Minister, so to ask that question, I'm going to get a rhetorical answer. So I will say it out loud but not expect an answer.

If we pass this bill it will then increase our limit to \$300 million for short-term borrowing. I would hope that we are going to be reducing our short-term borrowing over the next number of years as we hopefully manage our finances and reduce these extraordinary expenditures that we have been incurring. So is it conceivable that this bill would be amended to reduce our borrowing limit to try and get us back to a situation where we are potentially, it's all in the eye of the beholder, but potentially better off by having a lower borrowing limit? Something that would kind of keep us down to spending the money we have as opposed to borrowing to pay our bills. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: As I indicated as clearly as I could in the budget address – I thank the Member for raising the issue – on a go-forward basis it's going to be absolutely imperative that our expenditures don't exceed our revenues and that we are putting in place the pieces that we need to have to ensure that everything we do keeps us under that operational ceiling. The short-term borrowing limit is something we want to free up as well. Three hundred million, \$275 million, I mean, if we are able to hit our fiscal plan, we'll have it, but we won't be necessarily required to use it, barring more catastrophic events that cost us money that no one could have anticipated.

Like the borrowing limit on a credit card that I have, I have a ceiling on it, a borrowing limit. I very rarely get there, but it's nice to know that I have it if I need it. Very similar in this case, but we're going to take the steps and we are taking the steps to in fact do the things that the Members talked about. It's going to be not without some challenge to do that, but I think everybody recognizes the need that we are at that point where we need to do those things to ensure that our expenditures and our revenues don't exceed each other. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. I have no further questions.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. General comments. Next I have Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to continue my questions regarding looking at every possibility of re-profiling some of the money that is currently in our departments. Can the department indicate to me, when I use the term "vacant, unfilled positions," these are jobs that we've put money aside for. These are jobs where the government has said, you know what, thank you very much for allowing us to fill these positions. We're going to set aside money for these positions and these are vacant, unfilled positions.

Can the department indicate to us what happens to that money during the course of the year? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's all accounted through the variance process. There's ability to move money between activities in a department, so the money is always all accounted for at year-end. Some cases, like in capital, will have carry-overs. I will ask the deputy if he wants to add anything further on that particular issue. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. In '14-15 there is a passive restraint target for each department that they have to lapse a certain amount of their budget and the total of that is almost \$10 million. So there already is a corporate process in place to try to make sure that we don't exceed the appropriation and, in fact, try to help out dealing with our cash position. You know, so in terms of re-profiling to try to deal with this, as I said, there's already an exercise in place to do that.

With respect to what happens to any unspent or appropriated money in the department's budget, the Minister provided an answer to that question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Over the course of the last year or so the issue of job vacancy has been talked about in the House. It's been literally quizzed to death, you know, for the lack of a better use of the terminology and statistics. We have about 1,000 jobs that are vacant – I'm using whole numbers here – in which at any given time there's a number of them that are being listed to fill.

So for basic math, let's say 500 of those jobs perpetually are not being filled during the course of the year. Now, it might be high or it might be low, that's not the point, at an average wage rate of \$100,000. So if we have 500 jobs at any given time,

rolling average for the course of the whole year where we appropriate and set aside, on average, \$100,000 for each one of those jobs, that's \$50 million.

Can the department indicate to me, what happens to those so-called 400 or 500 jobs per year where they're still left vacant, they're unfilled and we're hearing there's a passive restraint of \$10 million? I'm talking almost five times that amount of money, given the statistics that we have been given in the House. Can I get some rationalization as to are we talking about a bigger sum of money out there that we could be re-profiling and we're not? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. When it comes to the vacancies there's any number, a host of things that could affect those particular jobs and you'd have to go over them almost position by position. Is it maternity leave issues? Is it a transfer assignment issue? Is it one where it's difficult to fill and we're doing a contract arrangement? As a government we haven't fully funded the benefits for departments. We fund \$17 million and it's actually \$23 million, so there's a 6 percent spread and departments have been told to fund that from within. So what departments have done historically is looked at their vacancy rate to free up that money, which can be a significant amount of money if you have a very large staff complement and you're short 6 percent on pay and benefits. You have to also be able to absorb, in some cases, retirement costs, which is an issue we've been making efforts, as a government, to in fact now start to fully fund departments so that we can get away from that and have, as the Member's pointed out, a clear accounting of what money is being used and where it's being spent. So, Madam Chair, those are some of the issues that would eat up some of that money that is there in vacant positions. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: I'll leave that question as is. I'm still a bit perplexed doing the math. Given the vacancy rate that we have, the number of positions we have and still, at the end of the day, it appears that there's money being tied up into vacant, unfilled positions to which, I believe, would have a huge benefit of accessibility should that money be profiled, or re-profiled for cases such as this where we need short-term money, especially near the end of the year when we're really hitting the odometer reset in less than a month for April 1st. So again, it's an accounting exercise of large proportion, but I did have to ask that.

Changing gears, Madam Chair, I want to talk about the corporate and personal income tax, or the collection of them. Last year at this time, if I recall, we were dealing with a collection mishap, or a collection faux pas, where we missed the mark, so

to speak, on both the collection of corporate and personal income tax to the potential tune of about \$38 million. That number is very slightly in some of the narratives in the House in the past year, but for the sake of argument, this was a \$38 million miscalculation.

Can the department indicate, you know, we fast forward to today, what circumstances today have affected our short-term borrowing with potentially the miscalculation again with the short-term borrowing in relation to personal and corporate income tax collection? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I'd just like to comment on Mr. Dolynny's final comments about vacancies. I want to acknowledge that it is an area, as we move forward and as we hew to that very tough line of not having our expenditures exceed our revenues, that there is going to be, I would suggest, ongoing scrutiny of the whole area of staffing vacancies. We have over 5,000 employees. We fund a veritable army of casuals and relief workers and it's roughly an \$800 million part of our budget, which is a very, very significant amount of money.

Clearly, as we move forward and look at how we're doing things and how we account for things, that is an area, as the Member pointed out, that's going to require continued scrutiny. I just wanted to acknowledge that to the Member.

In regards to our estimates on income tax, we've been relying on federal projections. We've indicated that we're going to move to our own five-year rolling average. The federal projections are based on a snapshot in time and they look forward through that lens of that snapshot and they give us numbers. It also points to the vagaries and the fluidness of how you file corporate income tax, the latitude that corporations have. When they file, how they file, how much they file, where they file are some of the things that we have to stand and wait to see what's going to happen. In the case of this particular circumstance where we have to repay a payment because we were overpaid because of the calculations and projections that were off, we have to manage all of those things and it's not, clearly, an exact science.

I'll ask the deputy to provide some more detail in regards to that particular issue for Mr. Dolynny.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. With respect to short-term interest rates, the amount of corporate income tax collected doesn't really have an impact, given that the federal government gives us the payments based on their own projections and there's a reconciliation process that takes place and we also try to estimate what we think what we will be getting. But when there is an

overpayment...so the overpayment that the Minister spoke about in his opening address is really from the 2012 year. The overpayment is almost like an interest-free loan for the GNWT and the fact that we pay it back in installments over three years, there's no interest and then we make a payment for what's left over at the end of year three.

So, from a short-term interest perspective, other than the fact that we have to pay it back, there's no real impact on interest. There is an impact, though, as the Member stated, on total revenue which the government uses to operate. Again, as the Minister stated, there's a challenge in that as experienced not only by ourselves but by every other jurisdiction in the country. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Dolynny, your time has expired again. Any other Members for general comments on Bill 43? Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, colleagues, for allowing me a third round here. I'll try to be brief.

I appreciate the analogy that the Minister indicated earlier about a credit card. Typically how I look and view the short-term borrowing is very close to a credit card ability where we're having some revolving money, we make payments and hopefully at the end of the year we get a lump sum so we can pay off our full credit card and we can start the process off again.

I'd like to backtrack to about two years ago when this issue of borrowing increase hit the floor of the House here, where had a \$175 million borrowing capacity in our short-term line of credit. At that moment in time, discussion ensued around increasing that to the current \$275 million that we have before us now and we are looking at an extra \$25 million with this bill.

I guess the question is, we had a credit card that was working fine with the government for, literally, I think it was close to 16 years. Clearly, there have been some fundamental changes vis-à-vis. Again, I understand there are issues of acts of God, little water and fire that basically have caused some issues. But fundamentally something has changed in the way we do business, where this \$275 million, this extra \$100 million that we increased in our short-term borrowing no less than two years ago has definitely dealt with how we deal with our revolving ins and outs on short-term money revolving in our government.

Can I get some explanation of what are some of those very large, unforeseen, outside of the bigger issues that we talked about here? What were some of those big issues that really have eaten that so-called \$100 million of extra grace, so to speak, that we've given under this short-term borrowing? There

has to be something fundamentally that has changed in the way we do our books. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. In this Assembly and the previous Assembly, for sure, have had very ambitious agendas. We've had very significant commitment to trying to beef up our infrastructure. During the life of this government, as I pointed out in the budget address, we have delivered or will have committed to deliver about 1.2 or 1.5 billion dollars of infrastructure. The last government was in the same circumstance.

We made a conscious decision. If I could point out, when we went down, when we hit the big economic crisis in 2008, we made a conscious decision to spend money, like every other government, to do everything we can, and could at the time, to prop up and put money into the economy. As businesses retreated, retrenched, cut expenditures, laid people off, limited their capital and suffered the consequences of the big market downturn, we spent money and we consciously did that as a Legislature to do our part. The federal government did theirs. We took advantage of every cent of the Building Canada programs. We've made investments because we know ideally... If we were just going to say we don't have the money, we wouldn't be doing Stanton. We're not going to take any risk. We're not going to have any sense of vision of making long-term investments. We wouldn't be doing the Tuk-Inuvik highway. We wouldn't be doing any of these things.

This is an operational issue. We have almost a \$2 billion budget. We have an \$800 million borrowing limit. Half of that borrowing limit is taken up on us by things that we don't drive personally as a government out of our operational money. It's paid for; NTPC debt, housing, most of the bridge. So in actual fact, for a \$2 billion corporation we have roughly a \$400 million borrowing room which, in my mind, when we look at the \$3.8 billion infrastructure we have, when we look at the things we want to do and we know we need to do with infrastructure is very, very modest.

I would also point out that as we focus on this, when you look at the big picture, we have an Aa1 credit rating, we have one of the best debt to GDP ratios in the country, our interest charges versus our revenue which is maxed out at 5 percent under our fiscal borrowing limit is 1 percent. So we're a very big, complex operation and this is an operational requirement and things have happened.

We have been dealing with the aftermath and the need to actually continue a lot of those investments because the economy, as we know, hasn't recovered. Our economy is only 75 percent of what it was back in 2008.

A government's responsibility is to manage risk, take risk, have enough vision to see when it's time to make investments, and manage the money and still have things like the Aa1 credit rating. All those things have contributed to what the circumstance is we have today, layered on top with the fire season from last summer, fourth year of a drought that has dropped water levels, and this conscious decision, this wise decision by this Legislature to say we're not going to sit here and add 13 percent to power rates and then say we're concerned about the cost of living in the next breath.

So all those factors, Madam Chair, contributed to the circumstance we are in today.

MR. DOLYNNY: I see the passion and I hear the passion with the department on this. I applaud the work that the department is doing. I want to say that, for the record, but I also want to say what's modest for some may be seen as extremely high risk for others. As a Member of this House, I need to make sure that all voices are thought of when we're doing these large, monumental and paradigm shifts in thinking when it comes to expenditure control and borrowing limits. I do appreciate what I've heard, but I'm doing my due diligence, Madam Chair.

As we heard from the Minister – and again this is before committee, but because it was brought up, I'll speak to it – that there's a borrowing plan within the new Financial Administration Act that would help with these types of processes in the future. Unfortunately, we don't have that plan before us today. This is a tool that I'm assuming, because I haven't seen the matrix and the analytics behind it that would definitely help us understand cash flow and help us better understand our spending and our spending habits. Because it's not before the House, it's almost moot to be discussing it at this point. I'm enthused that we will see it, but it's not here.

I want to leave this with this last issue here. That's going back to the issue of firefighting expenditures for the 2014 season. It makes it very difficult, extremely difficult for a Member on this side of the House to look at borrowing more money or allowing the increase of a borrowing limit when we haven't done the full cost accounting, that full exercise which was promised by the Minister at least half a dozen times publicly. I'm enthused we are getting there. But this sounds like an exercise that's not going to take place until way into March or April, which is way after the time period in which we've got to make a decision for this bill, which is problematic in my books. That's the cart before the horse. Unless we can do a full cost accounting, it makes it extremely difficult for me to understand the rigours of where our costs were for that fire season. How did we spend our money? How was our MARS agreement? How did it work? What was our

overtime position? How did we use our contractors? The list goes on and on. I still haven't had answers to my questions and I have a lot of questions. I have \$60 million worth of questions that still need to be asked and answered.

I'm going to leave it at that. Again, I'm a bit disappointed that there's a lot of faith that's coming to the floor of the House here and bringing substantiation of this magnitude. We need to increase \$25 million more to our short-term borrowing because this is what we need. We need the vision. We need to take the risk. Clearly, this was granted two years ago. We granted this government \$100 million of leeway to do exactly what we're talking about. For us to come back two years later to top it up another \$25 million is extremely problematic for me to wrap my head around.

With that, Madam Chair, I would like to thank you and thank the department and committee for allowing me the opportunity to speak to this. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We have come up with a final supplementary request for the cost of fire season, which is roughly \$60 million when you look at all the money including the money we had in the budget. We can account for that. What is being done, the full cost accounting, since the end of fire season is an operational review of how we are structured, how we've done business, the final accounting of what our expenditures were, communication issues. We've heard any number of suggestions from the communities on the issue of fire smarting, the command and control structure of firefighting, all those types of things.

The actual money piece is there and I appreciate the Member saying he has \$60 million worth of questions. I have to say if that's the case, then we would be providing \$60 million worth of answers, which I believe we can do. I take the Member's point, but I want to reassure him the money issue has already been decided for fire season. The operational review isn't going to change that bottom line. It will help us with our planning as we go forward, which is what we intend to do and we're going to get in front of committee as soon as we can. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Any further general comments? If committee is agreed that there are no further general comments, can we now proceed to clause-by-clause review of the bill? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Okay, so we will pass by the page which has the bill number and the title and go to the clauses. Bill 43, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act, clause 1.

---Clauses 1 and 2 approved

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Bill 43, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act, as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Does committee agree that Bill 43, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act, is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Bill 43 is now deemed ready for third reading. Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Thank you, senior officials. I will now ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

We will now return to our main estimates. We were working on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. I'd like to ask Minister Miltenberger if he'd like to bring witnesses into the Chamber.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. I will ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort ENR witnesses to the table.

Minister Miltenberger, again for the record today, could you please introduce your witnesses.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have with me Ernie Campbell, deputy minister; and Susan Craig, director of finance and administration for ENR. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. When we adjourned yesterday, we were on page 105, forest management, operations expenditure summary, \$32.632 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Page 106, forest management, grants, contributions and transfers, total grants and contributions, \$210,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Forest management, active positions, information item. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Page 109, water resources, operations expenditure summary, \$11.562 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Water resources, grants, contributions and transfers, total contributions, \$1.1 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed. Thank you. Water resources, active positions, information item. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Page 113, wildlife, operations expenditure summary... We'll go back to page 111, water resources, active positions, information item. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to ask about one position in the Sahtu that deals with the water quality. The application by Imperial Oil and 10-year renewal licence for their operation indicated that they are going to use a lot of water from the Mackenzie River over the 10-year period. The big issue for me is I believe it's downstream from the Imperial Oil at Fort Good Hope where the quality of water has been questioned. Imperial Oil is using not millions but billions of litres of water that's going to be used for their operation and they're going to be pumping a lot of water back into the river after it's recycled through the plant.

I want to ask the Minister on this one position in the Sahtu for the water operations, is this person hearing the concerns of the people in Good Hope as to the quantity or the quality of the water that's been flowing downstream? Because they use the water from the Mackenzie River for their personal use for drinking and bathing and all the other good stuff. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Madam Chair. This position is currently in the process of being staffed. I understand they have a successful candidate and hopefully, in the next few weeks, will be operational and up and running. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: I'm so happy, Madam Chair, because I know the people in Fort Good Hope will be happy because, again, the application by Imperial Oil is to take out billions of litres of water and use it for their operations and half of those billions are going back into the Mackenzie River and flowing down towards Fort Good Hope and Tsiigehtchic and down to the Arctic Ocean. So this person is going to be a key person to work with the community of Fort Good Hope.

My understanding again, and I appreciate the Minister's response, is this person then going to be available to help the residents of Fort Good Hope, because they have some major concerns about this

situation here and this is a real concern for the people in Fort Good Hope. This has been going on for many, many years, since the early '20s, and this is a long time, you know, and so this should be on everybody's radar, especially in our region.

Am I correct in my understanding that this person in the Sahtu region is going to be looking at this type of situation in regards to the water quality in the Mackenzie River as per our Sahtu Land Claim Agreement? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The Member is correct; this individual will be part of a broader water team that exists in the Government of the Northwest Territories. We've invested, over the last five years or so, millions of dollars in setting up community-based water monitoring initiatives and stations and in the Member's constituency as well. Where the testing is going on, results are being collected. To address some of the issues the Member has talked about, we're very aware of the concerns of the folks in Good Hope, for example, and this person will be an added resource to work with all the other resources we have that deal with water and effects on the environment. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Just a short question as to if the Minister can provide me the number of water testing sites, I believe, along the Mackenzie that fall within the jurisdictions of the Sahtu region.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We'll provide that information. In fact, we'll commit to provide the information for all the sites across the territory so people can see the length and breadth of the network and the coverage it provides. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: I appreciate that. Is this person able to help the communities, and I'm looking mostly at Fort Good Hope and maybe even Tulita, as to translating the language of a licence like Imperial Oil with all the chemicals and scientific jargon and technical wording into plain English so our people can understand what Imperial Oil is reporting? They do give a report but it's a very highly technical, engineering, scientific report so we need a person that then can translate, saying this is what they're saying, these are the chemicals that Imperial Oil is using, this is what's been processed through the plant, coming out of the plant to go back into the Mackenzie River.

Again, there are billions of litres of water going back once it's pumped out of the Mackenzie River. Have there been any impacts, you know, and this is what's flowing down 140-some-odd kilometres to Fort Good Hope. What's the impact? Because Fort Good Hope has a water plant down below the community that pumps the water out of there and into their water reservoir which gets pumped into people's homes. So this is what they're saying. This is an issue that's been on the radar for the community for the last couple of years, more so because we're starting to realize that over the years

Imperial Oil has sort of been getting a free ride on the use of the Mackenzie River and the amount of water coming out for their operations and now people are starting to realize that these licences are for 10 years. It's not a few million litres of water; it's billions that are being pumped out and about billions being pumped back into the Mackenzie. So I just want to know if the scope of the personnel in the Sahtu are bringing some workshops or some meetings for the people on these technical reports that government or Imperial submit for public hearings or applications. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I want to reassure the Member that this position would be able to provide some support in that area. There also is in Sahtu a fairly sophisticated, I think, well-versed, well-experienced group of people that work in the communities and the various boards that are there. So, between us all, we will be looking to make sure that we understand clearly the technical nature of all the applications that are submitted, and this water person will be one of the folks that are key in that regard. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: I do take that to heart and I do agree with the Minister that they're very capable people working in various boards and governments and that they can work together. I just wanted to make sure that we have a coordinated approach because we need to know that what's being tested for in the Mackenzie River and what's not being tested for is so important. So we need to know for sure that this information comes out in our own language when we explain this to the community. So I'll take that as a good response from the Minister and I'll leave it at that and appreciate what he's telling me this afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. I'll take that as a final comment. Committee, we're on page 111. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd just like to follow up on my colleague. That was a very interesting discussion. I know people in the Sahtu, and certainly in all of the Northwest Territories were shocked with the national survey of spills to find that Imperial Oil as the highest culprit, so to speak, and the consequences had been minimal to nothing. But mostly, even local people were shocked by the information. Again, I appreciate my colleague bringing this up.

I'd just ask the Minister, will this position ensure that that sort of information is not a surprise, that people are well informed about it? While I'm at it, would this person also contribute to good information on which to base the new protocol on generating income for water licences that reflects the true value of the water being used, the billions of gallons, billions of litres that are being used and put into this...(inaudible)... Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This position which came over with part of the devolution transfer is going to have a key role in the region. It's going to give us a specialized person on water for the first time in the region. The issue of tracking, understanding and helping with plain language, trying to keep track of all the things that are happening in the region in terms of compliance and spills would be one of the functions. But what I would ask, Mr. Chairman, with your indulgence, is the deputy to speak a bit further to some of the specifics in terms of the job requirements.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Campbell.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This position will also help with the partnerships, the community-based monitoring in particular. Part of that process includes communities in the Sahtu as well. We know that with Imperial Oil that water licence renewal process is a federal process and it's in the hands of the federal Minister at this point; however, through the partnerships we work with our federal agencies and, of course, with the communities, and do the assessments, the monitoring, the testing, and along, again, with our community-based monitors and, as well, we do have scientists, experts in headquarters that work with the communities as well. The answer is yes, it is definitely part of the mix here in working with the communities in the Sahtu.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Campbell. Continuing on with questions, I have Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have one other question. An interesting point that the renewal of the licence is in the federal government's hands and the federal government is part owner of Imperial Oil oilfield. That leads to other questions. Anyhow, I'm not going to belabour on that point here.

My other question I have for the Minister has probably to do also with the federal government, is the Great Bear Lake area where I think it was 700,000 tonnes of material that was dumped into the lake. I know that they are going through a process of that remediation cleanup and it has to do with the water. I might be out of sync here as to the question. I'm just saying because it's a water issue and the Deline community has been working closely with the federal government on the recommendations, but it has to do with water and I'm just trying to sneak that in, I guess, as to where the territorial government is in regard to the issue of cleaning up the amount that was quoted to me by the report that was 700,000 tonnes from the mining industry that was dumped into Great Bear Lake.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. I will continue on with this water question. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just assuming Great Bear. We're talking Port Radium? We'll commit to get back to the Member on the issue of remediated sites, waste sites. I'm thinking, but I don't have the list before me, that that might be one of the ones that the federal government still has responsibility for. But we'll double check that and we'll get that information back to the Member.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Committee, we're on page 111, water resources, active positions, information item. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, page 113, wildlife, operations expenditure summary, \$15.096 million. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My questions have to do with a letter that was sent to the Minister on November 19th. I'm not too sure if the Minister wants to see a copy. It is from the Sahtu Renewable Resources Board, signed by the interim chair of the board, Paul Latour, and Chief Leonard Kenny. It was addressed to the Minister and it talked about the request for the feedback on the issues considering the harvesters for caribou, allocations for the Bluenose-East caribou. In there, they've made seven points, addressed seven points of consensus presented to the department, and they want to know the feedback on these seven points from this department. I could share the letter with the Minister or go on memory there.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm familiar with the letter. As the Member indicated, it's from last November. The letter is somewhat dated. There has been a lot of water under the bridge on that particular issue. The deputy minister has been personally handling a lot of the work and discussions on the Bluenose-East, the issue of the allocation and the discussion with the boards and the communities, so I would ask the deputy just to give a quick update of the circumstance that would address those seven issues which have been, as I indicated, I think, overtaken by some other events.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Before we continue here with Mr. Campbell, because we're talking about a document that's not before the House or tabled before the House, I'll continue to allow the questioning, but I will suggest to the Member to maybe table that document with its proper redaction at a later date. Deputy Minister Campbell.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned yesterday on the caribou issue, the discussion started in August, and we had many, many, many discussions with political leaders, with technical working groups, there were caucuses with the political leaders, there were discussions with renewable resource boards. From then until just recently here, we've been able to work out approaches for an interim basis on management actions to address both the Bluenose-East and the Bathurst caribou herds, barren ground caribou herds.

Initially, with the alarming, I guess, information from the reconnaissance surveys in June, it definitely was recognized as an urgent situation. Throughout the number of months to where we landed today, it evolved into a process where we worked with our political leaders, and we worked with our co-management partners, and we recognized their recommendations, and we accepted those recommendations. Today we have an approach for the interim and we all recognize we have to get back together again after we get the photographic survey numbers from the June surveys, so we'll probably be talking again in August on an approach going forward.

I also recognize we need long-term management approaches as well. But just to confirm, some of the previous letters from communities, from co-management partners, those issues were addressed and worked out collaboratively. In the end, we took the recommendations from the co-management partners. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Deputy Minister Campbell. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I apologize. I'll table the document and I'll leave my questions for some other venue.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Continuing on with questions on wildlife, I have Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe we're on page 113, wildlife. I guess my first question is I see there's been a \$1 million reduction in wildlife research and management. This is a time when I know we're all aware we have serious issues. Why the drop there? If I can get an explanation on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. For that we'll go to Ms. Craig.

MS. CRAIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The department had a strategic initiative related to the Caribou Strategy that sunsetted at the end of this fiscal year, so those funds have been removed from our 2015-16 budget. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Craig. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. So that work was completed. We have a strategy and all that that's adopted now?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This particular line item is one that has been funding a lot of the work that we've done on caribou, all the surveys, all the work that's been done across the North for just about all the herds, trying to stay on top of things. It helped fund our involvement in all different regions with all the different co-management boards and in the unsettled claim areas.

After April 1st we're going to be working very hard internally to see how we can cover this off from within. So it did what it was intended to do, but we haven't had that money added to the base in ENR, so our challenge is going to be to still do the work that's required on caribou.

We have different strategies on different herds and we still have work to do on herds like the Bathurst and the final plan on the Bluenose, for example. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I agree, a close look is needed because we have clearly been failing miserably on our management of caribou. The herds have continued to plummet with every new report that we get. So I'm not averse to looking at how we're spending it, but it is disconcerting to hear that sort of thing when we're clearly failing.

Just on the caribou situation, I don't think there's any doubt that cow caribou, the female caribou, the adult female caribou are worth their weight in diamonds or gold or whatever it is that you value, yet in every case where we have established a quota and assigned a ratio of the number of bulls to number of cows, we have failed and vastly exceeded, sometimes by 100 percent, the cow harvest. That is, we're reducing the reproductive capacity, the recovery capacity of those herds. I know we're continuing on that and now we're going to be even more amazing in how we limit the harvest on Bathurst herds by having a mobile ... (inaudible) ... based on, I don't know, a dozen or two collars. This is even more magic. So I don't see the answer yet.

Can the Minister tell me: Will these quotas be shut down? Will the hunt be shut down once the female quota has been reached?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The majority of caribou herds are under pressure not only in the Northwest Territories but we've seen that to the east, as well, with the George River and Leaf River herds and some of the herds farther to the west. The one herd that has been doing well, the Porcupine, they have the benefit of, I think, a very, very good management plan that took about seven

years to agree to. They think the Bluenose-East plan is going to hopefully hit that standard as well. The Bathurst Management Plan is still somewhere in the future. Unfortunately, the complex area, unsettled claims combined with some settled claims has made it very problematic, but it's a challenge for us. The Bathurst mobile zone, we believe, is a good solution in terms of protecting the remnants of the Bathurst herd, and that's done based on the collars that we have, over a dozen collars, and regular flights to track where the herd is located.

When it comes to the Bluenose, there has been a ratio, in terms of bulls and cows. I fully appreciate and agree with the Member that cow caribou are very, very critical and we still have a penchant in the Northwest Territories for hunting cows. We can show very clearly in 1986 when the Bathurst was about 440,000 animals. At the same time as they put the road north into the range of the Bathurst, the numbers started to drop. So today we have about 15,000 animals. We've dropped over 400,000, 425,000 animals and we were harvesting roughly 15,000 animals a year. The majority of that, by far and away, at the most there was probably 3,000 at the absolute best time for resident and commercial harvest, the rest was the Aboriginal harvest and a lot of them were cows.

It has put enormous pressure on the herd and it has taken 28 years to get to this point. We've had some restrictions in effect for five years, and I've heard many comments by folks saying, "It's been five years. How come there's no recovery yet?" It's because of the extent of the pressure on the herds. It's taken 28 years to get down to 15,000 and it's probably going to take that long to recover.

On the Bluenose-East side, we're looking at allocation. I'll get the deputy to speak to the bull-cow ratio. We're pushing and have monitors out and staff out to make sure, because we've pretty well hit the cow harvesting number. The pressure now is on everybody to move on to the bulls with the tags that we have left, but I'll ask the deputy to speak in more detail on that particular issue. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Deputy Minister Campbell, please.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the Bluenose-East the recommendations from the board was 1,800 animals, and we've allocated those tags, authorization cards to the Aboriginal governments. The co-management partners informed that they wanted the 80/20 bull-cow ratio to be enforced. Through that process with the authorizations, today they've reached the cow limit. The tags that are being utilized by the communities are now bull-only authorizations.

Regarding the Bathurst, of course, the herd is protected with the core mobile zone. The Member did identify 12 collars. We had approval in the past

to collar 20 animals and we brought the number up, of course, to that last year. As we know, the herd continues to decline. Cow mortality, of course, we've lost a number of collars. However, I just wanted to take the opportunity to explain how we came up with this core management zone. It was because of the way the Bathurst herd had been behaving this year. They came off the calving ground as a core group. They've basically remained that way. That's something unique that we haven't seen before, and even on the winter range they haven't dispersed like they've done in the past. So we've had that ability to use that collared information to identify this core mobile conservation zone.

However, regarding the limited number of collars, we do have approval to up that number to 50 collars and we are undertaking that exercise and bringing those numbers up to that level in the month of March. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Deputy Minister Campbell. Time is expired, but are there any other Members who want to speak on wildlife? Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks for that response, Deputy Minister. That was interesting information on the mobile zones. Sounds like a unique opportunity there.

We are, again, just to repeat, we've clearly failed with caribou management and I can guarantee as a biologist and a keen observer that we will fail with the Bluenose-East herd unless this government gets up the gumption to close the season when the cow harvest is filled because the cow harvest will not stop. If the cow harvest has been filled, then we know that many more cows have been killed than the department is aware of. How many, that's an unknown.

We also don't know, the Minister mentioned 15,000; we have no data from back in those days. We completely chose to not measure harvest and I can see going back and looking at the rate of decline we can estimate that and I appreciate that work, but again, here we are.

So I'll leave it at that. I haven't heard that the department is closing the season on the cow harvest as yet, and if we don't do that we will continue to fail and a few people will enjoy their caribou meat at the cost of yet more generations of future people suffering the loss. Just a comment.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. We'll treat it as a comment. Thank you very much. Committee, we're on page 113, wildlife, operations expenditure summary, \$15.096 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Page 114, wildlife, grants, contributions and transfers, total contributions, \$634,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 115, wildlife, active positions, information item. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Seeing none. Thank you. Page 116, lease commitments, information item. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Seeing none. Page 117, Environment Fund, information item. Any questions? Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could I just get an update on the plans for the electronics recycling? I have to smile because I ask this every year, as the Minister knows, and I keep hearing positive responses, but no action on the ground. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll get the deputy to respond. We do have five operational pilots that I think are proving out the case, but I'll ask the deputy to expand further on that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Deputy Minister Campbell, go ahead.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do have a pilot project underway with the electronic and recycling. It involves five communities at this point and this fall the program will be fully implemented. So, there's a positive new story. We will be underway with the program in the Northwest Territories in the fall of 2015. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, deputy minister. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That indeed sounds positive and I'd be curious to learn more about that. Maybe there will be an opportunity.

Now, I see our opening balance on the fund is continuing to increase or at least remaining stable. Are there any plans? Is that part of the equation here on getting this electronics recycling going? Are there plans for those dollars or is that the amount we want to continue to maintain in the fund? Thank you.

MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Those dollars absolutely are to address this one component, the electronics, but they're also there to maximize the program so that we can continue to explore other areas that we want to undertake. We

do know there is a lot of interest, of course, with tires. There's also a lot of interest, as part of the review in the recent past, on household hazardous material and we heard, of course, some other area as well. So again, the dollars are to continue to attempt to be successful on the Recovery Act. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for that response. The last question I have is I believe the deposit on oil drums has been removed and no longer is in place and I think that's causing some issues. Well, I know that's causing some issues for cleanup and a lot are being left out on the land and so on.

People that are in the business of cleaning up sites are no longer bringing them back, because that \$50 deposit enabled them to do that. Is there any contemplation of this division for going after that issue and seeing what can be done about it and re-establishing some sort of deposit and ensuring that those materials are cleaned up? Often they're, of course, left out there with fuel in them and they are a risk, contamination risk and so on. The great thing about the deposits was that it enabled the cleanup companies to go out there, drain all of those out into a few barrels, bring them back, deal with those contaminants and it was paid for by the deposit they got back on the drums. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This issue was touched on a bit yesterday with some of the questions in the House and it's on our list that we've been working our way through and we're not there yet.

We recognize the need, the same as we had this discussion with Mr. Hawkins on things like shredders for tires and vehicles. Mr. Yakeleya raised the issue of cleaning up all the old vehicles that are scattered across the North and it's a question of time, resources and capacity. Just this rollout of the electronic waste issue, for example, has taken a considerable amount of time to get operational.

So we recognize it, we've got it on our list, but we are not in a position to be acting in the near future on being able to move forward on it at this juncture. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for the Minister's comments there. Perhaps there's another way to deal with this issue. I mean, I understand Mr. Hawkins, but those are drums that are in our possession. These are drums and contaminants that are being left out on the land in remote situations that by law are, I'm sure, supposed to be cleaned up but aren't, simply because of this mechanism that's been removed. Perhaps there's another way the Minister could conceive of dealing with this in another section of this department. I'll

leave it at that. I'm just raising the issue and it sounds like it's not going to happen in this division anyway in the near future but, meanwhile, it's an accumulating liability. I'll leave it at that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I'll take that as a comment more than a question. We're on page 117, Environment Fund, information item. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, committee. Page 118, Fur Marketing Service Revolving Fund, information item. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, committee. We're going to combine pages 119, 120, 121 and 122 under the title of work performed on behalf of others, information item. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, committee. I will ask you to turn to page 89, Environment and Natural Resources, department total, \$85.981 million. Agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that consideration of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is completed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, committee. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just request a moment of the committee's time as we wrap up our final budget of Environment and Natural Resources. As we've been doing, we appreciate all the questions and feedback and support from Members. As I've been sitting here in the House and at the table again, I've been thinking I've been doing this, this is my 20th budget, my 14th as a Minister and my ninth as Environment Minister. I've served with some of you four years, some eight, some 12 and my longest-serving travelling companion, Madam Groenewegen from Hay River South, 20 years.

I just wanted to reflect that I've been thinking back over those years, the up and downs, the peaks and valleys, and there's a Welsh word that comes to mind that captures this little moment, if I may request the indulgence of the House, and it's hiraeth, a type of homesickness for somewhere you can't return to, the nostalgia and grief for lost places of your past. I think back to some of the things that Mr. Bromley said and I can remember in my life up here when the days of caribou were plenty, when life was different. We've moved on to a whole new world and there has been enormous change over time. Sometimes we look back and all we can think

about is some idealized version of what we remember about the places that really never were. I think if we look back through the lens of reality, we've done a lot of good work and I've always appreciated the support that ENR has got in this House. I wanted to express that gratitude on behalf of myself and the department. As we look forward to the 18th Assembly, I look forward to that continued support to the department when we next appear before this Assembly and this august body in this wonderful place of the people. Thank you.

---Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger, for those fine closing remarks. I'd like to thank you and your department, as well, for your stewardship. Mr. Campbell, Ms. Craig, thank you for joining us. It's always a pleasure to have you in the House. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort our witnesses out of the Chamber. Thank you.

Continuing on with committee's wishes, we will start the Department of Lands. With that, we'll turn it over to the Minister responsible for the Department of Lands for opening comments, Minister R.C. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I am pleased to present the 2015-2016 Main Estimates for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Overall, the department's estimates propose an increase of \$4.02 million, or 3.8 percent, over the 2014-2015 Main Estimates.

Highlights of the proposed estimates include:

- funding of \$48.3 million to provide for community government operation and maintenance costs and \$17.6 million for water and sewer costs, a total increase of \$2.27 million from 2014-2015;
- forced growth funding of \$2.939 million is comprised of \$469,000 for Collective Agreement increases, \$613,000 in community government operations and maintenance funding and an increase of \$1.857 million in water and sewer operations funding;
- a decrease of \$474,000 as a result of departmental reductions. This includes the repeal of the Extraordinary Funding Policy and the reduction of water and sewer forced growth.

In addition, last fall the Legislative Assembly approved the commitment of infrastructure contribution funding for community governments totaling \$28 million. The department will also continue to administer the Gas Tax Agreement on behalf of the federal government. These two programs will contribute \$43 million towards community infrastructure in 2015-2016.

The proposed Department of Municipal and Community Affairs' Main Estimates continue to support the priorities of the 17th Assembly. Some

specific activities in support of these priorities include:

- \$1 million in new funding to provide support for the community selected to host the 2018 Arctic Winter Games;
- an increase of \$350,000 related to the transfer of funding from the Executive for the delivery of the Non-Government Organization Stabilization Fund;
- funding of \$400,000 to enhance community capacity in the areas of ground ambulance and highway rescue;
- funding of \$1.275 million to provide for recreation, sport and physical activity programs in communities across the Northwest Territories;
- funding of \$1.425 million to provide community governments and youth serving organizations with support for various youth development projects; and
- funding of \$1 million to support the training and development of senior community government staff.

That concludes my opening remarks. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Minister McLeod, I am thankful for correcting the chair. We are doing MACA, so you're on the right track. I said Lands, but it's MACA.

---Microphones turned off

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): No, we're not going to start over. We're doing MACA.

---Laughter

Minister McLeod, do you have witnesses you would like to bring into the Chamber? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I would, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the House, please.

Minister McLeod, please introduce your witnesses to the House.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With me from Municipal and Community Affairs, I have to my left Tom Williams, deputy minister; to my right I have Gary Schauerte who is our director of corporate services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Schauerte, Mr. Williams, welcome back to the House. It's always good to see you

folks. We are on general comments for MACA. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just briefly, I just wanted to touch on the way the department deals with the communities. As I said with the capital projects, it is up to the communities now to develop their own capital plans. From past experience, I really appreciate the way they operate now. I always say I'm glad the New Deal is moving forward. I hope we continue this practice. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Member for his comments. I think we've all been to the communities and we've seen the work that they've done. With the responsibility they've been given they've done a lot of fantastic projects in the community. As the Member said, they have the ability now to make the decisions as to what their priorities are. I appreciate the comments and a shout out to the communities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Before we continue with Mr. Blake, committee, I draw your attention to the gallery. We have Yellowknife resident Mr. Marino Casebeer joining us today watching the proceedings. Mr. Casebeer, thank you for joining us.

Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That was about the only comment I had there. I'm glad to hear that we are planning to continue this practice and I look forward to the future projects the communities have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. I'll take that as a comment. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a couple of comments and I don't need a response from the Minister. I will have questions when we get to detail. I just wanted to say that I was really pleased to see that there was a review of the funding formula for communities in this past year. It was well overdue, and I think the process that the department undertook was a good one. My communications with the folks from the City of Yellowknife was that it was a good process, well thought out and lots of good discussions and that the end product was a good one. I was really glad to hear that.

I do have to say that I'm looking forward to hearing about 911 when we get to that page. I'm also looking forward to hearing about the advancements in regard to the hotel levy when we get to that page. I do have to say, and I will have questions when we get there, but I do have to say that I am extremely disappointed about the transfer of the NGO Stabilization Fund to MACA from the Executive. It

doesn't belong in MACA. It's an all-encompassing fund that stretches across all departments, which is what the Executive does and MACA does not. No disrespect to the MACA staff who might be handling it, but it just doesn't belong in MACA.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Member asked to be just general comments without reply, so we'll respect her wishes. She'll be dealing with those in detail. General comments? Is committee prepared to go into detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, we'll commence with detail. We'll defer page 351 until consideration of activity details for MACA. I'd like to turn your attention to page 352, Municipal and Community Affairs, revenue summary, information. Any questions? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a question on this page in regard to the number. It looks as though the revenue, for instance, in 2015-16 is \$187,000, but then there's a line underneath that total, and I need an explanation. The total for 2014-15 revised is \$187,000 and then beneath that it has \$2.561 million, and I don't know quite where that other number comes from, so if I could get some explanation, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that we'll go to Mr. Schauerte.

MR. SCHAUERTE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The \$2.561 million includes the Building Canada Plan, \$2.374 million and the \$187,000 detailed below that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Schauerte. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Chair, and thanks, Mr. Schauerte, for pointing out what I should have seen in the first place. I guess the revenue for Building Canada Plan for this year, '15-16, is not there because we haven't got it yet. Is that right?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member is correct; we haven't gotten it yet.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, we're on page 352, Municipal and Community Affairs, revenue summary, information item. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Page 353, Municipal and Community Affairs, active position summary, information item. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Seeing none, thank you. Page 355, Municipal and Community Affairs, community operations, operations expenditure summary, \$2.093 million. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I note the last line of the text on page 354 says that this section is also responsible for coordinating MACA's responsibilities for environmental liabilities. I thought that those environmental liabilities came either under Lands or under ENR, so could I get an explanation of what MACA's responsibilities are under for, or under environmental liabilities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that we'll go to Mr. Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. MACA's role in the environmental liabilities is looking at all the sites and communities. Like, we have dumps that have closed, or sewage lagoons. We're keeping the inventory. We bring it forward to the overall Environmental Liabilities Committee that is chaired by the Department of Finance. It's more we track it, we work with communities and we do the first environmental site assessments, ESA1s that we're responsible for, for those activities.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to Mr. Williams. Where is the money for this environmental liability work? Where does it show up in the budget?

MR. WILLIAMS: We're not funded for ESA1s. We have to find the money within. But any ESA2s or 3s, it's funded through the Environmental Liability Fund.

MS. BISARO: Thanks for the explanation. It seems a little strange that the department is required to do work and doesn't have any funding for it. Is this something that is minimal to no cost, or you're overfunded and we don't need to give you money for liability assessments? It just seems strange to me that if there's work that the department has to do that there's not an amount earmarked in the budget. Can I get a guesstimate of how much might be spent on environmental assessments in any one year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Schauerte.

MR. SCHAUERTE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. By far the majority of the sites that MACA has booked under their environmental liability listing are active, open sites that are in communities. For example, a sewage lagoon or a solid waste facility. As these facilities are continued to be used by community governments, there is no point in doing any assessment until the facility is closed and we're preparing to decommission that facility. Accordingly, the only two significant environmental cleanups that we've been working on lately have been funded centrally through the Department of Finance Environmental Liability Fund, and that was one facility, I believe it was in Sachs Harbour, I

think, and one in Norman Wells that we've been working on.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Schauerte. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last question here. Can I ask the department, over time we're going to get more and more closed sites and sites that need to be remediated, so is it the intention of the department to put money into their budget to fund environmental liability assessments?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that we'll go to Mr. Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Right now it would be great to have money put into the activity, but we do have staff that part of their job is to monitor the environmental liabilities at the community level. We do monitor it. We do bring ones forward that have to be brought to the attention of the Department of Finance and the Environmental Liability Fund.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, deputy minister. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. That was my last question, but I have to comment that if we think that remediating the environmental liabilities sites is important, then I would urge the department to request funding to make sure it gets done.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We'll allow the Minister a final comment. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We appreciate that support.

As the work picks up, there will be opportunities where we will have to come forward to request more money to deal with all the work that we are doing. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we are on page 355. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just briefly, I know in the past it was a huge issue of solid waste but also waste soil and other materials like this in all the communities in the Beaufort-Delta. I know that the communities, at one point, were looking at cost-effective ways to find a way, whether they all pitch in, to bring the costs down to get a lot of this waste soil and everything out of the communities. I know in some communities we have anywhere from 50 to 100 forty-five-gallon barrels of waste oil and other materials like this. If we don't do anything with this, eventually it is going to leak through the barrels that they're in now. I think now is the time to start preparing and getting these materials out of our territory and into the proper storage in the South. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the Member is absolutely correct. If the communities can work together to try and find good options for disposing of their waste oil and whatever else they may have. You go to a number of communities and you see a number of old trucks that are down at the dump. If they can come up with a way and cost share that, I think that would go a long way and get rid of a lot of their old oil, old vehicles and old tires. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Continuing with questions on community operations, I have Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just wondering, under the drinking water quality in the Northwest Territories initiative and management by MACA, who is responsible for this particular area. Maybe you could describe on how they manage and monitor the fluoridation of the water and at what levels they monitor it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. For that we will go to Mr. Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Each community is responsible for doing daily testing at the community level. The testing is done on a regular basis. It is sent into the Taiga Labs. We also have the environmental health involved to verify the tests.

As for fluoridation, that is reviewed through Taiga Labs as well. There are mechanisms in place to ensure that we have clean drinking water and good drinking water. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: I actually support the principle of fluoridation so it's not a question of mine, but it is driven by a constituent concern, and I think it comes up every couple of years, so it's always good to remind ourselves of this. Fluoridation is known as a potential carcinogenic element that we are putting into our water, but that said, it's not as if we don't know that. I guess in some ways, how do we communicate its risks and gains? I know the dental industry strongly supports that, fluoridation in our water, and that is part of the reason why I certainly support it. But that said, how do we communicate the risks to ensure that our citizens are informed? Thank you.

MR. WILLIAMS: We have a Joint Drinking Water Quality Committee. The Department of Health plays a big role in this on the public information side. So, through our website that we have and through websites of the Department of Health, it is certainly a way to communicate to the general public and through the health system. That is the role that they would provide. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Does the website talk about this particular subject? Thank you.

MR. WILLIAMS: I think our website, the general website on the MACA site, it has just basic... It has the testing results. I don't think we talk about fluoridation, but I would have to confirm with the Department of Health, I haven't looked at their website. We would have to get back to you on that.

MR. HAWKINS: If it does say anything regarding fluoridation, would MACA be interested in updating the public as to why it is used and some of the comments provided on both sides? As I said earlier, I am in support of fluoridation and that's not the issue, but there are many people out there concerned with its risks, so the public is informed a little about the argument on both sides and allow them to pursue their own. I think it's in our best interests to provide good education to people on both sides of this argument and one should never be afraid to hear an opposing point of view.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's a good idea. We'll work closely with the Department of Health, and all the information that we can gather, we'll make sure that it's available on our website. We will take the Member's suggestion and we'll work to implement it. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: I appreciate the very warm reception to that thought. That said, I just want to underscore that I certainly am in favour of fluoridation. I think it is a good thing. I think it does wonders for the dental community, and dental health is very important not just for children but lifelong adults in our scope.

Mr. Chairman, just on that note, I wanted to change gears. One more second before I change gears. Can I get the Minister to confirm that he will inform me once it has been updated so I assume that it will be either checked or updated in a timely way, and could I get the Minister to also ensure that I am informed in some way that it has been addressed so that I can get back to my constituent? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I can commit to informing the Member and committee when all the information is on the website.

MR. HAWKINS: I appreciate that. That will make things most helpful.

Just changing gears here on a particular matter, I was speaking to some folks in Hay River and I brought this up with the Department of Health the other day. I think it sits under this particular operation, community operations, but that said, if the department feels the need to direct me to another page, I'm happy to wait as well.

That said, the issue was about a community access van and sometimes the challenge, of course, is being able to afford to purchase one. Some of the smaller communities have to raise money for a long time in order to be able to get enough money to buy a suitable vehicle so they can get those folks who are either disabled or those seniors who just need a little extra assistance, who would otherwise be easily defined as shut-ins and missing out on much needed community engagement, the old circulation of life, getting out there for a little fresh air, getting to appointments, going to community events, being involved to whatever capacity they are able to, and certainly making it easier for those who work with them and help them, be it family members or support workers. I'm just wondering if this is the right area to speak to vans and how much is dedicated to that type of budget to help provide communities with things such as community access vans so we can get our good folks out there into the community. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I believe that was one-time federal money that they accessed to purchase that equipment. But through the programs that we offer, the Gas Tax Agreement and the CPI funding, they are able to use those funds to purchase those pieces of equipment that they might need to get their residents around. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: The famous gas tax answer. I wondered how long we would get there. If you are part of what we call the NWT Disabilities Council, you don't qualify for the gas tax money. How does the Minister suggest, or what program is available to these types of folks who want to help enable our citizens to contribute to be involved in our territory's activities? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When the Member asked his original question, he mentioned a particular community, so I just assumed it was a community-owned asset. I didn't realize that it was the council. But the communities do have the ability. As to the council itself, I'm not sure what programs might be there for them. I'm just speaking to it from a community perspective and my apologies for misunderstanding the question if there was a misunderstanding there. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: It's completely fine. I didn't spell it out. I was just more talking about community access programs. I'm just trying to find a way to help small NGOs, as a matter of fact, or those types of organizations that try to work with the communities, and maybe NGO is the right descriptor we should use in this particular case.

Does the Minister see some ability there for them to apply for things like community access vans in order to help the folks such as I mentioned, seniors and those in the disabled community to be more involved in community initiatives? I had a great

conversation with a resident of Hay River about that and the need, and the fact is I see it here in Yellowknife, as well, and any other community I've had a chance to visit. I mean, when you see things such as people being able to get out of their home and access services, it changes the world that they live in.

What programs exist and how can we get our program people or specialists in the NGO area to apply, and where can they apply? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Through the programs that we offer the communities. Like, we work directly with the communities. If the communities want to purchase that particular piece of equipment and work with a local organization to operate it for them, I think that is allowed under gas tax and through the CPI funding again. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: If MACA becomes a new steward of the NGO Stabilization Fund, would there be an access point for people to be able to apply for capital projects like this where they offer programming? Again, focusing on our citizens of the disabled or senior community that have, you know, I don't want to say no means of getting around, but I just want to use a broad statement if people will allow me to say they have little to no means of getting around the community.

So, would he see the NGO Stabilization Fund as a program available for people to apply for these types of opportunities? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: For the NGO to access the money that a community gets, that's not part of the process. When there is some money there, I think it was \$350,000 that may come over to MACA for the NGO Stabilization Fund and it's for governance and management and organizational development. So, as to actually purchasing infrastructure, again, that would have to go through the community.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Hawkins, your time has expired. With that, noting the clock, I will now rise and report progress. I'd like to thank Mr. Schauerte and Mr. Williams for joining us today and, of course, Minister R.C. McLeod. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort the witnesses out of the House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Good evening. Item 21, report of Committee of the Whole, Mr. Dolynny.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Tabled Document 188-17(5) and Bill 43, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Act. I would like to report progress and that Bill 43, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Act, is

ready for third reading. I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Do I have a seconder? Mr. Nadli.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to proceed with third reading of Bill 43, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act. Thank you.

---Consent granted

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member...

MR. SPEAKER: Consent to proceed, third reading of bills. Do we proceed with third reading of Bill 43 today? Mr. Miltenberger, sorry.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 43: AN ACT TO AMEND THE BORROWING AUTHORIZATION ACT

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Bill 43, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act, be read for the third time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Dolynny, to the motion.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to start off by saying to my colleagues, what legacy do you want to be remembered by? Of course, we have collectively, as an Assembly, started off this 17th Assembly with some very harmonious and ambitious tasks, projects and objectives. I'm extremely proud to be part of this legacy and I hope that the history will see the 17th as being remembered for the good that it's brought to the people it serves.

So why do I find myself perplexed at Bill 43, a simple act that amends our borrowing authorization? Clearly, this House has debated much larger topics and those required more than \$25 million as a price tag attached. So why is the Member for Range Lake so concerned with this bill that he feels the need to speak out in its dying minutes on the Order Paper? Because I have a voice. I have a voice of many who are concerned at the spending of this government, a government that has blindly gone into a spending agenda of epic proportion and whose line of credit has reached its end.

It doesn't take much to understand the predicament that we face with our borrowing both in its long-term and indeed on its short-term merits today sends a message to those in public office and leaders that deal with our finances, that the situation we find ourselves is not only due to unforeseen acts of God or issues such as low water or extreme fires, but, moreover, the financial debt wall that we have before us is equally due to the lack of foresight, improper personal and corporate tax collection, the accelerating of large-scale projects without the Assembly vetting process and inappropriate promises to taxpayers circumventing the due process of the House.

This is now the second time during the life of this Assembly that we are being held accountable for our spending habits or, in this case, our poor habits. I say poor habits because it's easy to borrow money. Ask anyone who gets a Visa card where the bank has no problem increasing your limit multiple times even though your earnings don't change.

We went through this process not more than two years ago and the same government clearly articulated a need to increase our short-term borrowing from \$175 million to the current \$275 million today, a mere \$100 million more capacity to deal with the ins and outs of running the business we call government.

Interestingly, today we heard from the Minister the use of the analogy of the Visa card. As I said, we have not really increased our revenues over the last couple of years and the outlook that we have for resource revenues is rather bleak. In fact, we have had, marginal increases in our revenues in the last little bit and, in fact, this year alone we are destined to add a mere 0.5 percent increase over last year. When you balance our expenditure growth over this same period at a multiplier of more than four to one, it doesn't take rocket science to see that this inverted proportion is going to hit your general ledger at some point in a form of poor cash flow. As I said, economics 101 and that's why we're here today.

So we have asked, many of us have asked and we continually ask why we have been spending the way we have. What is the logic behind each expenditure and what do these expenses do to our fiscal strategy and our overall fiscal health?

I am proud of my colleagues for the thoroughness of their financial oversight and their acuteness of detail in keeping this government accountable. However, today and throughout the process of Bill 43, I have not been thoroughly convinced that this expenditure increase was warranted. Today we are being asked by those in financial authority to trust them, and to trust them with very limited rationalization. This, Mr. Speaker, I cannot support.

I feel that we, Members of this House and the residents that we serve, are being held ransom at the deliberate hands of its creators and we are being asked to mop up this mess. For this reason alone I did not support the principle of the bill in committee and the reason I didn't support this bill during the legislative process and the reason I'm not supporting it now.

I may not be able to stop this legislative process, but I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, and everyone in this room, we will remember this bill today as being the cipher in the first step of a series of epic borrowing increases never before seen by the NWT taxpayer.

May the residents forgive us for what we're about to do.

Mr. Speaker, colleagues, I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak today on Bill 43. With that, Mr. Speaker, I will seek a recorded vote of third reading.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

RECORDED VOTE

MR. SPEAKER: The Member has requested a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte): Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. McLeod – Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Hawkins, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Moses, Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Blake, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Abernethy.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please stand.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte): Mr. Dolynny.

MR. SPEAKER: All those abstaining, please stand. Those in favour, 12; against, one. The motion is carried.

---Carried

I understand the Honourable George Tuccaro, Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, is available to join us in the Chamber today. Mr. Clerk, will you ascertain if Commissioner Tuccaro is prepared to enter the Chamber to assent to the bill?

ASSENT TO BILLS

COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Hon. George Tuccaro): As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I am pleased to assent to the following bill:

- Bill 43, An Act to Amend the Borrowing Authorization Act.

Thank you, merci beaucoup, mahsi cho, qunanai, koana.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte): Orders of the day for Thursday, February 26, 2015, 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. Replies to Budget Address
13. Petitions
14. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
15. Tabling of Documents
16. Notices of Motion
17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
18. Motions
 - Motion 37-17(5), Extended Adjournment of the House to March 2, 2014
19. First Reading of Bills
20. Second Reading of Bills
21. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 12, Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Act
 - Bill 36, Health and Social Services Professions Act
 - Bill 38, An Act to Amend the Jury Act
 - Bill 41, An Act to Amend the Partnership Act
 - Bill 46, Deline Final Self-Government Agreement Act
 - Committee Report 10-17(5), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the 2013-2014 Annual Report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories
 - Tabled Document 188-17(5), NWT Main Estimates 2015-2016

22. Report of Committee of the Whole

23. Third Reading of Bills

24. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, February 26th, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:17 p.m.