HANSARD

Tuesday, October 16, 2018

Pages 4293 – 4314

The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker
### Members of the Legislative Assembly

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Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty): Good afternoon, Members. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Finance.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 98-18(3):
TWO NEW DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to a competent public service that is representative of the people it serves. As Members would be aware, the GNWT has a variety of tools to achieve this goal including the Affirmative Action Policy that offers priority hiring to candidates belonging to eligible designated groups that are under-represented within the public service. Recently, the Human Resources Branch of the Department of Finance added two new diversity and inclusion initiatives aimed at further shrinking the gap of under-represented groups and make it easier for Indigenous northerners to access training and gain valuable on-the-job experience with the GNWT.

The Indigenous Career Gateway Program is intended for the Northwest Territories residents who are designated Indigenous Aboriginal Persons under the GNWT Affirmative Action Policy and interested in careers with the territorial government. The Department of Finance will work closely with departments to create entry-level positions and to develop individualized training plans for applicants who may not meet all the qualifications for typical positions posted. These individuals will be provided with a training plan that will help them acquire the skills and qualifications to gain valuable work experience that is often required for long-term employment with the GNWT.

This initiative, Mr. Speaker, supports the GNWT’s priority to develop and maintain a diverse workforce that is representative of all the people it serves. In order to make this program as accessible as possible, interested applicants will be able to apply directly through the GNWT Careers website.

In addition, the GNWT has launched the Indigenous Management Development and Training Program. This program will help provide current Indigenous Aboriginal employees with necessary skills, training and work experience for career advancement.

The Department of Finance will provide financial support to departments, beyond existing training and education programs, to further the career objectives of Indigenous employees. Interested employees will be encouraged to work with their managers to identify education and training opportunities that could be supported through this new initiative. This program will also be an important tool as we address the challenges of our aging workforce and the need for additional succession planning.

Mr. Speaker, our people are the territory’s greatest resource. Investing in the skills and qualifications of Northerners provides employment for our people and benefits all residents of the NWT. We all share the goal of our public service being representative of the population we serve. The reality is that work within the public service is getting more and more technical. Growth areas like healthcare-related occupations and scientific and technology based jobs all require support to ensure residents have the skills and abilities to take advantage of these opportunities.

To achieve our overall goal, we need more than hiring preferences. We need to develop the skills and experience of our population and to focus on the development of our existing workforce to help achieve their career goals. These two new initiatives help build on our existing programs and services, including developmental transfer assignments, our Leadership Develop program, and other training and education supports, the internship program, the summer student program, and the regional recruitment program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministers’ statements. Minister of Health and Social Services.
HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, protecting our children from abuse and neglect and providing services aimed at keeping families healthy, safe and intact are fundamental priorities of this government. This is a priority for me personally, as well. Since joining the Legislative Assembly in 2007, both as a Regular Member and as a Minister, I have worked to ensure our Child and Family Services System is built around the philosophy that the best supports for children are strong and resilient families.

Our government has actively supported this philosophy through investments in early childhood development, strengthening our response to mental health and addictions, supports for on-the-land programming, addressing poverty, and engaging with communities in the development of community wellness plans. With the collaboration of our partners, we have also taken proactive steps to shape a better future for children, families, and communities served by the Child and Family Services System.

Mr. Speaker, the director of Child and Family Services, as part of their responsibility under the Child and Family Services Act, produces an annual report that details the activities undertaken over the year in this important program area. The report also outlines a number of key trends in the Child and Family Services System over a 10-year period. This offers a transparent process to track the progress and to help identify areas in need of focused attention. Mr. Speaker, later today I will table the 2017-2018 Annual Report of the Director of Child and Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, the 2017-2018 Annual Report shows a broad range of statistical data and trends relating to the number of children and families who have had interactions with our system through either child protection or prevention services. I would like to highlight some of these trends for you, which can be found in more detail in the report:

- The rate of children under 16 years old receiving services is decreasing, whereas the rate of children 16-18 years old receiving services is increasing;
- The proportion of children removed from their home is decreasing;
- The rate of voluntary service agreements is increasing; and
- The rate of children in permanent care is decreasing.

Mr. Speaker, the report shows that, over the past 10 years, more children are remaining in the care of their parents while families receive services. For example, in 2008-2009, only 19 per cent of children were receiving services in the home, but in 2017-2018, 30 per cent of children received services while remaining in the care of their families. Supporting families to keep them together is a priority, and these figures show that we are successfully doing this more often now than we did before.

On April 1, 2016, as a result of changes to the Child and Family Services Act, extended support services agreements were introduced so that youth reaching the age of 19 who had been in permanent care could continue to receive needed support services as young adults, up to the age of 23. The number of youth taking up these services has steadily grown, and, in 2017-2018, 78 per cent of young adults leaving permanent custody chose to sign on to receive continued supports and services. In total there were 27 young adults who had voluntarily signed an extended support services agreement in 2017-2018.

Mr. Speaker, plan-of-care agreements are also used by the Child and Family Services System with families in which there is a child protection concern and the family wants to work collaboratively to address the concern. In 2017-2018, 37 per cent of children receiving services were subject to plan-of-care agreements, and this number has remained steady over the past decade.

One area that has increased significantly over the past 10 years, Mr. Speaker, is the rate of children and families receiving support through voluntary services agreements. Voluntary services agreements are designed to strengthen families and support the healthy development and wellness of children and youth. In 2017-2018, 27 per cent of all children receiving services did so through a voluntary service agreement.

Mr. Speaker, over the past several years, we have been focusing on building a culture of quality and improving services and outcomes for children and their families in the Child and Family Services System by engaging in an internal audit process. The 2017-2018 Annual Report includes a summary of the most recent annual internal audit.

It is clear through our internal audit results that workers are focusing on prevention services, as we have a high volume of voluntary service agreements, support service agreements, and extended support service agreements. Child and Family Services workers have noted that these agreements build positive relationships with families and encourage them to reach out when they need support services.
The internal audit also shows areas where we clearly need to improve, as there were insufficient compliance rates on many audited items across the Child and Family Services System. Interviews with lawful caregivers and children are not consistently being done in accordance with our policies and standards. Critical information for assessing the suitability of foster care services is not always completed or up to date. File organization and documentation also needs improvement.

Mr. Speaker, we acknowledge our weaknesses, and we are moving towards improving the system and supporting Child and Family Services workers’ capacity to effectively deliver services that meet the needs of children and families requiring child and family services.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the report includes a summary of major developments and future directions for the Child and Family Services System. This section of the report helps to inform our residents about the work going into system-wide improvement, including the implementation of new standards and practices.

Mr. Speaker, this work is primarily guided by Building Stronger Families: An Action Plan to Transform Child and Family Services, which was released in 2014 and is now going into its fifth year of implementation. The Building Stronger Families Action Plan was developed in response to an external audit of the Child and Family Services System in 2014.

Mr. Speaker, through Building Stronger Families, we have taken action to transform and improve the quality of child and family services for our children, youth, and their families. This includes the introduction of tools to support staff decision-making and case management, as well as improvements to system-wide information systems. These actions, as well as other work to train and support front line staff, strengthen our quality assurance processes to ensure that continuous improvement is embedded in our Child and Family Services System. While we have put in place the building blocks for a stronger system, I recognize that there are still significant challenges we need to address.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the work of Child and Family Services workers. They are required to intervene in extremely difficult and complex situations, their workload is high, and staff is called upon to balance the overarching need to protect children and youth from abuse and/or neglect, while paying close attention to other critically important principles and values, including the importance of keeping a child within their family or extended family.

Child and Family Services workers need the support of supervisors, managers, and senior managers, and they also rely on an array of resources, including but not limited to foster families, extended families, and specialized care providers and supports. I would like to thank our staff for their work over the past year, which was well represented in the 2017-2018 Annual Report.

Mr. Speaker, while there are many challenges ahead for the Child and Family Services System, I have no doubt that we will continue to progress as a system, and as a society, to make a real difference in the lives of children, youth, and families in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers’ statements. Item 3, Members’ statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

Ms. Green: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Yellowknife voters have chosen strong, business-oriented leadership for their city council. I am looking forward to working with them for community prosperity, not only in economic terms, but also for healing and recovery for our most vulnerable residents. Previous city councils have been valuable partners with the GNWT and non-profit organizations offering services to this population, and I hope that will continue.

Services to the downtown population of intoxicated individuals took a huge step forward last month when the sobering centre and day shelter opened together under one roof in my riding. The new combined facility is more than just a place out of the cold. In addition to expanded services for bathrooms, showers, and laundry, it is the new storefront access to health and social services programs, offering help to those ready to deal with addictions and find a way off the street. This is a huge and welcome shift.

With additional staff on site, clients can access programs for healing, anger management, and healthy relationships, as well as take part in activities. The combined location provides a focal point for partnerships with the city’s outreach program, the RCMP, and the Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation, among others. All of this flows from an understanding that our fellow citizens are suffering and that non-judgmental support can reduce the harms of addictions, poverty, and homelessness.
I realize that high levels of street intoxication are a concern to all of us. As the MLA for Yellowknife's downtown riding, I field a lot of public concerns. I want to remind people that these problems are not the result of the presence of the day shelter, and that services must be offered where clients are found. The first day shelter was created as an effective response to a lack of a safe place to warm up, eat, and use the bathroom. Since the opening of the new centre, efforts have been made to tune up coordination of services to effectively direct clients to the centre.

I congratulate the Minister of Health and Social Services for championing the need for continually improved services and getting the program resources that are so hard to find. I will have questions for the Minister on where we go from here. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SKILLS GAP FOR FUTURE INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY EMPLOYMENT

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we live in a time when technology is changing many aspects of life. In many areas, this is beneficial, but elsewhere it is causing significant disruption, in particular the loss of jobs. Mining is a good example. What was once a dirty industry by every measure is now cutting-edge through the use of innovation and technology.

Mr. Speaker, some of the world's largest mining companies, including Rio Tinto, are moving to what is termed "intelligent mining." Automation is taking over underground excavators, and electric vehicles are being used. A process called X-ray diffraction is replacing core drilling to conduct metallurgical sampling to follow mineral veins. At the surface, the ore is being sorted by both sensor- and magnet-based applications, which separate the valuable product from the waste.

So what does our future look like, Mr. Speaker? As we look ahead, we need to embrace and fulfill our critical infrastructure needs, but we also need to look beyond traditional bricks and mortar and invest meaningfully in our future workforce.

Significant effort has already been undertaken by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment through the Skills 4 Success program. It identifies thousands of jobs that will be required in the coming years. In order to match the innovative ways of industry, these jobs will require a new assortment of skills. More than half the occupations in the NWT as we know them today will undergo a significant skills overhaul in the next 10 years.

The gap between the demands of the future workplace and the skills of our current workforce is daunting. The NWT as a whole, including other orders of government along with business and industry, need to recognize this shared challenge. We must address it in order to equip our next generation workforce with the skills they need to find the jobs of tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, our future economic prosperity is not simply about retraining. It's about cultivating lifelong learning. This is how we will build a future for the next generation of Northerners. As technology and innovation continue to evolve, our willingness to understand, adapt, and inspire must follow.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that investing today in the skills that will unlock future prosperity is the smart way to prepare our young people for the future. At the appropriate time, I will have questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SAHTU REGIONAL HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Advancing our Sahtu healthcare, Mr. Speaker, the official opening for the Sahtu Regional Health and Long-Term Care Facility by Minister Abernethy for Health and Social Services and Minister Schumann for the Infrastructure Department was held on August 27th in Norman Wells.

Mr. Speaker, over the past couple of months our region's medical clients and elders have come to realize improved primary healthcare and a modernized single accommodation. Mr. Speaker, the region has seen significant positions from this modern building, and the long-term care wings will accommodate 16 clients with two reservations.

Mr. Speaker, to date, one wing is fully operational. It is truly overwhelming to see the smiles of our elders when visiting this nice facility. More importantly, as we draw closer to the winter road season, neighbouring community relatives can easily visit their loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue of operational progress, later I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services on the second wing. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members’ statements. Member for Kam Lake.
MEMBER’S STATEMENT ON
CELEBRATING WOMEN IN POLITICS

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the contributions of candidates to our local elections. Yesterday, many communities in the Northwest Territories had their polling days, and it was amazing to see the results, particularly because so many women were elected. The Legislative Assembly has made getting women into politics and changing our dismal statistics a key priority of our mandate and a key priority of the 18th Assembly; and if yesterday’s results were anything to look at, I think we are starting to turn the corner in the Northwest Territories and seeing more women rise to positions of leadership within their communities.

Mr. Speaker, I will highlight a few of our newly elected women leaders in the territory. Here in the city of Yellowknife, Rebecca Atly was elected mayor of Yellowknife. She is joined on the council by Shauna Morgan, Cynthia Mufandaedza, and Stacie Smith. That represents three out of eight total council seats, which is 30 per cent of the council, which meets the goals that many democracies have put for themselves in transformative change for women’s leadership in politics. I really commend all those councillors for coming forward.

It doesn’t stop in just the capital city, Mr. Speaker. In Fort Smith, Mayor Lynn Napier-Buckley has been re-elected, another woman leader. Jessica Cox, Ann Pischinger, and Louise Beaulieu are all elected to council as well; another 30 per cent margin. So they have met their goal, as well.

In Hay River, Kandis Jameson has been acclaimed, and Linda Duford, Emily Chambers, and Sandra Lester have all been elected to council. That’s another three out of eight, so we’re doing really well, Mr. Speaker.

In Fort Simpson, Liza McPherson, Marie Lafferty, and Celine Antoine have all been elected, and in Inuvik, Nathasha Kulikowski has become the new mayor, along with Alana Mero and Reygan Solotki on council.

Mr. Speaker, these are great results and really encouraging for our future, and I hope we can look forward to a 19th Assembly when we see more women being successful in contesting ridings and bringing their input, their views, and their diversity and inclusion into this Chamber. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER’S STATEMENT ON
WAIT TIMES FOR AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

MR. O’REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. When a constituent talked to me in the summer with concerns about wait times for audiology services, I did a little research and there is definitely cause for concern.

Data supplied to me by the Minister of Health and Social Services shows a trend of mounting demand and longer waiting times. In April 2014, there were 10 adult patients waiting for up to week. A year later, 152 patients were waiting 26 weeks. Wow. As of April this year, 180 patients were waiting 38 weeks.

As bad as the adult backlog is for audiology, it’s even worse for children. The wait times for children have ballooned from 16 weeks in April 2014 to 70 weeks in April 2018, with 64 children on the wait list. Imagine 70 weeks waiting for an appointment. A child can go an entire school year without being tested or assisted with hearing difficulties. This is totally unacceptable.

It is my understanding that our audiology services are also provided to some western Nunavut communities. Travel clinics are also held in nine NWT communities. Other patients travel to Yellowknife or Inuvik for testing. When positions are full, we should have a staff of three audiologists and/or hearing aid practitioners. Not surprisingly, a combination of staff vacancies seems to have triggered the backlog, and it’s been difficult to cut wait times when demand for services has also increased by almost 25 per cent over the last eight years.

The Minister has informed me that there should be a significant improvement in wait times with the staffing of the vacant position in Inuvik. I’m not holding my breath, and felt compelled to raise the issue of wait times for audiology here today.

I have a couple of suggestions for the Minister to consider, given the wait times for audiology. Firstly, could the funds not expended for vacant positions be spent on locums?

Secondly, I was surprised to learn that we have a huge audiology service backlog dating back to 2014-2015. Obviously, there is a need for greater disclosure of wait times across all medical services to ensure accountability and better focus our limited resources.

Later today I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services on the unacceptably high wait times for audiology services and how we can improve public disclosure and planning for wait times across all of our medical services. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.
MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wilìideh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INDIGENOUS GUARDIANS PROGRAM

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to talk about environmental conservation in the Northwest Territories and the need to include Indigenous governments in this effort. Earlier this year the federal government earmarked in its budget an unprecedented amount of money that is geared toward environmental conservation; $1.3 billion over five years, to be exact. This investment is reflective of the federal government's pledge to safeguard at least 17 per cent of Canada's lands and waterways by 2020.

Mr. Speaker, it is a very welcomed investment that our environment desperately needs; however, in order to fulfill these conservation targets, all sectors of our society and all levels of government must step up to help with these efforts. That means that our country cannot afford to have any of our partners sit this one out.

Thankfully, Mr. Speaker, our federal government can recognize that and is acting accordingly, because part of the planned use for this billion dollar-plus investment is to work closer with Indigenous governments in a way that both addresses reconciliation and provides further protections to Canada's most vital ecosystems.

Mr. Speaker, Indigenous-led conservation efforts are reshaping Canadians' understanding and practice of environmental conservation, because the importance of Indigenous knowledge has never been in a stronger position. This has been demonstrated across the country, from the creation of the Great Bear Rainforest on the coast of British Columbia to the creation of the Torngat Mountain National Park in Labrador. Moreover, closer to home, efforts are being put forward within the NWT. We see this with the creation of the Edehzhie protected area in the Deh Cho and the Thaidene Nene national park near Lutsel'k'e and the Ni Hat'ni Dene from Lutsel'k'e.

Mr. Speaker, the GNWT is perfectly positioned to work with the federal government to train guardians of the land. Both governments can work together at the renewable resource officer-level, even supporting education of guardians and park officers alongside renewable resource officers at Aurora College in Fort Smith.

Mr. Speaker, I feel it is the right time to bring guardians into the NWT, to safeguard land and water and to support industry by providing certainty and ensuring that all sectors of resource development projects are environmentally responsible and sustainable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MARINE TRAINING CENTRE

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday I had the honour of attending the grand opening of the brand new Marine Training Centre in Hay River. There has been some secrecy surrounding the centre, so I wasn't quite sure what to expect. I checked out the facility, I spoke with the staff, and, Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to say that it's the real deal.

Even though people have inhabited the area since time immemorial, the town of Hay River, as it exists today, exists because of marine shipping and commercial fishing. With both industries experiencing a resurgence, the training centre couldn't come at a better time.

It is operated by the Nunavut Fishers and Marine Training Consortium, a non-profit organization, which has its headquarters in Iqaluit and has been doing this type of work for years.

The centre is located in the old NTCL headquarters on Vale Island. That building sat vacant for many years, but now the centre is bringing new life into the area. The first floor has been completely renovated and looks brand new. The classrooms are bright and roomy, with plenty of space to spread out nautical charts. There are multiple bridge simulators, each housed in their own room, that can create a variety of environments. The two I saw demonstrated were New York Harbour and the ferry crossing at Tsiigehtchic. They also have a full array of brand new gear and one small craft, and a larger, multipurpose craft to assist with hands-on training may be on the way in the near future.

I talked to the staff, and they were all very excited about the grand opening. They have many decades of on-the-water experience between them, and they bring that into the classroom. What impressed me the most is that they're aware that not everyone learns the same way, and they're able to adapt their teaching styles, even teaching basic life skills, if needed.

Even though they just had their grand opening, they've actually been offering courses for the past few months, and not just in Hay River. They have put them on or have courses planned for the Hay River Reserve, Fort Resolution, Inuvik, and Tuktoyaktuk.
Current and upcoming courses include Fishing Master IV, Small Vessel Operator Proficiency, Marine Basic First Aid, and the Bridge Watch Rating program, which allows those with little to no marine experience to become certified deckhands; and more courses than that, actually, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the courses are all free of charge.

Now, if this statement sounds like an advertisement, it's because it is. I want to get the word out so that everyone across the NWT knows and can take advantage of this great new facility. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thought I would take the opportunity to recognize the two people interpreting from my riding, Mr. Tom Unka, who is interpreting in Denesoline and Chipewayan, and Maro Sundberg, who is interpreting in Dogrib language, Wiilideh. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 7, acknowledgements. Item 8, oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 390-18(3):
SKILLS GAP FOR INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY EMPLOYMENT

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll go first. Mr. Speaker, today I spoke about the next generation workforce. My questions today are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Mr. Speaker, my statement, as I mentioned, was talking about the need that we have in order to address the educational and skills gap due to the advancement of innovation and technology. I would like to ask the Minister: can the Minister describe how the Skills 4 Success program is helping us prepare for the future of work for our young people in these days of, call it, massive technological change? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.


HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Skills 4 Success document is actually, in my opinion, a great document. It was done in partnership with the Conference Board of Canada, and it was a 15-year forecast of the jobs that will be needed within the territories, so it's really important. There was a lot of work done with this. The Member was right. The occupations are changing. The way we do jobs is changing, so this is really critical. We're using this document to look at all of our educational programming and our training programs throughout the territories. We are also using it in our high schools within our pathways to help guide children on deciding what education they need to be able to achieve their career goals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you to the Minister for her reply. I, too, agree that Skills 4 Success is a great program. Like many programs, we've got to be able to have the ability to adapt on the fly when need be. I know that the Minister said previously, and, I believe, in the House yesterday, that she wasn't necessarily qualified to design educational programs, and that's understandable, and prefers to leave that to the experts. Will she agree that, as Minister, she will lead the department to anticipate technological and workplace change to prepare our students for the future work that will be very different in the future?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I would like to clarify about yesterday, for sure. Yes, I did make that comment. I should clarify. It's not that I can't make decisions. I can make decisions. I can decide whatever I want to decide. The reality is, I don't believe in doing that. I believe in best practices. Best practices means that you get the most qualified people around to give me advice to make strong political decisions. So I will correct that, to start with.

Then, absolutely, like I stated in the first answer, the Skills 4 Success is a very progressive document, in my opinion. I will be using that document. I will be giving direction to anyone who works with Education, Culture and Employment that they use that document, the forecast of what's going on, the changes within the job market for developing any programs, any courses that we offer. So yes.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you to the Minister for that reply. I'm wondering: can the Minister commit that, given that the potential for potentially a new education institute in the form of a polytechnic university for the Northwest Territories might move ahead, that she will seek to build partnerships, but in particular with business and industry as well as with academia to help keep education for Northerners ahead of the curve, especially with the advancements of technology and innovation?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: At one time in my life, there was a time when I thought I could do it all alone. I'm almost 60 years old, and I've realized...
that that's wrong. I do need people around me to provide me support. So yes, it's really important, actually, that we engage with all partners, the labour force, academia, everyone who has a stake in this. We cannot do this alone in isolation. This has to be a comprehensive, inclusive strategy as we move forward.

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

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the Minister for her commitment to wanting to build relationships. These will be critical as we move ahead. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I spoke about a new initiative to combine traditional ways of knowing with modern design and innovation to create new, let's call it, knowledge clusters. Can the Minister talk about the importance of incorporating traditional knowledge with the new technologies to create a uniquely northern system of lifelong learning? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I'm going to try not to make this answer too long, because I could go on talking about traditional knowledge all day because I believe it's important to take that into consideration. This is the knowledge of our people. This is the knowledge of people who have brought history. It's not today's knowledge. It's historical knowledge that people have learned from, so we need to incorporate that into it.

I am going to use a concrete example, if I may, Mr. Speaker. When I was the Minister of Housing, I went up north to one of the communities, and we had built some senior's complexes. Because mainstream knowledge had said, build them along the street so that it looks nice from the street, we built them along the street. The reality is the people within that community kept saying, don't build them that way, because the wind blows and there will be a problem. We never listened, and you know what happened, Mr. Speaker? The wind blew, and we couldn't open the back doors. So yes, we need to incorporate traditional knowledge in what we do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: We always learn the hard way. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 391-18(3):
YELLOWKNIFE SOBERING CENTRE AND DAY SHELTER

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. My statement applauded the way we have upped our game with the new day shelter and sobering centre, increasing the delivery of harm reduction and extending the hand of treatment and support. First, we'll need to see how this new setup is working out, and adjust delivery if needed. How does the Minister plan to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this new program delivery model? Mahsi.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Member for her statement. I think the opening of the sobering centre and day shelter was an important day in Yellowknife North, an important day for the downtown core. I thank her and all the residents of Yellowknife for their support on this. I know there are some challenges, and we are certainly focused on safety of both our clients, our staff, as well as residents of the community, so we continue to evolve.

There are a number of different ways we hope to get some information, Mr. Speaker. We have put in place a number, a telephone number that residents in the neighbourhood could call to express their concern so that we can hear from our neighbours and modify the program, modify delivery to ensure that we are maintaining that safety that we're talking about.

We also have a contract with the NWT Disabilities Council. We've asked them to maintain some tracking of the individuals who are attending, how often, what kind of usage we're getting. We also have Health and Social Services staff going in there to utilize the front room for some of the reach-out to some of the clients who are in there, and we're putting in some evaluation mechanisms to monitor whether or not that is actually providing value in the services that the people are expecting and needing.

Outside of the evaluation, we are also working with other providers around town, like the Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation, who is using some of the program space in that facility to provide different types of programs on a rotating basis to meet the needs of some of our clients. We will continue to monitor what is happening in that building, and I look forward to having more discussions with the Member and Members about this particular facility and how it is evolving and working, or not working, as time goes on.

MS. GREEN: Thanks to the Minister for that answer. I think that monitoring the evaluation is very important to service delivery. I think that there are a number of jurisdictions watching this sobering centre to see what, in fact, we are able to accomplish here. I understand that the resolution of addictions is a difficult thing to measure, but I hope the Minister will do his best.
Since the opening of the new facility, I have received calls from concerned neighbours immediately adjacent to the new day shelter, and I think one of the things they would help is to increase coordination with the street outreach program to more proactively move people in distress off the street and into the sobering centre. Can the Minister say where we are on this suggestion?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, as I've previously indicated, safety is a primary concern for us as we work to deliver the services through this sobering centre day shelter. It's for our staff, safety for the residents, the client, but also safety for the neighbours who live or work immediately adjacent. We have put in the telephone number. We have shared it with neighbours, and we have asked them to please use the number. We need to hear their experiences. We need to learn from their experiences in order to improve what is happening around that facility.

With respect to street outreach, there is the Safe Ride Program who have done a significant amount of work, and I believe they have also been working with some of the individuals who utilize that facility to do more cleaning and other things around the facility so that bottles that are discarded are picked up more often.

Our challenge, obviously, is people who are using the facility. It's on a voluntary basis. People are participating in these programs. It's on a voluntary basis. I think there's been really great uptake, and I really applaud the NGOs who have been championing this, leading this, but there are some challenges. We can't mandate those activities at this point, but we would like to be supportive as much as possible.

MS. GREEN: The Minister touched on a complaint that I have had often, which has to do with the increased amount of litter surrounding the centre. To deal with this, I've suggested a more focused application of the Common Ground Litter Pick-Up Program, although I've heard that the money for this is sunsetting. Can the Minister say whether support has or could be given to extend this program, or whether there is another idea for picking up litter downtown?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Unfortunately, I don't know where we are in the financial situation with respect to that program. I believe that program is being run by an NGO, and it has been a very valuable program. We did have an opportunity to meet with some of the Member's constituents early on, and they talked about how much cleaner the area out in front of Northern Heights had been over the last year that this program was under way.

I will certainly look at it, Mr. Speaker. I think the program has value. I don't want to, obviously, step on another funder's toes, but if there is an opportunity to work together, I would certainly be happy to explore it.

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

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Finally, as I noted in my statement, harm reduction is the motivating philosophy of the creation of this centre, and to increase services for people who are homeless and/or addicted. In the past, we've talked about the possibility of a managed alcohol program. I'm wondering if the Minister can comment on where this proposal stands? Will we see it in the life of this Assembly? Mahsi.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I've said it in the House before, and I'll say it again: I am committed to having the Department of Health and Social Services explore the possibility of implementing a managed alcohol program here in Yellowknife as a pilot or trial a year after the sobering centre, day shelter, has been opened. I'm still committed to that. I still think that's incredibly important. We have seen that the managed alcohol program does work in other jurisdictions. I had an opportunity to visit a managed alcohol program in Ottawa which is getting some really great results.

The challenge that I'm now faced with, and we'll certainly be looking for ways to remedy this, is: the sobering centre day shelter is not a residence. Many of the managed alcohol programs are residential programs, so we are going to have to explore how to do that. I've committed to doing that a year after the sobering centre opened, so we have some opportunity to learn about it, the clients, what they're looking for, what supports they would like to see; but I do believe there's definitely value in this initiative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.


QUESTION 392-18(3):
INDIGENOUS GUARDIANS PROGRAM

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as per my Member's statement, I have questions for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. My first question is: other than Lutselk'e, are there other Indigenous communities in the NWT that have informed ENR of their interest to launch programs such as Ni Hat'n Dene? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.
HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have not heard of any interest from any other communities; however, that could change. The Member mentioned in his Member statement that there was some federal funding that was announced, and I believe the 2017-2018 budget there was $25 million committed over five years to support a pilot national Indigenous guardianship program. That is for all of Canada. So we are in the process of putting some funding requests in to the Nature Fund to see if we can access some of that funding, and I am sure, as the Indigenous governments and the communities become more aware of the program and the existence of the program and possible funding pots, then there should be more interest in this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BEAULIEU: I agree with the Minister, that $25 million set aside for proposals, I do not know what the end result of that was, but at this point the larger amount of money that has been put forward by the federal government of $1.3 billion, I have had all kinds of ideas for it. I would like to ask the Minister if the Department of ENR is prepared and willing to support additional Indigenous guardianship programs should they become of interest in other regions across the territory?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, absolutely, we would be prepared to support additional Indigenous guardianship programs in more regions. I should add that, the Sahtu, we have already offered assistance to the Sahtu region in their application for this sort of funding, as well. We believe that empowering the Indigenous guardianship program is empowering residents of the Northwest Territories. I think we are all of the opinion in this Chamber that who knows the North better than the folks who live in the North, so I think the guardianship program would be an excellent program for a lot of people in the Northwest Territories to provide their input and be, exactly as it says, a guardian the North.

MR. BEAULIEU: I would like to ask the Minister if the department would consider supporting the launching of a territorial-wide Indigenous guardianship program. There are many reasons, positive reasons, to have guardianship programs in all regions across the territories, and maybe even a couple of guardianship programs in a particular region. So, again, would the Minister support the launching of a territorial-wide Indigenous guardianship program?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The guardianship programs, they are best championed, developed, and implemented by the Indigenous governments. The GNWT, we would be more than happy to play a supporting role, but programs such as these would work a lot better if they are planned and implemented by the Indigenous governments with support from the territorial government.


MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I heard what he just said, but will the Minister commit to engaging the federal government, I guess, in support of some of the proposals that may come forward? What I am asking is that we need some sort of coordination at some level, and I feel that the GNWT is in the best position to coordinate these type of programs. They have renewable resource officers, that I mentioned in there, who could work hand in hand with the guardians, who could assist in training the guardians. They could work with the rangers. They could work with the various groups in the community, all designed to make sure that they are protecting the land and waterways across the territory. So would the Minister engage with the federal government to assist the various guardianship programs that could potentially happen across the territory?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We would be more than happy to work in partnership with the Indigenous governments of the Northwest Territories as they put proposals together to try to access some of the federal funding. The Member is correct. The GNWT may be best-positioned sometimes to have those talks with the federal government, along with I think they have a couple of residents of the Northwest Territories who are part of a national organization or a national group. Again, the Member is absolutely correct. Working in partnership with the Indigenous governments, I think it's important that we, as a territorial government, in our meetings with our counterparts in Ottawa continue to advocate for additional funding for a lot of these guardianship programs. So that was a long answer just to say, yes, we will continue to support the Indigenous governments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.


QUESTION 393-18(3): WAIT TIMES FOR AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My statement earlier today dealt with wait times for audiology services, so I have some questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Wait times of 70 weeks for children are simply unacceptable. Can the Minister explain how this acute problem of wait times for audiology, especially children, is being addressed? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.
MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, there are significant wait lists for audiology. We have actually done a number of things to try to reduce that wait list, and the Member has actually identified already that we have put in a third position in audiology. National levels are five audiologists per 100,000 people. We previously had two-and-a-half. Now, we have three, so we are slightly over that. Having said that, we still have significant wait lists.

I have asked the department to begin a review with the NWT Health and Social Services Authority, focusing on wait time and waiting list management within the audiology division. We are hoping to see the results of that review during this fiscal year so we can continue to work to make improvements and reduce some of the wait times for our residents seeking audiology. Mr. Speaker, I just want to be very clear on this: where there are urgent needs, priority needs, those individuals see the audiologist very quickly. It's where individuals are further down in the priority list or do not have needs that are very urgent where we are definitely having some difficulty getting them in within the timelines we have established.

MR. O’REILLY: I want to thank the Minister for that. I have characterized the audiology wait times as unacceptably high, especially for children. It's my understanding that long audiology wait times can correlate with loss of cognitive function. It's not clear whether there are any professional national or international standards for waiting times for audiology. Can the Minister tell us whether there are any standards for audiology wait times and how we compare to other jurisdictions?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: While there has been some work conducted by national committees of volunteers established by the pan-Canadian alliance to establish some benchmarks, there are no published standards for audiology wait times in Canada. I do know a cross-jurisdiction comparison, as I have already indicated, shows that there are about five audiologists required per 100,000 people. In the Northwest Territories, we have three, which is slightly higher than that level, but one of those positions is new. I did hear the Member in his statement indicate some pessimism that it's going to make a difference, but we are trying to make those improvements by bringing in an additional position. We are optimistic that we will be able to see some results.

The NWT has established some standards for all of our rehabilitation services based on a scale of 1 to 5: priority 1, 72 hours; priority 2, 10 business days; priority 3, one month; priority 4, two months; priority 5, four months. I can say that, in the priority 1 and 2 areas, we are meeting those levels. I can't say the same for the other priority levels, and those are the areas we are trying to address, and I think those are the areas that the Member is asking about. So we are working to make improvements in those areas.

MR. O’REILLY: I want to thank the Minister for that response. I mentioned the obvious fact that vacant positions bring savings in salary expenditures. I also recommended that these unexpended funds should be devoted to locum positions, wherever possible, to reduce wait times. Can the Minister explain whether unexpended salary dollars for audiology can be used for locum positions, and whether this is common practice for other GNWT medical services?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We use locums throughout our system on many different occasions, and we fund those locums through vacancies and through other unexpended salary dollars. We have brought in some audiology staff to provide some locums. We have also had some incredible difficulty finding people to come in and provide some of that backfill for us. We went for an extended period of time last year where we were actually unable to find somebody to provide that backfill. So I think there are some challenges at a national level to find individuals, but, yes, we absolutely use some unexpended dollars to provide locums if and when we can find them.


MR. O’REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Thanks again to the Minister for that. We actually did take one of those locums in, and they did house-sit for us at one point, so just so you know. The Minister has often talked about the benefits of system transformation, including standardized information collection and analysis. Can the Minister tell us whether and when we can expect wait-time public reporting for audiology and indeed a comprehensive selection of medical services offered across the NWT?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The move to a single-authority model here in the Northwest Territories, recognizing that we still have two outside the system although they are working closely with the system, has really provided us with an opportunity to start having that discussion and actually do the work to develop some territorial standards and some abilities to track information on a consistent basis. Which is great because we have had information, but it's never been presented or collected in the same way, so it's never been able to be a comparator.
The NWT Health and Social Services Authority is working to standardize data collection in the territory, which is obviously the first step of being able to produce reliable performance data. The authority anticipates being able to publish performance data either late in this fiscal year or early in the next fiscal year. I think this will be important for us, both in the department, in the authority, but in this House, to help us start making some evidence-based decisions on where some of our resources need to go. It’s incredibly important data. I want to see it, I know you want to see it, I know Members want to see it, so we will continue to work to get it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.


**QUESTION 394-18(3): SAHTU REGIONAL HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY**

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Further to my Member’s statement on the issue of operational progress for the Sahtu health and long-term care facility, my question is: can the Minister of Health and Social Services provide an update on the employment positions created by this impressive building? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with the creation of the new Norman Wells long-term care facility, which I had the honour of visiting with the Member opposite for the grand opening, 37 positions were created for this long-term care facility. Currently, as of today, we have 35 of those positions filled. We have one nursing clinical coordinator, seven LPNs, 12 resident care aides, three relief resident care aides, one clerk, one activity rehab aide, six-and-a-half housekeepers -- I am not sure how we have half a housekeeper -- one-and-a-half cooks, and three cooks’ assistants. There are still two positions for staff people, but we are confident that we now have enough staff in that facility to open the next wing, and we are anticipating the opening of that wing at the end of this month.

MR. MCNEELY: The Minister must have a mirror on the wall. That was leading to my next question on when we can expect the second wing to open up. Adding to that question: when can we see the elderly clients moving into the second wing once it’s in operation?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Obviously, we are hoping to open the next wing by the end of the month, so we should start seeing some of our residents moving into that facility in early November. There are a couple of things we want to do over the remaining couple of weeks of this month. We want to make sure that all of our staff are getting the proper orientation, that they are getting the proper training, that they get an opportunity to get into the wing, into the facility, so they see how the facility operates, and getting the other local training or specific job training that they need in order to provide a safe environment, a safe home, for the residents of that incredible facility.

MR. MCNEELY: As I live in Norman Wells, I have seen the change and I have seen in particular the changed contributions created by this building, particularly with the staff and the employment and the incoming families that took the opportunity of employment. Now, adding to that: training, in general an important element for sound administration, what plans are in place or going to be in place for the staff created by the institution?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I am not 100 per cent sure I understand the question, but I will do my best. At a territorial level, we do have some standards and standard protocols that we are putting in place at a territorial level, which all of the regional operations have to adhere to when it comes to things like plans of care and different things like that. In-house, there will be some local training, there will be some local policies and procedures that are put together by the staff of that authority. They obviously have to be consistent with the territorial policy and standards, but there is an opportunity to do some custom design, as well. Every building has its own little unique features. This one is no exception. They will certainly ensure that they are providing the best services they can out of their facility.


**QUESTION 395-18(3): HAY RIVER REGIONAL HEALTH CENTRE**

MR. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I continue to receive complaints about the service at the Hay River Regional Health Centre, and for the most part they are the same complaints I have been receiving since day one. Some are optimistic that the Minister of Health’s recent appointment of a new public administrator for the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority will spur positive change in service delivery, so I would like to ask the Minister: what changes does he hope to see with the new public administrator? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before I answer that
question, I want to take an opportunity to thank our previous public administrator for all of his years of service. He certainly helped carry us to a number of milestones in Hay River, including the amazing new facility, the work towards a single-authority approach, a single-system approach here in the Northwest Territories, as well as things like Woodland Manor. I think he was a valuable contributor to making those things happen.

However, having said that, a new set of eyes is always a good thing. I have had an opportunity to meet with the new public administrator to talk about Hay River, talk about the services being provided there. I have asked him to get oriented as quickly as possible, get an understanding of the lay of the land. He is also, you know, a city councillor, so he has a pretty good perspective of what's going on in the community. I have asked him to get oriented, and then we would have some further conversations about what he is seeing, what he thinks we need to be focusing on. Basically, we all want the same thing, Mr. Speaker. We want quality services for the residents of Hay River and the North.

**MR. SIMPSON:** Like Mr. McNeely, the Minister has answered a few of my questions already. So it's become clear that, during the life of this Assembly, the Hay River authority will not be brought into the territorial health authority. I mean, there just is not the political will to get it done from Cabinet, and so the Minister must work with the public administrator to address these recurring issues that I keep hearing about. Since the Minister said that the public administrator still needs to orient himself to this, I guess they have not made a plan. What I would like to see is the Minister and the new administrator, Mr. Willows, sit down and create a plan with clear goals and deliverables so that people can see whether or not progress is being made, because right now people are frustrated and they are giving up hope about the service of healthcare in Hay River. So will the Minister sit down with Mr. Willows and produce a document that identifies the challenges that people are seeing in Hay River, and ways to address them with clear goals and deliverables so that people can see progress is being made?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** The public administrator will be required to do public meetings similar to board meetings. At which point, he will have an opportunity to explain and identify some of the things that he's seeing and witnessing in the community and hear from community residents on where their concerns are. I know the Member has been very good at helping articulate some of the challenges that people are seeing in Hay River, and he has shared those with me. We are certainly attempting to address some of those.

One of the things I think we can be happy about is there have been an awful lot of concerns about wait times and same-day appointments in Hay River. We have tasked the CEO, and the previous public administrator tasked the CEO with finding some solutions on that with some support from people throughout the community. As of September 1st, by way of example, clinics began providing some same-day appointments, and patients can call in or walk in in the mornings for appointments that day. So we are listening. We are making improvements. There are changes that are happening. I believe that the public administrator, with some fresh eyes, is going to be able to look at some of the challenges and offer some new and unique solutions.

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

**MR. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reason I asked about getting together and creating a plan is because the public administrator isn't responsible to this House, whereas the Minister is. In the absence of Hay River being part of the territorial authority, I need some sort of way to convince my constituents that we are making progress. So further to the Minister's previous point,
what progress is being made to bring Hay River into the territorial authority? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: There are a couple of things that need to happen. Obviously, we need to determine and quantify the cost of bringing the individuals into the public service. Specifically, what I mean by that is the cost of the pensions and the cost of ensuring those who are already receiving pensions through Hay River who have worked there over the many years are not adversely affected, but that the individuals coming into the new system, our system, with superannuation are not adversely affected or penalized as a result of the pension that they provided in the past. We've had discussions in here about the pension in Hay River and how it's more of a Volkswagen than a GNWT Cadillac, and we have to figure how to roll those wins.

We're doing that work now. We're trying to quantify what that means. That is a partnership between Health and Social Services and Finance. We're getting closer to having some better numbers there, but some of it still depends on our negotiations with the UNW. We do need to have a long conversation with the UNW, because they are the bargaining unit for both the GNWT, but also Hay River and its two separate collective agreements. So once we have some of our financial certainty, we'll be able to have more informed conversations with the union, which will help us figure out what the ultimate costs of this transfer will be.

It's a lot of work. There are a lot of moving pieces. Sometimes they move faster and then slow down and then speed up, slow down. We are working on it. It is important. I take the Member's point. We'll certainly keep the Member and committee informed as we continue to move forward. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 396-18(3):
CARBON PRICING AND CAP-AND-TRADE PROGRAM

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as other Members of the House have mentioned, many of my constituents have concerns with the government's carbon pricing plan. I've taken a look at some of the statistics on emissions. If you look at the overall emissions for commercial and residential combined, it only makes up 10 per cent of total carbon emissions, so it doesn't seem like everyday Northern families are really the ones who are creating the highest level of emissions. I'm wondering if there's a way we can better craft a system to shield them from potential economic hardship that comes along with new pricing systems.

When you look at industry, mining, upstream oil and gas production accounts for 25 per cent of emissions, whereas transportation accounts for 49 per cent. This seems like industry is really where we need to target. So has the Minister explored a cap-and-trade system or the potential inclusion of the NWT into a carbon market where we could put the onus squarely on industry who are causing most of the emissions? Thank you. Sorry, Mr. Speaker. Minister of Finance.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during our review of carbon pricing, we did look at whether cap-and-trade was feasible. The analysis at the time was the NWT economy was too small to participate in any cap-and-trade program in any meaningful manner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: Did the Minister look into partnering with larger jurisdictions to be part of a carbon market? The province of Ontario was a part of California's carbon market. They joined with Quebec. So was that proposed, or was it just looking at the NWT as a carbon market?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: As the Government of the Northwest Territories, our priority is looking after the people of the Northwest Territories. That's why we informed Ottawa that we're going to come up with a made-in-the-NWT approach that would help minimize the impact that carbon pricing was going to have on residents of the Northwest Territories.

MR. TESTART: I agree with the Minister. We need a made-in-the-North system, so I'm trying to explore other options that may have not been considered. I commend the government for actually bringing forward a plan. It's just late in the game, and people are concerned about how it's going to affect families, so can the Minister share the cap-and-trade analysis they've done with this House or release it publicly so we can see the analysis and see exactly what was considered?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The federal government came up with carbon pricing. Our job was to adjust. I think the Government of the Northwest Territories and the folks have done a great job at mitigating some of the impact it's going to have on residents of the Northwest Territories. As far as the cap-and-trade analysis, I'll have a look and see if that document exists. If it does, I'd be more than happy to share it with Members. Again, I go back to the fact that we are finding a made-in-the-NWT approach.

We recognize there was going to be hardship in families. We had a "what we heard" document. We had a number of comments from across the
Northwest Territories. A lot of folks across the Northwest Territories are wondering what's going to be on their table tomorrow morning for breakfast. I think we've taken steps to help address the impact that it's going to have on families in the Northwest Territories.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that there are offsets and rebates in the carbon pricing proposal. However, industry, who are our largest emitters, seems to have many very high rebates built into it. So I'd like to ask the Minister what the priority was in the carbon pricing plan. Was it on the everyday family, the people who are producing only 10 per cent of emissions, or was the focus really to work with industry to lower those emissions and to bring us to the standard that we need to be at to reduce temperatures moving into the future? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** We are trying to find a balanced approach. Of course, industry in the Northwest Territories, which is very important to the Northwest Territories and our economy, are some of the biggest emitters in the Northwest Territories, so we wanted to work out a program that would benefit them. It goes without saying in this Chamber that people in the Northwest Territories are our priority.

Mitigating the impact on the people in the Northwest Territories, I think, is something that the government has done a fairly good job at. We rolled out our approach to carbon pricing. So there's a lot of information out there for those that are curious as to what the impact might be on them. Again, we need to find a balanced approach that works for industry and, more importantly, works for people in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**QUESTION 397-18(3):**
**LOG HOME PILOT PROJECT IN THE MACKENZIE DELTA**

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a few questions for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. Mr. Speaker, in the past, we have had some successful projects in the Mackenzie Delta, mainly Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson, with the building of three log homes, two of which went to private homeowners and one is now an RCMP residence. I would like to ask the Minister: is the Housing Corporation open to pilot projects in the Mackenzie Delta to build log homes? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
Tsiigehtchic, we have the capability of doing log homes in line with the national building code, so will the Minister support this initiative to provide log homes in our communities?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: As I mentioned, the community housing support initiative is, I think, the program that would well suit what the Member is asking. We would be willing to sit down with leadership, sit down with contractors, sit down with the Member. We do have some good partnerships in some of his communities already, and, as I mentioned, one good partnership that we have is with a lot of our Indigenous organizations. IRC and Salt River First Nations are a couple that I can think of. We would be more than willing to sit down with the Member and his leadership to try to look at assessing some of the housing needs. As I mentioned, you have to look at the cost, you have to look at what is going to be more efficient and better for his residents, and those are discussions we can have.


QUESTION 398-18(3):
LANDS AND RESOURCE NEGOTIATION

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have questions for the Minister of Lands. Mr. Speaker, the Minister wrote to priorities and planning on managing unauthorized occupancy in the Northwest Territories. I have some questions for the Minister. Has the Minister rolled out the cabin-type lease at this point? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Lands.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department has developed a new cabin-type lease that will be implemented on both territorial and Commissioner’s lands. This will support greater consistency between the two management regimes. We are expecting to roll that out in the fall of this year.

MR. BEAULIEU: One of the options for unauthorized occupants is to take the government to court, and I would like to ask the Minister if going to court over unauthorized occupation includes cabin that are out in the hinterland, like just the regular traditional pursuit cabins?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned yesterday, we are trying to determine which cabins are unauthorized and which are rights-based. We have considered them all untenured, and we want to find out from initially the Aboriginal groups which are actually rights-based. So that is our first step in this effort. Again, as I mentioned yesterday, there are more than 700 cabins or properties out there that are of concern, and we want to know which fall into which category, so that is our first step.

MR. BEAULIEU: In cases where the government considers unauthorized occupants are going through the stages and are then taken to court and the occupant uses Aboriginal and treaty rights as a defence, can the Minister advise us if those cases would be put on hold until the lands and resources negotiations are settled?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: We realize, of course, that there are unauthorized and rights-based properties that we are going to be dealing with and that different defences could be raised in both cases, so we are going to be extremely cautious in moving ahead with court cases in either of these situations. However, I can’t give a total undertaking that we will not proceed.


MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in that letter the Minister advised priorities and planning that there is an evaluation process. The evaluation process has various steps. In the letter, the Minister indicated that steps 1, 2, and 3 will begin in the fall of 2018. We are well into the fall of 2018. I would like to ask the Minister if the evaluation process of the unauthorized occupants has begun?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: As I mentioned yesterday, we have written to Aboriginal groups; that is really a first step in this process. We are waiting to hear back from them. We sent a very extensive number of letters out to a large number of IGOs. We are waiting to hear back from them, so that is really the first step. I understand that I will be before committee at the end of October, and I could perhaps prepare and explain where we are in the whole process at that time.

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

QUESTION 399-18(3):
SPECIFIED CONDITION FUNDING ELIGIBILITY FOR AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS (ALS)

MS. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, now that the Minister of Health has recovered from all his questions, I have a few more. He is well-informed about the situation of a constituent of mine who has ALS, or Lou Gehrig’s disease. Recently, people in Yellowknife held a major fundraiser to meet his expenses, now that his disease has progressed where he needs a lot of different kinds of support.
He is not eligible for public support for his condition because it's not listed in our medical health insurance program. My question for the Minister is whether he can explain how it's possible that such a serious and not completely uncommon condition could not be eligible for treatment?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Yes, the Member is correct. ALS is not one of the conditions covered under our specified disease conditions under our supplemental health program, but I do want to make it clear that, unlike many other jurisdictions, things like homecare are part of our services that we do provide. We are working with clients and residents who have different specified diseases such as ALS, providing them with things like homecare and other services that they wouldn't get, or they would have to pay for in other jurisdictions. Having said that, the specified disease condition is just one of our programs that focus on things like prescription drugs and sometimes medical supplies and these types of things.

Currently, most of our programs are tied to the non-insured health benefits program, and ALS is not something that’s covered by NIHB. We are trying to move away from having a specified disease condition program here in the Northwest Territories. I agree with the Member. It doesn’t seem to capture some of our residents who are in the highest level of need, and it should be based on condition or on individual’s ability needs, rather than a specified condition.

We are doing some work to modify our supplemental health programs. Much of the work is going to occur in the life of this Assembly, but it probably won’t be until the next Assembly that some decisions need to be made around that. I do hear the Member’s frustration. I share that frustration. We will certainly work with individuals to ensure that they are getting as much support as they can.

MS. GREEN: There is lots of good news in that answer. The fact is that, if I had the misfortune to walk out of here and get hit by a truck and I needed a wheelchair, no one would question my eligibility for that, but my constituent who has this terrible progressive disease has to make a case for it.

Having said that, the Minister and his staff have been helpful coordinating with the ALS Society of Alberta in providing services to this person. As an alternative to the specified condition, is it possible to create something like a catastrophic disease fund where somebody who has a progressive disease that has very high needs over a short period of time might be able to access help?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: In reviewing what has been provided by other jurisdictions across this country, it has been clear to us that no other jurisdiction actually has coverage for ALS, either. Fortunately, in other jurisdictions, they do have ALS societies that have done incredible work to support people with ALS by getting them the equipment they need, often on a loaner basis. We don’t have an ALS society here in the Northwest Territories, but the Alberta ALS Society has been a significant partner for individuals in the Northwest Territories who are struggling with ALS.

Having said that, I take the Member’s point, and we have had conversations about upgrading our supplementary health programs, modifying and changing them. We are doing that work. I think the Member’s suggestion is certainly one that we have to consider, and it will be incorporated in discussions around the future of supplemental health programs.

MS. GREEN: Thank you to the Minister for that response. As the Minister may know, this is a disease without a cure. The debilitation continues to progress, sometimes quickly and sometimes not. Both of my paternal aunts died of this disease. I’ve seen it up close. What is the Minister’s plan for this individual going forward in terms of providing him with the care he needs so that he has the best quality of life for his time remaining?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I’m not prepared to discuss an individual’s plan of care in the House of this Assembly. I don’t think it is the appropriate place. The Member and I, as well as other Members who have been providing consent by the family, have had some discussions. I am certainly happy to sit down with any of the Members who have received consent from the family, and I am happy to meet with the family again to discuss where we are. We have had a discussion with the family previously, but I am definitely not about to start talking about an individual’s plan of care in the House before this Assembly.

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

MS. GREEN: I appreciate the Minister’s response. My final question is whether the Minister can give us an indication of how many people in the NWT have been diagnosed with ALS? Mahsi.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I know the current number in the Northwest Territories. I can’t tell the Member how many people over time have had ALS. The number is quite small, and given the fact that it’s small, it might be statistically inappropriate for me to throw that number out, but I am happy to have a sit-down with the Member and let her know how many individuals are currently living with ALS in the Northwest Territories.
I say that recognizing that the media has already interviewed both the individuals or their families, so we know how many individuals there are out there, but I'm not prepared to say at this time, except I did just say "both." Whatever, two.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Item 9, written questions. Item 10, returns to written questions. Item 11, replies to Commissioner's opening address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, report of committees on the review of bills. Member for Kam Lake.

Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

BILL 8:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE SECURITIES ACT

MR. TESTART: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Government Operations has reviewed Bill 8, Emergency Management Act, and that Bill 8 is now ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.


TABLED DOCUMENT 252-18(3):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LIQUOR COMMISSION 64TH ANNUAL REPORT

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 64(2) of the Liquor Act, I wish to table the following document entitled “Northwest Territories Liquor Commission 64th Annual Report.” Thank you, Mr. Speaker.


TABLED DOCUMENT 253-18(3):
2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES
(INCLUDING YEARS 2007-2008 TO 2017-2018)

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled “2017-2018 Annual Report of the Director of Child and Family Services.” Thank you, Mr. Speaker.


Notices of Motion

MOTION 21-18(3):
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE TO OCTOBER 23, 2018

MS. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, October 18, 2018, I will move the following motion:

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on October 18, 2018, it shall be adjourned until Tuesday, October 23, 2018;

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to October 23, 2018, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly that the public requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.


Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I will call Committee of the Whole to order. 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 to report progress. The motion is in order and non-debatable. All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will rise and report progress. Thank you.

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

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 7, Chartered Professional Accountants Act; Minister’s Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process; and Tabled Document 215-18(3), Capital Estimates, 2019-2020, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

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

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Third Reading of Bills

BILL 13:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE SECURITIES ACT

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Securities Act, be read for the third time, and, Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Minister requests a recorded vote. The motion is in order. To the motion. Sorry, Minister of Justice.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Question: do we need to add the words “as amended?” I am told no. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. You were just told no. Okay. The motion is in order. There has been a request for a recorded vote. Question has been called. All those in favour, please stand.

RECORDED VOTE

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Ball): The Member for Thebacha, the Member for Hay River North, the Member for Mackenzie Delta, the Member for Sahtu, the Member for Yellowknife North, the Member for Kam Lake, the Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiiiloode, the Member for Frame Lake, the Member for Yellowknife Centre, the Member for Nunakput, the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, the Member for Range Lake, the Member for Great Slave, the Member for Yellowknife South, the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand. The result of the vote: 15 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. Motion carried. Bill 14 has had its third reading.

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BILL 14:
MISCELLANEOUS STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2018

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 14, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2018, be read for the third time, and, Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Minister has requested a recorded vote. The motion is in order. To the motion. Sorry, Minister of Justice.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Question: do we need to add the words “as amended?” I am told no. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. You were just told no. Okay. The motion is in order. There has been a request for a recorded vote. Question has been called. All those in favour, please stand.

RECORDED VOTE

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Ball): The Member for Thebacha, the Member for Hay River North, the Member for Mackenzie Delta, the Member for Sahtu, the Member for Yellowknife North, the Member for Kam Lake, the Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiiiloode, the Member for Frame Lake, the Member for Yellowknife Centre, the Member for Nunakput, the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, the Member for Range Lake, the Member for Great Slave, the Member for Yellowknife South, the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand. The result of the vote: 15 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. Motion carried. Bill 14 has had its third reading.

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BILL 15:
DOCUMENT FORMALIZATION, SERVICE AND NOTICE REFORM STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 15, Document Formalization, Service and Notice Reform Statute Law Amendment Act, be read for the third time, and, Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Minister has requested a recorded vote. The motion is in order. To the
motion. Question has been called. All those in favour, please stand.

RECORDED VOTE

COMMITTEE CLERK OF THE HOUSE TRAINEE (Ms. Franki-Smith): The Member for Thebacha, the Member for Hay River North, the Member for Mackenzie Delta, the Member for Sahtu, the Member for Yellowknife North, the Member for Kam Lake, the Member for Tu Nedhe-Wilíideh, the Member for Frame Lake, the Member for Yellowknife Centre, the Member for Nunakput, the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, the Member for Range Lake, the Member for Great Slave, the Member for Yellowknife South, and the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand. The result of the recorded vote: 15 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. Motion carried. Bill 16 has had its third reading.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

BILL 17:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ACT

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, be read for the third time, and, Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Minister has requested a recorded vote. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour, please stand.

RECORDED VOTE

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

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand. The results of the recorded vote: 15 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. Motion carried.

---Carried

Bill 17 has had its third reading. Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Wednesday, October 17, 2018, 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. Acknowledgments
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Commissioner’s Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of the Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
   - Bill 7, Chartered Professional Accountants Act
   - Minister’s Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process
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 Wednesday, October 17, 2018, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT
The House adjourned at 3:17 p.m.