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The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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ORDERS OF THE DAY1294

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Monday, October 31, 2016****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Blake, Ms. Green, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Robert McLeod, Hon. Bob McLeod, Mr. McNeely, Hon. Alfred Moses, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. O'Reilly, Hon. Louis Sebert, Hon. Wally Schumann, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Testart, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Vanthuyne

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty): Good afternoon, colleagues. Ministers' statements. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 101-18(2):
ON-GOING SUPPORT FOR MINING AS OUR
ECONOMIC FOUNDATION**

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories' economy is built on mining and exploration. Today our mining sector is the largest provider of high paying jobs and the main driver of the territorial economy. We have committed, in our mandate, to supporting mineral exploration and the NWT mining sector with actions and investments identified in the NWT Mineral Development Strategy.

Our goal is to realize all the benefits of our mineral resources to support ongoing prosperity for NWT residents and communities. At the appropriate time this afternoon, I will be tabling an overview of our five-year implementation plan for this strategy.

I want to highlight for Members some of the work that has been done this year to put our strategy into action and to make good on the commitments in the GNWT's mandate to close the skills gap in the mining sector, implement the Mining Incentive Program, develop a Mineral Resources Act and support Aboriginal governments seeking to build capacity from mining-related activities. In September, two Introduction to Prospecting courses were hosted in Yellowknife by the Mine Training Society, TerraX Minerals and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment. This course supports the development of an educated, trained and readily available northern workforce and fosters awareness of the importance of the mining industry. This is the third year that this course has been delivered. Our Mineral Incentive Program was over-subscribed again this year. In the first two years, our annual investment of \$400,000 has

resulted in an additional \$3.36 million in exploration spending in the NWT by companies and prospectors. This year, seven corporate and five prospector applicants received incentives to advance exploration in our territory.

We have begun work to create a new act that will modernize our government's approach to mining by streamlining our regulatory environment and bringing it in line with our northern priorities and realities. This will be a long process and we are looking forward to working with Members of this House, the intergovernmental council, Aboriginal governments, industry, NGOs and the public to take this next evolutionary step for our territory's economy.

We are also working with stakeholders and Aboriginal governments to advance community participation in mining through regional mineral development strategies. The Dehcho First Nation has been a leader in this, hosting a workshop this summer in Fort Simpson with the Canada Northern Development Agency and the NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines. The Inuvialuit, Sahtu, and Tlicho regions are also interested in developing regional strategies and we will continue to move these initiatives forward.

ITI's Customer Services and Community Relations division continues to support communities and industry interested in participating in our resource sector. In addition to their role as pathfinders and the first point of contact within GNWT, this unit works to promote projects that will enhance the socio-economic well-being of the NWT. In April this included delivering the Mining Matters curriculum in four schools in the Sahtu. It was an opportunity to promote discussion about mining in the NWT, staying in school and the opportunities for careers in the mining industry. This unit is now preparing to deliver the same programming to schools in Fort Simpson, Fort Providence and Fort Liard this week.

Mr. Speaker, we are also celebrating the opening of the Gahcho Kue diamond mine. In its projected 12-year life, this mine will create hundreds of jobs and an additional \$6 billion in investment into our economy. While on site for its grand opening, I was struck by this project's cutting-edge facilities, occupational health and safety procedures, and commitment to environmental protection. It was a reminder of how far mining has come in our

territory, and the certainty with which we can continue to realize its benefits into the future.

In November, Mr. Speaker, the NWT's mining industry will gather in Yellowknife for the 44th Annual Geoscience Forum. It has been 25 years since diamonds were discovered in the NWT and this year's event will include a special commemoration of our diamond industry, and the unprecedented growth it has supported. We are working with our stakeholders to introduce a series of NWT Mining Awards to recognize the many individuals and organizations that have contributed to our industry and continue to push it forward. These awards will be presented for the first time at a gala on November 17th and I invite all Members of this Assembly and the public to join us in this celebration of the mining industry which is so foundational to our territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Honourable Premier.

MINISTERS' STATEMENT 102-18(2):
MINISTER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Caroline Cochrane will be absent from the House today, tomorrow and Wednesday to attend the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Ministers of Housing meeting in Ottawa, Ontario. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
INCREASING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to continue talking about the distribution of employment across the NWT. Canada's employment rate is just under 62 per cent. The Yukon, at around 74 per cent, being the jurisdiction with the highest employment rate. The NWT is second at just over 70 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, we look great from a national perspective, however our employment rate is below 50 per cent in over 65 per cent of our small communities. It is good that larger centres have such high employment rates. It's good for their families, their communities and the NWT. However, the low employment rates for the small communities is not good. It is not good for families, communities and the NWT as a whole. It has a negative impact on health and educational outcomes, among other implications.

Mr. Speaker, the mandate of our government is to improve the lives of our poorest people. For the most part, they are people in our small communities. As you can see, the employment rate of people in small communities is more than 30 per cent lower than in larger centres. Imagine what life would be like if 30 per cent of the people working in Yellowknife lost their jobs. It is an everyday reality for the small communities. Increasing employment in small communities will help all the people of the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, it is a known and accepted fact that the increase in income has a direct and positive impact on the cost of the justice system, healthcare, education and social services and issues like child protection. Furthermore, income allows the small communities to deal with the high cost of living by providing resources that allow them to harvest food. Harvesting helps create and sustain local economies. It allows people to share food, and continue traditional arts and crafts. There are opportunities for people who can repair small engines used in snowmobiles, quads and boats that people use to travel on the land. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these activities are needed to sustain the economy in the small communities. Without them, our small community people cannot afford to eat. There are many families with NO food. Mr. Speaker, that is heartbreaking. Marci cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
DEMOLITION OF ROBERTSON HEADFRAME

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I left my house today, I looked up and for the first time in my life I saw a new horizon in the skies of Yellowknife. The Robertson headframe, the longstanding and iconic landmark of this community is no more. Now, like the 11 former headframes at one time surrounded the city is merely history. This is a bittersweet moment in the history of the NWT, a sentiment I have seen shared by many Northerners over the last few days. Though it is no longer standing, the legacy of the headframe and the strong community the mining industry built here in Yellowknife will always remain.

At 76 metres tall, Con Mine's Robertson Headframe was the tallest structure in the Northwest Territories. The black and white shaft with the red crown could be seen almost anywhere through Yellowknife. Built in 1977, the structure acted as an

employer of many citizens, a guide home on Great Slave Lake and the embodiment of a former economic era for the city for almost 40 years. It is no wonder that the debate for keeping it created such passion amongst our citizens, but it is curious this government remains so secretive about its intentions over the headframe.

Last week, media reported this government was brimming with excitement of the prospect of stepping into save the headframe from demolition from the over 500 pages of emails and other documentation attained by the media has to come to light the public service was preparing to announce as early as Tourism Week last May that the government and Newmont Mining were set to announce an agreement, though it appears all of this crumbled shortly after Regular Members became aware of these discussions ever happening.

I want to make it clear that this side of the House would have been open to the possibility to keep the headframe standing. Instead of staying in line with its commitment to transparency, this government responded with "meh."

Mr. Speaker, though it is sad the Robertson Headframe has fallen into history, let us instead remember the past but look optimistically toward the future. It is time for a new era to begin in Yellowknife and for the Northwest Territories. It is time to steer our economy towards its true potential as innovators and entrepreneurs. It is time to build a stronger economy, a knowledge economy that empowers Northerners to make their own decisions for their own communities. Mr. Speaker, let us now look into the sky and see that bright future the Robertson Headframe helped to build. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REFLECTIONS ON ROBERTSON HEADFRAME AND YELLOWKNIFE'S MINING HISTORY

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my statement today is about the historic structure that vanished from Yellowknife's skyline on Saturday, the Robertson Headframe. As the Minister of ITI alluded to just moments ago, mining has had a defining role in the North we live in today. There's no doubting the impact mining has had on our people, our landscape and our economy. Some may say it was negative, others will say it's the very reason they're here.

Regardless of your view, it was represented by that big monolith on the shore. Until it was gone! Two gold mines, Giant and Con, built the City of

Yellowknife. People came here from the world over for the work. Generations of families were drawn here. Many stayed, finding the security of the job, along with a community they called home. For myself, mining brought my father here, an Irish immigrant, in the late 60's. He worked underground at Giant for a few years. As a younger man I worked at Con, in the shadow of the Robertson Headframe, as an operator in the mill, the autoclave and the water treatment plant.

I was at Con during some of Yellowknife's darkest days, the Giant Mine strike in the early 90s. While mining had brought the community together, the strike drove a stake into the heart of this city. It was a very difficult time, and Yellowknife has never been the same since. In fact I believe the physical scar left by Giant today is in many ways symbolic of the emotional scar many Yellowknifers still feel from those sad days. Now Giant and Con are closed, and the mining community has refocused primarily on diamonds. Thankfully it seems that we've learned to manage the environmental impacts, as well as the social effects, better than we once did.

Gold may yet have a place, as the TerraX project just north of the city is working the far end of the same gold belt. Northerners may yet be gold miners again someday, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Robertson Headframe meant different things to different people, some bad, some indifferent, but mostly good. Judging by the number of pictures on social media, we know one thing for sure: as a Yellowknife landmark and a significant piece of mining history, it will never be forgotten.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SUMMER STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, October 27th, our colleague from Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh spoke about the importance of summer student employment. This past spring, I spoke about summer employment for our returning post-secondary students and the students that are graduating from our high school. Mr. Speaker, as a person that was born and raised in the NWT, I understand the importance of summer employment for the students. I'm not going to talk about the days that I was employed as a summer student because it kind of ages me, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when I was in university, I had the opportunity and pleasure to work for the Government of the Northwest Territories. The summer employment was very beneficial for me to

allow to focus on studies while I was in school and not where I was going to get my next meal. Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I didn't speak about the summer as an employee of the GNWT. I had the opportunity to hire several summer students to help with multisport camps throughout the McKenzie region a few years into my employment. As we were meeting with the Mackenzie Rec. Association in early June that year, I received a phone call from my immediate supervisor and was asked if we could hire some more summer students because the Premier wanted this done.

Mr. Speaker, I was very fortunate to have the demand and need to be able to hire two additional summer students to help offer multisport camps to the residents of the Mackenzie region. Not only did this help the youth of the region, but most importantly it helped two additional post-secondary students for their studies the next year.

Mr. Speaker, I realize we are only in October and the summer is a long way away, however we have students returning home from post-secondary next April or May who are worried if they will get summer employment to finish their education. Mr. Speaker, these are the same students that we are supporting them with our very own Student Financial Assistance Program. Students are either priority one, priority two or priority three and have gone on to northern or southern institutions to work on their education. We are helping them with their education and investing in them while they're in school. However, when they try to come back home to get a summer position with the GNWT they are not as successful.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister for Human Resources, informed this House and the public that his department received 628 summer student applications for the summer of 2016. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to seek unanimous consent to finish my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank my colleagues. Out of these applications, 306 students were hired by the government. This sounds like a great number and it is; however, the previous year we had more summer students being employed by the government.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister spoke about the Premier and former Minister of Human Resources encouraging all the departments to see how we can better utilize our summer students. I think this is a great step, however we need to do more. This includes having the departments identifying the number of positions within their business plans and not rely on vacancies.

Mr. Speaker, I realize this would be a challenge but as departments are already working on their 2017-2018 business plans, there should be a section on identifying how many summer students will be needed to help with our future generation. Thank you Mr. Speaker. I will have questions for the Premier today about summer employment for returning post-secondary students.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during this sitting of the Legislative Assembly, we've been debating changes to the NWT Income Assistance Program. We have learned that the new Canada Child Benefit no longer counts as income for people receiving income assistance. We've also learned that the department that administers income assistance has taken this opportunity to end the food and clothing allowances for children under 18.

Mr. Speaker, the effect of this change is two-fold. First, Ottawa is now paying for food, clothing and other necessities for children on income assistance through the Canada Child Benefit. The second is that the GNWT is paying less income assistance to families with children who are in need. Mr. Speaker, the government has been spinning this as a good news story because the bottom line is that poor families have more income.

Mr. Speaker, this is a claw-back by any other name, and I'm concerned there is another coming. In 2014, our Bureau of Statistics created a Northern Market Basket Measure as a tool to figure out what to pay recipients of income assistance for food. The Finance Minister of the day announced in his 2015 budget that an additional \$1.75 million would be added to the food allocation under the Income Assistance Program, an allocation that until then hadn't been increased since 2009. The increases would be phased in over a number of years to catch food allowances up with escalating costs, but, instead of catching the food allowances up for children, they have been wiped out.

Mr. Speaker, are more cuts coming to Income Assistance with the introduction of the enhanced NWT Child Benefit? The Minister told us, "The NWT Child Benefit will provide additional financial support to more low and modest income residents with children," and this is the important part, "not just those accessing Income Assistance." That sounds like good news, but my concern is that the introduction of the revamped NWT Child Benefit will follow the same pattern as the Canada Child Benefit, namely, that the benefit won't be counted

as income but it will result in reductions in income assistance rates. I will have questions for the Minister. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ABORIGINAL HEAD START PROGRAM IN FORT
PROVIDENCE

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the Deh Gah School in Fort Providence, two recent graduates share a special connection. They made their journey from kindergarten to grade 12, to graduation, together. In fact, they started preschool together in an Aboriginal Head Start program in Fort Providence. We've talked about Aboriginal Head Start or AHS here, in the House, many times before, but, to give a brief history, Aboriginal Head Start is a federally funded program with a mandate to serve preschool aged children, providing early intervention and early childhood education to foster spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical growth in Aboriginal children.

This initiative was first announced 21 years ago, in 1995. Since then, here, in the NWT, it's grown to serve more than 200 children each year in eight different communities. Aboriginal Head Start supports Aboriginal children specifically, helping them learn about their cultures and languages, prepare for school, work with parents, and live healthy lives.

In my riding of Deh Cho, Dezoah Undaa Etleh Koke is currently run by the Deh Gah Gotie Dene Council in Fort Providence. The graduates I mentioned a moment ago are alumni of this program. An AHS program also operates on the Hay River reserve.

Mr. Speaker, if it isn't already crystal clear, I'd like to emphasize to you how important this program is to Aboriginal children in the NWT. Every day the AHS program is delivered with these specific values in mind:

- Children are a gift from the creator who have the right to live proudly as Aboriginal people in the lands of their ancestors;
- Children have a right to learn their traditional Aboriginal languages and history;
- Children must develop meaningful relationships with elders and that elders' teachings will guide them throughout their lives;
- Children deserve opportunities to gain knowledge, have the right to enjoy the opportunities that education brings, and should

be loved, valued, and encouraged in their education.

Mr. Speaker, this is quality programming Aboriginal children need, and it is quality programming that they deserve. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Sahtu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
REMIEDIATION OF CANOL TRAIL

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to make my statement in regards to the Canol project, a project that needs no introduction, the process of remediation of this trail in preparation of a heritage designation trail. The federal government, being responsible, held an October the 12th and 13th site bidders' tour which involved numerous parties that are interested in the cleanup opportunities of this project.

Mr. Speaker, this designation, once cleaned up, will be transferred to our government as a heritage trail, becoming a tourism attraction of this government, working collaboratively with the federal government counterparts on the continued process, if any. Later, I will have questions for the Minister of ITI on the next step process as a result of the bidders' tour being postponed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
IMPACTS OF ROAD CONSTRUCTION IN SLAVE
GEOLOGICAL PROVINCE ON BATHURST
CARIBOU HERD

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, monsieur le President. I made statements on the perilous state of the Bathurst caribou herd in February and June in this House. Last week, the Minister of Transportation announced progress on plans for an access road into the Slave Geological Province, including a road "that will provide the greatest economic benefit to the region and the Northwest Territories." While some may be happy, this is not good news for caribou.

When asked about how environmental concerns would be dealt with, the response was that those issues would be dealt with through an environmental assessment. Caribou are an afterthought for Cabinet and not considered in designing or proposing roads or for their importance to the economy and culture of Indigenous peoples. I would just like to remind the other side of the House that the Bathurst caribou herd has suffered a catastrophic decline over the last 30 years, from 472,000 to as low as 16,000 animals today.

The Tlicho Research and Learning Institute found "the establishment of large scale mines and associated industrial activities on the Bathurst caribou habitat is the main factor behind caribou health defects and changes to their behaviour and migration." The Mackenzie Valley Review Board said in February, "The GNWT needs to complete and implement an interim recovery and management plan for the Bathurst caribou herd before this herd's population is so reduced that the recovery of the herd is no longer likely." The Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board found that "with the Bathurst herd in such a perilous state, all peoples who harvest in Wek'eezhii must do their part to ensure the recovery of the herd. Users and managers must act now in whatever ways possible to protect the herd so future recovery may be possible."

It's not clear how Cabinet sets priorities among a number of competing road proposals, but, apparently, caribou receive very little, if any, consideration. If we were to listen to the sound advice of the co management bodies, we should be doing much more when it comes to saving the Bathurst caribou herd. Developing road corridors without considering caribou is not responsible development. Leaving this task to the same bodies that have already told us we are not doing enough is hardly an answer, Mr. Speaker. I will have questions for the Premier later today. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DEMPSTER HIGHWAY BRUSH CLEARING

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to commend the Department of Transportation. After two years of working, trying to get the department to cut brush along Highway No. 8, the Dempster Highway, over the last few months the department has been doing this along the Dempster Highway, both near Tsiigehtchic and Inuvik and also near Fort McPherson. Mr. Speaker, this makes a huge difference in the riding, both as safety and creating work in the communities. I think it's only appropriate to recognize the work that department is doing, and I'd just like to thank them on behalf of my constituents. Marci cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 426 18(2): INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of ECE. No, sorry. I have two sets of questions. I am on the wrong one. Heads up. My questions are for the Minister of Transportation. Just kidding. My questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture, and Employment. Is the Minister prepared to continue to stick to the promise made by the previous Finance Minister and continue catching up food allowances for income assistance recipients so that they are up to 2014 levels? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'll have to look at the promise that was made by the previous Finance Minister. We are in a new government in the 18th Legislative Assembly, so we'll have to take a look at that, but the benefits and the increases in the changes that we've made to our Income Assistance program is actually benefiting families a lot more than what was in the previous year and even in the previous government. As I mentioned last week in the House, families are going to receive up to about \$740,000 to \$750,000 this fiscal year, in the fiscal year since we've made these improvements, but we'll have to take a look at the promise made by the previous Finance Minister. We do have a new Finance Minister now, and I will commit to sitting down and chatting with the Finance Minister to see what those previous promises were. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: While the Minister is chatting with the Finance Minister about whether to uphold that promise from last year, I would just urge him to consider that every other per diem and allowance that any of us receive who are associated with the government rises over time, and that the price of food isn't going down. So I wonder if he could give me a rationale for not continuing to raise the level of income assistance for food?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I believe in 2015-2016 we had about just over \$18 million on income assistance that this government provided. In 2016-2017, it went over \$20 million, and the odd time we come back to this House asking for a supplementary appropriation. As everybody knows, the economy is in a downturn, so we are seeing more families on income assistance in some of the regions, and from time to time we will come back to the House to seek a supplementary appropriation to provide income assistance to those that are in need.

There are a lot of things that we take into consideration; how big the family is, the net income for that family in the house, as well as the age of the children. I think we're doing a great job in providing those services to residents of the Northwest Territories, and we will continue to do so as we continue to make further income assistance changes. As well, this whole government, all departments, provide a lot of good programs for low income families, and we'll continue to do that job.

MS. GREEN: Of course, the Minister knows that income assistance is a last resort. The criteria for receiving income assistance is that you have used every one of your resources, including your savings, selling your house, selling your car, that you have nothing left. That's the premise for applying for income assistance. So I want to ask, again, whether the Minister will ensure that this promise to increase food levels will, in fact, be part of this government's agenda as well?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I believe in 2015 this government did put an increase on food allowances. The Northern Food Basket was what we looked at in terms of how we provided an income for food in the Northwest Territories. Obviously, there's one federally, and we wanted to make one for the North so we developed our own Northern Food Basket. As a result, we did put an increase in 2015. There is no index for income assistance. We don't index it to anything. So we feel that what we offer in income assistance is sufficient for families and individuals that need income assistance in the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Minister's answer. But if the funds were sufficient, why would we have food banks? Why would we have soup kitchens? Why would we have all these organizations, not only here in Yellowknife but in Hay River and Inuvik, and even in smaller places like Tuktoyaktuk that give food to people every single day? Food security is a huge issue in the Northwest Territories, and I would like the Minister's commitment that he's going to be part of the solution, not part of the problem. Thank you.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: First of all, I just want to thank all the organizations that do set up food banks and provide services in our communities, even our smallest communities. As the Member has said, without their help, we wouldn't be able to get some of these other families that might fall off income assistance based on some of the, I guess, regulations that we impose for people that want to take down income assistance.

But we are doing our job, Mr. Speaker. The changes that we just made to the income assistance and the Canada Child Benefit, as I mentioned earlier, families are going to get an increase of up to \$750,000 annually. Once we make the changes to the NWT Income Tax Act, families are going to get even more money. We just have to go through the process to get that done, and in 2017, August, we're going to see those changes come into effect and we're going to see more families getting more money so that they can put more food on the table, more clothes on their backs. I do believe our department and our government are doing a good job in addressing those issues.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 427-18(2):
IMPACTS OF ROAD CONSTRUCTION IN SLAVE
GEOLOGICAL PROVINCE ON BATHURST
CARIBOU HERD

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, monsieur le President. My questions are for the Premier. It appears that our departments work in completely isolated silos when it comes to caribou and roads. Will the Premier tell this House and the public why caribou are not considered in designing and developing roads into the Slave Geological Province? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Honourable Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Our Ministers work closely together. I'll redirect the question to the Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, caribou is not an afterthought with this Cabinet or people in the Northwest Territories. We are working closely with Transportation. Just to be clear, this is a proposed corridor through the Slave Geological Province, and my understanding is that, if this project were to go ahead, they would go through an environmental assessment process that would talk about the possible effects to the caribou, and then we would take the necessary mitigation steps if we get to that stage in the project.

MR. O'REILLY: But the fact is there's no recovery strategy or plan for the Bathurst caribou herd. Not one square metre of critical habitat has been protected, and there are no caribou protection measures in place for land users. Will the Premier tell this House why Cabinet is pushing ahead with a

plan for a road into the Slave Geological Province in range of the Bathurst caribou herd in the absence of a recovery strategy or plan for that herd, and at a time when the herd is in a desperate situation?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I share the Member's concern. I've seen the numbers from as far back as 1986, so I share his concern. With the proposed Slave Geological Province, there's a lot of work that needs to be done yet. We're not even sure if this project is going to go ahead. There's still the funding that we have to work with, and then the EA process that we need to go through. But in the meantime, we're continuing our work on the Bathurst caribou range plan. We're working with Aboriginal governments and all stakeholders, and we are putting a Bathurst caribou range plan together, and we're hoping to have this completed by March 2018.

MR. O'REILLY: So we may have a plan, then, for the Bathurst caribou in about a year and a half from now, but what is this government doing now other than imposing harvesting restrictions on people when it comes to the Bathurst caribou herd? I'd like to know how our government develops a route for a road into the range of the Bathurst caribou herd without any consideration for their habitat, its use, and the current desperate state of the herd.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I commend some of the Aboriginal governments out there on their desire to try and preserve the herd. To me, that shows a great deal of leadership because they recognize the desperate situation of this particular herd, and I share their concern. As far as the proposed route goes, there may be a couple of possibilities that the Department of Transportation is looking at for a proposed road. Again, it would need to go through an environmental assessment process where they'd be able to hear concerns, especially from those that are quite concerned about the survival of the Bathurst caribou herd.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I'm still getting some mixed messages, I think, from the other side of the House in terms of which departments are working on this and so on. In the absence of a recovery plan and continued low numbers of caribou our government continues to push ahead with development that will have a significant adverse effect on the Bathurst caribou herd. At what point would Cabinet decide it is not in the best interest of caribou to pursue this road? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, as I said before we are working on a strategy, and as far as

mixed messaging goes I think our Premier said it right when he said that all departments on this side are working together on a plan because we do recognize the seriousness of the Bathurst caribou herd and the effect it might have if there was a corridor that was built through there. I can assure the Member and all Members and the public, that the Government of the Northwest Territories is going to take all necessary steps to protect the Bathurst caribou herd, because to go from 476,000 animals in 1986 to just over 38,000 now that points out a problem and we need to try to find ways to mitigate that problem. I've even talked to my officials. I believe there was a caribou summit that was held in 2007 up in Inuvik, and I've even entertained the thought of having another caribou summit where we can hear from all people, including the public.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

QUESTION 428-18(2):
SUMMER STUDENT EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, Mr. Speaker, I spoke about summer employment. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to try a different avenue with questions today; I'm going to ask the Premier what he can do. We've heard in this House that the Premier spent the last year encouraging his colleagues on Cabinet to hire more summer students. Mr. Speaker, can the Premier please advise the House how he's encouraging his colleagues to hire summer students? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Honourable Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Hiring a summer student is a priority for this government and has been for every government that I recall. As a premier I work very closely with my colleagues and all Ministers share the goal of supporting youth in their development, which includes supporting them with employment opportunities within the Government of the Northwest Territories. Usually, at this time of the year we are reviewing how well this past summer went. Usually in December, we start receiving applications from summer students and going forward we review the statistics on a weekly basis and I discuss with my colleagues and, if required, I send out emails or I send out letters to all of my colleagues to ask them to continue to increase the numbers of summer students hired. Over the past six years, we've gone from a low of 272 summer students to 341 as the high two years ago. Thank you.

MR. THOMPSON: I'd like to thank the Premier for his answer. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the fact that

the Premier encourages his colleagues to try and meet or exceed last year's numbers, however, I believe there's a better way of doing it. Mr. Speaker, would the Premier please direct his colleagues to add summer employment opportunities for students as part of the 2017-2018 business plan?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I should point out that the hiring of summer students is an ongoing operational function that we continue to do on an annual basis, and, as a government, the work that summer students are hired to carry out is based on operational needs so they need to cover summer vacancies or work on special projects, and these operational needs vary between departments and change over time, so they cannot be reliably forecasted. We do work closely every year to maximize the number of summer students that we hire on an annual basis.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Premier for his answer. I appreciate the fact that you work in this operational needs out there; however, if we're developing business plans operational needs should be identified throughout the year. Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh asked the Minister of Human Resources to sit with Cabinet and develop a concrete of summer employment opportunities for post-secondary students. Will the Premier work with his colleagues to set the goal of 400 summer students for the 2017-2018 fiscal year? That would work out to about a cost of \$4.5 million; money well spent, I figure.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The majority of funding for summer students comes from vacant positions in the Government of the Northwest Territories. As my colleague indicated in his line of questioning a couple of days ago, generally, rule of thumb, you're looking at about 10 per cent vacancy rate. So to take positions, possibly taken away from families, people that have jobs and have their own children, and convert them to summer student positions would not be seen as the ideal way to go. Over the years we've been very successful in hiring summer students. As I said, the maximum has been 341 and I wouldn't want to set a limit on how many summer students that we can hire.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Premier for his answer. I'm not talking about taking jobs away; if there's vacancies, you can put that part of the business plan I honestly believe, and work on it. My colleague spoke about a subsidy for small businesses or communities to help them hire additional summer students. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier commit to work with the

Minister of Education, Culture and Employment to set up a subsidy of \$5 an hour for at least a hundred positions at a cost to the GNWT of about \$250,000? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We have had a program exactly as the Member described in the past and we'd be prepared to look at that again.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

QUESTION 429-18(2):
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN SMALL
COMMUNITIES

MR. BEAULIEU: Marci cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too have questions for the Premier. We will develop and implement a strategy to increase employment in small communities as part of our mandate in the 18th Assembly. I'd like to ask the Premier: what has the government done to date to increase employment in small communities? I'm specifically talking about the last year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Honourable Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As a government, we've done a number of initiatives over the years to increase the number of employment in small communities. I guess the one that's been more successful has been our Government Services Officer Program where we have taken vacant positions and converted them into government services officer positions and I think we have been able to hire approximately 20 government services officer positions in small communities and they're all filled and they're providing a very useful service. We also have the Skills 4 Success program which incorporates input from industry, NWT residents, and so on so that we can help people acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes for employment success. We also have the Small Community Employment Support Program and about 300 people are supported every year. Of course, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention decentralization initiatives of the Government of the Northwest Territories where over three phases and over a number of years we have moved approximately 190 positions out of Yellowknife out into the regions and into small centres.

MR. BEAULIEU: The Premier almost answered all my questions but that's okay. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Premier if he could have a discussion with the departments to create other jobs in small communities that are outside the public service using government dollars, whether they're projects or O and M programs.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We do this on a regular basis, and certainly we will continue to look at ways

to fund these jobs so that we can hire people in the smaller communities. We recognize the significance of those jobs, and certainly through a traditional economy, where the government invests about \$2.5 million a year in trapping programs, certainly we work with industry to try to get more people hired from the communities. As a government, we are constantly looking at this approach.

MR. BEAULIEU: The Premier mentioned decentralization as part of the method of putting some employment outside the larger centres into the smaller centres. The Premier mentioned Phases 1, 2, and 3. I'd like to ask the Premier if there's anything beyond that in the area of decentralization?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Decentralization continues to be a priority of this government. Over the past few years as a government we have not made excuses for not decentralizing. In the past, there have been issues with lack of housing, lack of office space, and as a government we've invested \$21 million, I think it's \$7 million a year for housing, to support decentralization. We invested about \$300,000 for office space, and we asked our departments to identify opportunities for decentralization on an annual basis. For the most part, the suggestions or recommendations are small units or divisions that lend themselves to decentralization, and we'll continue to take that approach and continue to have decentralization as a priority.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad we've gone that road. The government may actually be having some difficulties filling some jobs in the small communities due to lack of infrastructure. Has the government looked at those jobs that have remained vacant for longer periods of time and considered perhaps re-profiling those jobs to somebody else in the community that may have a different set of skills but could also be helpful to the community in all kinds of areas? One example might be alcohol and drug counselling. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I know that, as a government, we review our vacant positions, or positions that have been vacant for a long time, to try to identify the reasons for those positions to be vacant. A large part of them are professional, very technical positions, and in those cases we have to look at if it's a required service or a critical service, then we have to look at other ways to have those services provided. Where we have some flexibility, we would be prepared to look at that. I think that, historically, if I recall properly where we've taken professional jobs and filled them with people who don't have those qualifications, at some point you

have to review how successful the program is. But where we have that flexibility, we've shown we can do it with the government service officer positions, where we've been able to do that, and certainly we're prepared to look at that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

QUESTION 430-18(2):
CANOL TRAIL REMEDIATION PROJECT

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Canol remediation procurement process was under way starting with the site visit of mid-August. My question to the Minister of ITI is his department working with federal counterparts to confirm and secure project funding for the clean-up of that trail? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is right. The site bidder tour, I believe in October, was supposed to take place and it didn't. The federal government maintains the rights for the Canol Heritage Trail. This all came through devolution. They kept the right to facilitate the full remediation of this site, and we are working with the federal government on the transfer of land over to the territorial government to make it into a territorial park. But that won't take place until a remediation has taken place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MCNEELY: Can the Minister also confirm if there's some information that his department could share with our side here on project scheduling?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: That's a federal government responsibility. Like I said, we are engaged in conversation with them, but until the site is fully reclaimed, it is a federal responsibility and I would have to see what the federal government would have available to share with the Member. But again, like I say, it's a federal responsibility.

MR. MCNEELY: I'm seeing that we have no money yet, but on the permitting side of the project here, our government is responsible for issuing the permits for the cleaning up of it, when we have in fact one third of the regulatory agency to issue those permits. Can the Minister confirm that the permits are going to be issued, and pass me the schedule on this side of the issuance?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I would have to look into who would be in charge of the regulatory process on our side. I know for sure it's probably

not ITI's department, but it's something I can look into. It's probably the Department of Lands and ENR. I will look into it and get back to the Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to the information and continued dialogue to be kept aware of the project's process as a result of all the many opportunities we're going to see in our area, and the North for that matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. I'll take that as a comment. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 431-18(2):
PRESERVATION OF HERITAGE SITES

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, what heritage funding exists to preserve unique heritage sites in our communities?

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the full details of the heritage funds that we have here for the Northwest Territories. I know we do work closely with our federal counterparts to look at some of our cultural sites as well as our museums and the learning centres we have in the communities to do some of that work in terms of heritage, but I can get the numbers and I'll get them to the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: I appreciate the Minister's commitment to do that. Is the Minister aware of how we prioritize heritage? His department has a number of very high priorities, especially in lines with this mandate and creating employment and supporting education. Where does heritage fit into this, and is the department adequately supporting the preservation of culture and history in all of our communities?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: In 2015, the government of the day tabled a Culture and Heritage Framework. Right now, we're working with all departments to develop an action plan that we will present to the House, and that will focus on some of the priorities. Also looking at all 33 communities and also looking at some of the land claims that are out there in terms of culture and heritage throughout the Northwest Territories here, we're taking the lead, the department is taking the lead in developing that action plan, and we should have something hopefully in the new year brought before committee and before Cabinet and then we're going

to be working with all the departments to look at our priorities moving forward.

MR. TESTART: I'm looking forward to that report and I thank the Minister for his answer. Does the Minister agree that preserving our heritage is a boost to our tourist system and creates more opportunities to show off the North to visitors and that that is an important economic aspect of heritage promotion?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I do believe that is part of our economic drivers, as well, but we've got to look at our cultures, our traditions, our values for the people that were here, our First Nations, our Inuit people that helped shape the Northwest Territories to what it is. So it's more than an economic driver, it's preserving culture, it's preserving language, it's preserving what our ancestors, our grandparents have laid before us. So it's more than an economic driver and more than a tourism thing, it's about preserving our culture and heritage in the Northwest Territories for the people that helped build this territory.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I do agree with the Minister's response. This is important for so many reasons, but when we are trying to draw more attention to the North, having a place to showcase our heritage, our culture, and the unique contributions our people have made, in some cases since time immemorial, is exactly why we need to prioritize this. This action plan that's rolling out, will the government also be consulting with the Mine Heritage Society and other cultural heritage societies like that across the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: As mentioned, in 2015 a framework was tabled in this House. As we're going out to develop the action plan we do want to continue to get support from our stakeholders, Aboriginal governments, societies that are out there that focus on culture and heritage, as well as our residents of the Northwest Territories who provide that knowledge and experience of where we need to put our focus as well. As I mentioned, we have 33 communities in the Northwest Territories; we want to make sure that all priorities, all areas in terms of culture and heritage are met for the communities, for the Aboriginal groups and peoples of the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

QUESTION 432-18(2):
BRUSH CUTTING ALONG THE DEMPSTER
HIGHWAY

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a follow-up to my Member's statement. As I mentioned, the department is doing brush cutting to the Dempster Highway which is much needed. As I travel through all the different highways, whether it's to the Yukon or even from here, Mr. Speaker, it makes a huge difference; much more safe for drivers. I'd just like to ask the Minister: is the Minister and the department planning to continue brush cutting next year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Transportation.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: First of all, I want to thank the Member for his compliments today. Brush cutting is very important to the safety of all residents travelling on the Dempster. I had the opportunity this year to travel with the Member up and down the Dempster and see some of the challenge areas where we have a lot of willows. This year, we did approximately two hectares of brushing on the highway. We did from kilometre 75 to 95, and the coming year we have approximately five hectares of brushing, so more than double what we did this year, and we're going to do from kilometre 95 to 142.

MR. BLAKE: That's spooky, that's just what I thought the --

---Laughter

MR. BLAKE: -- Minister might say. No, that's great, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned, I noticed a big difference in driving that highway over the last couple of years. I'd just like to ask the Minister: is the department going to continue working with the contractors as we move into next year?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: To inform this House, we actually have a five-year labour supply contract that started in May of 2015, with Rat River Development Corporation, so that's going to go to 2020.

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, that's great, but we also have a Rat River Corporation Band Limited and the Inuvik Native Band, I believe. Will the Minister and the department continue working with those two contractors as well?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As plans move forward and we develop our business cases for the next consecutive years we will continue to look at all people and opportunities and engage all Aboriginal groups in the settlement area to be involved in the contracting.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All I heard there was blah, blah, blah.

---Laughter

You know, Mr. Speaker, as winter is coming along here even though there's not much snow I'm hoping that, for example, in Tsiigehtchic that they can finish their contract. But, you know, if by chance we get too much snow and the work can't be done, will the Minister be willing to extend that work into next year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I will look into this particular contract, but I suspect that, depending on where they're at, we can have a look at carrying this work over.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

QUESTION 433-18(2):
ABORIGINAL HEAD START PROGRAM IN FORT
PROVIDENCE

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I made my statement on profiling the Aboriginal Head Start Program so I wanted to follow up with questions to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. As I stated, the Aboriginal Head Start Program has been in operation for the past 20 years, and it's a federally funded initiative, so I wanted to ask the Minister: what is the status of the Aboriginal Head Start Program within the Department of Education, Culture and Employment? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Early childhood is an important aspect of the work we do here within the Department of Education, Culture and Employment as well as working with the Department of Health and Social Services to make sure that our children get the right education, the right start to a long life and a very prosperous future. Working with that are groups, whether it's daycares, day homes, Aboriginal Head Start, we take all that into consideration when we're supporting them. We have supported Aboriginal Head Start for the last few years and will continue to support them and work with them to make sure that the programs that they're providing is meeting the needs of the community. We do have eight communities that are providing Aboriginal Head Start in Northwest Territories and I was also very glad to be in Fort Providence this past fall and witnessed the

graduates, the ones that went through that Aboriginal Head Start Program.

MR. NADLI: I'd like to thank the Minister for his reply. Recently we passed a motion in this House basically positioning the department to contemplate the idea of an implementation plan to move forward on the JK initiative. How will the Aboriginal Head Start Program be part of the JK Implementation Plan?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I know we've heard those concerns of the implementation of junior kindergarten; the impacts it will have on daycares, day homes, in particular on this question Aboriginal Head Start. We have consulted and we have engaged with the eight Aboriginal Head Start staff and managers. We have been meeting with them on a regular basis. On August 24th we had the Public Health Agency of Canada come and speak with the managers as well and inform them that funding will not be affected going forward with the implementation of junior kindergarten. It is in our mandate to provide early childhood programs, quality early childhood programming, in the Northwest Territories, working in collaboration with our partners and I think working together we can do a great job. I think some of our communities are offering junior kindergarten as a half day and Aboriginal Head Start as a half day, so students are getting a full day of early childhood programming, particularly the four-year-olds.

MR. NADLI: Mr. Speaker, my question is the Aboriginal Head Start Program surely has amassed a lot of experience and expertise in terms of running program directly benefitting children in small communities. What lessons can be learned from the Aboriginal Head Start Program as Education, Culture and Employment moves forward with the implementation of the junior kindergarten?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: When we're providing program services in the Northwest Territories, we always engage and consult with our stakeholders moving forward. Aboriginal Head Start has been very successful, and they focus on the culture and identity of the people of the Northwest Territories, and that's something that we're really implementing within our education system from JK to grade 12 and beyond and we want to make sure that some of their best practices and around the curriculum that we're developing is working closely together.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 434-18(2):
MINERAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank the Minister of ITI for his statement

earlier today and showing our support for mining and what it does for our economy. So my questions today are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, and the Minister alluded earlier today that the Mineral Incentive Program has been a very big success. In fact, it's been oversubscribed, so my question for the Minister is is there any consideration to increase this investment? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister for Industry, Tourism, and Investment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member is well aware, I've recently just got this portfolio and I've been reading up as much as I can on some of this stuff. I believe when we get into looking into the strategy of how we're going to move some of this stuff forward, we're going to have to sit down and review some of this and welcome probably input from the Regular Members when we do this as well, and that could be one of the things we looked at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. VANTHUYNE: I appreciate the Minister's reply and I look forward to working with him on the possibilities of increasing the Mining Incentive Program. Second question would be that the Minister alluded today that we're going to be working to create a new act that will modernize our government's approach to mining by streamlining our regulatory environment. I wonder if the Minister could please share with us any particular specifics about what he means in terms of streamlining our regulatory environment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Like I said in my Member's statement today, moving forward with the act this will bring our act in line with northern priorities and the realities of how operating in the Northwest Territories is, and we will work with NWT intergovernmental council and the Aboriginal governments industry and NGOs and the general public in how we're going to move this forward, and so there's going to be a lot of information gathered in how we're going to bring this forward to work for Northerners.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Mr. Speaker, the Minister spoke today earlier about that there has been community participation in mining through regional mineral development strategies and that the Deh Cho in fact has been a leader in this regard and that the Inuvialuit, Sahtu, and the Tlicho regions are also interested in developing such strategies. I'm just wondering, Mr. Speaker, is the regional mineral development strategies going to be any different than our own territorial one, and will they be inclusive of land use plans?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Yes, it was quite exciting actually to see the Deh Cho being a leader in this. As my prior life when I was the Metis president, it's something I strongly believe that we should be doing in the Metis South Slave Region. So getting back to the Member's question, I think developing regional strategies is very important and we need to work on this initiative. Is it going to be part of the land use planning? I believe regionally they want to work on how they're going to move their land use plans for their own self-governments and their own governments and their own regions, but they're going to have to be tied, work closely, how we develop the territorial land use plans and the regulations and stuff moving forward.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you to the Minister for his reply. Earlier today, also announced that there's been some success in delivering the mining matters curriculum, and this is in schools now and in particular in the Sahtu and the Deh Cho region has interest in wanting to put this in their school programs as well. I just wonder can the Minister let us know if in fact other regions would be interested in having this mining matters curriculum brought into their schools, eventually having a territory-wide curriculum?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Yes, we are rolling this out into the Deh Cho I guess because all three schools that are going to be taking it on this week are all in the Deh Cho region: Fort Providence, Fort Simpson and Liard, and I believe we will be working closely with ECE on how we can implement this across the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 435-18(2):
INCOME ASSISTANCE FOOD AND CLOTHING
ALLOWANCE

MS. GREEN: Mahsi. Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. YWCA Yellowknife reports that eliminating the income assistance food and clothing allowance for children is already having a devastating impact on NWT families. For example, when women and children flee violent homes, it can take some time to have the Child Tax Benefit migrated to the person who left with the children. So for the Minister, if the income assistance applicant is not receiving the Canada Child Benefit because they're waiting for changes in taxation filing to go through, how will ECE ensure the family does not suffer even more as a result of the elimination of the food and clothing allowances for children under 18? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister for Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In cases such as the one the Member brought forward, I'd encourage the Member to set up a meeting with our CSO at the office. Any families that find themselves in that situation obviously want to provide the best overall supports to the families so that they do see this benefit, but in any cases as the Member has stated, I'd like to encourage the Member to talk to the families or even have the YWCA to explain to their families, come talk to us at the department, speak with the CSO on how this can be addressed, and I'm sure we can find a solution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: I'm wondering if the Minister can tell us if this issue can be addressed by paying food and clothing allowances until the Canada Child Benefit is available?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: We have a lot of clients that are on the Income Assistance Program. Obviously it's by a case-by-case basis. I've mentioned about the net income of the whole family, how many children are in the house and the ages of those children when we do the assessments. In this case, like I said, it seems very unique and in that case any families that do find themselves in that situation, I encourage them to come talk to the CSOs to find a solution.

MS. GREEN: Thank you to the Minister for that answer. Another situation that's like this that I'll bring to his attention is mothers with newborns. They often will take months of waiting to get the money paid, to get on with the support of the Canada Child Benefit. The other problem I want to bring to his attention is timing. So food and clothing allowances used to be paid at the beginning of the month. The Canada Child Benefit is paid in the last half of the month and people end up at food banks and other food security places earlier because they run out of money. Can the Minister say how people should be budgeting the lesser funds to make them stretch further?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: From my understanding, the amount of the cheque that the families get at the beginning of the month includes everything in it and there has been an increase. In terms of tail end, of families getting cheques at the end of the month from our office, I'll have to confirm that, but my understanding is families receive an increase in their payments and an increase in cheques at the beginning of each month. I'll have to confirm with our department, but I'm pretty sure that all families get the full payment at the beginning of the month. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll look forward to that confirmation from the Minister. Finally, I'm going to repeat the question that commentators and frontline service providers as well as I have been asking: will the Minister recognize that taking away the food and clothing allowance for children under 18 was the wrong thing to do and to reinstate that allowance immediately? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we were moving ahead with the Income Assistance changes, we got recommendations from clients, we got recommendations from our partners in the NGO community. Moving forward, a lot of those included that we no longer claw back income that's intended to help parents with the costs of raising their children.

In order to understand the improvements, I think, to the Income Assistance Program, Members must look at the overall benefit package and not at each item in isolation. As a government, we give a whole suite of programs and services to help families in need, low income families. All departments, most of our departments, do that. We've made those changes within Education, Culture and Employment.

When you put the community cost adjustments and that we're no longer clawing back income for children, our families are receiving more money, Mr. Speaker. Any other concerns can be brought forward to the department, but I thank the Member for bringing the concerns that she's been hearing to the House. I feel they're being addressed with the work that we've done with our changes in Income Assistance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 436 18(2):
INMATE TRANSFER FOR COURT
APPEARANCES

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, public safety in our downtown core is always of great concern to the people of Yellowknife. I'm wondering if the Minister of Justice can answer some questions today. Recently, Nunavut has made a decision to allow their sheriff's officers to provide for escorts from the courthouse to the correctional facility. Here, in Yellowknife, the RCMP are responsible for that function, and it keeps the RCMP off patrol duty at peak times in the downtown, which puts additional pressure on the RCMP to provide public safety.

Can the Minister make a commitment to review the situation here, in the North, and commit to empowering our sheriff's office to do that job and get the police on the streets, where they belong? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Justice.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, I can commit to reviewing the situation. I don't know whether I could really commit to having the sheriff's officers conduct the duties suggested by the Member opposite as I believe that would require a significant change of legislation. So I am prepared, certainly, to look at the overall issue, but I don't think I can make any commitment as to any certainty as to whether we would be increasing the duties that the sheriff's officers already have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: When was the last time the Minister reviewed that legislation? Because my understanding of it is that sheriffs are able to do this function; it is allowed by legislation; it's just not being done.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: It is some time since I've reviewed the legislation, and, in fact, I may have never reviewed the legislation. I will, however, undertake to the Member opposite that I will review the legislation. I was under the impression that we would either have to enact new legislation in the form of a police act or something along those lines to allow the sheriffs to take on these additional duties, but I will certainly undertake to look into the matter.

MR. TESTART: Thank you to the Minister for agreeing to look into it. If not the sheriffs, then can G Division officers be used for court duty rather than Yellowknife RCMP officers?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, I don't know if I entirely understand the question. The question is whether G Division officers, who are in the RCMP, could replace other officers within the RCMP? Either way, it's still RCMP officers, Mr. Speaker. I may have misunderstood the question. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and perhaps I'll clarify. Instead of using the local detachment resources, which would be the Yellowknife detachment, the territorial level resources for this function, so pulling officers who are not involved in patrol duty in our downtown core. That's really the crux of the issue, and that's what I'd like the Minister to consider. Thank you.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, certainly, we are always looking at new ways of being more

efficient. I'm rather concerned that moving officers around in the manner suggested by the Member opposite might actually involve a greater loss. RCMP budgets or, rather, our portion of it, which is 70 per cent, has been growing exponentially over the last five or six years, but I certainly will, as I mentioned earlier, undertake to the Member opposite to look at this whole issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to commissioner's opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of special and standing committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 203 18(2):
NWT MINERAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:
GNWT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN, 2014 2019

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled "NWT Mineral Development Strategy: GNWT Implementation Plan, 2014 2019." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Health and Social Services.

TABLED DOCUMENT 204-18(2):
2016 2017 HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
AUTHORITY BUDGETS

TABLED DOCUMENT 205-18(2):
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILD
AND FAMILY SERVICES 2015 2016

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following two documents entitled "2016 2017 Health and Social Services Authority Budgets" and "Annual Report of the Director of Child and Family Services 2015 2016." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

TABLED DOCUMENT 206-18(2):
WASTE REDUCTION AND RECOVERY
PROGRAM, 2015 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled "Waste Reduction and Recovery Program, 2015 2016 Annual Report." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

TABLED DOCUMENT 207-18(2):
CONSENSUS GOVERNMENT IN THE NWT
GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND PROCESS
CONVENTIONS

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, "Guiding Principles and Process Conventions for Consensus Government in the NWT." Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Member for Deh Cho.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 27 18(2):
A NEW DAY MEN'S HEALING PROGRAM

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, November 2, 2016 I will move the following motion: now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that the Legislative Assembly strongly recommends that the Department of Justice take immediate action to extend the service contract and funding for delivery of A New Day Men's Healing Program by one year, to December 31, 2017, thereby granting sufficient time for the completion of a program evaluation as well as any subsequent required program transitions;

And further, the Legislative Assembly strongly recommends that the Department of Justice inform the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning of its plan to implement the recommendations of this motion before the end of the 2016 calendar year; and furthermore, that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide a comprehensive response to this motion within 120 days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for First Reading of Bills. Minister of Health and Social Services.

Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

BILL 13:
MARRIAGE ACT

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that, on Wednesday, November 2, 2016, I will move that Bill 13, Marriage Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 11:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES), NO. 1, 2016-
2017

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2016-2017, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Bill 11 had its first reading.

First reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

BILL 12:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), NO. 2,
2016-2017

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 12, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2016-2017, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called.

---Carried

Bill 12 had its first reading.

First reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 11:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES), NO. 1, 2016-
2017

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations

Expenditures), No. 1, 2016-2017, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriation for operations expenditures for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2016-2017 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Bill 11 has had its second reading.

Second reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

BILL 12:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), NO. 2,
2016-2017

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 12, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2016-2017, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for infrastructure expenditures for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2016-2017 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Bill 12 had its second reading. Second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Tabled Document 143-18(2), Capital Estimates, 2017-2018, and Tabled Document 163-18(2), Capital Estimates, 2017-2018, for the Department of Public Works and Services and Department of Transportation, with the Member for Sahtu in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): I now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, committee would like to continue the consideration of Tabled Document 143-18(2), Capital Estimates, 2017-2018, and start the consideration of Tabled Document 163-18(2), Capital Estimates, 2017-2018, for the Department of Public Works and Department of Transportation, with today doing the Department of Public Works and Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, committee. We will consider the document after a short break. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): I'd like to call committee back to order. We will begin with Tabled Document 143-18(2). Mr. McLeod.

MOTION TO AMEND TABLED DOCUMENT 143-18(2): CAPITAL ESTIMATES 2017-2018,
CARRIED

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair I move that Tabled Document 143-18(2): Capital Estimates 2017-2018, be amended by deleting the section of the document entitled "Infrastructure" found on pages 43 to 49. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you. A motion is on the floor and is being distributed. The motion is in order. Mr. McLeod, do you wish to speak to the motion?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Pardon me?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Do you wish to speak to the motion? The motion is in order. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, committee. We will now proceed with Tabled Document 163-18(2) starting with the Department of Public Works and Services on pages PWS-1, Minister Schumann would you like to bring any witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Yes, I would, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Minister Schumann, would you like to introduce your witnesses?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On my left is Paul Guy, deputy minister of Public Works, and on my right is Brian Nagel, director of infrastructure and accommodations.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Do we have any general comments on Public Works and Services? Seeing none, we will proceed to PWS-1, Public Works and Services. This will be deferred in consideration. Activity summaries, total capital, \$14,017,000.

We will proceed on for the activities on pages PWS-2, Public Works and Services, asset management, infrastructure and investment, \$12,617,000. Detail is on page 3. Questions? Questions from committee? Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We're on page 2, correct? Thank you, Mr. Chair. Previously we talked about the Health and Social Services about replacing the health station in Trout -- or Samba K'e. Could the Minister please provide us an update on what the status is with this project as DPW asked is the department actually building this structure? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I'll defer to Mr. Guy.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Mr. Chair, that's a project for the Department of Health and Social Services that we would be delivering on behalf of them through our project management program, Mr. Chair, and further detail Mr. Nagel can answer. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Nothing further?

MR. NAGEL: Yes, Mr. Chair, we are currently doing a planning study on behalf of the Department of Health and Social Services. We're in the phase 1 of that process to finding that needs assessment. As you have heard before, there were some issues with the site and we couldn't finish the planning study until the site was secured. Now that it has we're on to phase 2 of the planning study and we will have that completed in approximately eight months, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Nagel. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was asking about the Smbaa K'e Health Centre, not the one in Fort Simpson. That's all right. I understand. So, again, it's the Smbaa K'e Health Centre. Can you please provide the status on that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Do you want to take it? Go ahead.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Nagel.

MR. NAGEL: The Smbaa K'e Health Centre is a level A health centre. It's a health cabin. We're proceeding with it. It's been approved in the plan, and we don't see any issues with moving on with the project, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Nagel. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess my struggle or I'm trying to figure out and the community's trying to figure out how we're going to proceed with this. Has the department been working with the community to see if they're going to build and rent back, or is the department going to do a stick built, or are they going to bring in a modular unit? We need to get that clarified. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I'll defer that to Mr. Guy.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The project as currently proposed in the capital plan is for the construction of a new health centre that would be owned by the Department of Health and Social Services, so we would be going forward with the procurement of that early in the new calendar year. We'd be working with the Department of Health and Social Services to finalize the program requirements and, of course, doing the consultation with the community prior to moving forward on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess my struggle is that the health centre, health cabin,

whatever you want to call it, in Smbaa K'e, the one presently is owned by the community and they've used that as an opportunity for revenue themselves. In my conversations with the community, they were looking at a number of options. Has the department finally made a decision to move ahead and just build it, and does the Government of the Northwest Territories own it? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Nagel.

MR. NAGEL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we are currently trying to set up a meeting with the chief in Somba K'e. There were some issues with scheduling here a week or so ago. We're, again, meeting with the chief in company with Health and Social Services to determine the best way forward and the methodology in which the community would like us to deliver this project. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Nagel. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, just to clarify I've heard two different answers has a decision been made how we're proceeding, or are they waiting for that meeting to make that final decisions? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. MCNEELY): Thank you, Mr. Thomson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you Mr. Chair. I'll defer to Mr. Guy.

MR. NAGEL: Mr. Chair, as of today, there is no definitive way forward. We would like to meet with the community first to determine that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Nagel. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's actually good news. I just wanted to get it clarified on that, and I hope the department is able to keep me updated. I know the community will, but, if the department can, as well, on the process of this as they move forward on this project. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thomson. Minister Schumann, do you want to add to that?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: No.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Okay. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on the Capital Asset Retrofit Program, I'd like to ask the Minister if the plan is to retrofit all GNWT owned buildings? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I'll turn it over to Mr. Guy.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through the Capital Asset Retrofit Program, we focus on the GNWT-owned buildings that are managed by the Department of Public Works and Services. There are approximately 800 assets in our database that we identify for these energy efficiency upgrades. We look at each building. We do an energy audit, a detailed assessment for the proposed scope of work that we would consider through the Capital Asset Retrofit Program. We prioritize it based on payback as well as what other work we have planned on that building. That's how we develop that list. So it is focused on the GNWT's own assets that are maintained by the Department of Public Works. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if the Minister could advise the House what the deferred maintenance situation is now. What is the deferred maintenance amount at this time?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: It's about \$212 million.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Mr. Nagel.

MR. NAGEL: I think we have nothing further. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Nagel. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: I thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am satisfied with those responses. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: No, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just trying to understand the government's policy in terms of

surplus buildings, just in terms of appraising the situation in Fort Providence. We did have at one time an old health centre that, I understand, has been decommissioned. So the Department of Health and Social Services, of course, did upgrade the building, so, from what we understand, the latest was that there's supposed to be an assessment in terms of whether there are hazardous materials contained in the building and perhaps consider a remediation plan of some sort.

So I understand that the department does play a role in this in terms of making that assessment, at the same time maybe making a decision at some point whether to offer it to other departments within the GNWT or, at the same time, maybe as an option to approach the community to look at maybe playing a role in terms of the future purpose of the old health centre in Fort Providence that still has life value in terms of making it of use at the local level. Maybe the Minister could clarify his role? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister Schumann. Yes, go ahead, Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member is correct. The Public Works and Services is responsible for the disposal of surplus government assets. In the case of the old health centre in Fort Providence, the process would be the department would surplus that formally through sending a letter to the Department of Public Works and Services, which I think has recently happened. Although the new building was completed for a number of years, that building still had some remaining assets and files in storage in there that had to be addressed by the department. I understand that has now been completed and the building has been surplus.

We have a disposal policy in place to go through for real improved property. Part of that process is doing an assessment of the hazardous materials so that there's full disclosure should we move forward with the disposing of it to another party. Then we have a process where we consider other government uses, other uses in the community, and so forth, to determine the priorities for disposal. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. MCNEELY): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just trying to understand the process. At which point would the community be approached in terms of considering whether it could be given to the community to perhaps take over responsibility in terms of maintaining the building? Is that perhaps the last step in the policy? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are aware of a number of interests in the community. In terms of the policy, they are about second or third down the list. We usually start with other government departments and other government agencies; however, in this case it's unlikely that we would see that type of use so the community would probably be one of the third or the fourth party. We're very early into the process, as I said. We've only recently received the formal surplus notice; however, we are aware of those requests from the community and we will be bringing them forward for consideration as we work through the process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just out of curiosity, like how is the building being maintained currently? I understand there has to be at the very minimum and lighting in terms of operating a building. Is that still continuing and for how long. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I'll defer that to Deputy Minister Guy.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Mr. Guy, go ahead.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We're funded for the maintenance on that building. We do minimal maintenance in terms of keeping minimal heat on to prevent it freezing up, doing the daily checks or whatever required, security checks, keeping minimal electrical power service in place, and once the building is removed, either demolished or transferred to another party, taken off the government's books. Then we would surplus that money through the business planning process that used to maintain it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No further questions.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I see that the top item on PWS-3 is fuel delivery truck for Colville Lake. I understand that we installed some solar panels there and things are working over very well. What's the percentage of the energy supply for the

community that's generated by those solar panels now? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Schumann.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't have those numbers in front of me, but I believe it's approximately 15 to 20 per cent depending on the time of year and there are periods of the day, for example in the summer where they meet all of the immediate requirements for the community. But those solar panels do offset I believe it's about 15 to 20 per cent. In terms of the fuel truck, of course the fuel truck is being used to distribute heating fuel as well as I believe fuel to the airport for purposes there as well and as well as to the power plant. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the response, but I think I heard the words "I think." So could we get a commitment out of the Minister to provide that information to Regular Members? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Yes, we can do that.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Anything further, Mr. O'Reilly?

MR. O'REILLY: No. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Okay, seeing no further questions on detail on PWS-3, we will go back to PWS number 2, Public Works and Services, asset management, infrastructure investments, \$12,617,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Moving onto page 4, Public Works and Services, programs and services, infrastructure investments, \$1,400,000. Detail on PWS-5. Questions. I see none. Please return to PWS-1. Okay, we will go back to PWS-4, here the main sheet there previous to detail. Public Works and Services, programs and services, infrastructure investments, \$1,400,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you. Now, we can go back to the main page, Public Works and Services, page 1. Total capital estimate, \$14,017,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm sorry, I just noticed this. On this page and it's reflected further back there, the money that we're expending on information technology projects is declining. There back in 2015-2016, it was over \$2 million, last year it was \$1.49 million, this year it's \$1.4 million. Are we getting that much better at replacing our information technology or are we just sort of building up a deficit in this area. What's happening, if I could ask the Minister? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Guy.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In terms of the IT infrastructure, the answer to the question is, no, we're not accumulating a debt or a backlog. There's a bit of a cyclic nature to the infrastructure needs. For example, this 1.4 million or the funding that we've identified for 2017-2018 is for things like server infrastructure in the data centre, network infrastructure, and storage infrastructure, and some of that infrastructure has a five-year life cycle, some of it may have a three or four-year life cycle. So it depends where we are in the life cycle of our whole compliment of IT infrastructure in terms of how much we actually need in any one given year. It just happens that there's a little less required this fiscal year that's in 2017-2018, but that's not necessarily indicative of future years. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So just to be really clear and on the record then, we're not postponing any of this replacement to save a few dollars now that are going to come back and haunt us in the future? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I'll turn it over to Deputy Minister Guy.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The answer is no. When we replace this infrastructure, we will keep it for a couple more years as back up and we will redeploy it if we need to, but no we don't feel that we're deferring any urgent IT needs in this plan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. No further questions.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Okay, calling page 1, Public Works and Services, total capital estimate, \$14,017,000. Committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Does committee agree that consideration of the Department of Public Works and Services is completed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you to the witnesses and the Minister. Sergeant-At-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. MCNEELY): What is the wish of committee, Mr. Beaulieu?

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

CHAIRPERSON (MR. MCNEELY): Thank you. A motion is on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and is non-debatable.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: May I have the report, Member for Sahtu.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has considered Tabled Documents 143-18(2) and 163-18(2) and would like to report progress with one motion being adopted. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Do I have a seconder? Member for Mackenzie Delta.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Minister of Health and Social Services.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 5:

AN ACT TO AMEND THE VITAL STATISTICS ACT

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Vital Statistics Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to request a recorded vote.

RECORDED VOTE

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Member is asking for a recorded vote on Bill 5. All those in favour, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): The Member for Great Slave, the Member for Yellowknife South, the Member for Hay River South, the Member for Thebacha, the Member for Hay River North, the Member for Mackenzie Delta, the Member for Sahtu, the Member for Yellowknife North, the Member for Kam Lake, the Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh, the Member for Nahendeh, the Member for Frame Lake, the Member for Yellowknife Centre, the Member for Deh Cho, the Member for Nunakput, the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand. All those in favour, 16; all those opposed, zero; all those abstaining, zero. Motion carried. Mahsi.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Bill 5 has had third reading. It's now ready to be assented. Masi. Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, Orders of the Day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Tuesday, November 1, 2016, 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 Commissioner's Opening Address

12. Petitions
 13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
 14. Tabling of Documents
 15. Notices of Motion
 16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
 17. Motions
 18. First Reading of Bills
 19. Second Reading of Bills
 20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Tabled Document 143-18(2), Capital Estimates, 2017-2018
 - Tabled Document 163-18(2), Capital Estimates, 2017-2018 for the Department of Public Works and Services and Department of Transportation
 21. Report of Committee of the Whole
 22. Third Reading of Bills
 - Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2016-2017
 - Bill 12, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2016-2017
 23. Orders of the Day
- MR. SPEAKER:** Masi, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, November 1, 2016, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 4:18 p.m.

