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The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	3681
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	3681
49-18(3) – Improving Supports for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and Autism (Abernethy)	3681
50-18(3) – Indigenous Languages in Schools and Communities (Moses)	3682
51-18(3) – Northwest Territories Asset Management Strategy (Cochrane)	3683
52-18(3) – Federal Infrastructure Funding (Schumann)	3683
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	3683
Partnerships on Suicide Prevention (Nakimayak)	3684
Recognition of Ruby Jumbo, Recipient of Senior Administrative Officer of the Year 2017 Award by the Local Government Association of the Northwest Territories (Thompson).....	3685
Homelessness in the Northwest Territories (Beaulieu)	3685
Northwest Territories Power Corporation Challenges (Vanthuyne)	3686
Fraser Institute Annual Survey of Mining Companies 2017 (Testart).....	3687
Personal Information Disclosure for Public Housing Tenants (Green)	3687
Rental Office Application Processing Time (Simpson).....	3688
Post-Secondary Education in the Northwest Territories (O'Reilly)	3688
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	3688
ORAL QUESTIONS	3689
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	3700
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	3701
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	3719
ORDERS OF THE DAY	3720

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, March 7, 2018****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Blake, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Ms. Green, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Hon. Alfred Moses, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. O'Reilly, Hon. Wally Schumann, 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 Health and Social Services

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 49-18(3):
IMPROVING SUPPORTS FOR FETAL ALCOHOL
SPECTRUM DISORDER AND AUTISM

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, our government made a mandate commitment to ensure that effective supports and programs are in place for persons with disabilities. The NWT Disability Review and Renewal Project is part of that commitment. Through this work, the government has identified the challenges residents with complex disabilities, such as autism or fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, or FASD, have in accessing assessment and diagnostic services across the territory. Identifying these challenges is an important step towards putting effective supports in place for persons with these disabilities.

Children living with autism or FASD require ongoing assessment, intervention, and follow-up support through an integrated care approach that involves the children, the family, and many different practitioners, including pediatricians, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, audiologists, social workers, and child development team coordinators.

Currently, the Department of Health and Social Services supports at-risk children and families through early intervention screening as part of the NWT Well Child Clinics, rehabilitation services, the Stanton Territorial Hospital Child Development Team, and the territorial FASD Family and Community Support Program.

The Child Development Team works with families and community service providers to provide medical and therapeutic intervention services to each individual child, based on findings from a comprehensive diagnostic assessment. The team

also monitors and revises an intervention plan that is specifically tailored to each child. This specialized support is offered to children with autism and FASD in the Dehcho, Tlicho, and the Yellowknife areas.

The FASD Family and Community Support Program assesses children up to 16 years of age for FASD. Where a diagnosis is made, this territorial program develops and implements intervention strategies for these children. It accepts referrals from healthcare providers and social workers across the NWT. Currently this program only covers 10 FASD assessments per year. Following their 17th birthday, patients are referred to the same support services offered to all residents with disabilities so that support can continue in adulthood.

We hear from the NWT Disabilities Council, the Yellowknife Association for Community Living, and the NWT Autism Society of the need for more support and to improve existing programs. This is why we proposed \$848,000 in the 2018-2019 budget that will be used to enhance services for autism and FASD. Those enhancements will include a child development team coordinator in the Beaufort Delta region, as well as speech language pathology and occupational therapy autism coordinators for the child development team at Stanton Territorial Hospital. It will also provide funding to establish and enhance the existing Territorial FASD community and Family Support programming.

The department will also be working with the NWT Health and Social Services Authority towards establishing a territorial FASD assessment and support program for adults, as this is something that does not currently exist in this territory. This funding will allow the addition of an adult FASD assessment team coordinator. The Department of Health and Social Services also contributes to a national FASD database. This database is the first of its kind in the world and gathers detailed information about FASD assessments from across the country. This national database makes it possible for practitioners to better communicate and collaborate when it comes to different FASD assessment programs.

This year, the Government of the Northwest Territories is the lead jurisdiction of the Canada Northwest FASD Partnership, which contributes

funding to the CanFASD Research Network. This network produces and sustains national collaborative research related to FASD. The partnership recently approved an FASD language guide that outlines common but unproductive language that is often used when speaking about FASD. The guide presents alternative, more respectful language and a rationale for its use.

By being involved in wider partnerships such as the Canada Northwest FASD Partnership, along with territorial and community organizations that represent the disability sector, our government is better positioned to receive reliable information we can use to improve the outcomes for our residents affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and autism.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to removing barriers to access, to improve service quality, and to work to build stronger supports for all persons with disabilities. The actions I have outlined are some of the ways that we are working to provide the best health and the best care for all NWT residents, including those with autism and FASD. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 50-18(3):
INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES IN SCHOOLS AND
COMMUNITIES

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Mr. Speaker, Indigenous language revitalization is a shared responsibility. Language revitalization is not something that can be done solely alone by the schools. Rather, numerous stakeholders, including elders, Indigenous and community governments, language groups, and families must work together to see our nine Indigenous languages thrive.

Mr. Speaker, in the past year, including \$5.9 million from the federal government, we have invested \$11 million in Indigenous language revitalization, through Indigenous governments who have the authority and responsibility to design and deliver Indigenous language programming in their communities. In December, we invited Indigenous language experts to participate in conversations about defining the differences between language learning, language revitalization, and language acquisition. Participants worked on identifying where current initiatives fit in and learned about tools and strategies for language revitalization. Many programs are at different stages of development.

Initiatives include community projects, regional initiatives, and territorial approaches. Language classes for front-line staff, carving and sewing

classes in the community language, and community phrasebooks are all good examples of community-based projects. Regional initiatives involve close collaboration between communities on projects, such as dictionaries and calendars, sharing resources and promotional materials across the region, and regional meetings.

At the territorial level, we are partnering with Indigenous governments, Aurora College, and southern universities on programs like the University of Alberta's Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development program, or the University of Victoria's Indigenous Language Revitalization program.

Mr. Speaker, in the last sitting I announced that the 2017 Northwest Territories Aboriginal Framework: A Shared Responsibility would soon have an accompanying action plan. The action plan is in the final stages of development and will be released in the May/June sitting.

At the same time, the Indigenous Languages Education Secretariat has continued its work on Indigenous language revitalization initiatives. We have made further investments in community radio stations for Indigenous language programming. Professional development opportunities have been offered and Indigenous language communities have been supported to deliver language and culture programming.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, it takes everyone working together to revitalize and increase access to Indigenous languages, but our schools are playing their part. Right now, in 19 of our schools, students are hearing and using Indigenous languages during their school routines and in interactions with staff and other students. These schools are piloting the new Indigenous languages curriculum, called Our Languages.

This curriculum promotes Indigenous language instruction in the classroom, but also encourages a whole-school approach to Indigenous language use. The Our Languages curriculum is not a graded program. It has five levels ranging from emergent to capable. A student's proficiency in a language, not their age or grade, determines the level at which they work. With feedback and input from this first-year pilot, the Our Languages curriculum will be further piloted throughout the territory in the 2019-2020 school year, in every classroom from junior kindergarten to grade 12.

Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, and as an Indigenous person, I find it deeply gratifying that our students have the opportunity to use and learn Indigenous languages in our Northwest Territories school system. We can all be proud to represent a territory that works so

diligently to revitalize and increase access to our Indigenous languages. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 51-18(3):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ASSET
MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to update Members on the progress community governments and the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs have made on implementation of the Northwest Territories Asset Management Strategy. In spring 2016, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, in partnership with the Northwest Territories Association of Communities and community government representatives, launched the Asset Management Strategy. The strategy helps community councils and staff maximize benefits from their infrastructure investments. Implementation has been designed to be flexible and adaptable, to enable the effective application of asset management practices across all communities.

Over the past year, territorial and community government staff have been collecting detailed information about all community government assets. In the coming months, the first nine pilot communities will begin using asset management software to support their decision-making. The department and the Northwest Territories Association of Communities also worked closely with the Northern Communities Insurance Exchange to ensure up-to-date information on community government assets is integrated into the system. The software includes detailed asset information such as age, maintenance requirements, and potential suppliers.

Mr. Speaker, the Asset Management Strategy also supports the 18th Legislative Assembly's commitments to assist community governments as they innovate to address climate change and to improve their energy efficiency and conservation. The department has collaborated with the Association of Communities, community governments, and staff from the Department of Infrastructure and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation to include preventative maintenance activities into the software. The preventative maintenance procedures include reminders, checklists, and guidance documents. Current activities, such as monitoring snow loads, have been built into the system to support communities with the protection of their assets as they adapt to a changing climate. As we learn more about climate change impacts and new adaptive maintenance activities, additional procedures can

easily be incorporated into the system. Mr. Speaker, community governments are continually faced with pressures to make investments in infrastructure and to deliver enhanced programs and services to their residents. The Asset Management Strategy will support community governments with solid information for decisions related to extending the life and service potential of community assets. Asset management will maximize community governments' investments, as well as allowing for strategic investment of both federal and community infrastructural funding in retrofitting or building new infrastructure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister's statements. Minister of Infrastructure.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 52-18(3):
FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, investments in effective and resilient infrastructure provide the foundation for a stronger North. Through infrastructure improvements, we can better connect communities to services they rely on, while mitigating the cost of living and doing business. Replacing or upgrading our assets increases our resiliency to the impacts of climate change and as we expand our infrastructure, we will support important economic development that provides residents with well-paying jobs and training opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories has often worked in partnership with the federal government to deliver meaningful investments that have a transformative impact on our territory. I am pleased to say that earlier today we had the opportunity to announce another milestone in the partnership with the signing of the Integrated Bilateral Agreement for federal infrastructure funds under the Investing in Canada Plan.

Mr. Speaker, all funding under the agreement is being cost shared 75 per cent federal and 25 per cent territorial funding. The federal government's contribution will provide over \$570 million to the Government of the Northwest Territories under various funding streams of the Investing in Canada Plan over the next 10 years. The Northwest Territories' contribution will come from a variety of sources and is approximately \$190 million, meaning nearly \$760 million in infrastructure funding in the North will be leveraged through the agreement. The streams included in the agreement are the Green Infrastructure Fund; Public Transit Fund; Community, Culture and Recreation Fund; and Rural and Northern Communities Fund, which includes the Arctic Energy Fund.

Projects benefitting from this funding will also help support the mandate and priorities of this Legislative Assembly. Upgrades to community infrastructure will improve quality of life for residents and increase local capacity. Transportation projects, such as ongoing highway rehabilitation, will provide for safer and more efficient intercommunity mobility. Funding for energy projects will support the implementation of the 2030 Energy Strategy and Action Plan and help us meet greenhouse gas reduction targets and stabilize the cost of living. Projects that support food security will increase the long-term stability of our communities. Expanded broadband connections will modernize our society and help address our ongoing communication technology requirements.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Infrastructure expects to be prepared to submit applications for a few projects that could begin in early 2018-2019 to Infrastructure Canada. Mr. Speaker, the signing of the Integrated Bilateral Agreement with Infrastructure Canada is good news. Going forward, further opportunities exist to leverage infrastructure funding for the Northwest Territories under various application-based programs under the Investing in Canada Plan.

In November, the Government of the Northwest Territories submitted comprehensive project proposals for the Slave Geological Province Access Corridor and Mackenzie Valley Highway to Transport Canada for funding consideration under the National Trade Corridors Fund. Up to \$400 million in funding is being dedicated to transportation projects in the three territories under this program. The Government of the Northwest Territories' proposals identify funding for all project phases, with a focus on next priority phases, to help advance these corridors as committed to under our 25-year Transportation Strategy and the Government of the Northwest Territories mandate. It is anticipated that decisions around this first round of proposals will be made in April.

Mr. Speaker, project proposals sent to Transport Canada under the National Trade Corridors Fund will also be shared with the Canada Infrastructure Bank, which allows for an opportunity to fund these projects under the bank instead. The Infrastructure Bank will focus on large, transformative, revenue-generating projects, which could potentially include the Slave Geological Province Access Corridor and Taltson Hydro Expansion Project. At this time, we are still awaiting additional details about when the Infrastructure Bank will become operational.

Mr. Speaker, there is also an opportunity to invest in NWT marine facilities under the Oceans Protection Plan. Transport Canada has announced its intention to invest \$94.3 million over five years in safety equipment and basic marine infrastructure in

at least 30 northern communities in the NWT and Nunavut. This funding could be used to support the operations of Marine Transportation Services and upgrade marine landing sites in communities, enhancing the delivery of essential materials to residents and businesses. Expanding marine infrastructure along the Mackenzie River and Arctic coast would provide new opportunities for shipping throughout this important marine corridor and support industry operations contributing to important economic growth.

Mr. Speaker, the strength of our partnership with the federal government is once again allowing us to advance our infrastructure priorities. The strategic investment announced today will result in long-term benefits to residents that result in stronger, more sustainable communities and a vibrant and prosperous Northern economy. As usual, I will continue to keep Members apprised of the success of our infrastructure funding submissions going forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PARTNERSHIPS ON SUICIDE PREVENTION

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last fall the Minister of Health and Social Services tabled his department's Child and Youth Mental Wellness Action Plan for 2017-2022. This is work I am very interested in, work that is very important to people of my region. Mr. Speaker, I have spoken many times in this House about mental health, mental healthcare, and the need to enhance suicide prevention programs in our communities.

As you know, when it comes to mental health, our small and remote communities have unique challenges that demand targeted solutions. For example, we are less likely to have resident healthcare workers, and it is much more difficult to access specialized care. While the close-knit ties of our communities can be a strengthening asset, they can also sometimes make it harder for patients to maintain their privacy, Mr. Speaker. However, we are not alone in facing these challenges. Mental healthcare and suicide prevention are two areas where we can learn a lot from our fellows in the circumpolar world.

I believe that, as our government develops its youth-focused programs, it could benefit greatly from observation of and engagement with some of these international initiatives.

For example, Project CREATEs is a project shared between Canada, Finland, and the Inuit Circumpolar Council.

Mr. Speaker, CREATEs stands for Circumpolar Resilience, Engagement and Action Through Story. The plan is to engage youth, elders, and other community members in digital storytelling workshops, helping youth to engage with their traditional cultures and to establish historical records that will keep those traditions alive in the years to come. Mr. Speaker, sharing circles will also provide a critical after-care component.

Mr. Speaker, nation-to-nation collaboration doesn't just mean partnerships between federal governments. It can also mean partnerships between settler-colonial and Indigenous governments or between Indigenous governments. Mr. Speaker, I would like to see the GNWT join the Yukon and Nunavut as northern territories to encourage collaboration and care across our borders. After all, the borders between territories, Mr. Speaker, are not borders between Indigenous groups.

I would also like to see the Government of the Northwest Territories work to engage with Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and other Indigenous governments in the Territory. Any initiative that brings youth and elders together to engage community care is a good thing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
RECOGNITION OF RUBY JUMBO, RECIPIENT
OF SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OF THE
YEAR 2017 AWARD BY THE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Ms. Ruby Jumbo, senior administrative officer for the Sambaa K'e First Nation, for winning the Local Government Administrator of the NWT, Senior Administrative Officer of the Year for 2017.

Ruby's selection for Outstanding SAO of the Year was announced during the association's 2017 annual general meeting by Grant Hood, senior administrative officer of the town of Inuvik and LGANT president.

Ruby has been a resident of Sambaa K'e all her life. Ruby worked for Sambaa K'e First Nation for a total of 23 years with different responsibilities, nine years as a summer student. Right after that, she did two years as senior administrative officer.

However, Ruby felt she was too young and missed the theory component of the position and went back to school for five years. After completing school, she immediately gained the position of senior administrative officer and served in that capacity since 1995.

Sambaa K'e First Nation's members, elders, youth, and staff feel that the organization and community is lucky to have such a culturally strong, motivated, humble individual to guide them. Ruby is always motivated to support her community and its members to become educated, trained, and to keep their tradition, to be respectful of one another and others. Ruby is one of the biggest advocates for incorporating traditional ways into the workplace, two of which consist of healing and practising Dene Zhatie daily.

One of Ruby's best attributes is that she is very keen on community wellness and unbelievably skilled at finding funding sources to continue running programs geared toward healing of the community members. Not only does she find funding sources for the community wellness program, but also programs for creating employment for Sambaa K'e First Nation and its community members.

She finds job rotation important and has helped implement a job-sharing program in Sambaa K'e First Nation. Job sharing allows the community to employ other people. Ruby is not only senior administrative officer of Sambaa K'e First Nation. She is also a mother, aunt, cousin, niece, sister, teacher, and volunteer of the community.

Please help me recognize her on a job well done. Thank you, Ruby.

---Applause

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
HOMELESSNESS IN THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES

MR. BEAULIEU: Marci cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about homelessness in the NWT. Last year the City of Yellowknife released a comprehensive strategy paper titled "Yellowknife's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness." The plan contains many facts and figures regarding chronic homelessness issues that are facing all of the NWT, not only Yellowknife. Mr. Speaker, I would like to highlight some of these key findings in the 70-page city plan, which includes topics such as migration, urbanization, rural homelessness, housing market trends, and housing needs, among others.

Mr. Speaker, the plan states that the issue of homelessness is directly related to Canada's history of colonization, which has not only resulted in many people without adequate shelter, but has disrupted many generations of families and entire Indigenous communities on a social and spiritual level. It is important to help accommodate all people who choose to live in Yellowknife and the NWT, regardless of the circumstances that brought them here.

Mr. Speaker, there are many social factors that push people into homelessness in the NWT, including things like no employment, poverty, and lack of housing. Moreover, it is crucial to know that these issues are not only Yellowknife problems, because we must also consider the fact that there are many reasons for people to relocate to Yellowknife from the smaller communities.

Some common reasons, Mr. Speaker, for people to relocate to Yellowknife from smaller communities includes seeking escape from trauma in their home communities, greater access to services, and an overall improvement in their well-being for themselves and their family. Unfortunately, in addition to these factors, one stark reality for some people is that, once a person ends up on the streets of Yellowknife, Yellowknife becomes a place of easy access to drugs and alcohol.

However, Mr. Speaker, the biggest factor for people relocating to Yellowknife from smaller communities is housing. Most of our small communities are seeing population increases, while the population across the NWT shows constancy. Mr. Speaker, we as a government have a duty and a responsibility to build our capacity to house homeless people. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to do that, we must look at homelessness from a broader perspective, meaning we must address its root causes, which will require years of work, yet an effective response can go a long way to working to improve people's lives and eradicate homelessness. After all, if other jurisdictions in Canada, like Medicine Hat, for example, can achieve such an amazing accomplishment as eradicating homelessness, then why can't we? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES POWER
CORPORATION CHALLENGES

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the past I've been hard on the Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, and frankly, I feel I've had good reason for that. Continuing rate increases up to 40 per cent over seven years, changes to the Power Corporation's management structure that hardly suggest transparency, there's no mention about the Power Corporation's role in the new Energy Strategy, and, of course, the infamous generator debacle.

Look, we all recognize that the Power Corporation has a tough job; stagnant demand, rising costs and inflation, lower water levels, and aging infrastructure are real problems, and there's constant pressure to lower the cost of living by getting off diesel and to protect our environment through newer, cleaning technologies. These are real challenges that are not easy to overcome, but overcome them we must, Mr. Speaker. That's the demand of residents today and the legacy we must leave for future generations.

Having now received three generators from California and made other arrangements for the rest, the mystery of the missing generators is behind us, but there is still uncertainty, Mr. Speaker. Questions remain, and residents deserve answers. What is the government's long-term vision for the Power Corporation?

Halfway through the 18th Assembly, Mr. Speaker, in spite of our commitment to transparency and openness, we still have more questions than answers. Does the government intend the Power Corporation to remain an arm's length Crown corporation? That's what we've always been told, but by the Minister's own admission when questioned about dissolving the previous board, he said, and I paraphrase here, due to more government subsidies, the Power Corporation is becoming closer to becoming just another government department.

If it is a government department, its role should not be to compete against the private sector. In which case, how can it justify competing against private enterprise in Hay River? How can it justify offering lower prices in one community while residents of the capital, almost half the population of the NWT, pay a higher rate that is continually going up? Mr. Speaker, the public needs to know the plan and vision for power generation and distribution in the NWT. They need know when rates are going to stabilize. They need to know how we're going to transition to cleaner energy. Mr. Speaker, they need a government that will level with them.

At the appropriate time, I'll have questions for the Minister responsible for the Power Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
FRASER INSTITUTE ANNUAL SURVEY OF
MINING COMPANIES 2017

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to speak of the largest contributor to our economy, the source of continued growth and the real economic engine of the Northwest Territories. I am, of course, speaking about our mining industry, and I do appreciate the advocacy that our Ministers and government do to support the continued growth and development of the industry, which is why I was shocked to read the most recent Fraser Institute annual survey of mining companies from the year of 2017.

It's a survey that was electronically circulated to approximately 2,700 individuals between August 22nd and November 10th of 2017. It's an attempt to assess how mineral endowment and public policy factors such as taxation and regulatory uncertainty affect exploration interests. Jurisdictions are scored on an overall investment attractiveness index that takes both mineral potential and policy perceptions into consideration for a total final score. Respondents consistently indicate that 40 per cent of their investment decision is based on policy factors, which means geology matters most, but policy still plays a key factor.

Mr. Speaker, we score 8 in Canada; we score 42 in the world for policy perception; and 19 for geological potential, for a total score of 21 out of 91 respondents. Middle of the pack, Mr. Speaker, saved largely by favourable geography.

This is something that the Minister has addressed previously, but continues to dog our regulatory environment. The concern from industry is that it's just too hard to get things moving quickly in the Northwest Territories, and although we have a Premier who has travelled 20 times internationally, more than all other Premiers except two, last year alone, you would think we would have more investment opportunities to show for it. You would think that these lengthy trips to mining expos and to conferences would allow us to communicate that NWT difference, and yet we are still middle of the pack for investment, behind the Yukon, behind Saskatchewan, behind Ontario, behind Quebec.

We need to do a better job. If mining is the cornerstone of our economy, we should be number one in Canada, Mr. Speaker, and I'll have questions for the Minister to find out if he has a plan to take us there. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
PERSONAL INFORMATION DISCLOSURE FOR
PUBLIC HOUSING TENANTS

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in November 2016 the NWT Information and Privacy Commissioner received a complaint about the way the NWT Housing Corporation was collecting personal income to calculate rents for public housing tenants. The complaint was about a new policy making tenants give housing authorities permission to collect income and other information directly from the Canada Revenue Agency. Some tenants didn't want to provide direct access to their tax records. They asked for alternatives, such as continuing to report income on the basis of submitted documents. They were told there was no alternative, and if they didn't provide consent, the housing authority would charge full market rent and a failure to pay would result in eviction.

Mr. Speaker, the NWT Housing Corporation had good practical reasons to change the annual income assessment. Public housing is, of course, subsidized, so income verification is necessary for spending public funds.

Annual reporting eliminated the need for 33,000 monthly income reviews a year across the NWT. Basing rent on income tax files promotes tax filing, giving low-income folks access to other federal programs such as the GST rebate and the Canada Child Benefit, these changes aligned closely with the income verification policies of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and the Department of Health and Social Services. I believe that the NWT Housing Corporation had good intentions.

Investigating this complaint, the Information and Privacy Commissioner was told that monthly reporting was still an option for clients who were uncomfortable allowing access to CRA records, but in practice this turned out not to be the case.

The commissioner's ruling on the complaint said, "The right to privacy is about far more than the ability to keep things confidential. Privacy is about the right of the individual to choose what information is provided to whom and how." The ruling called on the Housing Corporation and its LHOs to amend its practices to provide an alternative method for annual reporting to make clear there are alternates to CRA consent and to make consent time-limited. I'll have questions for the Housing Minister. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
RENTAL OFFICE APPLICATION PROCESSING
TIME

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last year in this House I raised the alarm about the length of time it takes for the rental office to process applications. Since 2011, there has been a steady decrease in the number of applications, but a steady increase of the length of time it takes to deal with them, until 2016-2017 that is, when that increase in time skyrocketed. During that time, almost half of the applications took longer than three months to process, and nearly half of those took more than four months. Earlier in this sitting the Minister stated that those numbers have since improved. Well, I sure hope so, Mr. Speaker, but there's still a long way to go.

I'm not criticizing the staff of the rental office. There are provisions in the Residential Tenancies Act that require landlords and tenants to settle disputes using the rental office, but the Department of Justice does not provide that office with the means to do its job in a timely manner. In Alberta, if a tenant commits a substantial breach, which includes things like not paying rent on time or committing illegal acts on the rental property, their landlord can evict them with 14 days' notice. If the issue is non-payment of rent, the only recourse that a tenant has is to pay the full amount owing.

In the NWT, only a rental officer can issue an eviction notice, which means that tenants who want to game the system can live rent-free for months. This happens all the time, Mr. Speaker, and it costs landlords countless thousands. To be clear, Mr. Speaker, when I say landlords, I'm not talking about a corporation that owns thousands of units and can absorb these extra costs. I'm talking about the small, independent landlords who might have one or maybe a few properties, and are just trying to get by or supplement their incomes.

The system doesn't just hurt landlords, either; it hinders the growth of our economy. Our system deters potential landlords from entering the market, which means fewer rental units and higher rents for tenants. Renters in Hay River feel these effects every day, Mr. Speaker. The lack of rental housing also makes it extremely difficult for businesses to attract out-of-town employees, which are desperately needed to address our labour gap and grow our economy. It also makes it difficult for organizations like the Hay River Health Authority to attract employees, which has a direct effect on the health of our residents.

Mr. Speaker, these are all issues that I've brought up before in this House, and I could go on. At the appropriate time, I'll have questions for the Minister of Justice, and if I have time, questions for the

Minister whose department makes two thirds of the applications to the rental office. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I have raised concerns regarding our support for post-secondary education in this House several times during this Assembly. The Minister of Education allowed Aurora College to cut the teacher education and social work programs as part of Cabinet's fiscal strategy and before efforts were made to improve them. He announced a foundational review on Aurora College and then got rid of the Aurora College Board. There appears to be little done to respond to the recommendations from the 2013 Cleveland review of Aurora College.

The steering committee for the foundational review is made up only of GNWT staff, without any outside expertise in post-secondary education system development. Advocates for the social work program had to go public before they were included in the consultations. Organized labour was not included, either. There seems to be little under way within ECE to develop a knowledge economy. The Minister focuses narrowly on Skills 4 Success and meeting big industry-focused labour market demand. Instead, he should be reshaping labour market demand by building on our assets, such as traditional knowledge, co-management regimes, cold weather technology, environmental remediation, and more. While the Yukon is heading towards the first university in northern Canada, we have our heads buried in the sand, or snow.

Where is the long-promised post-secondary education legislation? Where is the work to build a knowledge economy? Why do we not have the foundational review to study in this session? Where are the plans for this social work and teacher education program? Where is the leadership we need on post-secondary education? I'll have questions later today for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Great Slave.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize and welcome Tim Moorhouse, of Chestermere, Alberta, who is chair of the Canada

FASD Research Network. I truly appreciate the hard work he and the CanFASD Research Network do each year to support FASD education and awareness in Canada. Welcome to the House.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the members of the Anti-Poverty Advisory Committee as visitors to the gallery today. The committee has been meeting this week to review applications for the Anti-Poverty Fund and prepare funding recommendations. This committee has been in place for two years now, and they are concluding their terms at the end of this month. I have greatly appreciated their input and guidance over the past two years, and I have deep respect for their commitment to NWT residents and communities. I'm happy to have them here with us today, and thank them for their support and their time as committee members. They are the committee chair, Mayor Mark Heyck of Yellowknife; Elder Pat Martel from K'atodeeche First Nation; Nora Wedzin from Behchoko; Knute Hansen from Aklavik; Ruby Jumbo from Sambaa K'e; and Kyla Kakwi-Scott, who is the senior advisor of the Anti-Poverty Committee. Once again, thank you all for being here. Thank you, Tim. Thank you for everybody for joining us today.

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

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the LGANT 2017 award winner, and a constituent of the Nahendeh riding. Welcome, Ruby Jumbo, to the Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

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

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to acknowledge Mayor Mark Heyck, a constituent of mine, and thank him for all the work he's done on behalf of the Anti-Poverty Steering Committee and as mayor of this community. Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize a constituent of mine. I'm going to try again, Mr. David Wasylciw, I think I might as well stick with "W," and a friend of mine, Nora Wedzin, in the gallery. 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 want to recognize a good friend of mine, a former city council colleague of mine, and the mayor of Yellowknife, Mark Heyck. Welcome and thank you for being here.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I, too, would like to recognize Mayor Heyck. I had the pleasure of serving with him on city council and I want to thank him for all the work that he's done on behalf of our community. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Mr. Knute Hansen. Knute has been involved with the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation from the beginning and still continues to advocate for Inuvialuit. Welcome, Knute. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. I would also like to welcome Mayor Mark Heyck to our Assembly and Nora Wedzin, special counsel. [English translation not provided]. Item 6, acknowledgments. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 211-18(3): CHILD AND YOUTH MENTAL WELLNESS ACTION PLAN

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier on I spoke about partnerships on suicide prevention, and my questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, a patient's ability to control their privacy during their engagement with the healthcare system is critical to their treatment and ongoing healing and wellness. The Action Plan on Child and Youth Mental Wellness commits the department to developing standards of practice for children and youth privacy. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell us a bit more about this work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during the development of the action plan the Member has referenced, and we actually engaged with youth from across the Northwest Territories, and they made it very clear that privacy is of particular interest and importance to them. Youth have been very vocal about the fact that they do not feel that their privacy is always respected when using the healthcare system, so ensuring proper protection and rights of privacy and confidentiality is an extremely important part of the work that the health and social services system is doing. We want to make certain that our system in the Northwest Territories is set up with standards of

practice to ensure that youth feel safe in seeking healthcare, regardless of where they go in the Northwest Territories.

In 2017-2018, the Department of Health and Social Services has been working to research the current legal context and the best practices around privacy, confidentiality, and legal rights of children and youth, related to mental wellness. This work has included consultation with the chief health privacy officer. They are doing a jurisdictional scan as well as examining connections to professional standards and codes of conduct from many jurisdictions across the country. In 2018-2019, the department will work to develop the standards of practice that will guide Health and Social Services systems staff respecting and protecting the rights of youth to privacy and confidentiality. This work will all be followed by training for staff across the Northwest Territories.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: That is valuable information for youth to reach out. Mr. Speaker, the action plan also speaks of reviewing the out-of-territory program that is a program that sees children and youth leaving the territory for specialized care. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell us more about the scope of this review, including how it will interact with the need to establish reliable care options in people's home communities.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, we heard from youth that our programs and services need to be flexible and they need to be adaptive to their needs, to the children's needs. Initial work to prepare for review has already taken place. This work is focused on determining the best scope and outcomes for the review. It is anticipated that the review will include an examination of the needs of youth, including health and mental health needs, behaviours of concern, trauma, supervision needs, education, employment, housing, social supports, and any others that are deemed important. The review will also include an examination of the strength of children and youth, including mental wellness, social supports, physical activity, and in connection to culture, which we have heard over and over again is incredibly important.

In addition, the review will look at staffing models at facilities and the full spectrum of programs and services that children and youth need to access to support their individual needs. We are using a recovery-oriented approach to care and recognizing that youth needs change over time, and we know that it is essential that a full spectrum of services is available and accessible to children in order for them to basically have the best outcomes and the best potential future. Mr. Speaker, we need to have a better understanding of the evolving and complex needs of children and youth served both in the territory but also in facilities that we are supporting

outside of the territories, and that is the work that we are doing now.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: I appreciate the response. Mr. Speaker, the action plan's objectives include creating a supportive environment to protect the mental wellness of children and youth and improving mental wellness programs and services through locally relevant data and perspectives. Mr. Speaker, how will the future of the territorial suicide and crisis support network reflect the need for community-based programming like Project CREATEs or the GNWT sharing circles?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The crisis response network is one thing, and the supports that we are providing at a community, territorial, and regional level, they interrelate, but they have a different role. The suicide prevention and crisis response network will take a whole-community approach, involving relevant community partners who are figuring out who is in the community, who can be part of that network, and will focus on prevention, intervention, but also look at responses after an incident has occurred. The work will also include supporting community-level plans that can be developed to meet the needs of individual communities, recognizing that the communities have a lot of great ideas and they know their communities better than somebody sitting in Yellowknife or even a regional centre might, so it's critical that we get their involvement in the design to a community response. The programs that the Member has mentioned, I am not familiar with the CREATEs program, but I am certainly willing to have a sit-down with the Member so he can help me get educated on that, and then we can have a conversation with the department about how that might be something we can look at, if appropriate, in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 212-18(3):
IMPROVING RENTAL OFFICE PERFORMANCE

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The rental officer's 2016-2017 annual report made two recommendations for legislative amendments and looked forward to the appointment of a deputy rental officer. What steps is the Department of Justice taking to respond to these recommendations? These are, of course, for the Minister of Justice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Justice.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department, of course, did review the recommendation, and the act has been amended

several times in the last few years. There were significant amendments made in 2015. In the last 10 years, there have been amendments in 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2015, and 2017, so there have been significant amendments, often in response to suggested amendments from the office. Some of the amendments that we have made this year is to permit the filing of rental officer orders in the Supreme Court registry and the authority to rental officers to correct minor errors in their orders. So improvements have been made, and certainly we are interested in continuing to make improvements.

MR. SIMPSON: I will ask the Minister later about the deputy rental officer position. The annual report also spoke to the growing complexity of files before the rental officer and cites this as one of the reasons the wait times are increasing. In Alberta in 2014, the residential tenancy dispute resolution service was introduced as an alternative to the court systems and a way to reduce complexity. For example, the service limits hearings to 30 minutes, and the government took steps on implementation by hiring necessary staff and making a wide range of information documents, handouts, and tip sheets available online. So, can the Minister identify what drives the increasing complexity he mentioned and what is being done to help the rental officer tackle this challenge?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: As was mentioned in the question and the response to earlier inquiries, we have noted that the complexity of applications has increased over the last few years. I understand that much of that is driven by the increased amount of paperwork that is filed with the applications, dealing such issues as rental arrears, arrears repairs, and other matters, so the applications have become lengthier and therefore more complex. This has of course put pressure on the office administrators' workload, and, in response to this concern about the workload, the position has been reviewed and formalized procedures to provide guidance on certain issues have been put in place.

With respect to the earlier question regarding the deputy rental officer, we did issue an RFP for the addition of a deputy rental officer, but, unfortunately, these processes did not result in the recruitment, so what we have done is hired someone with a great deal of experience on contract as a part-time deputy rental officer in the beginning of February, so we are hoping that will alleviate some of the problems.

MR. SIMPSON: The Minister mentioned extra paperwork being submitted with these applications, so I am wondering if perhaps that is the work of one of the departments that is submitting these applications. Paperwork seems like a specialty of the government. It's my understanding that roughly 140 applications to the rental officer in 2016-2017

were made by landlords outside the public housing system. It sounds to me like government agencies are squeezing individual landlords out of the process that is put in place to protect them. On top of that, individual landlords may have to compete for time with the large residential landlords. Can the Minister identify how many of these 140 applicants were individual landlords compared to the large residential landlords such as Northern Property?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Of the 139 non-subsidized public housing applications that were filed in 2016-2017, 51 of them involved individual landlords as applicants or as respondents to a tenant application. I would assume the rest were corporate.

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

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I noted earlier that there has been a decrease in the number of applications, and I think this might be attributable to the fact that it is taking so long that some landlords are just giving up on the whole process. How has the department considered addressing the imbalance in services delivered by the rental office? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Certain emergency matters can be fast-tracked, but apart from that, it is first come, first served. Corporate applicants or respondents are not given priority over anybody else, and tenant applications are not given priority over landlord applications. We do realize that there is a problem, which was identified in the report that has been referenced. Hopefully, the improvements that we are putting forward, in particular the hiring of a part-time officer to assist, will reduce the wait time, because we do realize this is a very serious matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 213-18(3):
MINING INVESTMENT CLIMATE

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Mining Investment what he is doing to address the ongoing concerns about the perception of investors that the Northwest Territories is not as ideal a climate for mining investment as other jurisdictions in Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I would like to remind the Member that we do not have that kind of Minister in this building, so if he can rephrase that certain Minister?

MR. TESTART: My apologies, Mr. Speaker; the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

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

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are doing quite a bit. We get a lot of heat sometimes for going to some of the shows that we go to in the press. We have been to Mineral Roundup. The Premier and I have just been to PDAC, but it is one of the reasons that this government has developed a Mineral Development Strategy, and that is to address some of these inconsistencies that people have about the Northwest Territories. The 17th Assembly had signed on to devolution, and that gives us the tools that we need to change a lot of legislation to help us address some of these things, be it the Mineral Resource Act or a number of LPs that my colleague, the Minister of Environment, is going to bring forward around environmental protection and the new protected area strategies and these sorts of things.

We get out there and continue to pound the pavement to promote the Northwest Territories as a great jurisdiction. We know that we have the mineral potential that is here, and just as we have done today here in the Great Hall, signed a deal with the Minister of Infrastructure of Canada on how we can invest in the Northwest Territories to alleviate some of these things so that we can draw some more international dollars to our territory to invest in the mineral potential that we have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: The issue in this most recent Fraser Institute report that is primarily the holdup for investment from the survey respondents, and this is a direct quote, is that "ongoing disputes over land claims and protected areas create uncertainty for investors." I would like to ask the Minister what his plan is to address those specific concerns. Let's start with land claims.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As the Member knows, we have all sat down with all of the Indigenous governments in the Northwest Territories, and one of the number one priorities of this Premier and this Assembly is to address land claims in the Northwest Territories. The Premier has done a tremendous amount of work on this file. We have made substantive offers to two of the three outstanding land claimant groups in the Northwest Territories, and we are working on getting something with the third one. There is some significant progress being made there. The recent announcements with the federal government on how they are going to approach some of these things is certainly going to help us, I think, move some of these files along.

I'm with the Premier. Hopefully, we can settle some of these in the life of this Assembly.

MR. TESTART: The issue with land claims is, of course, much more complicated than we can get to today, so I am going to move on to protected areas and conservation.

An often concern is, that because of the size of conservation areas in the Northwest Territories, they cut off potential exploration and mineral development. Is the Minister cognizant of that, and is he bringing forward some clarity on that issue to investors that we are a friendly jurisdiction for mining?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Early in the life of this government, I was the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, so I am quite aware of the protected area strategies moving forward. This was something that was under the federal legislation, and now it has been switched over to the Northwest Territories, and we are moving on those fronts. It is a complicated file. It's not like we can just shelve all of the protected area strategies that the federal government was working on. These are led by a number of Indigenous governments, the areas that they want to protect, and it is a complicated issue.

As I have said, the Minister of ENR is coming forward with an LP for the new protected area legislation on how to address some of that and which ones will be rolled out in the coming years as we move forward, and we will be working with our Indigenous governments to ensure that the areas that they want to protect, and maybe carve out some areas that they want to consider for mineral development as they participate in these mineral mining shows that we are participating in, they realize that mining is a big part of our economy, and they want to be able to participate and contribute to their members as well.

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

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Minister is dedicated to a charm offensive at these trade shows and industry events and mining conferences, but I would like to know what we have to show for it. How much mining investment has been attracted to the Northwest Territories since this government took office? Thank you.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I can't give you an exact number, but I can tell you that we have met with a number of stakeholders and interested parties that want to invest in the Northwest Territories, and the ones that are investing here are glad to see the hard work that this government is doing on a number of these files, as I have said, since devolution.

We have taken over the LPs or the land and resource part of this from the federal government. It is going to create more certainty for the mining industry to come to the Northwest Territories, and we will continue to engage all residents, stakeholders, and industry on how we can promote mining in the Northwest Territories and move this file along. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 214-18(3):
ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS IN THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement, I talked about the homelessness report done by the City of Yellowknife. I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Homelessness if there has been any progress made. The report was released in the spring of last year. From then until now, what progress has been made to address some of the issues in that report? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister responsible for Homelessness.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Quite a bit of progress has actually been addressed. The City of Yellowknife, I commend them for doing the ten-year report. It was amazing, and it actually backed up a lot of things that I had been saying, that it needs a continuum of services; we can't just look at one model; we have got to look outside of the community, et cetera.

The City of Yellowknife asked me if I would sit on a committee and work with them on that. I agreed to do that. The City of Yellowknife has taken the lead on that committee. I have met with them once, and we are working towards that. The Department of Health and Social Services has done the sobering centre. I committed to doing homeless shelters in communities outside of Yellowknife. We have almost got the three communities that are covered. We are looking at a homeless support worker position.

I could go on and on. We have done a lot towards working on the plan, and again, my biggest stress is that the City of Yellowknife did an amazing job of doing that report, and I must commend them. They didn't only look at the City of Yellowknife; they looked at the extenuating circumstances, as the Member had stated. Homelessness in Yellowknife is not just a Yellowknife issue; it's a territorial issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BEAULIEU: It appears in the report that talks about all of the reasons for homelessness and

maybe addressing homelessness should be to resolve those issues, but it sounds like the Minister is telling me that they're putting things in place here that I'm not sure that it addresses the homelessness anywhere other than sobering up the people on the streets, maybe, if we're talking about the sobering centre.

I'd like to ask the Minister if there are homes being built in other communities to address homelessness on that report. When she mentions that there are homes being built in other communities, are those directly for the individuals who are considered homeless in that report? That's my question.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Yes, my years before being a politician, Mr. Speaker, I did work with the Yellowknife Women's Society, and so homelessness was something that I have been working with for many, many years. I recognize that the majority of people actually who access the supports in Yellowknife are from other communities. When I came on, I committed to not only looking at Yellowknife but other communities. Right now, we have a fourplex in Behchoko that is just recently done. That is ready for operation and that will serve people who are homeless within that community. We have a fourplex that's just being completed in Fort Simpson that is looking at homelessness. I believe it's Simpson. Then the last one was the homeless shelter that we're still looking at bringing into Aklavik.

The other thing that we're doing to address homelessness is we're doing a pilot project. A lot of times people have a place to live before they become homeless. We're doing a pilot project in Behchoko where actually we're having a homeless support worker. A housing support worker; it's not homeless. A housing support worker who will work with people who are on the last kind of chance, they're falling through the cracks, and they may need a little bit of support and able to retain their homes because, if we can be proactive and we can actually help people to retain their homes before they become homeless, Mr. Speaker, that's the most humane way to deal with people. These are people. They aren't numbers, so keeping them in their homes is a priority of mine.

MR. BEAULIEU: I'd like to ask the Minister if there are other departments involved in trying to address the homelessness issue. As I see it, a big part of the homelessness issue is lack of employment. I'd like to know if there's any work that's being done to try to get people employed so they can find their own homes.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Yes, the Ministers actually sit on a social committee. On that committee is the Minister of Justice, the Minister for Health and Social Services, the Minister of

Education, Culture and Employment, and myself, the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

Education, Culture and Employment is doing a lot to try to get people employed, but also what we're looking at is people within the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. We have people who have huge arrears, so that is one of the policies that we're looking at currently to see if we can actually look at ways to support them so that they can get employment opportunities, work with us to actually pay off some of their debt. It might not be the traditional sense of employment that people think, but in my opinion, it's employment and in gear to actually helping people stay in their homes, and that is my focus as the Minister responsible for Homelessness.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is certainly a big issue. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister if there is an actual budget put in place to address the homelessness identified in the report. I'm looking about a holistic type of approach here in trying to resolve the issue. What I'm hearing and what I know from my own history of just being a Northerner is that homelessness is not necessarily an inventory issue. I'd like to ask the Minister if they're doing things to try to get people into homes and homes that actually already exist. Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Yes, there are budgets. I don't know the exact number. We'd have to pull them all through, but like I said, there is a budget for building of the homeless shelters within the community. We provide the operating money with that. We have food security initiatives that we provide to people. That comes with a budget. We also have a homeless assistance program. Again, I'm not sure of the total budget, but that is just people with up to \$1,500, a one-time funding that they can actually use to repatriate, if they wish to go back to their communities, if they need to pay off a little bit of debt so that they can get a home. That funding is actually specifically for people who are struggling, so that they can actually not enter homelessness. There are quite a few programs within the Housing Corporation that are specifically budgeted to address homelessness or to keep people housed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 215-18(3):
COSTS RELATED TO DELAY IN DELIVERY OF
GENERATORS

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Power Corporation. About a year ago, I stood up in this House and asked the Minister about the five generators that we had contracted Viridi Power out of California to build and what the status of those were. We know what that is all about now, so there are no further questions along those lines. There was an interesting piece of information that was provided back then. The Minister indicated to us that we had incurred costs of about half a million dollars, \$500,000, at that point in time, which was about a year ago by not having those generators in place at that time.

Seven months later in the fall I asked a similar question: how much money is owed? The money was still oddly \$500,000. We still hadn't received the generators at that time. We have received three of those now. We've re-contracted the other two out. I'd like to ask the Minister: what is the final number that the Power Corporation has had to pay extra for by not receiving these generators on time? Can he please confirm if Viridi Power is in fact going to be responsible for covering those costs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, in January, the corporation made the determination that they had to terminate the contract because of the non-delivery of the two generators. There was a set-off for some of the costs. I would expect that overall, however, our costs will be more than anticipated because of the necessity of re-contracting for the final two generators. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. VANTHUYNE: I didn't really get any clarification. A year ago, the number was \$500,000. Can the Minister clarify what that number is today, that has cost the Power Corporation, ratepayers, quite frankly, what it has cost them extra to date by not receiving those generators, and are we collecting it from Viridi Power? How are we collecting it from Viridi Power?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, there is set-off for some of the costs that we have incurred as a result of the late delivery, in fact, non-delivery of the last two generators. It is expected that overall, however, that the \$8 million budget that was anticipated for this will be exceeded by about \$500,000. I think the only way of collecting the extra money would be to commence litigation against Viridi. There was a set-off on some of the payments to Viridi, but I don't know whether it will be worthwhile to litigate this in California.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Well, it seems to me that this is probably going to be a line of questioning for another day, but I want to jump ahead because this is part of the problem. There is always this degree of openness and transparency that we don't seem to receive as it relates to the Power Corporation. I am wondering can the Minister, and I have asked him this before, commit the Power Corporation to providing its annual operating and maintenance budgets and its capital budget through similar processes that we already use for the Housing Corporation? It's a Crown corporation. It partakes in the annual business plans, and it presents its budgets to the Committee of the Whole. Can the Minister commit the Power Corporation to undertaking the same processes so that we can have a public, open, transparent conversation about the Power Corporation?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: The Power Corporation, of course, is a publicly regulated utility, so there is the necessity of filing each year or each time there is an increase in front of the PUB, so the process is quite open and transparent. In addition to that, we file annual budgets, capital and operating annual financial performance, and a corporate plan, which will now include a 20-year strategic plan, so the corporation is quite open. We did appear in front of committee and would be prepared to do so again if required or if asked.

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

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, I appreciate that they have come and presented to committee. It was a PowerPoint presentation. I also appreciate that the some of the documentation the Minister spoke about is provided publicly. However, it's not put to public scrutiny through the similar processes that we already use to put the rest of the government's entire budget through scrutiny. That said, I would like to ask the Minister: we heard earlier the Minister of Infrastructure talk about federal infrastructure funding coming our way; can the Minister responsible for the Power Corporation indicate if there are any dollars from those funds coming to the Power Corporation to help it reduce its infrastructure gap? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: The Power Corporation participated actively in the drafting of the energy strategy, so I expect that our corporation, the Power Corporation, will be developing alternative renewable energy solutions for the communities of the Northwest Territories. If I could just outline some of the things that we are hoping to do, one of the things that clearly is a priority or a concern of the corporation and all of the communities is to reduce costs, so we are looking at LNG in Fort Simpson and Tuktoyaktuk; reducing emissions;

wind, we are looking at possible wind projects in Inuvik, Norman Wells, and Sachs Harbour; possible transmission lines to Fort Providence and Whati; and hydro, small hydro projects in Lutselk'e and Gameti. We also are hoping to improve reliability, the Bluefish hydro redevelopment, hydro overhauls, and micro-solar. In addition to those things, we are attempting to increase our number of clients by growing the rate base, and that is why we are working with other departments, to look at possible Taltson expansion. So those are the things that we are doing. Clearly, we will need federal involvement and funds to advance those projects. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 216-18(3):
STROKE MANAGEMENT SERVICES AND
SUPPORT

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions will be for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Since our last sitting, I have heard of individuals who had stroke symptoms and stuff like that, and there are different processes in the matter there, especially in our region, in our smaller communities. Can the Minister please explain what is the process when a person is diagnosed with stroke-like symptoms in the Nahendeh riding? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can let the Member know that the department and the authority take stroke symptoms very seriously and want to make sure that residents who are presenting with stroke-like symptoms are dealt with appropriately. It is kind of a difficult question to answer because it is important to note, Mr. Speaker, that an individual can present for a large number of reasons and stroke-like symptoms do not always necessarily mean a stroke.

However, if a person does present in one of our smaller communities where there are no doctors, with stroke-like symptoms or a stroke, one of the first things that we would obviously do is work to stabilize them in their current location, at which point the staff would be getting in touch with our medical response team, who would put them directly in contact with doctors in the Northwest Territories who can help determine next steps. Those next steps may include a medevac out of the community they are in, depending on the severity of the stroke, to a place like Stanton, where they can receive a CT scan, which is an important piece of the diagnostic tools available in determining what

next steps will be. That CT scan will often help determine what those next steps will be.

Having said all that, Mr. Speaker, I want to also make clear that the department and the authority are currently updating their clinical practice guidelines for primary care nursing throughout the Northwest Territories. This work is in process. This work will help put in some consistent standards for nurses across the Northwest Territories in health centres on how to deal with things like stroke and stroke-like symptoms. That work is currently being done.

MR. THOMPSON: I appreciate the Minister's answer. At no point in time am I saying that the staff are not doing the job. It's just there have been some different processes to it, and I thank the Minister and the staff for dealing with this in such a proactive way. My second question: does the department have a mandatory time that a patient needs to stay in a hospital or a health centre before being released to ensure the person is able to leave and the medication is working?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The answer is no, there is no mandatory time. Really, it is entirely dependent upon the severity of the stroke and the condition of the individual and what treatments have been provided in order to stabilize or treat the individual. That can be different for every person every time. I can say that the doctors and the nurses will obviously want to keep the patient in until they are confident that leaving the health or the hospital will not put them at adverse risk, but there is no set time because every case is unique.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for that answer. It is a concern, though, with some. I have seen and heard of patients that have been let go and then we have had to bring them back in. It's no fault of the department and that. It's just the process, but it is a concern, so I hope the department will come up with some mandatory time, at least. Mr. Speaker, when releasing a stroke patient, do they need to have a family member or somebody with them to ensure that they are looked after properly after they have been released?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Going back to the previous question, I really cannot say that we will have a set mandatory time before an individual can be released. Like I said before, it really depends on the nature of the condition of the person presenting with. Everyone is different. If we were to set a mandatory time, we might end up keeping people there well beyond when they should. I think what is important is that we have some clinical standards in place that talk about what certain criteria an individual must reach before they can be released as opposed to setting a time. I think that gives us the same result but through a different mechanism.

Those are what the clinical standards we are working on will help us determine, is when somebody is suitable for release, recognizing patients can leave if they want to. The physicians, doctors, and nurses will often encourage them not to if it's not appropriate, but, ultimately, as residents, as people, we do have the freedom of choice.

With respect to the last question and whether or not family must be there or should be there, a similar response, Mr. Speaker. It is really dependent on the individual patient and their capacity after their stroke and where they are as far as being stabilized in what they are presenting with and whether or not they are experiencing some level of disability or loss of neurological function that may impair their decisions and their mobility. So it really once again depends on their capacity at the time of release. If the person is still experiencing some mobility, they would be encouraged to have some family support there with them, but we do not require it in all cases because they may be fine to leave without it. Other cases, we would strongly encourage it. It really depends on the situation and the individual.

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

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the answer from the Minister and that clarification. As long as we are doing something to make sure that our patients are looked after properly, whether it is time or whatever process the department has come up with, I think it's great to hear. I am looking forward to sharing this information with the residents in my riding. My final question: does the department have a protocol for aftercare, especially for out-of-town patients? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I know that I sound awfully repetitive here, but it is really dependent on the condition of the patient upon release and whether or not they require more rehabilitation before they return to their communities. In some case, absolutely. A patient may require a longer period of rehabilitation in the hospital as opposed to being discharged for rehabilitation in their community, depending on the nature of the mobility or other neurological function challenges that an individual has.

Rehabilitation services at Stanton Territorial Hospital are involved in working with communities and what is available in the communities. When an individual goes back to their community, it is part of their discharge planning. It really depends on what is available in the community as far as supports, things like homecare or other supports. We work with the patient. We try to determine whether or not they can be released. Do they have the ability to be

released? Are they physically mobile, or do they have challenges? Going back to the community, we want to work on a discharge plan that takes into consideration what resources are available in communities, what resources may not be available in communities to help in the discharge planning so that they can be released appropriately. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 217-18(3):
DISCLOSURE OF INCOME INFORMATION TO
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HOUSING
CORPORATION

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. My statement outlined the recommendations of the Privacy Commissioner in the matter of the privacy of income information complaint on behalf of public housing tenants. The ruling called on the Housing Corporation and its LHOs to amend its practices to provide for an alternative to giving the information directly to the CRA. First of all, can the Minister tell us whether she has accepted the findings of the Information and Privacy Commissioner? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we have implemented the recommendations of the Privacy Commissioner. The recommendation to look at CRA assessments was actually based on good intent, as the Member has stated. I think it is actually a good practice. It took me a little while to get my head around it, as well, when I first took over the position.

Previous to that, people were presenting their incomes to the local housing organizations. That leads to more chances of private information on income actually getting leaked into the public, with staff turnover, et cetera. The Privacy Commissioner found that it was actually better for ensuring that people's private information was less accessible, but she did have a recommendation that people be provided alternatives to providing that information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: I appreciate the Minister's answer. Can the Minister tell us what those alternatives look like? What kinds of things are accepted as an alternative to the linkage to the CRA?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I want to step back for a minute and talk about the process for accessing the information from the Canada Revenue Agency. It is really important to note that

this is actually the most private way that people can share their income information. It is important to get income information, as these are tenants who are usually in public housing.

Only 10 people within the corporation have access to this information, excluding myself. I don't even have access as the Minister. It is really confidential. Although, some people, like I say, weren't comfortable with us doing that, so we provide the alternative that people can bring in their tax assessments on an annual basis. That tax assessment, which does provide their information, will also be utilized for the annual assessing of people's information. Some people, again, are not comfortable with it, only a handful. Not very many have complained about it. In those extreme cases, we are allowing them to still bring in their monthly paperwork to the local housing organization. Again, that has more risk of people's private information being leaked.

MS. GREEN: What I understand is the alternative to the electronic access to the CRA is to present the paper copy of the tax filing to the local housing authority and they will calculate the rent on that basis. That is my understanding. If the Minister could confirm that and also say that this is an option that could be followed at any LHO in the NWT?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Absolutely. The Member is correct. People can bring their paper copy of their tax assessment into any local housing organization within the Northwest Territories. That will be used to verify their annual income.

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

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, finally, I know that there is a very high rate of tax filing in the NWT, yet not everybody files a tax return. In the case where a tenant hasn't filed a tax return or needs help filing a tax return, how can the LHO respond to them? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Again, it is really important that we verify annual income to confirm that people are paying appropriate rent. It is not fair if somebody is not filing their taxes and paying a minimum charge and the neighbour who is paying their taxes is actually paying more. We need to verify that. These are usually public housing units. Market rent, of course, is different. They are paying the market rent.

Within the public housing, we do ask them to file their taxes. There are a number of supports within communities that will help them with that. We stress to them that it is important. A last resort would be to bring in, again, their monthly income. Again, that

has to be verified, and it is the most insecure way of providing their income. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 218-18(3):
AURORA COLLEGE FOUNDATIONAL REVIEW
AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Earlier today I raised questions regarding leadership on post-secondary education in the Northwest Territories. There are a lot of people anxiously awaiting the Aurora College Foundational Review, including students, instructors, and even Regular MLAs. Can the Minister of Education tell us all when the foundational review will be released to the public? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in support of the Government of the Northwest Territories' mandate, the department and Aurora College are embarking on an ambitious path to change that will lead to expanded opportunities right across the Northwest Territories for residents. They gave an update earlier this session on those. I am expecting this foundational review, the final report to be delivered to myself by March 31st.

Further to that, Mr. Speaker, once we do get the final report, we are going to develop a management response that will be prepared to support the implementations or the recommendations. Providing a management response just for all Members and residents to a report of this nature is a standard practice right across Canada. The management response is the government's opportunity to consider the feasibility of each of the recommendations and also compliments the report by making clear and transparent what will be implemented.

This analysis, Mr. Speaker, will take about several weeks to be completed. It will be made public, both the report and the management response once they have been completed, including time for input also from standing committee. We are looking at a time of the 2018-2019 academic year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: I'd like to thank the Minister for that. Hopefully the report will come out earlier in the 2018-2019 academic year. I'll look forward to seeing that. The Minister has been on record as saying that the future of the social work and Teacher Education Program is tied to the Aurora College foundational review. There's actually money in the 2018-2019 budget for these

programs. Can the Minister tell us whether this is still the case about the programs' future being determined by the foundational review and whether either of these programs will be offered again at Aurora College in the fall of this year?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: As Members know, there are no enrolments into both the social work diploma program as well as the Bachelor of Education program. As we're going through this foundational review, we're going to be looking at things such as governance, operations, academic program process, accountability, student recruitment retention. This is not a program review itself, but the recommendations are expected to help guide us for the future of how the college is going to be conducting its business. Following this foundational review itself, Mr. Speaker, and drawing on other supporting documents such as the Skills4Success, the labour market development, the labour market forecast, and needs assessment, we will start working on the strategic plan. It's during that strategic plan that we will determine the future of the program of the Aurora College.

MR. O'REILLY: I'd like to thank the Minister for his response. The Minister has been promising a legislative framework for post-secondary education in the Northwest Territories almost since the beginning of our term. I'd like to know what's happening. Can the Minister tell us where the post-secondary legislation is and when we can expect the introduction of a bill?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I just want to update the Member. Once again, I did make a statement on this earlier in the session, but we are looking at possibly getting a draft bill in late 2018 or possibly early 2019. As the Members know, there is a discussion paper and an executive summary on our website currently. Once that bill is drafted and we get input and feedback on the discussion paper, we're going to see other institutions outside Aurora College, such as the Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning and College nordique francophone, are all going to benefit from such a legislation. Those are the timelines. I'm looking forward to getting feedback from residents, organizations, partners, and stakeholders across the Northwest Territories that have an invested interest in our post-secondary future here in the Northwest Territories.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I'd like to thank the Minister for that response. Yes, we really need to get that legislation before the end of our term. Last fall in the House we changed our mandate for the 18th Assembly and we included a new section around the knowledge economy. I'd

like to know what the Minister can tell us about his department. What specific work are they doing on developing a knowledge economy? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: The Member in his opening remarks earlier talked about training and skill development. That is a focus of our department, but we work collaboratively not only within other departments within the GNWT but also business and other organizations on how we address that. I think it takes more than just the one department to look at addressing the knowledge economy.

One of the other mandates that has changed was working with the Department of ENR in terms of studying the feasibility of creating a Northern Centre of Excellence to support and promote such things as research, innovation, traditional Indigenous knowledge, and foster partnerships with other universities outside the Northwest Territories and other governments and other organizations. The GNWT departments are now working together to engage with external partners to study the feasibility of creating such a centre. I look forward to the outcomes of that study. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 219-18(3):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HOUSING
CORPORATION APPLICATIONS TO THE
RENTAL OFFICE

MR. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I was looking in the main estimates and I've discovered what I assume must be a typo. The rental office is listed the activity services to the public, but last year two thirds of the applications to the office were filed by public housing agencies. Either the rental office should be listed under services to government, or the government is essentially monopolizing the public service for its own good and at the expense of small landlords, renters, and to the detriment of the public at large, as I note in my Member's statement.

Given that the length of time it takes the rental office to process applications has been identified by this government as a serious concern, I'd like to make sure the entire government is taking steps to solve it. That being said, I would like to ask the Housing Minister if the Housing Corporation monitors its applications to the rental officer so that it can take policy steps to help reduce the number of times that it makes applications to the office? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we do monitor the applications to the rental officer. I do want to give credit to the Minister who was responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation before my time.

Previously, many years ago, people were in debt, like \$60,000, \$100,000. The debts were incredible, insurmountable, and people, they're going to be evicted at that point. The last Minister actually spent a lot of time actually getting people to try to pay their debts. It was very successful, with a 110 per cent collection rate, which means people were mostly paying up their current rents and dealing with their past rent arrears.

Because that was such a strong focus, my hope and my assumption will be that, in the future, now that people are more used to having to pay their rent, they know that they can't get away for it for years and that our applications will lessen because of that. Yes, we do monitor, and my hope is that they will lessen over the years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMPSON: That was a lot of hope coming from the other side. Does the Housing Corporation currently maintain a policy outlining when and under what criteria it will engage the rental officer on issues with tenants?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Yes, we do maintain a policy, and it's called Under the Collection Policy and Procedures. My direction actually when I took over is: don't leave it for three months. As soon as somebody is in arrears for over a month, you start the process. I apologize if that does cause inconveniences, but my job is to take care of 2,600 people in homes in the communities, and so it's important that people are provided their support by the eviction. Eviction is the last resort provided in the rental tenancy order so that they can start carrying their arrears once they owe only a month or so versus years of debt. Yes, we do follow a policy, and under my direction, it is stringently reinforced that says, as soon as people aren't paying within a month or so, start the eviction process, so that people have a chance to maintain their homes.

MR. SIMPSON: I appreciate what the Minister is saying, but the fact remains that the government is monopolizing a service meant for the public. Much in the same way that the government and the Housing Corporation pay higher rates for things like power, perhaps the Minister would voluntarily pay higher application fees than private individuals to help the rental office fund another position to help the independent landlords out in this situation. Would the Minister do that?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: It isn't the responsibility of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation to pay for the rental officer. There are a lot of services. If there are not enough building contractors in the communities, does that mean we should start new businesses? If there are not enough suppliers, should we start the suppliers? Our job is to keep people in houses, and that is my priority.

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

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's the point. They're keeping people in houses, and a lot of times, it is people who aren't paying rent to independent landlords.

I know the corporation has engaged in a broad strategic renewal, looking at a lot of its policies. The Minister mentioned that arrears are what is taking up a lot of the time. What is the Minister doing, other than ensuring that arrears are going to the rental officer right away, to deal with it? Are there any other pre-emptive things that the Minister is doing? I know she mentioned one earlier, sort of a work program. Is there anything else they are doing like that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Yes, every LHO is notified as soon as someone is behind their rent, and then they can actually provide counselling to people to try to ensure that they can catch up on their rent.

We do allow people to enter repayment plans. We try to work with them to say, "If you keep current with your current rent, can you pay a few dollars towards your arrears?" to keep people in, and then, finally, like I said, we are trying the new pilot project, the housing support worker, that when we get notified that someone is falling behind, we send in a worker to see if we can actually work one-on-one with those families to try to assist them so that they can keep themselves out of the Rental Office. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The time for oral questions has expired. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to the 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. The Honourable Premier.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 111-18(3):
LETTER TO MINISTER BENNETT FROM GARY
VIVIAN, PRESIDENT NWT & NUNAVUT
CHAMBER OF MINES REGARDING NORTHERN

MINERALS INDUSTRY SUBMISSION ON THE ARCTIC POLICY FRAMEWORK, DATED FEBRUARY 28, 2018

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled "Letter to Minister Bennett from Gary Vivian, President NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines Regarding Northern Minerals Industry Submission on the Arctic Policy Framework, dated February 28, 2018." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 112-18(3): FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION 119-18(3): MEDICAL TRAVEL COVERAGE

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled "Follow-Up Letter for Oral Question 119-18(3): Medical Travel Coverage." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 113-18(3): FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION 139-18(3): WASTE WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled "Follow-Up Letter for Oral Question 139-18(3): Waste Water Resource Management Strategy." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Justice.

TABLED DOCUMENT 114-18(3): FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTIONS 138-18(3) AND 144-18(3): RENTAL OFFICE WAIT TIMES IN THE NWT

TABLED DOCUMENT 115-18(3): FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION 150-18(3): PROPOSED ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY LEGISLATION

TABLED DOCUMENT 116-18(3): FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION 186-18(3): PERIMETER FENCE REPAIR AT THE NORTH SLAVE CORRECTIONAL COMPLEX

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following three documents entitled "Follow-Up Letter for Oral Question 138-18(3) and Oral Question 144-18(3): Rental Office Wait Times in the NWT"; "Follow-Up

Letter for Oral Question 150-18(3): Proposed Access to Information and Protection Privacy Legislation"; and "Follow-Up Letter for Oral Question 186-18(3): Perimeter Fence Repair at North Slave Correctional Complex." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Member for Kam Lake.

TABLED DOCUMENT 117-18(3):
FRASER INSTITUTE ANNUAL SURVEY OF
MINING COMPANIES 2017

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table one document, "Fraser Institute Annual Survey of Mining Companies 2017." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Member for Frame Lake.

TABLED DOCUMENT 118-18(3):
JOINT LETTER FROM DOWNSTREAM
INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES REGARDING THE
SITE C DAM

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I would like to table the following document. It's a joint letter from 14 downstream Indigenous governments regarding the Site C Dam, addressed to the Premier of British Columbia, dated November 30, 2017. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Member for Nahendeh.

TABLED DOCUMENT 119-18(3):
THE POINT OF NO RETURN: THE HUMAN
RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN CANADA
THREATENED BY THE SITE C DAM, BY
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

TABLED DOCUMENT 120-18(3):
SITE C PROJECT NOT IN KEEPING WITH
ABORIGINAL TREATY RIGHTS OR UN
DECLARATION: BELLEGARDE', VANCOUVER
SUN, SEPTEMBER 11, 2016

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table two documents. The first one is from the Canadian Press, September 11, 2016, article, "Site C project not keeping with Aboriginal treaty rights or UN declaration: Bellegard"; and the second one is from Amnesty International in 2016, "The Point of No Return, Human Rights of Indigenous People in Canada Threatened by the Site C Dam." 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. 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: Committee Report 4-18(3), Standing Committee on Social Development Report on Adult Residential Addictions Treatment Facilities Tour 2017; Minister's Statement 1-18(3), North Slave Correctional Complex Inmate Concerns; Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process; Minister's Statement 32-18(3), Update on the Northwest Territories Disability Framework and Action Plan; Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019. By the authority given to me as Speaker by Motion 7-18(3), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider business before the House, with the Member for Hay River North in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, committee would like to consider Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019, with NWT Housing Corporation and Legislative Assembly as items under consideration. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. We will consider the document after a brief recess.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I will now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019, beginning with the NWT Housing Corporation, which begins on page 369 of the document. I will turn to the Minister for opening comments. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am pleased to present the 2018-2019 Main Estimates for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. While the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's estimates propose an operating budget decrease of \$845,000 or 0.8 per cent from the 2017-2018 Main Estimates, the Government of the Northwest Territories contribution is increasing by \$1.5 million to \$76.4 million.

The proposed estimates include forced growth of \$550,000 for housing, water, and sanitation services, as well as an increase of \$2.9 million towards the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Housing Initiative, bringing the 2018-2019 investment to \$8.4 million. This strategic investment will help ensure that our communities are able to staff policing personnel and will also contribute incremental revenue that will assist the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation address declines to date in the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation funding for public housing operations.

The 2018-2019 Main Estimates include a new revenue item of \$3.6 million related to the federal Northern Housing Fund, whereby the Government of the Northwest Territories will receive \$36 million over the next 10 years to address priority northern housing issues. Further details on partnership funding from the National Housing Strategy are expected over the coming months.

These estimates continue to support the priorities of the 18th Legislative Assembly by addressing the cost of living by implementing northern solutions for northern housing such as the Fuel Tank Replacement Initiative, utilizing \$300,000 to make homeowners' houses and the environment safer, and \$2.9 million for the New Home Program. A housing support worker pilot will be launched, with \$170,000 committed for 2018-2019. To provide opportunities for public housing tenants to purchase their homes, \$400,000 will be invested to repair and make ready to purchase 20 public housing units as part of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's three-year pilot initiative to sell up to 60 public housing units.

The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation will continue its strategic investments in supporting the mandate priority of assisting seniors aging in place by investing \$3 million in 2018-2019 to begin the construction of a mixed-rent seniors housing complex in Yellowknife. To inform this and future seniors housing investments by the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, a seniors planning study is now under way that will help identify current and emerging seniors housing needs as well as provide valuable insight into what housing features seniors are most interested in.

In order to prepare for partnership opportunities that may arise when the federal government announces details of the National Housing Strategy, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is investing \$900,000 for the Community Housing Support Initiative, which provides support for local and Indigenous governments to develop projects of their own design. This program will provide a template for tripartite partnerships between Indigenous, territorial, and federal governments.

That concludes my opening remarks, and I would be happy to answer Members' questions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I understand you have witnesses you wish to bring to the Chamber. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses for the record.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On my left is Mr. Ron Williams. Tom Williams, the president of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. Sorry, family members. On my right is Mr. Jim Martin. He is the vice president for finance and infrastructure services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Welcome back to the witnesses. Committee, we have agreed to forgo opening comments. The departmental total can be found on page 373 of the main estimates. It is \$103 million approximately. We will consider the four activities and the one information item contained in the detail before considering the departmental total.

The first activity, community housing services, begins on page 376. Comments or questions from committee for this activity?

NWT Housing Corporation, community housing services, operations expenditure summary, \$56,634,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I am just looking at schedule 3 of the business plans, the public version from the website, and I see that there is going to be a reduction to local housing, LHO funding contributions of \$217,000. Can someone explain what that is all about? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We did a review of the local housing organizations, and we found that a number of them actually had surpluses, so we have scaled back so that those surpluses, it is not okay to have local housing organizations having surpluses. We lowered the amount of funding to them, and we will be looking at different opportunities for them to actually bring in revenue and, if needed, we will increase those as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Thanks to the Minister for that. Is this a multi-year cut that is going to happen over a number of years, or is this a one-time thing? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, it is over two years. For the two years, it will be \$217,000. Like I said, we are watching them closely. If they need additional monies, we will support that, and we are also looking at different ways that the local housing organizations can bring in funding. For example, some of the communities are talking about how they don't have access to repairs for people who are over the income threshold, and they don't have supplies. We are just in that policy review. We are looking to see if the local housing organizations can expand to meet not only the public needs in the market housing to public housing, but can meet the housing needs within the communities as a whole. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. How does the corporation determine the allocation of this \$217,000 reduction? Is it just a handful of LHOs, or is it all of them? How is that calculated? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reduction, as the Minister alluded to, the \$217,000 amount over the next two years was determined through the corporation's analysis through the budget reduction exercise. This amount was identified in terms of, well, the aim here was to minimize the impact on the local housing organizations. This reduction translates into approximately 2 per cent of the budgets. In terms of how this budget reduction has been allocated, it has been allocated on a pro rata basis across each LHO based on their total annual operating budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. That is interesting information. I would have thought that it would have been allocated or it would have been some sort of aggregate of the LHOs that are in a surplus situation, but it just seems like it was cut across the board. Can I just get someone to clarify that for me? Is this to just to cut across the board or was this an aggregate of those LHOs that are in a surplus situation? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we looked at the allocations to the local housing organizations, we realized that some of them actually, like you said, had surpluses. Some of them actually had differing numbers. It is a formula that we need to look at, the amount of funding. As stated, we will be looking at and watching the monitoring very closely. I am committed to ensuring over the next two years that, if the local housing organizations may need more financials to be able to meet their needs based on, because they don't get all of the housing units, at that point, then we will look at reinstating from internally.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. The question was whether or not this was a cut across all the LHOs or whether this cut represents an aggregate of those LHOs with the surplus. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Yes, so the cut was across all LHOs. So far the feedback that we received is that the local housing organizations are stating to us that they are manageable. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I'm a bit disappointed to hear that. Is the Housing Corporation then going to develop some kind of policy about surplus retentions and deficits for LHOs? I know the Department of Education has something similar, but is that something that the corporation is going to look at, developing rather than these across the board cuts? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we have a surplus and deficit policy in effect already. The policy states that if any local housing organization is over \$100,000 in surplus that they need to re-invest that into housing. My goal is that housing organizations should not have a surplus. They need to be using that money. We have critical needs in the community, so I'm trying to just let them know that building a surplus is not acceptable, that they need to actually put those into the housing and repairs that are needed in communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the response from the Minister. I would tend to agree

that you don't want large surpluses built up over a number of years, but if they have capital needs or something, that might be a good reason to do it. Can the Minister commit to share the policy with standing committee? I just checked with my colleague, the chair of the standing committee, and the committee hasn't seen that policy and the chair is interested in seeing it. I'm interested in seeing it. Can the Minister commit to share the policy with standing committee? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you. It's actually within our Community Housing Services Agreement, so our operating agreements with the local housing organizations. I can provide a copy of that agreement with that piece in it by tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I don't think I've ever heard a prompt answer like that before in Committee of the Whole, so that's great. In any event, I just want to go on the record. I don't think this is a good way to cut funds out of the Housing Corporation. If there are some LHOs that are in surplus, they're the ones that you should go after, not just right across the board cuts. I'll just leave that on the record. I don't have any further questions. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Next, I have Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'm at page 377. I have a question on the electrical power. I noticed that power first dropped by \$1.6 million and then another drop now by \$700,000. I'm wondering if that's because the Housing Corporation is moving to more user pay. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is correct. We are moving towards a more user pay. We did realize that, in a lot of communities when people are -- and not everyone, so I want to justify that -- but a lot of community members, when the Housing Corporation was paying for all the utilities, the lights were left on, the windows were left open in the winter months. The public housing units were used as the local car washes. We are trying to bring more people more responsibility within that, so the user pay is the reason for it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. That last remark wasn't on the record.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Like I had said before, another reason is for energy efficiency. It's not okay to have your windows open and your lights going. We need to recognize that, in this day and age, we need to be more energy efficient and energy conscious. The money that we're actually saving by making people more responsible for their utilities will be utilized for the declining CMHC funding that we will be facing in 2038. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could advise the House now of what the user pay is. I'll be a little bit more specific. I think it started at three cents per kilowatt hour for the tenants and then it went to six. I don't know where it's gotten from there. I wonder if the Minister could just give me a little history lesson on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, so the Housing Corporation has been implementing the user pay power initiative for the last few years; 2018-2019 will be the last year in implementing this initiative. We started out with a subsidized rate for power, for public housing tenants at nine cents per kilowatt hour. In 2018-2019, through incremental adjustments over the last two years, we will be going to full residential rates for public housing tenants. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Martin. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, is the vice president saying that the tenants will be paying their full power, full residential rates, as all living in residences? Does that mean they're paying their power from now moving forward as of 2018-2019? Thank you. Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, the idea is that residents would be paying their full power, which would be at residential rates, which would actually be more economically viable, but the important thing to also recognize is that we're just currently looking at the rent that we are charging within the zones. We'll be taking that into consideration and that's one of the

policy renewals that we're doing just currently at this time.

The goal is not to make people poor. The goal is to actually make people more energy efficient and responsible for their electricity and to realize that there is a cost. The cost of the power will be considered when we do the new rent assessments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, that's not good news. Mr. Chair, I guess I often wondered because I don't get into the bills and so on, but I often wondered why so many people were having such a difficult time maintaining their power account, but it's so expensive in the small communities that it's difficult for the people to afford power. I felt that a user pay of a certain amount, like a flat rate for all user use, and I don't know, whether it be nine cents and whatever it was heading to was sufficient to govern the people to make sure that they are reducing their power usage, but it is not good news to hear that individuals this year, in addition to all of the difficult times -- we have heard in the House today about people appearing in front of the rental officer for non-payment of rent, and now they are probably going to be losing their power meters, at no fault to anyone, but just that people can't afford more bills in the communities. We can't afford more bills in the communities until there are more jobs.

People are, I think, going to have a real difficult time with this. I think we are going to see some serious issues here if people start paying all of their power, but that is just more commentary, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Would the Minister like to respond?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Like I said, the goal is not to make people live in poverty. That is not what my goal is. We have done, over the years, a lot of investment into alternative energy and things like solar in our units and putting LED light bulbs in all of our public housing units, and those are things that should bring down the costs.

In some communities, people are only paying \$70 a month. I understand that that is all they can afford, but the reality is that, down south, people are paying 25 per cent of their income towards public housing. We are charging people between 4 per cent of their income to 19 per cent is our cap. I recognize that it is difficult for people, but we are one of the most generous provinces in Canada. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we shouldn't be compared to other jurisdictions at all. There are jurisdictions where it is common, right across entire provinces, to have 70 per cent employment rates across the provinces. In addition to that, the social housing program is designed for divestment, and it is targeted to divesting in the provinces, which is easy to do. There are many jobs down there. People are able to take over their public housing.

This government is initially trying to divest some units right now, 60 units, in fact, and now we are going to make it even more difficult for people to be able to afford to operate their house. We are going to have people evicted right across the territory if people are asked to pay all of their power.

It is generous to say that people are paying 4 per cent of their income to pay for their rent, but if the 96 per cent that they have left can't afford to feed them, then it's not so generous. At one point, seniors didn't pay anything, and seniors certainly didn't pay for power. That was reversed a few years ago. Seniors are paying. Now we are saying that poor people who are in public housing are now going to start paying power. I don't think this is going to be a good move going forward by the government. Sorry. Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's all I have to say.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Next, Ms. Green is on my list. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I want to just follow up on a couple of responses that I heard here this afternoon. What I recall about the LHOs is that some of them had considerable surpluses, and some of them didn't have surpluses at all. How is this cut going to be applied? What is the methodology? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Housing Corporation, as part of this implementation of this reduction exercise, does recognize that there is a need to continue to closely monitor the LHOs' fiscal situation. As part of that process, the Housing Corporation will be undertaking a full review of the LHO funding formula in 2018-2019, and we have already received a fair amount of feedback from the local housing organizations in that regard. We are expecting to implement the outcomes of that review later in 2018-2019. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With respect to the current situation, which is making the cut, do I understand correctly that 2 per cent is going to be cut from every LHO, whether the LHO has a \$10 surplus or \$1 million surplus? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The initial allocations of the reductions were done on a pro rata basis, and given the amount of dollars involved here per each local housing organization, the dollar amounts are quite small. As a result of that, that is what makes this allocation methodology a viable approach.

We will continue to closely monitor the financial results for the coming fiscal year, and certainly, as part of the funding formula review, we could potentially be making adjustments on a case-by-case basis. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Martin. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Further to that point, the Yellowknife Housing Authority had a fairly significant surplus, which they wanted to spend on creating more housing for their extensive waiting list. Has the Housing Corporation come to an agreement with the Yellowknife Housing Authority about how that money can be spent? Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we have worked with the Yellowknife local housing organization. They are using a lot of surplus, actually, to build an eight-plex within Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: That's good news. When is that going to happen? Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We just have started the design work for that currently. As soon as we have got the design finished, construction will begin. It's not okay for LHOs to have \$600,000 in reserves. I am not okay with that.

I do want to also state that, when we are doing the cuts across, like I said, over the two years, it has been 1 per cent last year and 1 per cent this year, some of the communities are only getting a reduction of \$2,000 per year. Like Mr. Martin said,

we are closely monitoring them on a case-by-case basis. If the smaller LHOs do run into a problem with that, a deficit, we will ensure that they have the funding to be able to provide the services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I don't think it is appropriate to scold the housing authorities for having surpluses. That is prudent management on their part. The money is used for housing. In the case of Yellowknife, it is used to address the waiting list, which is the most substantial in the NWT. It looks like the housing authority is actually doing work which the Housing Corporation is not up to. I recognize that that may not be an ideal situation from their point of view, but I guess I want the Minister to acknowledge that this isn't wasted money; this is housing money, whether it is spent by the housing authority or the Housing Corporation. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Minister, any response?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In 2016-2017, the Yellowknife housing organization provided a year-to-date surplus of \$3.4 million. That is a lot of money that can be used for services. We are not going to take it away and not provide other supports. We have asked them to reinvest that money into housing. They are building the eight-plex.

We have also started new programs. If they were using that to address the wait list, we have other programs now that will address the wait list. We have our rent supplement program in which any resident who is paying more than 30 per cent of their rent can actually get up to \$500 in rent supplement. We are working with the City of Yellowknife on their Housing First project to have rent supplements for people. We are expanding that, and so we are working with the other non-profit organizations in the communities that are providing housing support so that there will be rent support to support people who are on the wait list who are paying more than 30 per cent. So, when that program takes off, and I advertise it as much as I can, we are projecting that our wait list within the market communities will go down because of that.

So we are not penalizing people on the wait list. We are actually providing better support for people on the wait list. Not all LHOs have that. It was nice that the Yellowknife Housing Authority did, but this rent supplement program and the NGO rent supplement program are across the market communities, so they address the needs in all of the market

communities, not just one community that had such a huge surplus. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Mr. Chair, the Yellowknife Housing Authority has this surplus in order to meet the housing needs of Yellowknifers. Can the Minister guarantee that money that is taken away from the Yellowknife Housing Authority will be spent in Yellowknife? Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As stated before, the surplus that they are looking at now is going to build a six-plex. The intent is to actually provide more housing supports in every community, so, yes, the intent is to keep the monies in the communities. It's not to penalize communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. I appreciate that answer. Often, Yellowknife has been short-changed in public housing because of the fact that there is a market here for rental accommodation, and so I will just leave that where it is. The Minister referenced the CMHC decline. It was my understanding that the National Housing Strategy halted the decline in CMHC funding. Can the Minister confirm that, please?

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, the CMHC, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, halted the cuts that they were taking every year, so now we will not be cut any further, but, in 2038, that money is still on the table to be chopped. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you for that clarification. My next question is about energy use. Are any of the NWT Housing Corporation units heated with electricity? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Certainly, looking at alternative energy is a must for the Housing Corporation for our assets. I do not think we have any units that are heated by electricity now, but we are looking at it. It might be something that we have to investigate further, especially in

areas where they are serviced by the Taltson, so certainly Fort Smith. It was raised to me personally at the NWTAC by the mayor of Fort Smith as something that maybe we should look at, a pilot in Fort Smith, because of using the Taltson hydro as an option to heat our assets. Certainly, we are open to those suggestions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. I asked that because I know a lot of the public housing stock is old and would not be energy efficient in terms of heating, but I guess that does not really apply to the power usage. It does lead me to ask what kinds of investments the Housing Corporation is making in energy efficiency in their units this year. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Thirty seconds, Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank, Mr. Chair. So, currently, we are looking at not as many individual units. We are looking at more of a multi-unit design where the energy efficiency would be better. We are looking at boilers, biomass, solar heat. LED light bulbs have been put into all of the public housing units. So we are looking at a variety of energy-efficient means so that we can actually be more energy efficient. Within the day of climate change, it's important for us all to be conscious of what we are doing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green, your time has expired. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, I think I am going on to my third business plan, and again I am going to wish to talk about the apprenticeships and how the department has expanded or developed better apprenticeships and, more, increased it. Can the Minister tell us if the department or corporation has developed more apprenticeships for the local housing authorities? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Certainly, the area of building capacity in our tradespeople across the Northwest Territories is important for us. We have increased the allocation for apprentices. I think we will be allocating up to 15 apprenticeships across the territories. It's certainly something that there is a need for. I know it's a small number, but, working with the LHOs, we support 15 LHOs on apprenticeships, and it used to be 12, so we have increased it by three this year, and we will continue to increase. There is also a program with CMHC that LHOs could subscribe to, that they could get funding to support youth training. It's a youth

program run by CMHC, and it has been very successful in Nunavut and also in some of our Beaufort communities. Paulatuk, for example, has accessed this funding in the past. So, working with our federal partners, we are able to train a lot of people. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Don't get me wrong. I think going from 12 to 15 is huge. It does not sound like it, but it is, and I honestly think this is a very good step as we move forward. So, I guess in regards to this youth training and this opportunity to tap into federal funding, does the corporation work with the LHOs to get this information out there and access it? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we certainly make sure that the LHOs are aware of this program. We have our annual LHO managers conference, and we have invited CMHC to speak to the program and provide information. I think to date we have three applications in with CMHC to access funding. So, it's certainly an area that we want to promote along with CMHC because we both believe in building trade capacity. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank Mr. Williams for that answer. I guess it's great that we are getting the housing managers and informing them, but is this information getting to the boards, as well? How is it getting shared to the boards? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, as stated, we do have the annual meetings, and the boards are well aware of it, of the programs. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I should state that we are working really diligently with all of the chairs in the local housing organizations because of the number of program and policy changes that we are implementing, so communicating with them on a regular basis is critical to make sure that this program renewal is effective. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate the answer from Mr. Williams and the Minister. Can this information be shared with ordinary MLAs so that we then can also be advocates to our boards to look at tapping into this program? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would really appreciate if the MLAs from the different regions would be able to help to get that information out. It is available on the website for the CMHC, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, so, if you can access it there, that has the best description of the program and more than welcome to help to disseminate that information. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What the Minister is saying is that I have to go to CMHC and find this information and then share it because the department can't do that? Can they explain? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I can commit to submitting the link for that tomorrow. If there is any difficulty for the Regular MLAs to be able to access it, we will provide the link tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. THOMPSON: I appreciate the Minister doing that. Now, going on to local housing authorities here, in particular, the new one in Fort Liard, when will we start seeing staff besides the manager there being implemented? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the Housing Corporation continues to work closely with the manager. It does have full intention of staffing up as soon as possible. That work continues. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can we get a definition of what "as soon as possible" means? I mean, is it going to be within the next month? Is it going to be six months? I know the corporation has brought this LHO in last year, and I

greatly appreciate it. I am looking to see potential employment for local people. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We don't have that detail with us right now on where that process is in that individual community. We were more broad in what we brought to present. I did hear him ask if it could be a month or six months. I can commit that the process will be done within six months. That gives me some leeway. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that. At least, now I can go back to the community and explain to the band and the hamlet what is going to happen there. My next question is: where are these guys going to be housed? Right now, you are renting out Aviva Enterprises there. Has the corporation found a spot that they are going to have the office and the yard for the material? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this point, they are renting a space. It is important to note that the local housing organization, the board has just been formed. It is a new service. At this point, they are fine in their accommodations. As they progress and become more sustained as a board of directors, then we will look at the needs of their individual housing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I greatly appreciate that she is talking about the board and the manager. I am talking about where they are going to locate their staff. Where are they going to locate the materials that they need to help renovate the housing units? Right now, they have to either bring in contractors or utilize the Fort Simpson area to provide this material. Has the department looked at that and come up with a situation where they are going to put their shop? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As stated, this is just a new entity. We are working with the board sustainability, making sure they know rule and procedures and getting the support. We are looking at what will be needed. We

will need an office. We will need a warehouse. Once we look at the various options, we will be putting that out for a request for proposal. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is this going to be all done within the next six months? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just confirmed with my staff. They say within the next six months we will assess what space they will need and then we will put it out to RFP process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson, your time has expired. Finally on my list, Mr. Nakimayak.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My colleague Mr. Beaulieu was talking about electrical power earlier. I noticed the decreases through the years. This past winter we had an emergency at my hometown, and we lost power to half the units in the community. With the unemployment rate so high in my region, with people who cannot afford to pay their power bill, I am wondering if the number of disconnects are going to increase, which may cause tenants to use other sources of heat to heat their homes where they can suffer from CO₂ and possibly cause a fire in the house, or on the opposite side, when it freezes, freezing pipes. I am just wondering if the Housing Corporation is looking at all of those avenues to ensure that people don't really end up homeless and that they are still maintaining their units? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are watching it carefully. It is important to note that people who need additional income support, who are at the lowest end of income, in fact, have no jobs or very minimal income, can qualify for other programs that are offered through ECE, such as income support. Income support rules, I hate to speak on behalf of the Minister, my understanding that if it is a family, they will pay for the cost. Individuals, there is a set amount that can be paid for. There is other support besides the Housing Corporation for people who have no jobs or very minimal employment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Just one more on maintenance here. I see the decrease to \$11,359,000. There are a lot of units in the territory that have mould in them, whether it is in their crawlspace or the entrances. I am just wondering if this is going to affect or increase the amount of mouldy units that the Housing Corporation owns. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe we are referring to the minor modernization and improvements category expenditure line item. On that line of discussion here, the amount from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019 has increased by approximately \$925,000. This was a result of the NWT Housing Corporation allocating additional dollars to this line item using the incremental federal funding that the Housing Corporation received under budget 2017. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Nothing further from Mr. Nakimayak. NWT Housing Corporation, community housing services, operations expenditure summary, \$56,634,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Moving on to the second activity of the first department. Executive, beginning on page 379, \$1.8 million activity. NWT Housing Corporation, executive, operations expenditure summary, \$1,871,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. The next activity, finance and infrastructure services, begins on page 381, \$12.5 million activity. Comments or questions. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, during the business plan review, we talked about the possibility of making the NWT Housing Corporation's website better populated with current information and easier to use. Is there money in this budget for that activity? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As part of the NWT Housing Corporation's strategic renewal initiatives, there will be additional investment into modernizing our website. This expenditure will be accommodated within the contract services budget of the executive activity. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Martin. Nothing further from Ms. Green. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could advise me if all communities in the NWT are eligible for the co-op 2 per cent write-down and a non-profit 2 per cent write-down? Sorry, Mr. Chairman, I apologize. I'm on page 383. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just looking at the amounts here. The policy in this area has not changed since the Housing Corporation has taken over this responsibility for supporting the groups under this former CMHC program. The two groups being supported under that non-profit 2 per cent write-down program category is the Salvation Army and Hay River Community Help Board. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could advise the House if the homelessness assistance fund is fully utilized? Same page, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The homelessness assistance program is currently fully utilized. We are, however, looking at changes to that program as well because currently it's a one-time access to it and it's a maximum of \$1,500. The whole goal of that program actually is to address homelessness, and sometimes people get into trouble more than one time. Now we're looking at, instead of one time, we're looking at trying a maximum amount of \$1,500. For example, previously if people needed a ticket to their community and they were coming from Yellowknife and wanted to go to Hay River, that's not \$1,500 for that airline. We're changing the program so that the \$1,500 can be utilized for one person instead of a one-time up to the amount. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I was, I guess, just looking at the line and thinking that it was a bit underfunded. That was not so much specific to how much each pot can max out at, so that was my question. It appears as though it is fully utilized, but the corporation hasn't added to the budget in a couple of years, a couple of fiscal years. I guess it's just more of a question and I got

the answer. It is fully utilized and I guess the corporation will do what they can with that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Would the Minister have a response? Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, if that does go over, we will accommodate within. It's important to note that homelessness is one of the major concerns of mine and the corporation. It's the reason I ran for politics.

We're currently doing a homelessness review to look all the programs that we offer to ensure that we're providing the proper supports and at that point, if we need to increase on certain areas, we will be looking at doing that. Everything is under the microscope, and homelessness supports is one of my critical and most important aspects within this policy review. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Anything further? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I noticed that, under the transitional rent supp, there was a certain amount used at one point and then the budget was brought to a certain level. Has the Minister been able to get all of this money out the door? Is this budget fully utilized in the Territorial Rent Supplement Program? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The transitional support of housing investment for 2016-2017 was supported under-budget 2016. This is a \$600,000 investment supporting the Centre for Northern Family Organization. The \$375,000 for 2017-2018 has been set aside to support similar type investments. If this is not fully expended in the current year, it will be carried over for further investment in this area next year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Martin. Anything further from committee? Seeing nothing further, NWT Housing Corporation, finance and infrastructure services, operations expenditure summary, \$12,450,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Moving on to the final activity, programs and district operations, beginning on page 384, a \$31 million activity. Comments or questions from committee? Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, during the business planning process, we had some extensive discussion about the CARE programs. What I'm looking for now is an indication of where the CARE program -- oh, I see. It has gone down by \$2 million. What I'm looking for is an indication of why this reduction has been made. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Regarding the utilization of the CARE program, this is certainly one area that the Housing Corporation is continuing to review along with all the other programs within the corporation through this strategic renewal initiative. The past several years, the Housing Corporation has noted a decline since the 2012-2013 delivery season, when there were about 102 homeowners supported through that program.

Currently in 2016-2017, the most recent audited actuals, obviously as reflected here, there was a total support of \$823,000, so that's only 19 per cent of the total available budget. Based on utilization and the less uptake, this was identified as an area for a reduction or fiscal. Sorry, Mr. Chairman, just a second. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To add to that, as part of the review, there is changes now being implemented in the area of the CARE Major to remove the co-pay requirement. This was identified as one of the limitations to the program, that contributed to less uptake.

The Housing Corporation is expecting, with this adjustment, as well as others as the programs are reviewed, the uptake for the coming year will be a lot more. The \$2 million now established for 2018-2019 will be sufficient going forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. The witness may have, in part, answered my next question, which is why the uptake is so low. Is it the Housing Corporation's understanding that the copay is the only reason, or are there other reasons as well? Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: The primary reason, yes, is the copayment. Like I have said many times, people that are making \$20,000 can't afford to pay 10 per cent. With the changes where anyone under \$60,000 doesn't need to have a copayment towards the CARE programs, we are hoping that there will be an increase in uptake

within that. Again, this is one that we are watching carefully.

It needs to be noted that the Housing Corporation has gone through a lot of changes and more changes to come. Within that, there may have to be some reallocations of funding to make sure that the programs we are changing are adequately funded.

At this time, they are just beginning, so we are closely monitoring. In previous years, the CARE Major was not expended at capacity, so it may increase, but based on previous years, it was not used to capacity. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the answer. My concern in this area is that, by taking away the copays, many seniors who might use this program to renovate their homes to age in place may find that there is less money available than there has been in the past.

I recognize that the specific aging in place program is the same at \$500,000, but maybe the Minister could put my mind at ease by telling me whether it is seniors who are the primary users of CARE or whether it is another segment of the population. Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is a mixture of people, not necessarily only seniors that were using the CARE Major. It is also important to note that, especially with seniors, where we have the aging in place money, but more than that, we are trying to really work with the senior population. We have gone into communities, and we have talked to seniors' associations. We have been trying to reach out to seniors, and we have focused on them, to talk about our other programs such as the CARE PM, which is preventative maintenance. That is an annual program.

The biggest cost when it comes to CARE Major is that people aren't doing the preventative maintenance. It is a lot easier to fix shingles on a roof if you go in every few years than if you leave it for 25 years and your roof is leaking and falling in. We are really trying to focus on the CARE Preventative Maintenance, with the senior population especially, recognizing that they need additional support, to be more proactive in the supports that we are giving them,

Then, of course, seniors with the aging in place can bundle their programs. If they have access to CARE Minor or if they have access to the SAFE

program, they can bundle the seniors' aging in place funding. It is not an "only" program; it is a "plus" program. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you for that thorough answer. Anything further, Ms. Green, to programs and district operations?

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate that answer. I am wondering how the message about these program changes is being communicated to seniors. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have met with the Seniors' Society, who are helping us to get this information out. As well, as stated earlier, we recognize that our website needs to be changed, so we are working on that currently. We are also looking at a communications plan on a regular basis so that not only this program but all of the changes need to be out.

I have given direction, and it was followed through, to make sure every local housing organization, every Aboriginal government, every municipal government, actually had the information on our changes.

Just from the past weekend, one of the Regular Members and myself went to Fort Simpson. I looked on the bulletin board of the Aboriginal government there, and I noticed that our programs weren't there. I am going to make a conscious effort, if I have to provide that information on a more regular basis, I need the Aboriginal and the municipal governments and all of the organizations within communities to help me get that information out.

Communication is the toughest issue. Not everyone listens to the Leg. In fact, my guess is a lot of people don't listen to what is happening in the House. We are working on a communication plan to get this information out. There is no sense doing a program renewal if we don't get it out. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Agreed, there is no point if people don't know about it. I am not sure the website is the most effective way to reach the seniors. The Seniors' Society is probably a better choice.

Just finally, in this area, and I recognize this might not be the right area, but anyway, I will ask the question. The waiting list for affordable seniors' housing in Yellowknife is six years long at the

Avens Court, and I am wondering if the Minister can tell us about her new initiative to create more independent housing for seniors in Yellowknife. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am not sure what page it is, but it is in our capital plan. We are actually looking at building a seniors' complex within the community of Yellowknife. We are targeting for 22 units. I know it is small, but it is the most progress thing we have done in many, many years.

Of course, within that, we are doing the full review of a study of what seniors' needs are throughout the territory so that we can actually be more strategic in putting seniors' units up. They are our knowledge; they are our history. It is important that we respect them and we provide accommodations as best as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Closing comments, Ms. Green?

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. While 22 units does sound modest, I think there are around about 30 units in Avens Court; so this would almost double the amount of housing. I am going to call this a really good start. We obviously need more in years to come, but I appreciate the answers that I have received, and I have nothing further. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. NWT Housing Corporation, programs and district operations, operations expenditure summary, \$31,921,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. There is one information item on page 387. If there are no comments, we can return to the departmental total. Seeing none, committee, please return to page 373. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the Housing Corporation has received \$3.6 million each year for 10 years. Where would I find that added to the budget? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The \$3.6 million for 2018-2019 is allocated in a few different areas within our budget here today. \$1.5 million was allocated for repairs to the social housing stock. That is modernization and improvements. \$1 million was allocated to demolition and

environmental remediation work. \$900,000 was allocated to community housing support initiative projects. \$100,000 was allocated to increase our apprenticeship program investment. Finally, we used \$100,000 to support incremental policy staffing to support the strategic renewal. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. Nothing further.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess this is the point where I could ask questions about revenues for the Housing Corporation. The Minister's colleague made a statement in the House earlier today about federal infrastructure funding. There is \$570 million coming to the GNWT from the federal government. It's going to be, I guess that's 75 per cent federal dollars that we have to match with 25 per cent of our own funds. I'm just wondering how much of that funding is going to be used towards housing.

Of course, I'm looking at the report that the Minister tabled in the House called, "Towards Level Ground" where housing core need is set out. There's a bit of a, not more than a bit, there is a table in here that shows that it would cost \$67 million as of the time that the Minister tabled this report to get rid of the core housing needs here. The \$36 million that the Minister talked about for the Northern Housing Fund is not going to meet this need. So is the Minister looking at accessing some of this \$570 million in infrastructure funding to help get our housing out of core need? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you. I was just trying to think of the name of the infrastructure or funding that we just announced today with the federal government. That one I believe is called the Building Canada Plan, Phase 2. I may be incorrect, but I believe it's called that.

That infrastructure money that was announced today actually is not to address the housing. The housing infrastructure, the housing money is actually coming through within the National Housing Strategy. I have a FPT in the middle of April, if they don't change the date, because they've changed it a couple of times so far. We'll be looking at that allocation.

So far they've confirmed the \$36 million over 10 years. They are looking at how they can assist the North more. We are advocating so that we can

actually get something more equitable to the Nunavut government. They are all still looking at an Aboriginal stream, and we are working with them to try to actually expand that because right now, as they currently have it, it's not going to meet the needs of the Aboriginal governments within our communities.

We've been working diligently with them, but not on our own. It's important to note that we've been working in partnership with the other two territories. We're working in partnership and trying to get our needs to the table so that they recognize that the North is different.

It was a huge movement actually when we got them to state that there was going to be a northern strategy. We just need to push a little bit further and ensure that the needs of the Northwest Territories are met within that. The infrastructure money will be coming within the National Housing Strategy and the Aboriginal stream. We're still working diligently on making sure the needs of the territories are addressed within that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Well, that's all great information. I want to thank the Minister for that. I'm looking at the Minister of Infrastructure's statement in the House today. He talks about how there are a number of streams for this federal infrastructure money, some of which you think would be where housing would be eligible, things like Green Infrastructure Fund, Rural and Northern Communities Fund, Arctic Energy Fund. Can any of these funds be accessed and used for housing? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Housing Corporation has been working and collaborating with the Department of Infrastructure regarding a couple of separate pots of funding. We've been working in terms of completing a proposal for Environment and Climate Change Canada's Low Carbon Economy Fund. Within that application, the Housing Corporation is proposed to receive \$4 million, which translates into about \$1 million a year over the next four years. That will be cost-matched by the Housing Corporation, I understand approximately 25 per cent.

The funding associated with this application would support energy upgrades for 128 existing housing units across the Northwest Territories, as well as a conversion of 43 oil fire heating systems in Yellowknife to propane. That's one example of an area that we're working with the Department of

Infrastructure on. We're also working on an application or have for this past year regarding INAC's REACHE program. This is the Northern Responsible Energy Approach for Community Heat and Electricity Program. It's a long name. Under that program, the Housing Corporation was supported in an investment for PV and solar system for the Whati seniors complex. The year before that, the Housing Corporation was supported under that same program for a solar system for the 17-plex in Inuvik.

There are a couple of programs out there certainly that we continue to work with the Department of Infrastructure on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, those are great examples of the Housing Corporation getting creative and accessing federal infrastructure programs. I'm really pleased to see that, but are there any concrete plans by the corporation to access the \$570 million in infrastructure funding that was announced just outside in the Great Hall here earlier today? Is the Housing Corporation looking at getting any of that money to carry out the Towards Level Ground that's required, or are we just going to use it all to build roads? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I agree with the Member that housing needs are important within the Northwest Territories and we need to look at all accesses, all opportunities for funding. I am hopeful that the National Housing Strategy and the Indigenous Funding will actually address some of the needs within the territories, but I do commit that we will continue to work with the Department of Infrastructure to identify any opportunities that we can use to increase and better maintain the stock of housing that we have in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, okay, I want to encourage the Minister to continue to go after that some of that federal infrastructure money that was announced in the Great Hall to meet our housing needs. Those are critical for our residents.

When I look at our Towards Level Ground report, there are lots of things in here that you would think would be eligible under this federal infrastructure program, things like emergency repair, seniors aging in place retrofits, new unit constructions, all kinds of things in here that are cost-shared at

millions of dollars, that are not funded right now. This federal infrastructure money should be accessed for housing. It shouldn't just be for roads, so I want to encourage the Minister to go after some of that money and work with her Cabinet colleagues to make sure that we meet the needs of our residents. That's all I have to say. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Next, I have Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hopefully this will be short. In this revenue, is this where the RCMP housing is in this? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, there is a small allocation of revenue expected for 2018-2019 within the lease revenue category of our revenues. We're looking at approximately \$117,000 projected at this time, recognizing that the three Fort Smith duplexes that are scheduled for upfront delivery will be, the aim is to have those in place in the coming year. We'd only be looking at a partial year for 2018-2019. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the answer from Mr. Martin. I guess my next question is: when are we going to be fulfilling the whole mandate with the RCMP housing? Because now we're only talking three duplexes. I know in my riding in Fort Simpson, we're supposed to be looking at a minimum of six units, and Hay River is on the board; so is Inuvik and that. Can the Minister please provide us with an update when we could see these other units being implemented into the communities? Thank you. Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We've been working with the RCMP and the Treasury Board on this for many years, actually. If it was my say, then we would be moving ahead at a faster rate, but it is not up to us. This is the RCMP at the federal level who are delegating this. At one time, they were looking at getting right out of providing their housing, but now they might be looking at retaining some, so I am not even sure that they are actually really clear at this time on what they are doing. So we are watching them closely. We are supporting them. We have told them we have the capacity and we are willing to work with them, but it really is not about me deciding on when. It's about the federal RCMP deciding, treasury board deciding, when this will

happen. I do have to say that the RCMP have remained committed to the full 45 units. It's just a matter of when they decide it's best for them. There may be financial implications within that for themselves, but they have a commitment for us. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that answer. I guess, the MLAs who are affected by this decision, can the Minister make a commitment to keep us updated on this? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, absolutely. As soon as we hear more and there are firm commitments, we will share that with the MLAs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. NWT Housing Corporation, total department, \$102,876,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Does committee agree this concludes our consideration of the NWT Housing Corporation?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Thank you to the Minister and the witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, you may escort the witnesses from the Chamber. I will call a brief five-minute recess, and we will continue after with the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, committee.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I call committee back to order. Committee, we have agreed to next consider the Legislative Assembly, which begins on page 1 of the main estimates. I will turn to our Speaker for opening comments. Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Masi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I am pleased to present the 2018-2019 estimates for the Legislative Assembly.

The Assembly is seeking an operations expenditure appropriation of \$20,790,000 for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. This is an increase of \$1,454,000, approximately a 7.5 per cent increase in funding from our 2017-2018 main estimates.

This budget represents the important work we will undertake during the upcoming fiscal year. The

proposed funding will be used to advance strategic initiatives and address forced growth matters. These are:

- Additional staff resources for our statutory offices to meet increasing demands;
- Additional funding for Elections NWT for staff resources and program initiatives as they begin preparations for the 2019 territorial election;
- Legislative Assembly public education and communications initiatives;
- Needed improvements and replacements to the Legislative Assembly building;
- Adjustment of Members' compensation and allowances based on the Consumer Price Index;
- Pension obligations of Members' plans; and
- Contributions to the governance and development of the capital area.

The Legislative Assembly remains committed to supporting the good work of our statutory offices. With new legislation coming into force and better public awareness, the offices of the Human Rights Commission and the Information and Privacy Commissioner are experiencing increasing and more complex caseloads. The Legislative Assembly is keenly aware of the importance of these offices having the resources needed to meet their demands.

With the 2019 general election just over a year and a half away, Elections NWT will be ramping up for operations to ensure that they are prepared for this election period. Effective communications remain a priority as efforts continue, by my staff, to provide the people of the Northwest Territories and visitors with timely information about the important work and the history of the Legislative Assembly.

Also, the upcoming year will mark the first time in many years that the Legislative Assembly will need to contribute to the Members' pension plans in order to ensure that these plans are adequately funded. This budget also proposes a contribution to support our participation in the governance, upkeep, and future development of the capital area. The capital area is home to all orders of government, including the Legislative Assembly, and also includes the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre.

The Legislative Assembly remains committed to upholding the priorities of the 18th Assembly and stands by the principles of an accountable and transparent government. This budget represents a responsible and efficient approach to conducting

the business and operations of the Legislative Assembly. In closing, Mr. Chair, I want to thank all Members, my colleagues on the board of management, and Assembly staff for their contributions and efforts in working towards these estimates.

Masi, Mr. Chair. That concludes my opening remarks. I look forward to answering any questions Members may have.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand you have witnesses you wish to bring into the Chamber, so I will ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses into the Chamber, and you may take your seat at the witness table. Mr. Speaker, would you please introduce your witnesses for the record?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Masi, Mr. Chair. I have to my left Mr. Darrin Ouellette. He is director of corporate services. To my right is Tim Mercer, the clerk.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, and welcome to the witnesses. The total of the Legislative Assembly can be found on page 5, but we will defer the total until consideration of the activity detail. There are four activities, the first beginning on page 8, expenditures on behalf of Members. Comments or questions from committee? Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Speaker, in your opening comments you referred to adjustments of Members' compensation and allowances based on the Consumer Price Index, and so I am just wondering: how much does the CPI increase in the Members' compensation and allowances actually amount to?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, that particular amount would amount to approximately \$70,000.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So how does the \$70,000 actually break down between salaries and constituency budgets? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Masi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the way it's broken down is that it's evenly split between roughly half for MLA salary and allowances and half to adjustment of the

constituency budget. That is how it's laid out in the budget. Masi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the Speaker for that reply. Further to that, can the Speaker let us know: are these CPI increases retroactive to 2016 and 2017? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Masi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, this has been brought up before, if it was retroactive, and it's not. They do take into effect April 1, 2018, and it is not retroactive. MLAs' salaries were frozen for 2016-2017. That was the decision that was made at that time. Masi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Okay, and the decision was made at that time, but how in fact were the adjustments determined? Can the Speaker let us know that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, that particular area is laid out in the legislation. The current system was put in place, obviously, following the recommendation of an independent commission that was established in 2005; so, based on that, it is part of legislation, though. Masi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the Speaker for that reply. I guess maybe one last question would be: has there been any other thought given to different ways in which to adjust MLAs' salaries? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Masi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the current system was put in place, again, based on the recommendation of an independent compensation commission. There is another independent commission that is currently reviewing the MLAs' compensation as we speak, and I understand that they are considering this particular matter before them. I do hope and expect a report by this summer, and the plan will be to table that in the fall session. Mr. Chair, masi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Anything further, Mr. Vanthuyne?

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Nothing further at this time. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Next, I have Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just under the Members' pension expenses, when is the last time the Legislative Assembly made a contribution to the MLA pension plan? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Masi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, it has been quite some time. It has been over 20 years, since the late 1990s; approximately 20-plus years. Masi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My understanding is that defined benefit pension plans like these are funded through a combination of employee and employer contributions. Have MLAs been contributing to these plans since the 1990s? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Masi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the answer would be yes. MLAs over the years, even continuing until this day, contributed 9 per cent of their salaries to the plan. Masi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, how has the plan been able to survive without any employer or public contributions? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Mercer.

MR. MERCER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The plan, since the late 1990s, developed a surplus position, largely as a result of returns on investments in the capital markets during the late 1990s, early 2000s, and when that surplus got to such a size, the board of management of the time made the decision to stop any employer or public contributions to the plan.

For over 20 years now, the plan has basically been living off that surplus and drawing it down in a planned fashion. It was always known that the surplus would be drawn down. The financial crisis

of 2008 expedited the drawdown of that surplus probably by two or three years, but for the last 20 or 25 years, the plan has essentially been living off its surplus and drawing that down. Mr. Chair, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I would like to ask: do you know of any other MLA pension plans or any defined benefit plan at all that has been able to live off its surplus like this for so long? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Masi, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, this is an area that we have been asking ourselves, as well, throughout Canada and even around the world. As far as we know, there are no other MLA plans in Canada in this position, and I can't think of any other, whether it be public or private sectors, across Canada that are in a similar situation as we are. We are quite unique over the last 20 years, and we're here today. Masi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, you may not know the answer to this, but I assume that all of the other plans administered by the government, including the one for the public service, the judiciary, teachers, NEBs, and so on, do they all include employer contributions like this? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, as far as we know, yes, they all contribute as we do. Masi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Will this return to employer or public contributions to the pension plans in any way impact the pension benefits that MLAs, whether past, present, or future, are entitled to? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Mercer.

MR. MERCER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, the return to employer contributions does not impact the benefits that either current, past, or future MLAs are entitled to upon retirement. Those benefits are laid out in legislation, and that can only be changed by way of legislation. This contribution is largely focused on and exclusively focused on ensuring the

full funding of the pension plans themselves, but they do not impact the benefits provided to the Members. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is my final question. It is kind of a two-part question. What would happen if we didn't approve this contribution now? Would the plan collapse? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Mr. Mercer.

MR. MERCER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, the plan is not in any financial danger whatsoever. There are adequate assets now to continue to meet the plan's liabilities, but the longer that a return to public contributions is delayed, the greater will be the contribution required in the future to make sure it is fully funded.

The fact that the surplus has been drawn down basically brings these pension plans back to a normal state of affairs that virtually all other pension plans are in. The plan is healthy and will continue to be so as long as it is adequately funded. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Anything further? Nothing further from Mr. Blake. Legislative Assembly, expenditures on behalf of Members, operations expenditure summary, \$8,889,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Next activity, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer. It begins on page 10. Legislative Assembly, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, operations expenditure summary, \$878,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Next activity, Office of the Clerk. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. It is found on page 15. I see that there is a \$50,000 contribution to the Capital Area Development Fund. I see that there are a number of other partners involved, including the City of Yellowknife, RCMP, Department of National Defence, and so on. Are the other partners contributing towards the fund, and if so, what is the total of the fund? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. MERCER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When the revised capital area plan was developed in partnership with the City of Yellowknife and all of the remaining partners, the plan at the time was that all of these partners would make a contribution to the plan and to the Capital Area Fund, and it is my understanding that all partners will be doing a similar contribution. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks for that information. Over what period of time does the new plan cover for these expenditures? Is it over the next three or four or five years? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Mercer.

MR. MERCER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The plan calls for a steady state funding for the Capital Area Fund, so the thinking is that this \$50,000 contribution will be an annual contribution. These contributions will likely build up within the Capital Area Fund until there are adequate resources to undertake some fairly significant projects. There is no time referenced in the capital area plan, but the thinking, subject to the appropriation of the legislature every year, was that this would be an annual contribution by all of the parties. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Nothing further from Mr. O'Reilly. Legislative Assembly, Office of the Clerk, operations expenditure summary, activity total, \$8,190,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Next, we have Office of the Speaker, beginning on page 17. Comments or questions. Seeing none. Legislative Assembly, Office of the Speaker, operations expenditure summary, \$500,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Continuing on to the next activity, statutory offices. Comments or questions. Seeing none. Legislative Assembly, statutory offices, operations expenditure summary, \$2,333,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. There is one information item on page 24, NWT Human Rights Commission. Comments or

questions. Seeing none. Would committee please return to page 5. Legislative Assembly, Legislative Assembly total, \$20,790,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Does committee agree this concludes our consideration of the Legislative Assembly?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Mr. Speaker, do you have comments?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would just like to say thank you to the Members. I just want to highlight that this will be the last time Mr. Ouellette is here before Committee of the Whole. I would like to thank him for all the services over the years provided to our Legislative Assembly and our corporate services. I just wanted to say Masi for your contribution.

---Applause

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Ouellette. Thank you to the witnesses for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, you may escort the witnesses from the Chamber. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

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

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? Motion is carried.

--- Carried

I will rise and report progress. Thank you, committee.

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

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

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

---Carried

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

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, the orders of the day for Thursday, March 8, 2018, at 1:30 p.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
 - Motion 11-18(3), Appointment of Human Rights Adjudication Panel Member
 - Motion 12-18(3), Appointment of Human Rights Commission Member
 - Motion 13-18(3), Increasing Women's Participation in the Legislative Assembly
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Committee Report 4-18(3), Standing Committee on Social Development Report on Adult Residential Addictions Treatment Facilities Tour 2017

- Minister's Statement 1-18(3), North Slave Correctional Complex Inmate Concerns
- Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process
- Minister's Statement 32-18(3), Update on the Northwest Territories Disability Framework and Action Plan
- Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Masi, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Thursday, March 8, 2018, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:51 p.m.