



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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Box 1320

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Tel: (867) 767-9010 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, September 21, 2017****Members Present**

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

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty): Good afternoon, Members. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

Ministers' Statements**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 200-18(2):
FOREST MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS**

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, supporting a diversified economy that provides all communities and regions in the Northwest Territories with economic development opportunities and choices is essential to the long-term future of the territory and is an important part of this government's mandate. One of the ways we are fulfilling this mandate commitment is through forest management agreements.

Forest management agreements give local Aboriginal corporations non-exclusive rights to harvest timber from Crown lands for the purpose of sustainable forest business development and growth. Agreements respect settled land, resources, and self-government agreements, interim measures agreements, and land use plans. They do not affect the rights of persons to harvest or use the forest for subsistence or traditional practices. The agreements require the parties to follow all established regulatory processes and obtain necessary authorizations.

The first two NWT forest management agreements were signed in 2015 with Timberworks in Fort Resolution and Digaa Enterprises in Fort Providence. Timberworks is owned by the Deninu Kue First Nation and the Fort Resolution Metis Council, and Digaa Enterprises is owned by the Deh Gah Got'ie First Nation and the Fort Providence Metis Council.

To move forward, once a forest management agreement is signed, an organization needs to establish a wood fibre supply agreement with a wood products facility, and both the corporation and

the community need to participate in the development of a timber harvest plan for the agreed area.

Aurora Wood Pellets Limited, a Hay River-based corporation, will be locating a wood pellet mill north of Enterprise. The mill is expected to create an annual demand for 125,000 cubic metres of wood. More than 40 people will be employed at the Enterprise site, with the potential to create additional jobs in the region.

This northern-owned and operated business will purchase sustainably harvested timber from Timberworks and Digaa Enterprises and contribute towards a sustainable northern economy. As a result, timber will be harvested, turned into pellets, and directly supplied to residents and businesses right here in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, Digaa Enterprises is actively engaging with Aurora Wood Pellets to finalize a wood fibre supply agreement. It is expected that the Timberworks agreement will be based upon the Digaa agreement and will follow shortly after the Digaa agreement is completed.

Work is under way to help Timberworks and Digaa Enterprises develop a strong business model and work together to build a timber harvest plan. The timber harvest plan provides a framework for the sustainable management of the timber resources and takes other values, such as biodiversity, into consideration.

The wood fibre supply agreement discussions are led by the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment. However, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is working closely with ITI, forest management agreement holders, and Aurora Wood Pellets to complete a detailed cost analysis of log delivery for the first several years of operation.

Mr. Speaker, CanNor has continued its support of the GNWT Forest Industry Biomass Initiative and has provided \$900,000 this year to support various projects related to developing forest inventories, improving knowledge of forest sustainability, and preparation for commercial harvesting.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources expects an increased interest in

biomass and other forest industry opportunities and has started to develop a forest industry development strategy. This strategy will help the GNWT identify and assess economic opportunities and associated impacts of this key resource. By determining the potential for development of the resource and making it available for appropriate investments, the GNWT can begin planning a more robust and diversified economic outlook specifically based on forest resources.

Forest management agreements are a major tool that will help us encourage and support a viable forest industry that encompasses the full range of forest values, to ensure economic development opportunities are realized by NWT residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 201-18(2):
SUPPORTING GOVERNANCE IN NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES COMMUNITIES

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is committed to supporting the development of strong community governments that are responsive and responsible to residents through effective local governance. As part of that, it has been important for the department to adapt its materials to reflect different types of community governments in the Northwest Territories which exercise their authorities under municipal legislation, the Indian Act, or new self-government agreements.

With the department's commitment to strong local governance in mind, we have worked hard to develop capacity-building tools that are responsive and target areas specific to local governance interest and support the general concept of good governance.

One recent example of this is the decision to work with the NWT Association of Communities to coordinate our resources and tools related to local government elections together into an online portal. Mr. Speaker, this partnership initiative will make comprehensive information on the subject of community government elections available to the general public through an online portal. This portal will give residents access to guidelines, training materials, election forms, and multimedia resources, all designed to educate and inform the public about the local government election process. This information will be particularly useful to those who are considering running for office or who would like to act as a returning officer. We expect to be able to launch this online portal in advance of the

upcoming community elections scheduled for December.

Mr. Speaker, this joint portal is only the most recent in a long history of cooperation on governance initiatives with the NWT Association of Communities. Later today I will table a letter acknowledging the value of this partnership. It is important that we continue to develop tools and resources that support self-reliant communities and are able to educate residents about the role of local elected officials. These tools also help ensure transparency and accountability for the administration of local elections.

In addition to this exciting new initiative, the department continues to deliver governance training designed to further develop the skills and knowledge of elected officials. Governance training has been developed by the School of Community Government and it is delivered through workshops that can be tailored to the specific needs of individual communities. Governance training helps mayors, chiefs, and councillors improve their understanding of their roles and responsibilities and enhances their ability to make sound decisions in the interest of their communities and to the benefit of their residents.

Community Governments can request training workshops such as Roles and Responsibilities; Conflict, Codes, and Legal Responsibilities; Financial Awareness; and Planning – Directions for Success through the school. The training is offered in person to individual councillors who want to brush up on their skills, or to whole councils who want to learn together in a team environment. This year, in an attempt to make course material even more accessible, some of the school's governance training has also been adapted for distance delivery.

The department also tailors courses and workshops to meet the individual needs and interests of community governments. We are constantly seeking feedback on what we need to incorporate and/or do differently. Through this responsive approach to training delivery, the school has developed and delivered custom value-added activities such as pre-election workshops, youth governance awareness, or facilitating the development of a strategic plan.

Mr. Speaker, as Minister I strongly believe in the development of strong, self-reliant communities, and I am very pleased with the work that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has done to ensure that community governments in the Northwest Territories receive the support, advice, and guidance they require to best serve their residents. I am particularly pleased with how the department continues to adapt its materials to

support the new forms of government that are being created in the Northwest Territories and be responsive to whatever the needs of local communities are. I look forward to seeing how Northwest Territories residents will benefit from some of the new initiatives on our horizon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 202-18(2):
JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 12
EDUCATION RENEWAL PROGRESS

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Mr. Speaker, in 2013 we tabled the Education Renewal Framework, a 10-year strategy to help us and our partners rethink the way our education system supports the teaching and learning of our students. We have been methodically transforming the education system in the North, and I would like to share with the Members some of our successes.

Junior kindergarten is now a part of our territorial education system. I would like to thank Members for their oversight and input in this important initiative. Junior kindergarten is now available to every family, in every community within our territory. I had the opportunity to visit one of the junior kindergarten classes in Yellowknife earlier this month, and I was pleased to witness how excited the children were, the types of activities that they were engaged in, and the overall energy of the classroom. Junior kindergarten will help our students build language and comprehension skills through play, and give them the confidence and social skills to succeed in school.

We recently completed the third New to the North Educators' Orientation Conference. Approximately 50 teachers participated in the three-day conference in Yellowknife, Detah and Ndilo. They learned about the history and legacy of residential schooling, and they gained information about the Education Renewal Strategy. The conference gives newcomers the opportunity to network with other teachers and learn about the North and the communities and people they will serve.

We have also expanded the high school Northern Distance Learning program, now in its fourth year, with a proven successful track record. Begun in East Three Secondary School in Inuvik, the program has now been expanded to eight small community schools across four regions, with a plan to continue adding communities in the upcoming school years. This initiative ensures that our small community high school students have the opportunity to take grade 10 to 12 academic courses if they wish.

In addition, we have introduced the My Blueprint platform to interested schools this year. The purpose of this career development and post-secondary preparation program is to provide grade 8 to 12 students with access to information and resources about post-secondary education programs of study and employment opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, one of the important areas of focus for education renewal is student and teacher wellness. We are in year two of implementation of the new Inclusive Schooling Directive. There will be an increase in program support teachers in schools to assist the classroom teachers. There will be more training opportunities for those program support teachers, as well as for classroom support assistants, principals, and all staff who assist teachers in meeting student needs.

After two years of self-regulation implementation support in selected schools, all Northwest Territories schools are being invited to apply for a variety of supports for self-regulation. These supports will assist teachers in providing activities and options for their students to develop ways to manage their energy both in and out of the classroom.

The Strengthening Teacher Instructional Practice program is now in its first pilot year, thanks to the committed partnership between the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association, and the Northwest Territories Superintendents' Association. While the pilots look different from school to school, the common thread is that teachers will have more time embedded in their school year to prepare lessons, assess student work, collaborate with other teachers, and develop and strengthen their overall teaching practice. Over the course of the next three years, we will be evaluating the success of this territorial pilot. Mr. Speaker, we have some new curricular supports in place. There is a new grade four to six health and wellness curriculum, and mental health training is available for school staff.

We also held an LGBTQ2+ Rainbow Conference earlier this year. We made sure the conference was a safe place for students to learn, talk, and be heard. Students came from communities across the North to participate, and it was a resounding success. Mr. Speaker, we are all passionate about education. We all want the best for the children of the Northwest Territories. I believe the transformational changes we are making in education are taking hold and that we will see our students becoming capable and successful people. Marci cho, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TSIIGEHTCHIC POLICE SERVICES

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, on May 25th, the Minister of Justice committed to following up with the RCMP regarding the community of Tsiigehtchic's request for sustained overnight RCMP presence during spring break-up and fall freeze-up. This request was not made idly, Mr. Speaker, and it is not unreasonable. In fact, it is consistent with the service standards of other GNWT departments. For instance, the Department of Health and Social Services makes sure that a nurse is present in the community during these times. This means that, if a nurse is needed, the nurse is there, Mr. Speaker.

In contrast, if RCMP officers are needed during break-up or freeze-up, when the community is particularly isolated, the people of Tsiigehtchic are left in the lurch. They are provided with substandard service and denied the access to justice that other Northerners regularly receive.

What happens when the RCMP cannot get there, Mr. Speaker? What happens when something goes wrong? Evidence could be damaged or destroyed. Far more importantly, people could get hurt. I understand the limits of the territorial resources and the limits of territorial authority. I am not asking for year-round resident RCMP services, and I know that, for good reason, the Minister of Justice cannot direct RCMP resources. Instead, I am asking the Minister to join me in advocating for the people of Tsiigehtchic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will have questions later today.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Hay River North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MEDICAL TRAVEL

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, medical travel: where do I begin? I spoke yesterday about the medical travel co-payment threshold that desperately needs updating. Today I want to talk about the level of service that residents in Hay River receive with regard to medical travel. There are around 1,300 medical travel round trips between Hay River and Yellowknife each year, and about 600 to Edmonton. Maybe it is because of the sheer volume of these trips, but without a doubt my office receives more complaints about medical travel than anything else. The frequency of

complaints has reached a point where the GNWT can no longer ignore the problem. Mr. Speaker, things need to change.

As I was preparing my statement, I really did not know where to begin. I typed "medical travel" into my e-mail inbox to look over some of the issues I have received in the past, and I was overwhelmed. I will provide a couple of examples, but just know that these are not isolated cases. For everything I say, I have had multiple constituents tell me the exact same thing.

I will begin with the difficulty in scheduling travel. A constituent contacted the Hay River medical travel office to make travel arrangements two weeks before his appointment in Edmonton. It is a recurring monthly appointment that he has been attending for some time now. Being diligent, he called back a week later, on Wednesday, to ensure arrangements had been made. They had not, but he was reassured that they would be. He called on Friday. No arrangements had been made. He called on Monday, three days before his appointment. No arrangements had been finalized. His next contact with medical travel was the following day, when he received a call from the office asking him why he missed his flight. He was never informed that the flight was booked, let alone booked a day early. A new flight was booked, and he arrived in Edmonton the next day; well, technically, two days later because it was 3:00 a.m. by the time he got to Larga House. Luckily, his appointment was at 3:00 p.m. that day, so he had a little time to recover, but he was on the plane with another patient who had cancer and whose appointment was at 7:00 a.m.

My constituents frequently deal with specialists in the south, some of them, and they tell me the specialists cannot understand why it is so difficult to book their appointments. My constituents often spend hours just to book a single trip. I had notes about the complete lack of communication and information-sharing with patients about escorts, about not even being aware that they can stay at Vital Abel House here in Yellowknife, but I have run out of time so, Mr. Speaker, I will have some follow-up questions for the Minister of Health at the appropriate time. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ABANDONED HOUSEBOAT PLATFORM

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to address something that has a lot of people upset. Yellowknife North constituents, the City of Yellowknife, the Rotary Club, as well as visitors and tourists to Yellowknife,

they are all upset. Why? For good reason, Mr. Speaker.

For four years now, a derelict platform has been docked, or perhaps a better term is abandoned, on the shore of Yellowknife Bay. It sits on Commissioner's land, in what the city has designated as a nature preserve at the end of a beautiful nature trail and boardwalk established by the Rotary Club, at great expense, I might add.

It used to have a residential structure on it, but the structure was taken off and now the rest has been left there to rot. Now, it is falling apart; it is surrounded by old abandoned pieces of lumber, tires and pallets. Even an old dock from somewhere else has floated in and lodged itself between the structure and the rocks. Styrofoam insulation, once attached, is disintegrating and causing a huge mess on the rocks and in the water. It is turning into garbage, and it is polluting Yellowknife Bay.

Now, I know this platform is also the cause of an ongoing lawsuit. As far as I am aware, the owner believes he has rights that allow him to put a structure on this land or water, and he is in court with the government to prove his case. Mr. Speaker my issue is not with the owner and the never-ending court case. I support the owner's right to use the courts to determine his rights as an Indigenous person of the NWT, and I recognize that such court cases can take some time to resolve, but why does the platform have to be left alone to rot in Yellowknife Bay in the meantime? It is no longer a houseboat. It is barely even a platform anymore. It is falling apart more and more each day. It is starting to cause environmental damage.

Mr. Speaker, winter is coming. That means freeze-up is coming, as well. This mess should not be left to disintegrate for another year. Moving garbage should not affect a court case, but leaving garbage is irresponsible and should not be condoned.

Mr. Speaker, enough already. This government has to clean up this mess or force the owner to clean it up. At the appropriate time, I will have questions for the Minister of Lands. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PROGRESS ON SKILLS 4 SUCCESS

MR. MCNEELY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Progress on Skills 4 Success. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment established a plan, Skills 4 Success, to improve lifelong learning, skills development, training, and employment for Northerners, a proactive measure for youth in academic and in training. The Skills 4 Success

Strategic Framework was implemented to ensure that the North's education training management keeps up with the dynamic changing of our labour market. Skills 4 Success identifies nursing in the top 20 professions in demand.

Mr. Speaker, individual skill values is one of the most important aspects of employment success. The more skills you carry, the more opportunities or choices you have. Mr. Speaker, the Sahtu Regional Health Centre will officially open its doors in the coming months. This facility will make available skilled long-term career opportunities. Mr. Speaker, we need to ensure both the demands and the needs are met with necessary planning. I will later have questions for the appropriate Minister. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Over the last year we have heard the Minister of Education promise that there would be "full funding" for the implementation of junior kindergarten. On May 25, the Education Minister stated that he was "committed to fully funding the ongoing costs for junior kindergarten implementation beginning in the 2017-2018 school year and into the future" in response to the petition calling for full funding of Junior Kindergarten. Furthermore, the Minister said the department "will continue to maintain funding levels for inclusive schooling, and Aboriginal language and culture-based education".

I have heard from all the Yellowknife-based education authorities that full funding for junior kindergarten implementation is not happening. On May 31, in this House, I asked the Minister six times if he would commit to prepare a cost estimate for the incremental costs of including junior kindergarten students in all the funding formulae for the district education authorities. The Minister refused to do so, so I had to resort to a written question on June 2nd.

Finally, on September 19th the Minister tabled the response to my written question that shows the department is short-changing our district education authorities almost \$1.7 million for junior kindergarten students in 2017-2018. The areas of greatest underfunding are inclusive schooling assistants at \$609,000, school custodians at \$340,000, and Aboriginal language assistants at \$267,000. How can the Minister continue to claim that our government is fully funding the implementation of junior kindergarten?

Everyone in this House will agree that junior kindergarten is a good thing. That is not the issue. The issue is that we have now forced our district education authorities to deliver junior kindergarten but not given them the resources to do it. That is quite frankly shameful and flies in the face of the Minister's commitment to fully fund implementation of junior kindergarten. It is not clear whether the Minister intends to make up this shortfall for 2017-2018 to fully fund the implementation of JK by our district education authorities. The longer-term solution is to fix the funding formulae to fully account for JK students.

I will have questions for the Minister later today on funding for JK implementation. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TUKTOYAKTUK GROUND AMBULANCE SERVICES

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When someone mentions ambulance services, most people immediately think of emergency services, an ambulance with its siren blaring, quickly and easily transporting patients to the hospital. That stereotype, though, hides just how complicated providing reliable ambulance services can be, especially in small and remote communities.

Mr. Speaker, in-town services transport patients from their homes, to workplaces, to a hospital, or to a health centre, but there is also the inter-facility services, the common northern practice of transporting patients between health centres, hospitals, and airports via Medevac.

On top of that, there are highway services where patients need to be transported out of town or rescued from the highway. We have already seen the headaches that this causes for the town of Hay River.

As we look forward to the opening of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway, Mr. Speaker, the people of Tuktoyaktuk are wondering how the new road will impact emergency services in their community.

Mr. Speaker, right now the Tuktoyaktuk ambulance services are minimal, and only available to deliver Medevac patients from the health centre to the airport. The volunteer fire department is just that, Mr. Speaker, volunteers, and they are not ready to deliver that responsibility.

Although traffic increases are likely to increase demands on all local services, the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway is going to open up a lot of opportunities for both communities. If the GNWT

can help Tuktoyaktuk bolster its emergency services, all residents will be better prepared to welcome the changes to come. Quyanainni, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NORTHERN CARBON TAXATION REGIME

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, early this week the Premier gave a bold and uncompromising statement on putting the NWT first and bucking Ottawa's efforts to make decisions for us. While I have some sympathy for the Premier's position, I wonder why it has taken us so long to get our footing on this issue of carbon tax because, if we don't have our own made-in-the-North carbon tax, Ottawa is the one who is going to be deciding how it works here, and for that, the responsibility is this government.

The initial climate change deal was signed in December of 2016, and engagement for carbon pricing only began July 26th of this year, with a February 2018 deadline. That does not give us much time, Mr. Speaker, and I certainly know my constituents have a lot to say about this and are quite concerned about what the future is going to look like; and while we have a discussion paper, we do not have a clear plan of what the government is actually considering. I'm going to offer a solution that addresses our high cost of living, but still makes an impact on reducing our emissions, and that's to look towards the model that is currently existing in British Columbia.

Mr. Speaker, in 2018 British Columbia introduced North America's first revenue-neutral carbon tax applied to the purchase or use of fuel in British Columbia. The carbon tax has been celebrated as the most comprehensive of its kind, covering approximately 70 per cent of provincial emissions. Every dollar raised from this new tax is returned to British Columbians in the form of personal and business tax measures, such as reductions in personal income tax rates, the Low Income Climate Action Tax Credit, and corporate income tax reductions.

The result, Mr. Speaker, has been an estimated reduction of provincial emissions by 15 per cent, while offering negligible effects on overall economic performance in B.C.'s real GDP growth, which is 12.4 per cent, stronger than the Canadian average, Mr. Speaker, and also a 12.5 per cent increase in clean economy jobs. It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that we can develop a carbon tax that both supports a strong and growing economy and reduces our emissions. The way to do it is with a revenue neutral tax credit that will see all the proceeds

returned into the pockets of hardworking Northerners who are concerned about the high cost of living. It is appropriate now that the government propose these solutions instead of relying on consultations and putting them out there like spaghetti. It is time to take action on climate change. It is time to have a carbon tax. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
EXPANDED FACILITY FOR YELLOWKNIFE DAY
CARE ASSOCIATION

MS. GREEN: Masi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Yellowknife Day Care Association. Their brand new child care building on 52nd Street is scheduled to open at the end of 2017. It is the latest accomplishment in YK Day Care's 36 years of service to Yellowknife families, and one which they have taken on without government assistance.

This building is the first that is purpose-built for child care in Yellowknife. It meets the highest standards of design and amenities. It will have three times the space and more than twice the capacity for youngsters: 32 babies, 56 preschoolers, and 20 children up to eight years old in an after-school program. The two-storey building will feature four nursery rooms, a multipurpose activity room, classrooms, a kitchen, preschooler rooms, as well as staff and administrative accommodations. Expanded facilities also bring increased employment, from 14 to 25 full- and part-time staff.

The opening should clear the waiting list of parents seeking child care, and will bring the YK Day Care after-school program back from its temporary home at Northern United Place. This project would not have been possible without the support of the volunteer board of directors, some of whom have already moved or are no longer within the board, but left a significant contribution for this project. They had the vision and, quite frankly, the guts to meet child care needs of their own initiative.

The territorial Department of Education, Culture and Employment has committed funding for some furnishings and equipment, and a special fundraising drive with the public will be mounted to complete the outfitting. The executive director of the YK Day Care describes the expansion as "a dream come true." Parents can continue to rely on the same top notch child care, in excellent new facilities that maximize child safety, care and development.

Please join me in saluting the Yellowknife Daycare Association's continuing contribution to the quality of life in this community. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
MANAGEMENT OF NORTHERN WATER
RESOURCES

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we know, the NWT is blessed with an abundance of water. From mighty waterways like the Deh Cho to countless freshwater lakes and rivers. We rely on our water for fishing, drinking, and recreation.

Mr. Speaker, water is simple: it flows downhill. It can't be constrained by the artificial boundaries and jurisdictions we humans create. These have resulted in a complex management regime that is anything but simple. We are stewards of this vital resource, and I am worried about how well the system is working.

Interest in offshore exploration and development in the Beaufort Sea will only grow as more accessible oil and gas resources are depleted. A recent unilateral decision by Canada to place a moratorium on this development is in direct contravention of the Devolution Agreement. It is also inconsistent with the right of Aboriginal governments to self-determination, especially the Inuvialuit, who have inhabited the coast of the Beaufort Sea since the dawn of time. Some would say the moratorium will protect our coastal waters. I agree, but without the input of the people who live there is it the right decision? Or was it made for political reasons that have little to do with water?

Mr. Speaker, when I reflect on this, I have to wonder if the federal government is living up to its responsibilities for water management in the NWT. I'm troubled by the fact that there are only two fisheries officers for the entire NWT, which has a land mass of 1.3 million square kilometres.

I never thought I'd say this, Mr. Speaker, but it leaves me wondering if the GNWT should have a greater responsibility for our water resources. Except for Environment Canada's federal roles and responsibilities under the Canada Water Act, water resources have been transferred to the provincial governments.

The GNWT already manages the NWT's inland and offshore water resources through the administration and co-management of the Northwest Territories Waters Act, the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, and the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act.

Whatever we choose to do in the longer term, we shouldn't be satisfied for another day with only two DFO officers monitoring our fisheries. I would encourage my Cabinet colleagues to work with their

federal counterparts to fix this now, and to consider over the time whether the GNWT should take over a greater role for water management. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
EULOGIES FOR ANTOINE MICHEL AND ALFRED
LOCKHART

MR. BEAULIEU: Marci cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, [no translation provided].

Mr. Speaker, I am continuing my series of eulogies for people who have passed from sitting to sitting in my riding. Today I have two eulogies. I will first speak of Antoine Michel. Antoine Michel was born April 17, 1953, and passed away July 24, 2017, at the age of 64.

Mr. Speaker, Antoine came from a large family in Lutselk'e, the Michel family, and he also had family in Ndilo and Behchoko. Antoine was a well-known individual in the community; a respected leader and a hard-working man. Antoine was very-well liked in his community and was very helpful to elders. He served two terms as chief and many years on band council. A few years ago I was speaking to an elder. He told me that Antoine was a very capable man on the land.

Antoine is survived by his children Henry, Jason, Delores, Jessie, Laurajane; siblings Rosa, Brenda, Jerry, Belinda, Derek, Norton, Noel; and his beloved grandchildren. Antoine is predeceased by his wife Mary Jane Michel; parents Alice and Joseph Michel; siblings Ernie, Bernadette, and Juliane.

Mr. Speaker, my sincere condolences go out to the late Antoine Michel's children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, sisters, brothers, and all his family and friends. Secondly, I'd like to acknowledge Alfred Lockhart. Alfred was born January 25th, 1943, and passed away August 9th, 2017, at the age of 74.

Mr. Speaker, Alfred was born in Snowdrift River at his grandparents' house Tejean Cassaway. He came from a large family in Lutselk'e; those would be the Lockhart and Cassaway families.

Mr. Speaker, Alfred is survived by his wife Alizette; siblings Joe, Felix, Tommy, James; children Judith Ekecho, Kiana; grandchildren Justin, Ashly Kaydence, Sofia, and Samuel. Alfred is predeceased by his parents Maurice and Judith, and siblings Mary, Michelle, Frank, Tobie, and Emerance. Alfred will be missed by all who knew him.

Mr. Speaker, Alfred was a friend of mine. I visited him almost every trip I took into Lutselk'e. Mr. Speaker, Alfred was a telephone installer, journeyman carpenter, and an outstanding hunter. In Lutselk'e they called him "John Wayne." Mr. Speaker, my sincere condolences go out to the late Alfred Lockhart's wife, children, grandchildren, brothers, and all his family. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him. Both Antoine and Alfred had many friends all over this country. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Our condolences also go out to the families as well in Lutselk'e and surrounding communities, and also the region. Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
EULOGY FOR TOMMY KOTCHEA

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to speak about a constituent and respected elder who recently passed away this summer, Tommy Kotchea. Tommy was born on July 11, 1937, and was raised in Fort Nelson, B.C., where he met his wife Helen and moved to Smbaa K'e.

Tommy began to work for the RCMP as a special constable at the age of 19. At the time, Tommy was one of the few individuals who was fluent both in Dene Zhatie and the English language. As a result of this, Tommy travelled with the RCMP to do the translations. For 10 years he was the only translator to travel with the RCMP.

In the 1970s Tommy decided to go into business for himself. He operated his own store in Smbaa K'e. This store was just big enough to hold enough food from one charter plane. It made a huge impact on the remote community and the residents from around the area.

To add to Tommy's involvement in the community and hard work throughout the years, he managed Smbaa K'e fishing lodge, where he was an expert guide and a person people looked forward to guiding with.

To add to his work, Tommy worked as a liaison with Northland Utilities for over 20 years with the community. Beyond all his work experience, Tommy was an avid trapper, a great fisherman and hunter. Although he would hunt towards the B.C. border, Tommy did most of his trapping around his community of Fort Liard and Smbaa K'e.

Those who remember Tommy know him as a very kind and humble soul. Tommy loved to joke and was rather funny. He was always kidding around with everybody, but especially he liked joking with the kids and youth. This past summer I had the

opportunity to chat with Tommy while I was in Samba K'e. During this conversation we were talking about things about the community, when all of a sudden he told me that he broke out of the long-term care facility in Fort Simpson just to come for a visit. Then he said "just kidding" with a big smile. This was his humour.

A couple of weeks before Tommy passed away he went out to a youth camp in Samba K'e. He told stories to the children, sang them a drum song, and gave them some words of wisdom. Tommy's message to the youth was for them not to worry about money and not to be preoccupied with material things. Tommy was a father, an uncle, a grandfather, and a husband. He leaves behind four children, his wife Helen, and an entire community of family and friends. We will sadly miss him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Our condolences to the family as well, and also to the region. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Delores Betsina; she is the daughter of Antoine Michel, who I just did a eulogy for. I'd also like to recognize her friend, also from Lutselk'e, Linda Case.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife South.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the following visitors in the gallery with us today. These are participants in the Executive Leadership Development Program, Canada and the North Study Tour, Canada School of Public Services. Mr. Speaker, we can expect well-informed decisions about the North with these visitors: Louise Metivier, Assistant Deputy Minister Natural Resources; Pierre-Marc Mongeau, Assistance Deputy Minister, Transport Canada; Kathleen Thompson, Assistant Deputy Minister, Public Safety Canada; Annette Butikofer, Assistance Commissioner and Chief Information Officer, Canada Revenue Agency; Daryell Nowlan, Vice-President, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency; Gary Robertson, Assistant Deputy Minister, Employment and Social Development Canada; Pod Champion Andrew Treusch; Canada School of Public Service Representative Ok Kim; Marie Anick Maille, Senior Advisor to the President, Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity today to also recognize a couple of constituents from Yellowknife North. First, I would like to recognize Linda Case, who has joined us here today. I would also like to recognize Shaleen Woodward, who is the ADM for Executive and Indigenous Affairs.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to recognize a couple of our Pages from Mildred Hall who live in the Yellowknife North constituency or riding, and that is Adam Abraham and Haylee Fradsham. Thank you to all of the Pages for the great work that they contribute to us here in the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Range Lake.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take a moment to recognize a constituent, David Wasylciw. Welcome to the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce two of my constituents, Janet and George Diveky. They have lived in the North almost all of their adult lives and made great contributions as teachers and volunteers; and their grandson, Graham Diveky-Suchlandt, is one of our Pages. I would like to thank him for being here, as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, have a couple of Pages who have been with us this week from Inuvik Boot Lake, Kaylin Harder and Isobel Jellema. Thank you for the hard work that you have done this week. We really appreciate it, and to all Pages who have helped us get through the days this week, thank you. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Are we missing anyone in the gallery? Welcome to our proceedings. Item 6, acknowledgements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 26-18(2): RECOGNITION OF JANET DIVEKY

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the achievements and recognition of my constituent Janet Diveky, who I just introduced.

Janet was recently honoured for her contributions to the quality of our community life with the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers. The award was bestowed in recognition of her years of efforts in support of the Yellowknife Association for Community Living, particularly her efforts in organizing and staging the annual "Gumboot Rally" fundraiser.

Please join me in offering congratulations to Janet Diveky for receiving this award. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Acknowledgements. Member for Kam Lake.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 27-18(2):
RECOGNITION OF DEANNE WHENHAM

MR. TESTART: Mr. Speaker, this summer the North American Indigenous Games were held in Toronto, and the Northwest Territories was well represented by so many talented young athletes. I want to acknowledge my constituent Deanne Whenham for winning the gold medal in 17 and Under Female Golf.

Ms. Whenham is a true athlete, and in addition to this year's games she has represented the Northwest Territories at the 2014 North American Indigenous Games, 2015 Canada Winter Games, and 2016 Arctic Winter Games. Honourable Members, please join me in congratulating Ms. Whenham and all the athletes, coaches, and volunteers who participated in the 2017 North American Indigenous Games. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 842-18(2):
STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TRAVEL
PROVISIONS

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these past two weeks before attending session I had the opportunity to speak to a number of students returning to school down south and a number of students attending school for the first time. They were all excited about heading off to their new adventure.

I found it interesting, however, some of the students and parents were not well-versed in what they were entitled to receive from Student Financial Assistance as it pertains to travel. With this in mind,

Mr. Speaker, I have some questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister please advise us what the students can expect when it comes to travel when they attend school down south? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First off, I just want to say that our NWT Student Financial Assistance program continues to be one of the best financial aid programs throughout this country, and we do assist a lot of students going on to get their post-secondary education.

Now, with travel, Student Financial Assistance will assist any resident in the Northwest Territories who is eligible under the basic grants with travel expenses by air or by land from their home community to the nearest approved institution offering their program. Students are notified of their travel entitlement once their application has been approved. Our student service officers do a great job of informing them of what they are entitled to and work with them to make sure that they get to their institution of choice and also make sure that they get the supports that they need. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for his answer. I do have to agree that SFA is one of the best ones in the world. I was lucky enough to be part of it, as I went to school down south. However, there are some concerns, and there are still some challenges for parents and students to understand this. My next question is: can the Minister explain how the travel is calculated for students outside the regional centres, i.e., some of my small communities?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Once again, it is really up to the student whether they go by air or by land. Airfare travel is based on the cost from the student's home community to the nearest approved institution offering that same program. If they decide to go to post-secondary by land, then land travel is reimbursed based on mileage only.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for his help clarifying some of this confusion out there. Again, it is new for some of these new students and, again, some parents who have not had children move out of home, I guess. Can the Minister explain how many trips a student is entitled to during the school year and when these trips are being scheduled?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: The students who are eligible for the basic grant are entitled up to two return trips per academic year. Once students get an understanding of the program itself, if they are

having problems kind of navigating around what the program offers, I really do encourage them to go and speak to their student service officers, as well as their guidance counsellors in the schools, but as I mentioned, two return trips if you're eligible under the basic grant.

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

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for that answer. What I will be doing with these answers is I will actually be putting them in my newsletter and sharing them with the communities out there so that people are better informed. I am not saying that they are not informed from the staff out there, because they are doing a good job, but just sometimes communications get lost in the woodwork.

In looking at students' travel, is the department staff given some flexibility to work with students to help them get down to their chosen school as long as it's within the budget log? In other words, if a student wants to go from Nahanni Butte to Calgary instead of Edmonton for the program, is there some flexibility to get the mileage within that budget? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Our Student Financial Assistance Program must abide by the act and regulations when determining a student's eligibility. We also strive to treat all students fairly and consistently, and decisions must be made in accordance with the regulations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 743-18(2):
SHORTAGE OF LONG-TERM CARE BEDS

MR. BEAULIEU: Marci cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the Minister of Health and Social Services' statement, he spoke of a shortfall of 258 long-term beds. I would like to ask the Minister if this number takes into account all of the work that is happening in home care to keep people at home. Thank you.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in this government's mandate, one of the priorities that we have is to support aging in place. As a result, we have moved forward with the Continuing Care Action Plan which has been shared with committee. The number 258 was identified in the long-term care review, and that actually contemplates doing more work with NWT

residents to support them to stay in their homes for as long as possible.

We know that seniors benefit and want to live in their homes as long as possible. If they cannot live in their homes, they would like to stay in their regions; but, unfortunately, there will be those situations where individuals do need the additional support that is provided through long-term care. In short, Mr. Speaker, yes, the number 258 certainly takes into consideration this government meeting its mandate in doing more to support residents to age in place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BEAULIEU: I would like to ask the Minister if there is some sort of a contingency plan in the event that there are construction delays in any of the new long-term care beds that are being contemplated. In this contingency plan, if there is one, is there a plan to have more money going into supporting aging in place?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: As I have indicated, we have come forward with an aging in place or a continuing care action plan that talks about supporting and enhancing home care. We are talking about family or community caregivers who are providing supports to help people age in place. The Housing Corporation has moved forward with the construction of independent living units at a regional level, at a community level, to support people to stay in their communities if they are not able to stay in their homes. At the end of the day, we also know we need long-term care beds. The evidence is there. The numbers are there to support that. We need beds.

We do not have a contingency plan. We are moving full steam ahead to get those beds, but that does not in any way, shape, or form minimize or downplay the importance of aging in place and the important work we are doing to support people to stay in their homes, to stay in their communities, to stay in their regions for as long as possible. The evidence says that people who stay in their homes or in their regions have better health outcomes, are healthier, and have better connection to their family and friends. That is a priority for this government. We are going to continue to move forward with aging in place, but we will certainly not to take our eye off long-term care at the same time.

MR. BEAULIEU: In between the time when the need for long-term care beds was identified, there was some discussion on family caregivers being paid to take care of their own elders as they age in place in their own homes. I was wondering if that specific initiative has been also factored into the 258 beds.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The concept of a family or a community caregiver was highlighted in

the Continuing Care Action Plan. It is certainly something that we are excited about and certainly something we are pursuing. We believe all the actions we are taking, whether it is enhancing home care, working with community and/or family caregivers, working with the Housing Corp to put independent living units in throughout the Northwest Territories, or all the other actions that are clearly articulated in the continuing action plan, all build to supporting an environment where we can help individuals stay in their homes and their communities. It is all tied together, and the long-term care review and the long-term care beds are part of the continuum of care that is necessary to support our seniors as they age.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the things that often prevents seniors from aging in place in their own homes and their own communities has been cost. One of the big costs now is the lease cost of land, potentially because it is not covered 100 per cent like a tax relief. It is a 50 per cent thing. Some seniors could end up paying \$2,000, \$6,000 for land lease.

Will the Department of Health commit to, or this Minister commit to, working with other Ministers to look at those type of costs as those costs are being passed on to the homeowners? Will the Department of Health look at some further subsidies for those costs by working with other Ministers? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: That responsibility would fall under the Department of Lands, but I do hear the Member. I would like to sit down with the Member and have him explain to me in more detail the exact issue, and I am happy to engage with the Minister of Lands to see what, if anything, can be done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 844-18(2):
JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN IMPLEMENTATION
FUNDING

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Education. At the very strong urging of this Assembly and a petition, the Minister committed to fully fund the introduction of junior kindergarten. The Minister tabled a reply to my written question earlier this week regarding the full cost of including JK students in the funding formulae for district education authorities. Is it really the intention of the Minister to fully fund the district education authorities for JK implication and make

up this \$1.7 million shortfall for 2017-2018? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I just wanted to clarify that when the Member says that I finally tabled the response to his written questions on September 19th, protocol does state, just for the public's record, that we table responses at the earliest convenience, which was September 19th and first day of this sitting, and does not have a reflection on myself or the staff.

Now, education authorities have been provided their 2017-2018 funding targets and have prepared their operational plans based on that figure. There is no shortfall in funding. Using the 12:1 ratio that we said we were going to use to staff JK teachers instead of the K-to-9 teaching staffing table, there is an additional \$1.8 million to education authorities for the 2017-2018 school year, which is more than the \$1.6 million that they received under the old formula. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: I thank the Minister for his response. I do acknowledge that he tabled the information that I requested at his earliest convenience, but often Ministers will provide it to Members ahead of time. That did not happen in this case. If he has different figures that he wants to quote than the reply to my written question, I would be happy to look at them, but after a lot of wrangling to try to ensure that we have truly fully funded JK, the answers have been evasive at best. We will be reviewing the 2018-2019 business plans beginning in November of this year. Will the Minister commit that full funding of that fiscal year's cost for JK will be included in those business plans?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: During the first year of the territorial implementation of JK, which has just started this school year, specific needs for children with exceptionalities are unknown. After the first full year of territorial JK, ECE will review the needs of the children who are in attendance so we will have a better understanding.

Now, should enrolments increase this year, the education authorities are eligible for additional funds through an extraordinary enrolment formula. We will ensure that a 12:1 staffing ratio exists for junior kindergarten students. As we roll out junior kindergarten, we will have a better understanding and have a better idea of what is needed.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks again to the Minister. I think that was two no's in a row, now. We are not going to make up the shortfall for this year, and it does not look like we are going to get it for 2018-

2019. I think our government really needs to make good on this \$1.7 million gap for 2017-2018. The Minister's May 25th reply to the petition committed to "fully funding the ongoing costs of JK implementation, beginning in the 2017-2018 school year and into the future." Will the Minister commit to changing the district education authorities' funding formulae to fully account for JK students to avoid future shortfalls?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: As I mentioned, we still do not know what the full enrolment rates are for students, JK students, entering the JK-12 system. We are working with education authorities to address that. I would like to see where the shortfall that the Member is mentioning is coming from. As I mentioned, we are using the 12:1 ratio that we all agreed upon moving forward within the system, and there is an additional \$1.8 million to address that. I would like to maybe ask the Member if he would not mind sharing where he got his numbers from so that I can share that with my department.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that was a third no. He is not prepared to look at the funding formulae which are the basis for the figures that he himself tabled a couple of days ago in this House. That is where I got the numbers from, was from his own reply to my written question that came from his own department. So, look, the funding for junior kindergarten implementation has been like a zombie; it just keeps coming back for more. Whether it is busing, inclusive schooling, capital improvements, Aboriginal language, custodial services, they are all underfunded or not resolved, but we are into providing junior kindergarten now on the backs of the district education authorities. I want to give the Minister a chance to see what lessons he may have learned. What would the Minister do differently if he had to start all over again with junior kindergarten?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: We are not even a month into the school year, and we have to look at some of the data that we are collecting from our education authorities. We did provide the education authorities with their funding targets. They gave us their operational plans. The education authorities also have a responsibility to roll out their plans within the partnerships that we have with them and the contribution agreements that we have with them. We will wait until we see that data to address it. I have mentioned that education authorities can come back and look at extraordinary enrolment formulas to address some of those areas that they might be needing, so we will wait for that to happen. We are only a month into this academic year, so we will just wait and see as we move forward. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 844-18(2):
TUKTOYAKTUK GROUND AMBULANCE
SERVICES

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I spoke about ambulance services in Tuktoyaktuk. My questions are for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Mr. Speaker, my first question is: what role can the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs play in helping Tuktoyaktuk build up local ambulance services? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs does take a very active role in assisting community governments to decide what services they are going to need within their communities through their capital plans that we do with them, that we support them with. In this case, it was a little bit different because the Tuktoyaktuk Highway, of course, had brought a different situation.

We went into Tuktoyaktuk last March and we talked to them about some of the issues that they are facing where, of course, emergency medical responses was brought up as one of the issues. The difficulty with that, though, is that we need to make sure that we have the proper training and that the services that we provide are safe and secure, so there is more work to do with the community, and we are committed to working with the community as best we can to be able to ensure that their residents are provided safe services.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: I appreciate the response. My second question for the Minister is: as we enter business planning and begin to prepare for the next fiscal year, how can the community of Tuktoyaktuk access funding the department provides to support community governments with the provision of ground ambulance services?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: When we talk about accessing funding within the next fiscal year, it makes it a little difficult, as, like I said, there are some needs, there is training, there is capacity, there is equipment that needs to be built, so it will not be a short-term strategy. It will be a longer-term strategy that we need to look at. We have not forgotten the community of Tuktoyaktuk and the issues that they face now, with having the new highway that will be opening, but, like I say, we need to make sure that any provision of support that we provide is done in a comprehensive,

accountable way to ensure that the residents are provided the best services that we can, in a safe manner.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: My final question for the Minister is: what role will the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs take in respecting potential highway rescue on the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: The highway rescue, actually, on the road to Tuktoyaktuk is a concern, as is highway rescue on many of the highways that are in the Northwest Territories, so across departments we have committed to actually taking a look at doing a review of all of the services that we currently have in place and the gaps that we are experiencing. That review is actually currently happening. Tuktoyaktuk is part of that review, as well as every other community, so until we finish that and decide what services are needed, then we will define what action we will move forward with in, like I say, a comprehensive method so that we ensure that, as best as possible, all residents of the Northwest Territories are provided safe services.

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

QUESTION 846-18(2):
ABANDONED HOUSEBOAT PLATFORM

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Lands. Earlier today I spoke about what appears to be, by all observations, an abandoned barge that is located out on what is known as the point of Rotary Park, located, in fact, in a nature preservation. Both the City of Yellowknife and the Rotary Club have put significant investment into the trail and boardwalk that goes out to this beautiful point. It attracts a lot of tourists and visitors as well as locals. My first question to the Minister is: in circumstances like this, can the Minister clarify for the Assembly what exactly is "ownership?" What defines "ownership" in a circumstance like this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Lands.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I can advise that the Department of Lands and Justice are well aware of this problem and are attempting to resolve it through the courts. I cannot comment on the case that is currently before the courts and, as the Member opposite alluded to in his question, there are perhaps some unusually complex issues concerning Aboriginal claim. However, I understand that we are also looking at alternative legal steps to have the structure removed, and it is anticipated,

and I hope this comes to pass, that the structure and other debris will be removed prior to freeze-up.

MR. VANTHUYNE: I am absolutely pleased to hear that news. I am not sure that I have to continue down any further line of questioning, quite frankly, because I am pleased to hear, as I am sure the residents of Yellowknife and visitors alike will be happy to note, that the Minister is making a commitment, to the best that he can, that this what appears to be abandoned barge will be removed, and removed hopefully before freeze-up.

I just want to thank the Minister for informing this House of that, and I'll be sure to let residents know.

MR. SPEAKER: That sounded like another Member's statement. I just want to remind Members that this is oral question period. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

QUESTION 847-18(2):
MEDICAL TRAVEL

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll be asking questions of the Minister of Health and Social Services regarding the level of medical travel services received in Hay River. As I stated, my office receives more complaints about medical travel than anything else. I was only able to touch on a few areas of concern during my statement. As I mentioned, I understand that when patients are sent to Edmonton they must take what flights are available, but when bookings are constantly being made at the last minute there are just no decent flights left. I want to ask the Minister: how does the department justify sending sick people and elders on flights that arrive in Edmonton late at night or in the wee hours of the morning, especially when those patients have early-morning appointments? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I hear the Member's concerns, and I've heard the concerns from residents as well. Usually, the medical travel officers throughout the Territories work with patients to develop a medical travel solution that meets the patient's needs.

I understand that there have been some challenges in the Hay River area, and we have worked together to address some of those, and I do apologize for those frustrations. For the most part, we work to actually accommodate individuals' needs throughout the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMPSON: That sort of leads into my second question. There appears to be a significant lack of information-sharing and communication on the part of the medical travel office, where it doesn't seem that they're working with patients. For example, patients are often unaware that they can rest at Able House when they travel to Yellowknife for the day for an appointment, and constituents often spend the day waiting at the airport or Tim Hortons when they could be resting in a bed, which they might need.

I had a constituent in his eighties who didn't realize he could get a wheelchair at the airport in Edmonton and skip the 45-minute security line the day after his heart surgery. This would all be good information to have, so I want to ask: is there something like a checklist that the medical travel officer is supposed to go through so that patients are aware of all this type of information?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We recently released a handbook that actually has a significant amount of information available to residents who travel on medical travel, and our medical travel officers throughout the Northwest Territories for the most part actually provide the information that is necessary so that the patients know what is available to them. Whether or not, for instance, they could stay at one of the boarding homes; whether they're eligible to stay at one of the boarding homes on a daytime basis.

It doesn't appear to always happen in Hay River. I'm aware of the challenges that the Member from Hay River has raised. I've made a commitment to the Member that we will certainly look at how the services are being provided in Hay River. It's a bit of an anomaly. Normally these services are provided historically through Stanton, now the Territorial Authority. In Hay River there's a bit of a unique situation that we're exploring to see how we can actually bring those services in to be more consistent with the policies of medical travel as it's intended.

MR. SIMPSON: Because of this lack of communication, I've informed the Minister's office that the handbook doesn't contain the information that I mentioned. It is not very detail-oriented and it's good to know that officers are supposed to provide this information, but, like I said, we're not doing that, and so it sounds like, just like the Hay River authority is outside the territorial authority and we receive those services in a unique way, it sounds like the same thing has happened with medical travel. The Minister says he's going to work to fix these, but it's time to change it. What is the Minister going to do to fix medical travel in Hay River?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I know we have challenges with the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority, but medical travel is not one of them. Hay River is not responsible for medical travel; it's the Territorial Health Authority. They currently have a contract for the provision of medical travel services with a separate organization in Hay River. It's the only place in the Territories where medical travel is delivered by non-GNWT or territorial staff.

I've made a commitment to the Member that we're certainly going to look at that. We need to make sure that we have a consistent application of medical travel for all residents of the Northwest Territories, including Hay River, and I will continue to make that a priority and we will find some solutions that work for Hay River to ensure that they have consistent application to medical travel with all residents of the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my understanding that medical travel in Hay River is unique in the territory because it's provided by a third party. How long is this arrangement scheduled to last for? Thank you

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I think it was a contract that was let in the previous government prior to my time. I think we're on a year-to-year-basis contract. I think we're going to be coming to an end of that contract at some point, at which point we will be exploring options to provide medical travel in a consistent manner with different regions of the Northwest Territories, which would mean the NWT Health and Social Services Authority would be responsible for medical travel like everywhere else. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 848-18(2):
FUNDING FOR CHILD CARE AND EARLY
LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, further to my statement saluting the accomplishments of the Yellowknife Daycare Association, I have questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment about daycare and child care.

In June the federal government announced it is putting \$7 billion into creating 40,000 new daycare spaces over the next 10 years. Can the Minister tell us how this money will be used in the Northwest Territories and when it will start flowing? Mahsi.

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

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also want to congratulate the Yellowknife Daycare Association on their accomplishments and the work that they've done to provide service here in Yellowknife.

I want to update the Members here that the GNWT is currently still in negotiations with the federal government regarding the funding agreements on early learning and child care. Negotiations are ongoing and I look forward to seeing that report and sharing that report and outcomes with this House, and I am looking for feedback. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: I appreciate the answer from the Minister. Affordability and accessibility are the two big issues with child care in the Northwest Territories. I talked a little bit about how the Yellowknife Daycare Association will be addressing accessibility. I'm wondering what the government is doing to make child care more accessible in the communities that don't currently have it.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I'm proud to say that currently we have 23 communities across the Northwest Territories that offer early childhood programming. In the last little while we worked with some of our smallest communities to incorporate daycare programs, day home programs, and we're continuing to work with the other communities to get that up and running, and working with them on how we will do that.

We have made significant increases to the daily rates for early childhood program funding that came into effect October 1st of 2016. We do have start-up costs for people, groups, organizations that want to start up daycares, so there's a lot of work that we have done during this government on early childhood programming.

MS. GREEN: I acknowledge that the daily rates went up in October of last year, but the fact is that child care is very expensive. In fact, here in Yellowknife it's a working family's greatest expense after they pay for accommodation. As a result, really, licensed child care in a facility is only affordable for families with two good incomes. I'm wondering what work the Minister is doing on improving access to child care subsidies for lower income working families.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: We continue to try to see what we can do in terms of providing subsidies for our infants to four-, five-, six-year-olds who go into early childhood programming. Junior kindergarten I think was a very good step in terms of providing early childhood programming for families in our

communities right across the Northwest Territories. We continue to see how we can address the high cost of living. I think one big one was changes to the Canada Child Benefit as well as changes to the NWT Child Benefit; I think really made a big improvement in that area.

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

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge that it is useful to have junior kindergarten, and that is it is useful also to have an increased NWT Child Benefit, but that does not really address the cost of child care that families are paying for infants to age three, that is, prior to school age. I am wondering whether the Minister will investigate the feasibility of subsidizing the cost of child care on an income-tested basis, and set it up on a sliding scale like the NWT Child Benefit. Mahsi.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Over the course of this government and the end of the 17th Legislative Assembly, a lot of work has gone into early childhood programming. This government made it a mandate and a priority during the life of the 18th Legislative Assembly, and we continue to try to address high cost early childhood program needs. I will take that suggestion back to the department and see what we can work on and look at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 849-18(2):
PROGRESS ON SKILLS 4 SUCCESS

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As mentioned in my statement, my questions were directed to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment with regards to the Skills 4 Success. My first question to the Minister is: what is the progression or report since the Skills 4 Success was introduced in the Northwest Territories, more specifically in the Sahtu region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We did release the Skills 4 Success action plan in November of 2016, so we are just coming up to about a year of having that out there in the public and in the communities throughout the Northwest Territories. We are working with our partners. We are working with schools. We are working with post-secondary institutions and CLCs to get that information out there on how we can address that. Specifically with the Sahtu region, if the Member

recalls, we have four goals under the Skills 4 Success, and under each one we have a lot of priorities. To get a progress on all the priorities would take a lot of work, but I can assure the Member that we are doing a lot of work throughout the Northwest Territories in every community and in all the regions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MCNEELY: I know it was a broad question, but as I mentioned in my statement, it is a very proactive measure to see that the department is identifying and forecasting the opportunity so that it can be shared with our students in the academic classroom world. My question is: as mentioned in my statement, what work initiatives are under way with the Department of Health and Social Services in preparation for the transitional start-up at the Sahtu Regional Health Centre?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: We have a small community employment strategy as well that we are working with. We have our apprenticeship, trades, and occupational strategy that we're trying to see how we can work with our small communities in our regions. I would have to see specifically what is coming out of our regional office in the Sahtu and how they have been working to get the skill force up, and people certified so that they can enter the work force and be part of the building and ongoing staffing at the health centre in Norman Wells, so I would have to talk with my colleague as well as look at what our regional staff is doing with it at the Department of ECE in the Sahtu.

MR. MCNEELY: It leads me to my third question here: would the Minister work with the counterpart there, the Minister of Health and Social Services, to coordinate together both departments making community visits to share the forecasted opportunities as identified in the Skills 4 Success program?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I know our career development officers at the regional centres do a great job of highlighting the Skills 4 Success document, the action plan, as well as our labour market information needs assessment. We work with partners with other departments. We work with our partners in business. We work with our partners in education, taking it into the schools as well as post-secondary. I will make sure that my colleagues within the Department of Health and Social Services, as we look forward to having more work force in the health centre for an ongoing purpose, do understand some of the needs of staffing at the health centre.

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

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My last question, getting back to the action plan or the

campaign plan, if you want to call it that: would the Minister share a marketing campaign brochure, addressed to the Sahtu leadership, identifying the opportunities in the Skills 4 Success initiative? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: As I have travelled over the Northwest Territories and been to career fairs, NWT Skills, our department does a great job of highlighting the labour market information needs assessment. The opportunities with Skills 4 Success, immigration strategy, ATOC strategy, a lot of the good things that our department is doing, and ensure the Member that we are getting out there, giving that information to residents and to our partners. However, any resident in the NWT can access our website as well. It has a lot of good information on all of our strategies and how to apply to them, and see what kind of program services as well as funding that they are entitled to or can apply on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 850-18(2):
NORTHERN CARBON TAX REGIME

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier if he can provide some clarity on his position towards carbon pricing. He has both made statements that he is supportive of the Pan-Canadian framework, and also that he is seeking an exemption. For those people who do not want that tax, that is a confusing message. Can the Premier clearly lay out his vision for a made-in-the-North carbon tax? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Honourable Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the Member has been reading too many newspapers because we are, as a government, taking action to deal with carbon pricing, and we have gone through one round of consultations across the Northwest Territories. I have said in this House many times that, with the federal government imposing a carbon price on all of Canada, we will do whatever is required. We have signed on to a nation-wide carbon pricing agreement, and we are continuing to go forward to implement our responsibilities. The federal government has recognized that. They have said that they will work with us, and that we will all be fully cognizant of the implications of imposing a carbon price on people in the Northwest Territories before we go ahead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: I do read the newspaper, and so do my constituents. When they see what is going on with this issue, they are concerned. They want

to know what the government plans to do. I appreciate that the Premier has laid out his responsibilities very clearly, and I applaud him for that, but what I asked him for was a clear vision. Is it going to be a revenue neutral option, or are we going to see a revenue grab for government to fund clean growth? We need some certainty here that it is not going to unduly impact our economy and take money out of the pockets of Northerners. Can the Premier at least give us some of those assurances? I am not looking for a detailed proposal. I am looking for a broad statement of where the Premier wants this to go, and I appreciate we have to consult. That is an important part of our process, but he has to have some idea of where he wants this to end up.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We always listen to our residents, and we have gone out twice. We are still in the middle of our second round of consultations. We are coming to a close. We are still hearing from stakeholder groups. We will soon be doing an analysis of the online survey responses. I know the Member is very eager for us to impose a carbon tax, and as I said, we have done modelling. We have done all the work necessary. We will get the results. We will sit down and come to a decision. I mean, we all know the federal government has announced a carbon tax.

MR. TESTART: I do not want to impose anything. I want to implement a carbon tax that is going to reduce our emissions, protect our environment, and support our clean growth economy. The Premier wants to do that, too. He signed the same declaration. I am glad we have the model, and I am glad we have all this information, but are we going to be able to implement all this information by the deadline in 2018? It is fast approaching, and we are still in the middle of the second round of consultations. Could the Premier provide some clarity on that? Are we going to hit our deadlines?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I should remind the Member that, when British Columbia imposed a carbon tax, the price of the gas at the pumps increased by \$0.10 a litre; multiply that five times is what the federal government is suggesting. It could have an impact on all of us. I should say, as the Member talks about us dragging our feet, well, we are working with the federal government. We have done modelling. We are waiting for an analytical paper from the federal government. We were supposed to receive it by the end of August; now they are shooting for the end of September. Then we will have discussions with the federal officials so that the federal government will better understand how it will affect the unique nature of the Northwest Territories in implementation and how we deal with carbon pricing.

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

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The nice thing about revenue neutral tax that puts money back into people's pockets is that they can pay for fuel at the pump, which right now is increasingly getting out of reach as our cost of living continues to climb. My final question for the Premier is: how is he working with our Indigenous government partners beyond this consultative effort? How is he working directly with them to ensure that their interests are respected in this process? Can we get an answer to that? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: At the national level, certainly the national Indigenous organizations or governments have been involved. They were fully involved in the four working groups that the federal government set up here in the Northwest Territories. We work very closely with the Aboriginal governments, and certainly we have had roundtables where we have invited people. We have made arrangements to fund people to attend these roundtables. We will take all of the results of that information and, going forward, we will fulfil all of our responsibilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 851-18(2):
TSIIGHTCHIC POLICE SERVICES

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in follow-up to my Member's statement, I have a few questions for the Minister of Justice. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister: what was the outcome of the Minister's engagement with the RCMP on the matter of overnight RCMP presence in Tsiigehtchic during break-up and freeze-up? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Justice.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a result of the questions asked by the Member opposite in May, we did have correspondence from the RCMP, and I can advise the Member opposite that during break-up this year there were instances where RCMP members responded to immediate needs in the community of Tsiigehtchic and travelled quickly there by helicopter or boat. They were able to get there fairly expeditiously when required. Thank you.

MR. BLAKE: The Minister previously reported on overnight RCMP patrols to Tsiigehtchic between January and March 31st. Can the Minister provide the most recent data?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I am very pleased to provide that update. Since January 1st, the RCMP members have spent 15 nights in the community, including four nights for the Tsiigehtchic Jamboree in March, participation in providing support for the Arctic Red River youth canoe trip in June, and participation in August with Canoe Days. I understand that, as of September 13th, the RCMP has conducted 15 overnight patrols and 36 day patrols to the community; compared, of course, to no overnight patrols in 2016, when they did not have a residence to stay in.

MR. BLAKE: On average, how long does it usually take the RCMP to reach Tsiigehtchic compared to travel time during freeze-up and break-up?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I suppose it depends on the immediacy of the event that requires the police to go to the community. Obviously, if there was a helicopter available, they could get there very quickly. I understand sometimes, during freeze-up, members can access the community over a secondary ice road over the Arctic Red River. Clearly, it depends on the nature of the information that requires the RCMP to attend at the community. I am certain that they are able to get there in an expeditious way, if necessary, by helicopter.

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

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we prepare for freeze-up, will the Minister ensure that he works with "G" Division to see if it is possible that we have an officer this fall to stay in the community at the same time as we have the nurse there? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: While I will certainly bring that concern to "G" Division, I do not think I can guarantee that an officer would be able to remain in the community for that period of time. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 852-18(2):
MANAGEMENT OF NORTHERN WATER
RESOURCES

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier, my statement was in regards to the Department of Fisheries and the responsibility of water and its resources. My question is to the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, and the question is basically founded on the reality that, here in the NWT, we have about 1.3 million square kilometres to watch over. Can the Minister inform the House of how many DFO officers actively work in the NWT to enforce federal and GNWT laws respecting water? Mahsi.

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure of the exact number of DFO officers there are hired by the federal government, but I will gather that information and share it with the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NADLI: Recently this government has been trying to diversify our economy. In that effort, we are extolling the value of a fishing strategy and that we need to try to get communities involved and revitalize the whole industry. At the same time, we are promoting tourism and also sport fishing. There is an increase in interest of activities to be out on the land. In its role as the government of the Northwest Territories, how are we protecting the waters of the NWT?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The Member, I think, raised a couple of questions there. He was talking about the fishing industry, and then the question was about protecting the waters of the NWT. Protecting the waters of the NWT, we obviously have a water strategy that we are working on. As far as the fishing goes, I mean, again, that is a federal responsibility. We have been listening to some of the outfitters on their concerns with sport fishing, so we have had those discussions with the federal Minister.

MR. NADLI: It is pretty clear that there might be a strong case for us, perhaps, from the GNWT's perspective to make a trip to Ottawa and ask for more officers here because we have a big land mass, 1.3 million square kilometres, but also just fresh from the devolution experience. Are we contemplating the idea of more control and authority for the NWT? With that in mind, has the ENR Minister met with his federal counterpart to discuss our needs in terms of ensuring that we have additional officers for the NWT?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We have had those discussions with the federal Minister of Fisheries, and we have raised the concern about the number of fisheries officers. They are more concerned with, through the devolution agreement, putting responsibility for fisheries on the GNWT as part of the devolution. We are continuing to have those discussions, and we have raised it with them, but their concern is possibly giving the NWT the responsibility for fisheries.

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

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is this the natural evolution of how we have heard devolution? It is ongoing, evolve and devolve. I think again

there is an opportunity for us to perhaps push the agenda further on terms of taking on more responsibility for water and resources. The Minister has stated that he has had discussions with his federal counterpart on this very idea of taking more responsibility from the federal government, so is there a timeline in terms of this government engaging the federal government in terms of devolving more responsibility, especially for water and fisheries, to the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: As far as the timeline goes, I am not sure. I will find out. We continue to have discussions with our counterparts in Ottawa. I think water, we already have. I think the discussion was more around the fisheries part of it. We will continue to have those discussions with the federal Minister of Fisheries. Also, on the ENR side, I do have a PT coming up, I think, in the beginning of November, and there might be an opportunity there to have those discussions, as well. We will continue our discussions with the federal Minister, and I take the Member's point about devolve and evolve. That is exactly what we are looking at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 853-18(2):
 SCRUTINY OF NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
 POWER CORPORATION
 OPERATIONS AND EXPENDITURES

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to do some follow-up with the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation. I had a line of questioning yesterday, and I ended it with asking the Minister if he would commit the Power Corporation to meeting with the appropriate committee to report on the annual capital acquisition plan and main estimates. I recall the Minister closing with comments that said something to the effect that he would be happy to meet with committee. So, for clarification, I would just like to know: is the Minister prepared to have the Power Corporation present its capital acquisition plan with substantiations as well as main estimates, in the fall, to Members or to the appropriate committee? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: As indicated in my answer yesterday, Mr. Speaker, we are always prepared to appear before standing committee. However, the Power Corporation is a little different than the rest of the government in that we appear in front of the Public Utilities Board for discussions about our

budgeting and ongoing requests for rates, so I think it would be duplicitous and probably a waste of time to go through that sort of exhaustive exercise also before committee.

MR. VANTHUYNE: I can guarantee the Minister that it is not ever going to be a waste of time. The ratepayers of the Northwest Territories, who contribute to the Power Corporation millions of dollars a year, want and deserve another level of accountability. Every other department of this government, they present their annual business case for the year, both for operating and maintenance as well as capital, with substantiations, to the people right here in this House, and so that is what I am asking the Minister to commit to. I mean, unless he is trying to tell me that the Public Utilities Board is who I have to start asking for those answers. Is that the case? I would like to ask the Minister that. Is it the Public Utilities Board that has to come under questioning with regard to the O and M and capital business of the Power Corporation?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: We would be prepared to appear in front of committee to discuss in a general sense our ongoing plans for the Power Corporation. However, again, the whole point of the Public Utilities Board is to deal with these very complex issues and to set rates. I am wondering if the Member opposite is suggesting that we could do without the Public Utilities Board. I would be interested in that conversation.

MR. VANTHUYNE: There is a line of jokes that I could go down with that point, but I will not go there. This is a serious matter. What I am talking about here is accountability and transparency, which happens to also be the Minister responsible for Public Engagement and Transparency. I mean, we are talking about a lot of money. This is an item that affects us all. It affects individuals, businesses, homeowners, and they do not seem to have any clear answer of what goes on with this power corporation. I appreciate that the Minister keeps saying he can --

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Yellowknife North, what is your line of questioning?

MR. VANTHUYNE: We want to see the Power Corporation come in with the Minister and witnesses and be able to defend their annual case, and it seems like he is not going to be able to do that. Is the Public Utilities Board the one that has to now come here and speak on behalf of the Power Corporation for their capital planning and their operating and maintenance costs every year?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: The Public Utilities Board has an exhaustive process which I understand costs the Power Corporation approximately \$2

million each time there is a GRA application. I do not think there is any point, frankly, in duplicating that sort of detail of information before a standing committee. As I said, we are prepared to appear before committee and, in a general sense, go through the details of our plans for the future, but to go through the sort of detail that the Member opposite seems to be alluding to, well, I suggest that is properly before the PUB.

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

MR. VANTHUYNE: Mr. Speaker, does the Public Utilities Board answer questions with regard to the expenditures on generators that are to replace old infrastructure at the Power Corporation? Because, if the answer is yes, then that is who I will start to go to to ask those questions and not the Power Corporation. He knows where I am going with this. It is not about rate increases. It is also the numerous other questions that the public deserves answers on, and they have to sit before us, the public representatives, and answer those questions. No further questions, Mr. Speaker. Thank you. I am not getting where we need to go.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The time for oral questions has expired. 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 standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 442-18(2):
STRENGTHENING OUR CORE – 2016-2017
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES HYDRO CORPORATION AND
THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES POWER
CORPORATION

TABLED DOCUMENT 443-18(2):
PROPOSED MANDATE OF THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, 2016-2017
(REVISED) - WITH TRACKED CHANGES

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I wish to table to following two documents entitled "Strengthening Our Core – 2016-2017 Annual Report of the Northwest Territories Hydro Corporation and the Northwest Territories Power Corporation," and "Proposed Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2017 (Revised) - with Tracked changes." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

TABLED DOCUMENT 444-18(2):
STATUS OF WOMEN COUNCIL OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ANNUAL REPORT
2016-2017

TABLED DOCUMENT 445-18(2):
LETTER FROM THE NWT ASSOCIATION OF
COMMUNITIES TO THE MINISTER OF
MUNICIPAL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
REGARDING GOVERNANCE TRAINING AND
ELECTIONS, DATED SEPTEMBER 19, 2017

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Speaker I wish to table the following two documents entitled "Status of Women Council of the Northwest Territories Annual Report 2016-2017," and a "Letter from the NWT Association of Communities to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs Regarding Governance Training and Elections, dated September 19, 2017." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 446-18(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES SPECIES AT RISK
COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

TABLED DOCUMENT 447-18(2):
CONFERENCE OF MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITIES SPECIES AT RISK ANNUAL
REPORT 2016-2017

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents entitled "Northwest Territories Species at Risk Committee Annual Report 2016-2017" and "Conference of Management Authorities Species at Risk Annual Report 2016-2017." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Honourable Premier.

Motions

MOTION 35-18(2):
REFERRAL OF TABLED DOCUMENT 419-18(2):
PROPOSED MANDATE OF THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES 2016-2019
(REVISED),
CARRIED

HON. BOB MCLEOD: WHEREAS Tabled Document 419-18(2): Proposed Mandate of the

Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019 (Revised), has been tabled in this House;

AND WHEREAS the Proposed Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019 (Revised) requires detailed consideration;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that Tabled Document 419-18(2), Proposed Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019 (Revised) be referred to Committee of the Whole for consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is in order. The motion is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Tabled Document 419-18(2): Proposed Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019 (Revised) is now referred to Committee of the Whole. Masi. Motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Coroners Act; Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Residential Tenancies Act; Bill 28, Interpretation Act; Bill 29, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017; Bill 30, Health Statute Law Amendment Act (Cremation Services); Committee Report; Minister's Statement and Tabled Document, Capital Estimates, with the Member for Hay River North in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. I will 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 wishes to consider Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Coroners Act; Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Residential Tenancies Act; Bill 28, Interpretation Act; Bill 29, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017; and Bill 30, Health Statute Law Amendment Act (Cremation Services). Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. We will begin consideration after a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I will now call Committee of the Whole back to order.

BILL 24:

AN ACT TO AMEND THE CORONERS ACT

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Committee, we have agreed to begin our afternoon with consideration of Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Coroners Act. I will ask the Minister responsible for the bill to introduce it. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes. I am here to present Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Coroners Act.

I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Social Development for their review of this bill, and for the constructive feedback they have provided. A number of motions were made in committee, and I am pleased the bill has improved as a result. Bill 24 includes a number of proposed amendments to the Coroners Act to create greater efficiencies in the process to form a coroner's inquest jury and the procedures for conducting a coroner's inquest. To this end, the amendments would be:

- Allow for the assembly of a jury panel, from which the jury may be selected;
- Add provisions outlining the procedure for selecting jurors from the jury panel;
- Allow persons to be excused from jury service in certain circumstances;
- Allow the Chief Coroner to create rules of procedure for inquests; and
- Improve the clarity and readability of certain provisions.

These proposed amendments came at the request of the Chief Coroner, and the bill has her support.

I would be happy to answer any questions that Members may have regarding Bill 24. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I will now turn to the Chair of the Standing Committee on Social Development, the committee that considered the bill for opening comments. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the Standing Committee on Social Development concluded its review of Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Coroners Act, on August 22, 2017, with a public hearing held here at the Legislative Assembly building. The committee received no public submissions on the bill, and carried two motions to amend the bill. Enquiries can be extremely difficult for communities, including families and those fulfilling a civic duty by serving as a juror. Members

are pleased that Bill 24 takes concrete steps to lessen that burden. Individual Members may have additional comments or questions as we proceed with consideration of this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister, do you have any witnesses you would like to bring to the Chamber?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I do. May I proceed to the table?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses to the Chamber.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my left is Emily Ingarfield, the manager of policy, and to my right, Laura Jeffrey, legislative counsel. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I will open the floor to general comments on the bill. Are there any general comments? I see none. Can we proceed to a clause-by-clause review of the bill? Committee, please turn to page 2 of the bill. We will defer bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses. Clause 1, does the committee agree?

---Clauses 1 through 7 inclusive approved

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. To the bill as a whole, does the committee agree that Bill 24, reprint, An Act to Amend the Coroners Act is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Bill 24 is now ready for third reading. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 24?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Thank you to the Minister and your witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, you may escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

BILL 25:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE RESIDENTIAL
TENANCIES ACT

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Committee, we have agreed to next consider Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Residential Tenancies Act. I will ask the Minister responsible for it to introduce it. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am here to present Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Residential Tenancies Act.

The Residential Tenancies Act was amended in 2015 to make a number of changes, including providing for the enforcement of orders through filing with the Supreme Court, allowing for applications to terminate tenancy agreements due to domestic violence, providing a remedy to a tenant for termination on notice of rent increase where rent is not then increased, and establishing a regulation-making authority to set fees for the filing of applications with the rental officer. Since these changes were made, a number of additional concerns regarding the act have been brought to the attention of the department from both the public and by Members.

Bill 25 addresses these concerns, and includes amendments which would:

- Permit the filing of rental officer orders electronically or by mail;
- Provide authority to rental officers to correct minor errors in their orders; and
- Adjust the definition of "tenant."

These amendments would help increase access to justice for tenants and landlords in the Northwest Territories by allowing easier filing of rental officer orders. They would also create efficiencies by allowing for correction of minor errors in rental officer orders without requiring that the order be taken to court. Lastly, they would allow the continuing allocation of subsidized public housing in an appropriate and fair manner.

I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Social Development for its review of the bill, and I would be happy to answer any questions that Members may have regarding Bill 25. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I will now turn to the Chair of the Standing Committee on Social Development, which considered the bill for any opening comments. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the Standing Committee on Social Development concluded its review of Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Residential Tenancies Act, on August 22, 2017, with a public hearing held here at the Legislative Assembly building. Although the committee received no public submissions on the bill, the committee is aware that the operations of the Northwest Territories rental office has recently been of interest to our colleagues in the House and to our constituents. We look forward to improvements in

the services Northerners receive at the rental office. Individual Members may have additional comments or questions as we proceed with consideration of this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister, would you like to bring them into the Chamber?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to have that opportunity, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, Emily Ingarfield, the manager of policy, to my left, and Laura Jeffrey, legislative counsel, to my right.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I will open the floor to general comments on the bill. Any general comments from Members? Seeing none, we can proceed to a clause-by-clause reading of the bill. We will defer bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses. Please turn to page 2 of the bill. As I read out the clauses, please reply with "agreed" if committee agrees. Clause 1.

---Clauses 1 through 6 inclusive approved

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Committee. To the bill as a whole. Does committee agree that Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Residential Tenancies Act is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Bill 25 is now ready for third reading. Does committee agree this concludes our consideration of Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Residential Tenancies Act?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Thank you again to the Minister and thank you again to the witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

Next on our agenda, we have agreed to consider Bill 28, Interpretation Act. Once again, I will turn to the Minister responsible for the bill to introduce it. Minister Sebert.

BILL 28:
INTERPRETATION ACT

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am here to present Bill 28, Interpretation Act.

I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Social Development for their review of this bill and for the constructive feedback they provided. A motion was made in Committee, and I am pleased that the bill was improved as a result.

The current Interpretation Act finds its origins in the Revised Ordinances of the Northwest Territories of 1888, and although minor changes have been made to the act over time, it has not been significantly modernized from its original iteration. Bill 28 will repeal and replace the current act with a more accurate and accessible version. The new act will include most, but not all, of the components of the Uniform Law Conference of Canada's model Uniform Interpretation Act, which was adopted at their 2015 annual meeting.

More specifically, the bill will make changes that:

- Update existing standard provisions that regulate aspects of the operation of all enactments;
- Update existing definitions of commonly used words and terms in legislation;
- Revise existing provisions that identify which elements in a legislative document are to be considered as part of the statutes for purposes of interpretation;
- Add a new provision that incorporates and clarifies the Carltona doctrine;
- Remove outdated provisions;
- Improve the structure of the act by reorganizing provisions; and
- Improve the readability of the act.

These and other changes provided for in the bill will ensure that the Interpretation Act meets its purpose of promoting consistency and conciseness in the form and language of legislation in the Northwest Territories.

I would be happy to answer any questions that Members have regarding Bill 28.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I will turn to the chair of the Standing Committee on Social Development, which considered the bill for any opening comments. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair the Standing Committee on Social Development concluded its review of Bill 28, Interpretation Act, on August 22, 2017, with a public hearing held here at the Legislative Assembly building. The committee received no public submissions on the bill and

carried one motion to amend the bill. Overall, the committee is pleased to support the Department of Justice's effort to update and enhance out-dated legislation.

Individual Members may have additional comments or questions as we proceed with consideration of this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister, would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, I would, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, please introduce your witnesses to the House.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my left, Emily Ingarfield, manager of policy, and to my right, Mike Reddy, director of legislation. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Committee, please turn to page 5 of the bill. I'm sorry, I should open the floor to general comments. Do we have any general comments? I see Mr. Testart has comments. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know this bill and many like it are very technical in nature and contain a lot of legal matters that are significant for how governments operate and how the legal community operates.

I think most average readers can understand what the Minister laid out for the changes, what this bill does, in his opening comments, except for one, which is the Carltona doctrine. I raised this in the review of the standing committee. I understand it now, but I'm hoping, for our listeners to these proceedings and for the future of our Hansard document, that the Minister can properly define that Carltona doctrine so everyone understands how the law is being changed to reflect that principle, which currently we only have in scare quotes. If the Minister can give just a description of that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wonder if I might defer that question to Mr. Reddy, to my right. My recollection of exactly what this means has been lost in the mists of time. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Reddy.

MR. REDDY: Thank you. The Carltona doctrine, I'm not going to bore you with all the details, but it stems from a case 75 years ago. Basically, it stands for the proposition that, when a power is conferred on a Minister in legislation, that power or that act can be performed by delegates, by responsible delegates of the Minister.

How the act is, in fact, changing is, if you look at Section 19 of the bill, it actually explicitly states in those instances where a Minister can delegate the authority and who, in particular, it can be performed by. It can be performed by another Minister. It can be performed by the deputy minister or a person employed in the capacity of that department appropriate to the exercise and performance of that duty. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you for that clarification. Mr. Testart, anything further?

MR. TESTART: Crystal clear, Mr. Chair. Excellent job. Thank you. Nothing further.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. I see no further questions or comments. Committee, we can proceed to a clause-by-clause review of the bill starting on page 5. There are 52 clauses, so I propose that we proceed five clauses at a time. I'll call out clause one through five, et cetera. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): All right, committee. I note there's also one schedule at the end.

---Clauses 1 through 52 inclusive and Schedule 1 approved

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. To the bill as a whole. Does committee agree that Bill 28, reprint, Interpretation Act is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Bill 28 is now ready for third reading. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 28?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Thank you again to the Minister. Thank you to your witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, you may escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

Committee, next we have agreed to consider Bill 29, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017. I will once again turn to the Minister responsible for the bill to introduce it. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I am here to present Bill 29, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017.

The purpose of Bill 29 is to amend various statutes of the Northwest Territories for which minor changes are proposed or errors or inconsistencies have been identified.

Each amendment included in the bill had to meet the following criteria:

- It must not be controversial;
- It must not involve the spending of public funds;
- It must not prejudicially affect rights; and
- It must not create a new offence or subject a new class of persons to an existing offence.

Departments responsible for the various statutes being amended have reviewed and approved the changes. The amendments proposed in Bill 29 are minor, uncontroversial, or non-substantive, and many consist of technical corrections to a statute. The amendments are of such a nature that the preparation and legislative consideration of individual bills to correct each statute would be time-consuming for the government and the Legislative Assembly. I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Social Development for its review of Bill 29 and would be happy to answer any questions Members may have regarding Bill 29.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I will turn to the chair of the Standing Committee on Social Development, which considered the bill, for any opening comments. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the Standing Committee on Social Development concluded its review of Bill 29 on the Miscellaneous Statutes Law Amendment Act, 2017 on August 22nd, 2017, with a public hearing held here at the Legislative Assembly building. Housekeeping bills such as this ensure that territorial legislation is subject to regular review for consistency and liability. The committee is pleased to support the department's work. Individual Members may have additional comments or questions as we proceed with the consideration of this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. I see that the Minister has witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, please introduce your witness.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Laura Jeffrey, legislative counsel, to my left. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I will open the floor to general comments on Bill 29. General comments? Seeing none, we can proceed to a clause-by-clause review. There are 16 clauses. I propose that we consider the bill five clauses at a time. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Clauses 1 through 5.

---Clauses 1 through 16 inclusive approved

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. To the bill as a whole. Does committee agree that Bill 29, Miscellaneous Statutes Law Amendment Act, 2017 is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Bill 29 is ready for third reading. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 29?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Thank you, Minister. Thank you to the witness. Sergeant-at-Arms, you may escort the witness from the Chamber. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, pursuant to section 77(1) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I wish to advise the House that I have a conflict of interest in Bill 30, Health Statutes Law Amendment Act. This bill amends the Public Health Act to clarify that the Commissioner may make regulations respecting cremation and crematoria. Mr. Chair, my spouse is a funeral planner and, as such, has a private interest in this bill. I will now excuse myself from the Chamber during consideration of this matter. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Let the record show that Ms. Green has left the Chamber. I will turn to the Member responsible for the bill to introduce it, Mr. O'Reilly.

BILL 30:
HEALTH STATUTES AMENDMENT ACT
(CREMATION SERVICES)

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. First off, I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Social Development for its review of the bill. Bill 30, the

Health Statutes Amendment Act (Cremation Services), is a private Member's bill which proposes amendments to the Public Health Act and to the Vital Statistics Act.

Together, the minor amendments in Bill 30 will allow greater certainty for cremations to be performed here in the NWT, reducing costs and wait times for bereaved families, and further diversify the domestic service economy. Specifically, amendments to the Public Health Act will create the ability to make regulations for cremation and crematoriums. Amendments to the Vital Statistics Act will define cremation and crematoriums and ensure that only a funeral planner can carry out cremations that are to take place in a crematorium.

Although the existing regulatory regime does not prohibit cremation, it is largely silent on how this service is to be provided. Burial, cremation, and funeral services are not governed by specific legislation in the Northwest Territories.

In introducing this bill, I would like to provide Members with a brief background on the cremation service situation and on how these amendments will improve services for the public and provide certainty for service providers. All Canadian jurisdictions except the Northwest Territories and Nunavut have legislation for cremation. There are about 200 deaths each year among NWT residents. There are two recognized funeral planners in the NWT (located in Inuvik and Yellowknife) and others, on a case-by-case basis, in small communities.

Of the approximately 100 funerals handled annually by the main service provider, cremation is the chosen option for about 40-45 per cent of families, even though cremation services are not available in the NWT. Cremation currently takes place in Edmonton, and transportation costs alone are approximately \$1,500 from Yellowknife. Shipment to and from Edmonton adds several days' delay at a time when families may wish to proceed as promptly as possible with a funeral. These transportation costs and delays will be reduced or eliminated by the availability of local service suppliers.

The proposed bill would amend the Public Health Act and the Vital Statistics Act to state clearly that cremation is both permitted and governed by the current regime. This provides certainty for service providers and communities, and it will explicitly allow cremation as a permitted method of interment under the existing statutory scheme. For the service providers, clarifying cremation practice and regulatory authority and the use of consistent definitions in cremation legislation, provides greater certainty.

The private Member's bill does not seek to establish new powers with respect to cremation. It does not create any new regulatory structure to govern the performance of cremation. Above all, the private Member's bill does not require cremation. It does provide greater clarity for anyone designated to offer funeral services in the NWT, enabling service providers to include cremations within the existing system.

Prior to deciding to proceed with a private Member's bill, I consulted widely on how to make NWT-based cremation possible. In response to my inquiries, the Minister of Health and Social Services stated in an email in December 2016 that the department had done a jurisdictional scan of cremation legislation. The Minister indicated he would work with other departments to determine the legislative steps necessary to make cremation services available in the NWT.

In the winter 2017 Legislative Assembly session, I made a statement on cremation and asked whether Cabinet was prepared to bring forward a bill. In response, the Minister of Health and Social Services and Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs suggested that a private Member's bill may be the best way to move forward.

Since then, I have worked closely with the Office of the Law Clerk and consulted with a potential service provider in preparing the proposed legislation. It was decided that the best approach was to ensure certainty through minor amendments of the existing law.

The proposed approach maintains the current regulatory regime governing burial, funeral services, and the final disposition of human remains in the NWT. The bill explicitly provides that cremation is permitted by this system.

Regulations under the Public Health Act could be brought forward by Health and Social Services at some point in the future, as the department would have the authority to regulate cremation and crematoriums. For now, there is no proposal to create regulations. The establishment of crematoria may require municipal approvals including zoning and business licensing. These matters will continue to be regulated by local governments under the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs municipal governance legislation. This is consistent with other jurisdictions in Canada.

Creation of the ability to perform cremations has no financial implications for the Government of the NWT.

In summary, I believe this private Member's bill:

- Responds to a real and immediate need to enable improved services for NWT families and

consumers, at reduced expense and with an expansion to the local service economy and tax base;

- Has been carefully constructed, in consultation with a potential service provider and the Minister of Health and Social Services;
- Provides the legislative support necessary to permit these operations with greater legal certainty and clarity;
- Creates the ability for further and more specific direction of these practices by establishing the ability to write regulations; and
- Allows this legislative improvement to be made even though this action was not among the legislative priorities of the government.

I welcome the committee's review of this proposed legislation. I would be happy to answer any questions Members may have. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. I will turn to the chair of the Standing Committee on Social Development, which considered the bill. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the Standing Committee on Social Development concluded its review of Bill 30: Health Statutes Law Amendment Act (Cremation Services) on August 22nd, 2017, with a public hearing held here at the Legislative Assembly's building. During its review of this private Member's bill, the committee received one public submission, a letter of support from Ms. Janice McKenna, owner and director of McKenna Funeral Services in Yellowknife. Committee is pleased to support this bill. Individual Members may have additional comments or questions as we proceed with the consideration of this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Does Mr. O'Reilly have witnesses he would like to bring into the Chamber?

MR. O'REILLY: Yes, Mr. Chair, I do.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Mr. O'Reilly, please introduce your witness.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have Ms. Laura Jeffrey, who is the legislative counsel for this bill, and she is sitting to my left. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Welcome back, Ms. Jeffrey. I will open

the floor to general comments on the bill. Do we have any general comments? I see Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate how this bill was designed and the problem it is trying to solve. I think it is important that we offer low-cost funeral services for Northerners, but there are some technical questions I would like to ask the honourable Member who is sponsoring this bill.

In the current version of the Public Health Act, it would appear that there is authority to regulate funeral services and the disposal of human bodies. Now, this bill corrects that by being explicit and brings more clarity to the act of cremations, but what is missing from this bill seems to be that it creates exclusivity for funeral planners in performing cremations and offering crematoria. With this exclusivity should come some sort of duty, a duty to comply with the regulatory system, a duty to be qualified, a duty to be trained, a duty to obtain a permit, a duty to maintain records, and a duty to maintain sanitation.

If you look at what is comparable in other Canadian jurisdictions, you will find, in the Province of Alberta, the Funeral Services Act; in the Province of British Columbia, the Cremation, Interment and Funeral Services Act; in Manitoba, the Pre-Arranged Funeral Services Act and the Funeral Directors and Embalmers Act; in New Brunswick, the Pre-Arranged Funeral Services Act; in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Embalmers and Funeral Directors Act. As you can see, across the gamut, there are explicit ways to regulate the profession and to create that duty.

Now, I acknowledge there may be other means and secondary sources for imposing standards and for exercising control on the providers of funeral services and on funeral planners in the Northwest Territories. However, if the Member would like to speak to that and provide some clarity on what those secondary sources and existing regulatory measures are that can be brought towards this, I would be more comfortable supporting this bill with that clarification. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Mr. O'Reilly, how do you respond?

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the question from the Member. I think, first off, I would like to say that this bill is an interim step. There was not an attempt to try to regulate funeral planners, their accreditation, and so on in this bill. That is not the purpose of it. That is not what I tried to set out to do in the first place.

There is a definition for funeral planner, and it is found in the Vital Statistics Act. It is defined as follows: funeral planner means a person who takes

charge of a dead body for the purpose of burial, cremation, and other disposition. The duties of a funeral planner are defined under section 60 of the Vital Statistics Act. I will be the first to admit that it is not a comprehensive set of duties.

As the Member has indicated, there is a lengthy means of regulating this service in other jurisdictions, and I agree that we should probably ultimately aim towards moving in that direction. That is not the purpose of this bill. It was to at least ensure that cremation comes in under our existing system. I think the steps that the Member has outlined are the next logical ones, but they are not going to be addressed through this bill. I would be happy to work with my colleagues on the Cabinet side to try to move forward with some level of regulation of this profession, as well, but that is the next step after this bill. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Anything further, Mr. Testart?

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I certainly appreciate that. There is only so much that can be done with this type of legislation. Now, I know that there are funeral directors operating in the Northwest Territories who have certification from the Province of Alberta, and, in other examples in the Northwest Territories, we often use Alberta's qualifications, or we use other provinces', as well.

Has the honourable Member from Frame Lake had the opportunity to have that discussion with a representative from the government side on doing something similar, of applying Alberta's qualifications to our funeral directors? That might save us some time, and potentially money, in order to ensure that this profession is well-regulated and that there are those professional standards set. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the question again. I think it is fair to say that I have had some very preliminary discussions with at least a couple of our Cabinet colleagues about this, but we all know that there is a lengthy legislative agenda that we would like to accomplish together as part of this 18th Assembly. I am not responsible for that, but I am happy to work with them and Regular Members to try to move forward with that. There are other professions, even medical professions, that are not currently regulated; occupational therapy, physios, and so on. There are a number of professions, medical professions, that are not even regulated, so to sort of bring this one out and to bring it to the forefront, I am not sure that that is the priority that we might move forward together on.

I think there is a clear recognition, at least on my part and I think for other Members in this House, that it is something that we should move towards, but this is an interim step. That is what this bill is trying to accomplish. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate again where my honourable friend is coming from on this one, to create a service as an interim measure, so I guess I cannot ask this question directly. I will just include it in the debate.

It would be lovely if a member of the government's side could offer some clarity on their position on this issue and whether or not they have contemplated the regulatory issue that I have raised earlier today. Apart from that, I have nothing further for the honourable Member, and I am pleased to support his bill. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Do I have any further general comments? I see Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to thank the Member for Frame Lake for bringing forward this private Member's bill to propose amendments to the Vital Statistics Act and the Public Health Act, to provide some certainty that cremation can be authorized in the Northwest Territories. We do support the bill in principle.

Currently, NWT residents are sent south for cremation and are subject to a comprehensive legislative framework in Alberta. As the Member appreciates, an NWT regulatory framework for cremation will involve input from several departments of the Government of the Northwest Territories. If and when the bill is passed by this Legislative Assembly, I commit to working together with the Departments of Justice, Environment and Natural Resources, and Municipal and Community Affairs to develop regulatory changes that may be required.

It will be necessary for officials to consult with industry as appropriate and as is prudent. From a Health and Social Services perspective, we would consider regulatory amendments under the Public Health Act and, to be clear, these regulations would be restricted to sanitation standards, air quality, and other public health matters, but would not include specific rules around the business of crematoria, as it is beyond the scope of the Public Health Act.

We have not established a work plan or timelines, as this is a private Member's bill. However, if and when the bill passes, the department will make it a priority to meet with the other departments and map out the work required and the associated timelines,

recognizing that we have a heavy mandate to commitments for many different areas in the government and this would have to fit in there. It might not happen as quickly as some want, but it is something that we will work towards. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Anything further? I see no further general comments. We can begin with a clause-by-clause review. We will defer the bill title and number until after the consideration of the clauses. Please turn to page 2 of the bill. I will call out the clauses. Clause 1, does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. To the bill as a whole. Does committee agree that Bill 30, private Member's public bill: Health Statutes Law Amendment Act (Cremation Services) is now ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Bill 30 is now ready for third reading. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 30?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Thank you to Mr. O'Reilly and your witness. Sergeant-at-Arms, you may escort the witness from the Chamber. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: May I have the report, Member for Hay River North.

MR. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 24: An Act to Amend the Coroners Act; Bill 25: An Act to Amend the Residential Tenancies Act; Bill 28: Interpretation Act; Bill 29: Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017; and Bill 30: Health Statutes Law

Amendment Act (Cremation Services) and would like to report that Bills 24, 25, 28, 29 and 30 are ready for Third Reading. Mr. Speaker, I move I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Do we have a seconder? The Member for Nahendeh. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

Mahsi. Item 22, third reading of bills. Item 23, Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, the orders of the day for Friday, September 22, 2017, commencing at 10:00 a.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Commissioner's Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
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
 - Committee Report 12-18(2), Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning Report on the Progress Review of the

Mandate of the Government of the
Northwest Territories, 2016-2019

- Minister's Statement 186-18(2), Update on
the A New Day program
- Tabled Document 416-18(2), GNWT
Capital Estimates 2018-2019
- Tabled Document 419-18(2), Proposed
Mandate of the Government of the
Northwest Territories, 2016-2019
(Revised)

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Coroners Act
- Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Residential
Tenancies Act
- Bill 28, Interpretation Act
- Bill 29, Miscellaneous Statute Law
Amendment Act, 2017
- Bill 30, Health Statutes Law Amendment
Act (Cremation Services)

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Masi, Mr. Clerk. This House
stands adjourned until Friday, September 22, 2017,
at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned 4:48 p.m.

