



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Thursday, February 21, 2002

Members Present

Honourable Roger Allen, Honourable Jim Antoine, Mr. Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Nitah, Honourable Jake Ootes, Mr. Roland, Honourable Vince Steen, Honourable Tony Whitford.

ITEM 1: PRAYER

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Oh God, may Your spirit and guidance be in us as we work for the benefit of all our people, for peace and justice in our land and for constant recognition of the dignity and aspirations of those whom we serve. Amen.

SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Please be seated. Good afternoon. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 4-14(5): Rollback of Retail Fuel Prices

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce that the government has decided to roll back the fuel price increase in the 16 communities served by the petroleum products division.

-- Applause

The division's mandate is to provide a secure supply of fuel products in communities where no private company sells fuel. Typically these communities are isolated and only accessible by barge and winter road.

We try to provide fuel on a break-even basis. Costs are recovered through the price charged for fuel. Last summer's fuel prices were higher than the previous year. This increase prompted the government to raise prices in communities by 4.5 cents per litre.

Mr. Speaker, the government made the decision to raise prices last December, but implemented the increase effective February 1, 2002, to avoid increasing people's costs during the Christmas season.

In January, however, the petroleum products division tendered for supply and delivery of petroleum products to communities on the winter road system. Prices received for this resupply reflect the current market price for fuel and are substantially lower than those of last summer. In recognition of these lower prices and in response to discussions with concerned communities and Members of the Assembly, the government took a second look at the situation and agreed to rescind the scheduled increase.

The communities that we serve are small and isolated. The cost of providing fuel is much higher compared to communities located on our highway system. In recognition of this, we will not be increasing fuel prices at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Steen. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

Minister's Statement 5-14(5): Reinvestment Into Income Support Programs

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as outlined by the Minister of Finance yesterday during the Budget Address, this government plans to reinvest \$1.5 million into income support programs. I wanted to take some time today and review some of the details of the reinvestment.

Let me start by thanking the Standing Committee on Social Programs...

-- Applause

...for their recommendations on reinvesting this money. Based on our discussions with them, the following areas have been identified.

Increased economic activity throughout the NWT has made it increasingly difficult for single persons to find affordable housing. In response to this, we plan on increasing the single accommodation benefit by 50 percent, bringing the total amount to \$750 per month. This will bring the benefit more in line with actual shelter costs while encouraging accommodation sharing and workforce participation.

A second area is the food benefit rate. It is our plan to increase the NWT food benefit rate by \$580,000. This represents a 13 percent increase over previous years and provides assistance to those clients that need it the most.

Mr. Speaker, we will increase the disability allowance currently offered to low income, permanently disabled Northerners. The plan is to increase the overall monthly benefit by 33 percent from \$225 to \$300.

Finally, we plan on investing an additional \$100,000 into the seniors' home heating subsidy. The intent of this reinvestment is to increase the income thresholds and thereby allow more seniors and elders in the NWT to become eligible for this popular program. In addition, it is the government's plan to adjust the amount of subsidy on a regional basis, taking into account regional differences of heating seasons.

Mr. Speaker, the changes envisioned here are designed to increase the basic level of assistance provided to low-income Northerners. Through this new investment, the government is sending a clear message that all Northerners will share in the NWT's current prosperity. In addition, we move one step closer towards balancing development and social impacts as

envisioned in Towards A Better Tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister for Health, Mr. Miltenberger.

Minister's Statement 6-14(5): Health and Social Services Action Plan 2002-2005

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On November 5, 2001, I made a commitment to the Assembly and the people of the NWT to have an action plan within 90 days, mapping out the actions necessary to implement reform of the health and social services system. The Health and Social Services Action Plan 2002-2005 was publicly released on January 16, 2002. Later today, I will be tabling the action plan that we are implementing to make sure that our health and social services continue to meet the needs of all Northerners now and in the future.

The action plan is based on the principles outlined in the department's strategic plan issued in 1998 and reflects the many reports, consultations and studies done over the past eight years. The action plan draws from those studies and clearly outlines what we will do as a system to implement the changes and enhancements identified as important many times over the past decade.

The plan ensures service delivery and decision making are as close to the people being served as possible. At the same time, we clearly realize the need for coordination and cooperation through shared leadership at the territorial level.

Central to the action plan is the development of a Joint Leadership Council comprised of the chairs of each health and social services authority, the deputy minister and myself to serve as stewards of the health and social services system. In our consensus system, this type of shared leadership and planning is critical. It will enable us to provide the clearest direction to the system we are responsible for and realize economies of scale in the many critical areas of health and social services that affect us all.

The action plan has 45 actions contained within five broad strategies to address these issues and develop a sustainable and healthy system:

- improved services to people -- which recognizes our primary obligations to provide quality service to individuals and families;
- improved support to staff;
- improved system-wide management;
- improved support to trustees;
- improved system-wide accountability.

Since the action plan was completed ahead of schedule, we have been able to begin working very aggressively to

implement the actions outlined in the plan in the five weeks since the plan was released.

- The Joint Leadership Council has met to begin to prioritize and address the issues of system-wide coordination and collaboration, with the issue of recruitment and retention of staff being identified as the number one priority.
- Authority and departmental staff have been working together extensively to develop implementation plans for each of the actions.
- I have continued to meet with professional organizations to get their feedback and advice as to how to proceed with the action plan and how they may be directly involved.
- I have met with the Hay River Community Health Board staff, and a working group has been established to address their concerns and interests related to the transition to becoming GNWT employees.
- I have met with the leadership, community members and staff in Fort Resolution and Lutselk'e, and working groups have been established to develop plans to improve support and enhance services for the residents of these two communities.

This plan, for which we will be accountable on an ongoing basis, lays out a plan of action over the next three years with aggressive implementation time lines. Through this plan, it is our intention to make the long-term sustainability of our system a reality. I am committed to report on progress to this Assembly and to the public. I plan to bring forward updates on a regular basis to ensure that we are all aware of the status and the results of each action.

Since I became Minister, I have placed a priority on meeting with health and social services authorities, community leaders and professional associations to discuss how best to proceed. I really appreciate the response from those with whom I have met. They have provided excellent advice and I have committed to continue meeting and consulting with them as we move forward to implement the plan.

I would like to thank the Joint Leadership Council for their support in the development of this plan, members of the Standing Committee on Social Programs for their feedback, and professional associations and health and social services staff for their expertise and input.

In closing, I would like to say that I believe we have learned a valuable lesson over the past eight years of studying and consulting. That lesson for me is that we have a tremendous system of health and social service delivery across the North. It needs constant care, attention and renewal on an ongoing basis. What is being proposed here today will allow us to improve our system of service delivery for the people of the North in just that way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement on Renewable Energy Technology

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we begin this budget session, I wish to bring the government's attention to an opportunity for long-term savings through our capital construction program. People in the North are particularly concerned about energy and the environment. There is a need in the Northwest Territories for our own energy strategy. We know, as noted by the Minister of Finance in his budget address yesterday, that we will be seeing a strategy put forward by next summer.

Mr. Speaker, there are actions we can take now to save energy and be more environmentally friendly. Our government has major capital construction projects planned and underway and I want to ask the government to act now in reaping energy savings. As a positive example of this, I learned that the young offender's facility under construction in Inuvik now will incorporate a solar wall in its construction. This is a good start but much more can be done.

Savings can be achieved through the use of proven renewable energy technology. Things like wind, mini-hydro and solar are technologies that do not just save money, Mr. Speaker, they also help cut greenhouse gas emissions. That is something that this government is committed to reducing.

I think we are shortsighted in our project planning criteria. This is because when we tend to plan for the budgets to build these facilities, we do not plan for their long-term operational costs. Here is where the up-front cost of putting in the technology, while it may be high, will have those financial and environmental paybacks in the future.

I think our policy should be that proven renewable energy technologies will be designed into all construction, Mr. Speaker, and I am calling for all of these technologies to be included in the original cost framework of facilities we are planning. I will be asking the Minister to make this a mandatory requirement on all of our future GNWT construction contracts.

This government can and should be demonstrating leadership in the use of renewable energy technology and capital construction programs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Member's Statement on DIAND Oil and Gas Positions

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you may recall that some time ago, I referred to Yellowknife as a giant vacuum cleaner and that this government was the motor that drove it. As an update, Mr. Speaker, it appears that the vacuum cleaner may be in trouble. The main container is full to capacity and the exhaust is practically plugged. Now the government is being called upon to become the repairman.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that all residents of the Northwest Territories have been inundated with the news reports of the housing crisis and the zero vacancy rates in Yellowknife. I am quite sure, Mr. Speaker, that some of this is the result of this government's focus on staffing existing and new positions at the headquarters here in Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, this government has stated many times that regional capacity building is high on its list of priorities. I am sure that my fellow colleagues from outside of Yellowknife would agree with me when I say that it is difficult to see any instances of this when so many government jobs are being posted in Yellowknife.

I speak not only of the territorial government, Mr. Speaker, but the federal government is guilty of this practice also. On February 6th, CBC Radio reported that the federal government says it will be at least three months before it knows how many civil servants to hire in response to the increasing activity in the oil and gas sector.

Mr. Speaker, the news report goes on to state that the positions include regulatory monitoring and technical experts, an oil and gas advisor and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs stated that the first phase of this increase would mean under 20 jobs. If the Mackenzie Valley pipeline is approved, as many as 50 jobs could be eventually created.

The federal government has stated that they are considering Yellowknife as the location for these jobs. Mr. Speaker, this gives me cause for great concern. If the pipeline is built, it will not be built anywhere remotely close to Yellowknife. I can think of no reason whatsoever why these jobs would need to be located in Yellowknife, other than to bolster the already overgrown number of public sector jobs located here in Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot stress enough that we as a government should continue to do more to consider alternatives to have the vast majority of government jobs located in Yellowknife. If you speak to anyone in the regions outside of Yellowknife, Mr. Speaker, the public perception is that the headquarters of government departments in Yellowknife are far too top-heavy.

Mr. Speaker, I intend to continue to fully address this issue with my colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Member's Statement on Clawback of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in my question to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, I spoke about impact benefit agreements and how some chiefs and councils are using the financial compensation they receive from resource companies such as Diavik and BHP, and give that to their members. Now, that portion of funds that has been given to their members has been clawed back by this government on the notion that it is an unearned income.

My understanding of the impact benefit agreements -- and I am going to be probing the appropriate Minister to find what their

understanding is -- is that it is compensation for loss of resources and the use of land. If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, compensation that our First Nations across the Territories are negotiating with federal government in terms of land claims, if they decide to pay some of that compensation dollars to their members, is this government going to be clawing back that portion from those income support recipients? I will be probing this line of thought with the appropriate Minister this afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

Member's Statement on Addictions Treatment Facility for the North Slave Region

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From what I have seen, there are no plans for healing centres or plans for addictions prevention, especially in the North Slave. With all of the economic activities going on, we need a proper addictions or healing centre in the North Slave, Mr. Speaker. We need this to deal with the ongoing addictions and all of the problems that go with economic development.

Mr. Speaker, in the news, we have heard about addictions in the Beaufort-Delta communities and how a lack of counselling services makes it difficult for people with addictions to keep their jobs. Addictions affect our northern economy and it has devastating social consequences, as well as other effects.

The lack of treatment and prevention facilities effects everyone in the North, whether it is someone on the verge of asking for help to relatives who try to cope with a dependent loved one, or their children who suffer and may have a high risk of becoming addicted themselves in their life.

We see the effects of alcohol and drug addiction in everyday life and it is a disturbing sight. These people need support and they need help with healing and prevention in their own languages. If they do not receive help in their own languages, then they are just going to a dry-out centre and no healing is taking place, Mr. Speaker.

In my communities, we have the Dogrib Communities Services Board with addictions counsellors. They need a physical space or facility to call their own. On February 22, 2000, nearly two years ago, I addressed this. At that time, I tabled a petition supporting treatment for alcohol and drug addictions.

Mr. Speaker, as you can see, this has been an ongoing concern of mine and of my constituents as well.

We want to see strong and healthy families in our northern communities, Mr. Speaker. If we want to see our people proud of their aboriginal beliefs and spirituality, then we need to address alcohol, drugs and other addictions.

We can do that by having a proper, designated addictions building in the North Slave, not just a slap-dash sprinkling of counsellors parachuted in and operating out of other facilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Member's Statement on Affordable Housing for Small Communities

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, recently the government announced that the NWT Housing Corporation would receive additional funding from the federal government to spend over the next five years to increase the amount of affordable housing in the Northwest Territories. In the media interview, NWT Housing Corporation representative explained that some money has already been set aside for Yellowknife, Hay River and Inuvik, where it is determined housing difficulties are most notable.

Furthermore, the representative from the Housing Corporation stated that private market enterprise has been working to identify housing solutions in Yellowknife for many years and it would be unfair for a government agency to jump into the market at precisely the time when the private sector can develop opportunities for expansion.

Mr. Speaker, this new funding should focus on the smaller or non-market communities. Market forces such as supply and demand can take care of our larger centres because in those communities there is a large private sector. These regional centres could stand on their own, especially when it comes to development or more affordable housing.

Walk down the street here in Yellowknife, Mr. Speaker, and you can find a number of developers ready to build. In most of our smaller communities, this is not possible. There, we have a shortage of private industry, housing, infrastructure, financial as well as human resources. It is there we must devote most of our attention.

Mr. Speaker, decent, affordable homes have a major impact on the quality of our lives -- not only in terms of improving health and education achievement, but also in strengthening our communities for everyone. On February 15, 2002, our Prime Minister, in his speech at the Team Canada luncheon in Moscow, stated:

"We will continue to make strategic investments that contribute to building our long-term economic strength, building an advanced infrastructure of knowledge and skills for our people."

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that in order to have that advanced infrastructure that the Prime Minister referred to, we must first begin with the basics. One of these basics is affordable housing -- affordable housing for all of our smaller communities in the North, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Member's Statement on Traditional Knowledge

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak on an issue that is important to many residents of

the Northwest Territories. It is in the area of traditional knowledge.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a while since this government has endorsed the idea of traditional knowledge and started to incorporate so-called traditional knowledge into programs and services delivered by this government.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that we recognize the history of the peoples in the North and incorporate some of those teachings into today's schools and younger children, and incorporate some of those practices of the past that would make sense today.

Mr. Speaker, it is also a concern of mine that within traditional knowledge, or the heading of traditional knowledge, we are now incorporating traditions that are from outside the aboriginal peoples of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I speak in particular about the community of Inuvik, where I have heard from a number of constituents that in fact, traditional knowledge is now being practiced in the community and they are bringing new ideas to the people.

New to them because, Mr. Speaker, when you talk with parents and grandparents of the Inuvialuit and the groups in the northern part of the Northwest Territories, some of these practices are foreign to them. They are not part of the teachings they grew up with and were raised to understand. In fact, in some cases, it opens a whole realm of spirituality that is again foreign to their idea of what traditional knowledge is, or healing, as it is being called in some cases.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that we leave doors open to those involved in the healing process to make choices -- those who need the services to be able to access services, that they can understand and feel that they are being helped by.

Mr. Speaker, I am also concerned that -- and in fact, it has been said that new facilities going up in the Northwest Territories are being somewhat restrictive in the area of healing that might be provided.

Mr. Speaker, it is time that this government learns from the past and does not make the same mistakes of trying to put on something that sounds good but does not quite fit, but make everybody take the program.

I think, Mr. Speaker, as we enter into this session, it is something I will be paying attention to and have a number of questions for the appropriate Ministers. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement on Clawback of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too have a major concern with the Social Assistance Act, especially with the clawbacks for benefit agreements, and also socio-economic agreements and land claim agreements.

We have obligations in land claim agreements. We have treaties that have been in place for over 100 years in the Territories. These agreements, for a lot of people, have a lot of significance. Yet, Mr. Speaker, we as a government seem to have a double-edged sword here.

On one hand, we are telling aboriginal groups, aboriginal organizations to negotiate, settle your land claims, get your agreements in place, allow for development to take place through socio-economic benefit agreements.

Then on the other hand, we are taking back the same benefits that we are telling them to go get to help their people thrive and take advantage of those developments.

Mr. Speaker, this act allows for exemptions to take place. There are two clauses -- one refers to treaty payments and another clause refers to the value of any goods received in accordance with the provisions of the Inuvialuit final agreement and any other land claim agreement.

I would like to see, is there a possibility of making an exemption to allow for those other types of agreements, similar to land claim agreements, such as the socio-economic benefit agreements that are being signed? Those are agreements between First Nations governments. First Nations governments have tax exempt status. They had the right to provide programs and services like this government here.

Why are we penalizing the same people they represent in their communities and in their regions for receiving benefits? Mr. Speaker, I for one have a real problem trying to understand this government. On one hand, we are talking to the First Nations governments on negotiating a Northern Accord to ensure that we receive royalties from Ottawa. Is that the next pot that we are going to be clawing back? Go out there and get the royalties to the Northwest Territories so this government can claw it back?

Is this the practice that we are putting in place, the precedents that we are setting through this type of bad legislation? I feel that this government, this Ministry should make some attempts to allow us to see the legal opinion that was received by this government.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we heard from the Minister, he has a legal opinion on this matter. If it is at a point where we are receiving legal opinions which are being kept in-house by Cabinet, not released to the Members here in the House or to First Nations governments to judge for themselves and review that legal opinion and see where there are problems or loopholes in that legal agreement, which could either resolve this issue or ensure we find ways of making this agreement so that it is workable. Right now, it is not workable. I will be asking the Minister responsible for income support questions on this matter. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Training for Drug and Alcohol Counsellors

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that we are all aware of the enormous financial, social and human costs in the Northwest Territories as a result of drug and alcohol addictions. Domestic violence, child abuse, neglect, family dysfunction are all symptomatic of our extensive addictions issues.

The effects of addictions are pervasive and impact our levels of spending in health and social services, justice, housing and education. Mr. Speaker, drug and alcohol counsellors in our communities are vitally important to the treatment and healing of people with addictions. When you go to the doctor or nurse with a broken arm, you know the qualifications of the person treating you. However, when you go to a counsellor with a broken relationship or a broken lifestyle, there is now no standardized level of education or training required to have been achieved by that person.

People tend to be very vulnerable when they are seeking or requiring this type of help. I am certain that most drug and alcohol counsellors in the Northwest Territories are very dedicated individuals. However, even the best of intentions is not a substitute for counselling if they do not have the proper and current qualifications and training to perform the job.

Misguided advice in this field can be very harmful, just as misdiagnosis or mis-prescription of treatment can cause harm in the medical field. With the prospect of people at risk of hurting themselves or others, this government must do everything it can to ensure that the services provided to our people is professional and regulated by adequate legislation.

The Standing Committee on Social Programs had a very effective presentation from Anne McGuire Smith on this very topic. Mr. Speaker, drug and alcohol counsellors themselves want to be supported by legislation that will ensure that they are protected by a professional conduct process in case of allegations, they need to have a standard pay grid established to ensure fair remuneration.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, drug and alcohol counsellors need to have opportunities established for them to further their education and professional development in their field. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

Member's Statement on Legislative Pages From Inuvik

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to take this opportunity to profile the two pages working in the Assembly this week from my riding of Inuvik Twin Lakes. These two fine young persons are Dwayne Dresher and Rennie Edwards.

Dwayne attends Samuel Hearne Secondary School in Inuvik. He is also very active in sports. He participated in the territorials for the biathlon and will be heading to Quebec City. He will also be participating in the 2002 Arctic Winter Games in Greenland for soccer and he is a master corporal in the army cadets.

The young lady, Rennie, also attends Samuel Hearne Secondary School. She belongs to the youth group in Inuvik, which does a variety of volunteer work at Ingamo Hall. During the summer, Rennie also works as a camp counsellor at the summer day camp in Inuvik.

Mr. Speaker, when these two young pages were asked why they wanted to come and page, they replied it would look good on their resumes. Mr. Speaker, this makes me very proud to see our youth thinking and acting on their future. I hope they will continue to pursue their personal goals.

I wish both Dwayne and Rennie the best of luck, especially to Dwayne who will be participating in the Arctic Winter Games, and to Rennie in your wish to become a businessperson someday. I would like to thank both of them for coming here and working with us. As you know, pages play a key role in aiding in the communication amongst the Members while they are sitting in this House.

I would also like to thank their chaperone, Eileen Edwards, for her assistance to all the pages. Thank you for the excellent job. I would like to say thank you to the staff of the Legislative Assembly, who continue to make this page program a success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

Member's Statement on Third Annual Youth Parliament

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stand today as MLA for Nahendeh to speak about our youth who participated in the Third Annual Youth Parliament here in our Legislative Assembly. I would like to congratulate all of the youth participants from throughout the North who attended this event. I would like to thank the organizers for this. I would like to say that I am very proud of my representative, Courtney Squirrel from Fort Simpson, who was a very enthusiastic participant to this Youth Parliament.

I called her and I asked her to do a Member's statement for me, and she writes:

Mr. Speaker, from February 3rd to the 8th I attended the Third Annual Youth Parliament in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. During my stay in Yellowknife, I met and befriended new people. I also learned and experienced a lot of new and interesting facts about our government and how it works.

In Yellowknife, I had the privilege to spend a week at the Legislative Assembly and worked with the MLAs and coordinators of

the Youth Parliament. While at the Legislative Assembly building, myself and 18 other students were taken on a tour of the building and learned about the different rooms and the different areas of the building.

My day spent at the Legislative Assembly building, I participated in a variety of activities, such as Cabinet meetings with members of my staff, rehearsal in the Chamber and the actual time spent in the Chamber. We did not spend all of our time at the Legislative Assembly building. The coordinators had activities scheduled for us prior to our arrival. We played soccer, we watched movies, went shopping, toured Yellowknife and the military and had dinner at the Northern Headquarters of National Defence, which was a privilege and was very enjoyable.

While I was in Yellowknife I enjoyed every minute in Yellowknife during the week of the Youth Parliament. It was a very educational experience. I would like to thank everyone responsible for making it happen. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, reports of standing and special committees. Mr. Dent.

ITEM 5: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee Report 1-14(5): Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. Mr. Speaker, I would like to present the Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates.

Introduction

The Standing Committees of Accountability and Oversight, Governance and Economic Development, and Social Programs all participate in the review of the government's business plans and main estimates. The committees met from January 14, 2002 to January 25, 2002 to review the 2002-2003 draft main estimates for the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight is comprised of all Regular Members. The committee prepares a report dealing with issues that are government-wide in nature, which were identified by the Standing Committees on Governance and Economic Development and Social Programs. The issues identified in the next section of the report are government-wide in nature and were brought forward to this committee for further study and discussion.

Total operations expenses for the government increased from \$833,642,000 proposed in 2002-2003 business plans to \$851,673,000 proposed in the draft 2002-2003 main estimates.

This represents an increase of \$18,031,000. Total capital expenditures for the government declined from \$131,928,000 proposed in its business plans to \$108,852,000 proposed in its draft main estimates, representing a decrease of \$23,076,000. A major portion of this reduction is due to the cancellation of the original Highway Investment Strategy and the transfer of infrastructure contributions from capital expenditures to operations expense as the result of the revised accounting process for capital.

Government-Wide Issues

On January 30, 2002, the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight took the opportunity to follow-up on several issues arising from its review of the 2002-2003 main estimates with the government. Three issues were felt to warrant a letter to the government from the committee requesting changes be made before the main estimates were presented in the House. These issues included the National Aboriginal Day and Living History Project, Student Support Services and Caucus Priorities for Housing.

National Aboriginal Day and Living History Project

During the review of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development noted a proposed \$1,000,000 expenditure for a combined National Aboriginal Day celebration and pre-celebration events co-ordinated under the Living History Project.

The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development had a number of concerns about these projects and brought them to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight for review. The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight agreed with these concerns, which are outlined as follows.

Members could not understand why the two initiatives were linked in the same line item in the main estimates, nor why funding for the Living History Project would fall under the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. Combining the two makes it more difficult for Members and the public to understand the amounts proposed to be spent on either project. It also makes it difficult for Members to evaluate each of the projects without the inference that concern with one of the projects impacts on the other.

Members of the committee were concerned by the lack of detail on the proposed activities for the Living History Project. Aside from the brief outline of initiatives planned by this society in the main estimates, Members were disappointed to see no formal proposal for the funding requested. Members want to see an outline of the society's mandate and goals, an analysis of other funds received by the project from various private corporations and the federal government, and other relevant material to establish the organization's value and substance.

Members were also concerned that there had been no notice in the business plans that significant funding would be requested for this non-profit organization. Members noted the project has already received funding of \$40,000 for start-up costs, and the draft main estimates requested a further \$500,000. We were told this new funding was for pre-National Aboriginal Day celebration events, including a symposium and a review of the history of the past 25 years of the Government of the Northwest Territories. By adding the funding for this

organization to the main estimates without going through the business planning process, some Members wondered if we might be accused of preferential treatment for this group when other non-government organizations have to follow a much more rigorous process to acquire government funds.

Without seeing long-term plans, Members were further concerned that funding for this organization may become ongoing.

As noted above, committee was concerned with funding for the Living History Project falling under the auspices of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment is responsible for most grants and contributions offered to cultural or historical organizations.

Committee felt the government should address these concerns before the Legislative Assembly considered funding for the Living History Project. We advised the Minister of Finance by letter that the proposed funding should be removed from the main estimates, and that any proposal for funding should come forward as part of a supplementary estimate when our concerns had been addressed.

Members of the committee are pleased to see that the department addressed one of the concerns stated above and has supplied information showing that the budget items of National Aboriginal Day and the Living History Project have now been separated. However, in light of the concerns previously stated by the committee, we make the following recommendation:

Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight recommends that the funding for the Living History project be removed from the 2002-2003 Main Estimates.

Student Support Services

Committee members noted that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, or ECE, had included \$2,726,000 in the 2002-2003 draft main estimates to reduce the pupil/teacher ratio (PTR) to 16:1 and to increase student support services to 14 percent in 2002-2003.

The committee noted that the department is ahead of its legislated requirement to reduce the PTR levels in NWT schools and on target for the legislated student support increases for 2002-2003. Committee pointed out the positive results of increasing direct support to students in need in the classroom. Based on the financial information provided during the review of the business plans and the draft main estimates, committee members asked the Minister to consider taking \$900,000 from the PTR and advancing the final installment of the student support services to reach 15 percent in this fiscal year. This would leave the balance of \$1,826,000 to apply to PTR in 2002-2003. The PTR would then be topped up in its final year by \$900,000 to meet the legislated target of 16:1 in 2002-2004.

In the government's response to the committee's request, it became clear that the financial information presented to the committee on the split of the \$2,726,000 during the business plan review and draft main estimate review was wrong. The

department now states that \$1,600,000 was to be used to increase student support services to 14 percent and that the remaining \$1,126,000 was to be used to reduce the PTR. Subsequently, the department's initial estimate of \$900,000 to implement the 15 percent student support services was revised to encompass the entire \$1,126,000.

Regardless of any misunderstanding, the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight was pleased that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment agreed to the committee's request and that the funding for student support services will be increased to 15 percent in 2002-2003, a full year in advance of the legislated requirement.

Caucus Priorities for Housing

The committee discussed the proposed budget of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. Following Caucus discussions in Hay River in December of 2001 that highlighted the priority Members attach to making housing available to Northerners, the committee was surprised that the government had not proposed significant new monies for new or existing programs within the main estimates. Nearly all additional money appears to come from the Government of Canada through a contribution from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to enhance housing programs.

In the government's response to committee's concern that the main estimates do not reflect Caucus priorities, it is stated that the government is currently developing initiatives to support private development of housing in non-taxed based communities.

Mr. Speaker, the committee will watch to see whether the initiatives under development are relevant and will encourage private developers to invest in the non-taxed based communities.

Mr. Speaker, I now seek your consent to ask the honourable Member for Hay River South to conclude the report.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen, to conclude the report.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Other Government-Wide Issues

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight also discussed and evaluated the following government-wide issues. These issues include the corporate capital planning process, the consolidation and placement of energy initiatives and the placement of the social agenda.

Corporate Capital Planning Process

A responsive and equitable capital planning process is essential for effective community capacity development and maintenance. A new capital planning process, referred to as the corporate capital planning process, which I will just refer to as CCP after this, was announced by the government during the review of its draft 2002-2005 business plans by the standing committees. The development and adoption of the CCP by the government was done without consultation with the Regular Members.

The CCP is based on a primary rating criteria which prioritizes capital projects in the following order:

- protection of people;
- protection of assets;
- protection of the environment;
- financial investment considerations; and
- program needs or requirements.

A capital review committee, comprised of deputy ministers, determines which projects are chosen based upon this prioritization model. However, committee members concurred with comments made by the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development in its review of the 2002-2005 draft business plans that this new capital planning process "may leave communities and Regular Members without effective input" and furthermore, that "these criteria, especially the protection of people, may lead to projects from larger centres being placed before the needs of smaller communities."

As a result, the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight in its review of the 2002-2005 business plans, recommended the re-introduction of the notification letter from the Premier to each Member and community informing them of the capital plan for their community.

The government agreed and informed the committee that the letter of notification process will be implemented during the preparation of the 2003-2004 main estimates.

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight remains concerned about the implementation of the CCP and looks forward to a debate on this issue on the floor of the House.

Consolidation and Placement of Energy Initiatives

The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development had expressed concern that a number of new energy initiatives have been placed within departments that do not have the proper mandate for such programs and this appears to be duplicating efforts. The Hydro Unit has remained within FMBS and the Energy Secretariat has remained within the Executive Offices under the Cabinet Secretariat. Committee members suggested that a better coordination of efforts would result in greater efficiencies and better results. The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development is of the opinion that this issue has government-wide implications and as such, referred the issue to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight for further discussion by all Regular Members.

After detailed discussion, the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight in its review of the 2002-2005 draft business plans, recommended initiatives be placed within the most relevant department rather than within the department of convenience.

The government, in a recent information package submitted to the committee, replied that the placements of the energy and social agenda initiatives are currently under review. However,

the draft main estimates still show that the placement of these initiatives has not changed.

In a letter to the Minister of Finance, dated January 11, 2002, the committee stated that:

During Committee of the Whole Consideration of Bill 14, Supplementary Appropriation Act No. 2, 2001-2002 on November 5, 2001, the Premier made the following statement and commitment to the Members:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have had a discussion with some members of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight earlier today. They had said they were concerned about having the Energy Secretariat by itself in the Department of the Executive and seeing different elements of initiatives and interests within the government in different departments. I will look at making an announcement to address that. We will specifically look at moving the Energy Secretariat out of the Department of the Executive. That will be done within the next couple of days.

That is from Hansard, page 654. Further, the committee asked "would you please provide the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight an explanation as to why the 2002-2003 draft main estimates do not appear to reflect the commitments made by the government?"

To date the committee has not received a written explanation. However, during the review of the draft 2002-2003 main estimates for the Executive Offices, the Premier advised the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development that he would bring forward option papers on the placement and consolidation of energy initiatives during the February session.

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight looks forward to receiving and reviewing the government's option papers on the delivery, consolidation and placement of its energy initiatives and environmental responsibilities. We trust the government will be able to provide the option papers to the committee in the next few weeks.

Placement of Social Agenda

As the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development reviewed the Department of the Executive's main estimates, the chairperson noted that the placement of the social agenda within the Executive paved the way for considerable discussion of social issues and problems that should fall under the mandate of the Standing Committee on Social Programs.

The committee was also of the opinion that there does not appear to be a clear coordination between the Department of Health and Social Services and the Social Agenda Working

Group. While Health and Social Services has just recently announced its action plan, the Social Agenda Working Group plans to release its recommendations at the end of February. The committee would like to be assured that the expenditure of over \$475,000 towards the working group has been worthwhile and their recommendations will be considered in the department's plans.

Given the committee's concerns and the fact that their suggestion for the removal of the Social Agenda from the Department of the Executive during the business plan report was not heeded, the committee brought the matter to the attention of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight.

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight examined the expanding mandate of the Executive Offices. Given the cross-departmental nature of the social agenda and other initiatives like Maximizing Northern Employment, the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight will be proposing an amendment to the Rules of the Legislative Assembly to include the Executive Offices within the standing committee's mandate.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight on the review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates. Therefore,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that Committee Report 1-14(5) be received by the Legislative Assembly and moved into committee of the whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Committee Report 1-14(5) moved into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4). Are there any nays? There are no nays. Therefore, Committee Report 1-14(5) is moved into committee of the whole for today. Item 5, reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Committee Report 2-14(5): Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Introduction

The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development met from January 14 to January 25, 2002 to review the 2002-2003 Draft Main Estimates. The GED envelope includes the following departments, the Executive, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Finance, Public Works and Services,

Municipal and Community Affairs, Transportation, and Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development.

General Comments

Corporate Capital Planning Process

The government informed the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight about its new corporate capital planning process on September 25, 2001. The process was developed and implemented without input or approval from the Regular Members.

With the new corporate capital planning process, or CCP, there is only one government capital target, with all departmental projects competing for the same pool of available funding. Proposed capital projects are placed within a primary rating criteria in the following priority:

- protection of people;
- protection of assets;
- protection of the environment;
- financial investment; and
- program need or requirement.

Each project is then considered against a secondary criteria comprised of the following factors:

- scale of impact;
- severity of impact if the project is not completed;
- urgency of the project; and
- the ability to mitigate.

The evaluation process is done by a Capital Review Committee made up of deputy ministers. It is the Capital Review Committee that determines which project would be chosen based on the new capital prioritization model.

Committee members are concerned that as more responsibilities are transferred to the municipal level, the ability of communities to obtain the necessary infrastructure, human resources and funding to ensure the safe and effective delivery of local programs and services have become increasingly difficult.

Committee members note that since the CCP's first priority is the protection of people, projects in larger, more populous communities would almost always obtain funding at the expense of smaller and less populous communities.

The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development is of the position that any capital planning process must also take into account essential programs and services such as health, safety and other priorities in the smaller communities. Committee members pointed out that these communities, because of their smaller population, isolation and high operating costs, have less financial and infrastructure capacity to deliver programs and services efficiently, effectively and economically than their larger counterparts. Furthermore, in many of the smaller communities,

capital projects funded by the government are often the only source of employment.

The committee first brought attention to this issue during its review of the government's 2002-2005 draft business plans and referred it to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight to allow for further input from all Regular Members. The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight recommended that the government re-instate the letter of notification from the Premier to each Member, informing him or her of any changes to the capital plan in their riding. The government subsequently agreed and advised all the Members that the notification letter protocol would be implemented during the preparation of the 2003-2004 main estimates.

Placement of New Initiatives Within the Executive

As stated in the business plans, the committee continues to have significant reservations about the placement of new initiatives in non-service delivery departments. Specifically, the placement of the Energy Secretariat and the Social Action Working Group within the responsibility of the Department of the Executive appears to be at odds with the department's mandate.

The placement of specific initiatives within departments that are not focussed on that particular area of expertise may lead to confusion both between departments and between standing committees of the Legislative Assembly that must evaluate the programs.

The committee continues to assert that new initiatives should be placed within the most relevant department in order to ensure consistency and non-duplication of efforts.

National Aboriginal Day and Living History Project

During the review of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development noted a proposed \$1,000,000 expenditure for a combined National Aboriginal Day celebration and pre-celebration events coordinated under the Living History Project. The committee had a number of concerns about this project and brought them to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight for review.

One of the first problems faced by the committee was a lack of documentation from the society outlining their plans and funding needs. In the absence of such documentation, committee members were unable to ascertain the true value of this project and its need for half a million dollars.

Members also noted that funding for National Aboriginal Day celebrations and the Living History Project were combined in the budget of the ministry, making it difficult to understand funding arrangements between the two. The committee recommended to the department that they split the two projects into separate line items. The department agreed to this request.

Members of the committee were concerned that the funding of one newly formed society for half a million dollars may set an inappropriate precedent for other non-profit agencies approaching the government and expecting similar funding. Members would also like to be assured that the organization

has sought funding from other sources and that funding from the GNWT will not be ongoing.

The committee was also confused by the placement of this society's application for funding within the domain of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. It is the committee's understanding that most cultural and historical organizations are funded through the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

Due to these significant concerns, the committee recommended this issue for consideration to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight.

As a result of both committees' comments on this issue, the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development is aware that there have been significant alterations to the funding proposal on behalf of the Living History Project.

The committee looks forward to addressing these changes during the review of the government's main estimates in the House.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the introductory portion of the report of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates. Therefore,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that Committee Report 2-14(5), be received by the Legislative Assembly and moved into committee of the whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? No opposition, therefore the motion is carried. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Committee Report 2-14(5) moved into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4). Are there any nays? There are no nays, therefore Committee Report 2-14(5) is moved into committee of the whole for today. Thank you.

Item 5, reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

Committee Report 3-14(5): Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present the Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates.

The Standing Committee on Social Programs met from January 14th to January 25th 2002 to review the draft main estimates. The social programs envelope includes the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, the Department of

Justice, the Department of Health and Social Services and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

The committee, in our discussions with the Ministers, raised a number of issues. These discussions resulted in the committee making some specific recommendations. The issues and recommendations will be discussed under the appropriate department, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the introductory portion of the Report of the Standing Committee on Social Programs on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates. Therefore,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that Committee Report 3-14(5) be received by the Legislative Assembly and moved into committee of the whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? No opposition, therefore the motion is carried. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and have Committee Report 3-14(5) moved into committee of the whole for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4). Are there any nays? There are no nays, therefore Committee Report 3-14(5) is moved into committee of the whole for today. Thank you.

Item 5, reports of standing and special committees. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 7: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 31-14(5): Increased Day Care Funding

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we heard that \$1 million would be included in the budget to increase day care support funding. The budget speech noted that this was intended to remove barriers to affordable childcare faced by low-income northern families.

Could the Minister tell us how this \$1 million will be spent? Specifically, how much will the per diem O and M contribution to operators increase?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 31-14(5): Increased Day Care Funding

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the \$1 million will be divided up into two areas. One is for contributions to day cares. That is start up funding and operating funding. That is \$780,000.

The \$220,000 will be used to increase subsidies to provide for income support and low-income earners. It will be added to provide day care services for the summertime and after hours for those who work shift work, if that is available. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 31-14(5): Increased Day Care Funding

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister advise us what the per diem rate will increase to? What is it now and what it will increase to on the O and M side, the \$780,000? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 31-14(5): Increased Day Care Funding

HON. JAKE OOTES: Yes, Mr. Speaker, it will change. For example, for a preschool space, I will use Yellowknife as an example -- we have other communities where it is higher -- Yellowknife is \$5.00 for preschool. That will go to \$8.00. Infant space is \$7.50 and that will go to \$12.00. Space for after school is \$1.25 and that will go to \$2.00.

Other areas are community-based. I will give an example here of \$8.00 to \$12.80 and for preschool and infant space from \$12.00 to \$19.20 and after school \$2.00 to \$3.20, depending upon the community, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 31-14(5): Increased Day Care Funding

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This sounds like they are fairly substantial increases and I commend the Minister on this change. Will the methodology of payment change? It has been a substantial problem for operators in that they are only paid on days the child attends. So if a child is sick, they do not get paid for it and that has created a significant amount of problems for them. Will that methodology be changed? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 31-14(5): Increased Day Care Funding

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is still an outstanding issue which is more an administrative issue. I have not concluded that yet. It has been brought to my attention as an area of concern and I have not yet finalized that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 31-14(5): Increased Day Care Funding

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister commit to advising this House before the end of this current sitting the resolution to this issue that he proposes to take? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 31-14(5): Increased Day Care Funding

HON. JAKE OOTES: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be pleased to do so. I also committed two days ago to some other areas with day cares that I will follow up on. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Question 32-14(5): Yellowknife Housing Infrastructure Requirements

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to follow up on a line of questioning from the last couple of days regarding housing and the crunch that we have here in Yellowknife and getting affordable housing supplied to suit the demand that has grown very rapidly in this city. I want to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs. We have been looking for ways where government and private sector can combine and work together to reduce the cost of housing and make it more affordable.

One of the major up-front costs is that of infrastructure; water, sewer, roads and this kind of thing. I wanted to ask the Minister if there is any news he can bring to Yellowknife in terms of what Municipal and Community Affairs might be able to do to assist with infrastructure. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 32-14(5): Yellowknife Housing Infrastructure Requirements

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, MACA has a very limited program to assist tax-based communities with infrastructure other than for water and sewer programs.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary to Question 32-14(5): Yellowknife Housing Infrastructure Requirements

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, other jurisdictions in Canada, I am familiar with the Yukon, do have a program where the territorial government does assist with the up-front high cost of putting infrastructure in, which then enables private individuals and the private sector to put affordable housing up in a much more expeditious way.

Is there anything preventing this government from looking at putting together that kind of program, not only for Yellowknife

but for other communities, especially Inuvik, that are also under a housing shortage? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 32-14(5): Yellowknife Housing Infrastructure Requirements

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe there is anything preventing this government and this department from following up on suggestions such as the one that the Member put forward.

I would just like to point out though that MACA, in their policies governing the assistance to communities to develop infrastructure, has policies for land development for non-tax-based communities. The only policies we have as far as assisting tax-based communities is through debentures or financing that this government would put in place, possibly a loan to the city or to the tax-based community at a better rate than the city or the town may obtain directly from the bank.

However, I believe this program is accessible through the Department of Finance via the community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary to Question 32-14(5): Yellowknife Housing Infrastructure Requirements

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps at another time I will direct a question to the Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker. I would like to again press the Minister -- right now, the City of Yellowknife has an accelerated demand for accommodation largely driven by our diamond industry. We are fortunate to have that.

Other communities though up and down the Valley are hopefully going to be in a similar situation when a pipeline happens. We are not an anomaly here. We are part of a trend that I hope is going to continue in the Northwest Territories. Land development will be something that many other communities hopefully will have to deal with.

Can this government commit to looking at something that will be progressive...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Braden, I am sorry to interrupt but I would limit your preamble to a question. What is your question?

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will this government commit to looking ahead to the long term to assist all communities in the Northwest Territories with large-scale infrastructure development? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for MACA, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 32-14(5): Yellowknife Housing Infrastructure Requirements

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just recently the department was considering a program whereby we would assist all communities, including tax-based

communities, with the development of land lots for residential purposes.

We were doing this in consultation with the Housing Corporation and in cooperation with them as well on what possible programs we could come up with to address this particular issue.

In particular, it was identified that Yellowknife and Inuvik, as far as tax-based communities, were very heavily impacted right now and there was a shortage of lots for residential purposes. However, the program that we put forward to Cabinet and FMB, the decision of Cabinet and FMB was that this program to develop lots, a certain number of lots rather than a whole pile of them, in non-tax-based communities is what we got approval for.

At this point in time we have not followed it up with some kind of proposal to address the issues in the cities, in the larger centres like Inuvik. It was mainly because the thought was there are enough developers in these communities already. It is just a matter of finding funding to assist people to purchase these lots. What was brought forward as one of the major problems was that a lot of these lots were market-driven prices rather than the real price of what it cost to develop them. In some cases, as much as 50 percent more of a markup on the price of the lot.

The government felt that it was a matter of the market taking care of itself. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. I just want to remind Members -- and Ministers, of course -- that oral questions should be short and to the point and responses should be equally short and to the point. Your final supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary to Question 32-14(5): Yellowknife Housing Infrastructure Requirements

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From the Minister's response then, are there discrepancies between the territorial government's approach to infrastructure development and the municipalities' approach to marketing and pricing?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 32-14(5): Yellowknife Housing Infrastructure Requirements

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe there are any discrepancies between the two. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Question 33-14(5): Traditional Healing Practices in the Correctional System

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, following on my Member's statement about traditional knowledge and the practices that are now beginning to be implemented across the Northwest Territories. Although this falls under a number of

different departments I am going to go with my first question to the Minister responsible for Justice and find out if, in fact, the practices are changing as new facilities are being built and existing facilities in operation -- if the programs available to constituents of ours that have unfortunately found themselves in these facilities, are those programs specific to receiving help through these new traditional healing practices? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Justice, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 33-14(5): Traditional Healing Practices in the Correctional System

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I hear the question correctly, there are a number of programs that are being introduced in the context of traditional healing. Sharing circles is one. The use of the drum in other jurisdictions is another. We still profess on the liberty of people's choice for prayer, that is another. There are also areas of sweats and pipe ceremonies. Those are currently some of the typical traditional methods used in the corrections service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 33-14(5): Traditional Healing Practices in the Correctional System

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So my understanding then is that the term that has been used is "Christian services" will be available, along with the traditional practices that are now being implemented? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Justice, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 33-14(5): Traditional Healing Practices in the Correctional System

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I understand that the choice of religion is entrenched in our Canadian Constitution and that will certainly be acknowledged. We anticipate that will continue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 33-14(5): Traditional Healing Practices in the Correctional System

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister inform us then that a choice will be available to those that are in the facilities and it is open to them, and it will not look badly on them if they do not pick one over another in those instances? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Justice, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 33-14(5): Traditional Healing Practices in the Correctional System

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can assure the Member very succinctly that no individual member who is

incarcerated will be obliged to practice outside of what they believe in. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Question 34-14(5): Placement of Federal Oil and Gas Positions

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I stated in my Member's statement, it is imperative that this government continue to look at regional capacity building and to continue to communicate with our federal counterparts to ensure that they are aware of our strategy to build at a regional capacity level. Could the Deputy Premier tell this House if this government has a policy or a strategy that guides this government in regional capacity building? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 34-14(5): Placement of Federal Oil and Gas Positions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Government of the Northwest Territories we are very aware of the different regions in the Northwest Territories and the debate and discussions that go on in the Intergovernmental Forum and other forums of this nature that talk about capacity building in the communities and in the regions. We are fully aware that there is a need by this government to put more focus and emphasis into the regions. The message is that we have to look at the regions and consolidate the development of the different regions. There is a focus on it by this government. It is not necessarily a policy, but is a direction that this government is going in at the present time. There is an emphasis that we need to put more resources into the regions and try to get the regions to be stronger and more cohesive. Yes, we are working in that direction. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 34-14(5): Placement of Federal Oil and Gas Positions

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if there is no policy or strategy in place, could the Deputy Premier commit to ensuring that the federal Ministers are aware of our government's emphasis that we put on regional capacity building when it comes to transferring federal jobs to the Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 34-14(5): Placement of Federal Oil and Gas Positions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Government of the Northwest Territories, we have been communicating with our federal counterparts, mainly the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, who have been talking about putting positions up in the North.

There is the possibility of other departments, such as Fisheries and Oceans and Environment Canada, who may also be putting more resources into the North. The decision has not been made there yet. In the last federal budget announcement, it does not look like there was anything in there to indicate that there are going to be more resources going into the North.

In our discussions through our officials, we express our position and our concern that if you do put positions in the North, that you have to be open to discuss not only locating these positions in one central area but look at distributing some of these positions to where it is most applicable. For example, if there is oil and gas activity, then we should be focusing on putting the positions that are going to be dealing with oil and gas into the most applicable areas.

This is the kind of discussion we have been having, and there is nothing concrete yet. There is a desire to put positions up here but we do not know where they are going to go. I think the feds would like to put them in one local central location, but I think we have to do some work here to try to encourage them to consider putting these positions in the regions and into communities other than Yellowknife. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 34-14(5): Placement of Federal Oil and Gas Positions

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am encouraged by the Deputy Premier's commitment that the federal government is being made aware that we want to move some jobs around in the Territories. Should the federal government not heed the request that our government is making, would the Deputy Premier consider transferring an equivalent number of GNWT positions out of Yellowknife to the communities to compensate for the projected influx of new federal positions, thereby meeting the GNWT's goal of increasing regional capacity? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 34-14(5): Placement of Federal Oil and Gas Positions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a very complex and difficult question. It is not for me to make a commitment at this point in time alone. It is going to have to be a Cabinet decision, perhaps in discussion with the MLAs as well. It is not for me to make that kind of commitment here. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Premier. Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 34-14(5): Placement of Federal Oil and Gas Positions

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess I was asking if the Deputy Premier and Cabinet would consider making that request, but could the Deputy Premier please state then that he will continue to push this with the counterparts? I would like to ask the Deputy Premier where would this decision be made? Is it made in this Cabinet and this government, or is

it made at an Intergovernmental Forum stage? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey, two questions there. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 34-14(5): Placement of Federal Oil and Gas Positions

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the honourable Member is referring to the possibilities of the federal positions coming to the North, then it is really up to the federal Minister to say which positions are going to the North and ultimately where these positions are going to go. If that is the case, then our job here is to try to influence that decision any way we can, and that is what we are going to do. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Premier. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 35-14(5): Clawback of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, regarding the question about income support and clawbacks of IBAs and other earnings people may have.

Mr. Speaker, in my statement, I made reference to different sections of the act and the regulations. I raised questions yesterday about this matter, in which there is a legal opinion that has been developed through the Minister's office and has been shared with Cabinet.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, will he consider making amendments to the act under section 20(5) of the regulations to allow for a section to include the IBAs received by other aboriginal First Nations?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 35-14(5): Clawback of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have to provide a bit of background information here to the income support programs. They are designed to be an income replacement program. They are not a guaranteed lifestyle type of program, Mr. Speaker. The system is based on a productive choice made by the client and is a support system, of course, of last resort.

Now, doing that, Mr. Speaker, there have been certain areas that have been put into place to say that these are the incomes that would be considered earned and unearned. The impact benefit agreements are considered as unearned income. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 35-14(5): Clawback of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, under the existing legislation, it talks about the different types of settlements or agreements. I think if the department -- all it takes is the stroke of a pen to get rid of the statement that settlements or agreements of the regulations, and that will do away with economic benefit agreements. If you remove the word agreements in your legislation, these benefit agreements will not be affected. Will you consider looking at that?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 35-14(5): Clawback of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this has tremendous implications in terms of the philosophy of the program. Therefore, it is an area that I cannot commit to here at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 35-14(5): Clawback of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister talks about the impact to the program. What about the impact to the aboriginal people who are receiving these benefit agreements and having them clawed back? There is an impact to an organization that has signed an agreement in good faith with this government and with industry to allow for these benefit agreements to be negotiated.

I would like to ask the Minister again, will you release the legal opinion that you received so the aboriginal organizations can see for themselves if there is any infringement on their rights in those agreements that they have signed?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 35-14(5): Clawback of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is highly unusual. It is unprecedented to release legal opinions. They are between the lawyers and government. However, what we will do is provide a summary of the report, Mr. Speaker, if the Member so wishes, because it will give fairly well the gist of the information. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 35-14(5): Clawback of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a precedent has been set in this House where legal opinions have been shared with other Members of this House, and shared within this House. So the precedent has been set. It is

there. It has been done. I would like to ask the Minister how soon we can get copies of that legal opinion?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 35-14(5): Clawback of Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it was provided to me on a confidential basis and I am prepared to provide a summary of the report, which will give the details of what the Members wish to see. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Question 36-14(5): Affordable Housing in Small Communities

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on a line of questioning relating to my Member's statement. The Housing Corporation and the CMHC will be receiving some new funding over the next five years to address affordable housing in the North. I would like to ask the Minister if he could inform this House how the funding will be allocated amongst our communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 36-14(5): Affordable Housing in Small Communities

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will reiterate my previous answer. As of yesterday, when I was asked the same question, we have approximately 11 different home ownership type of programs delivered throughout the Northwest Territories.

What we said and what we did commit to was the idea of looking at those communities in greatest need, reinvesting a portion of that money into those communities. We will further review other communities that are lesser in need. We will re-profile those monies in the same regions but to those communities that are in the greatest need. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary to Question 36-14(5): Affordable Housing in Small Communities

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister provide to this House how his action plan will demonstrate commitment to the people of the North in terms of developing more affordable housing in the smaller communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 36-14(5): Affordable Housing in Small Communities

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will use a customary approach here and I will make a Minister's statement and also table a strategic document prior to the conclusion of this session. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary to Question 36-14(5): Affordable Housing in Small Communities

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to hear that the Minister will be tabling information. I would like to ask him if he could give us an indication of when we can expect to see that -- this week, next week, the week after?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 36-14(5): Affordable Housing in Small Communities

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I was advised that it is near completion. It will be presented to myself as the Minister for final review and approval and I will submit that to the House accordingly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 37-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Addictions Counsellors

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement, I spoke of the vital role played by drug and alcohol addictions counsellors in northern communities. The cost of drug and alcohol addictions, as I said in my statement, is enormous, both socially and economically. Yet despite their importance, drug and alcohol counsellors are currently not legislated as a profession in the NWT. This means that the public has no assurance that the counsellors are certified, that they are meeting the professional standards, that they go through any regular process of re-examination or certification for their skills and competencies.

I would like to ask the Minister for Health and Social Services, what sort of qualifications do you require to be an alcohol and drug counsellor in the NWT? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 37-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Addictions Counsellors

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the requirements would be somewhat dated. They used to have arrangements with Nats' Ejee K'eh. Then there was a drug and alcohol program through the college. I take the Member's concern that this is clearly an area that attention needs to be paid to and I am prepared to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary to Question 37-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Addictions Counsellors

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, the ongoing research and new information in addictions counselling needs to be accessed and implemented in the North. I understand that a presentation was made to the department on this issue and that the department has yet to respond. Will the Minister commit to reviewing this situation and the need for legislation establishing the profession of drug and alcohol counsellors? When I speak of presentation, I refer to the presentation under the Addiction Intervention Association, Canadian Addiction Counsellor Certification Board, this material that was presented to the department. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 37-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Addictions Counsellors

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, I will, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary to Question 37-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Addictions Counsellors

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware that the department is currently preparing a multidiscipline Health and Social Services professions legislation. Will the Minister ensure that drug and alcohol counsellors are made a part of this new legislation and support that with the necessary resources? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 37-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Addictions Counsellors

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the area identified by my colleague is one that will be considered. We also want to look at social workers as well. I look forward to the advice and direction and working with the committee as we move forward with that legislation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary to Question 37-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Addictions Counsellors

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister indicated that he is not aware of what the current requirement is to act and be on the payroll as a drug and alcohol counsellor in the Northwest Territories at this time. Would he be aware of credentials of people who are on the government payroll?

He is not telling me what the necessary standard is, but what is the standard of people who are already involved in this profession? For example, Nats' Ejee K'eh, which is our residential treatment facility? Is the department aware of the qualifications people are receiving, either through NGOs or through health boards? What kinds of qualifications do they have at the present time? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 37-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Addictions Counsellors

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can indicate to the Member that I am aware of the longer-serving drug and alcohol counsellors in the communities having taken advantage of the training through NICI.

What the current training qualifications, education, experience that the people at Nats' Ejee K'eh have, I cannot say. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

Question 38-14(5): Extended Downpayment Assistance Program

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister in charge of the Housing Corporation, Minister Allen, with regard to the Extended Down Payment Assistance Program. I understand that in order to qualify for this program in Yellowknife, you have to meet the minimum threshold of somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$52,000 per year. Is that correct?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 38-14(5): Extended Downpayment Assistance Program

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I understand that those numbers are correct.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

Supplementary to Question 38-14(5): Extended Downpayment Assistance Program

MR. BELL: I also understand that in order to qualify for this program, you have to meet several other criteria. You have to be either in public housing or on the public housing wait list. Is that correct?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 38-14(5): Extended Downpayment Assistance Program

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Mr. Speaker, I believe that is one of the criteria. If you are in public housing and can afford home ownership, then it is our intention to put those people who are at the high end of the rent scale into home ownership.

If those who are on the waiting list are those who would qualify under existing programs, we would try to accommodate them as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

Supplementary to Question 38-14(5): Extended Downpayment Assistance Program

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess here is the dilemma. In order to be in public housing or on the wait list, you cannot make more than \$43,000 per year. In order to access the EDAP program, you have to make \$52,000 per year. What do we do about the people who fall in between?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 38-14(5): Extended Downpayment Assistance Program

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, they do have a program called the IHP, the Independent Housing Program, that really should meet those clients who are in that area. I think the intention here is to review the current policy and see if we can address it so that it does meet the ever-growing demand for home ownership.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Bell.

Supplementary to Question 38-14(5): Extended Downpayment Assistance Program

MR. BELL: Thank you. Will the Minister commit, in reviewing the EDAP program, to make sure that the minimum threshold income level meets exactly with the amount of money you cannot make any more than to be on public housing, so that there is no gap? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 38-14(5): Extended Downpayment Assistance Program

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we have heard that message loud and clear and we will certainly make that a priority in our review of the existing criteria. We will try to apply that accordingly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

Question 39-14(5): Addictions Facility for the Dogrib Region

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. In my statement I mentioned addictions, prevention and healing in the Dogrib region. I would like to ask the Minister, since the Dogrib people have invested \$500,000 in training their counsellors, will the Minister commit to putting a facility in the Dogrib region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 39-14(5): Addictions Facility for the Dogrib Region

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will commit to working with the Member to look at the needs in the North Slave. I know he is very keen on a facility. We have a limited amount of funds. We spend \$5.6 million currently in alcohol and drug services and we have about five requests that I am aware of as Minister for facilities of various kinds in the Northwest Territories.

We have Nats' Ejee K'eh, which has about 30 beds, giving us four times the national average in terms of residential facilities. We have to decide and look at bricks and mortar, or is it a program issue that can be better served by looking at enhancing the kind of services we already have, such as mobile treatment for youth and women and other support services in the community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 39-14(5): Addictions Facility for the Dogrib Region

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We did hear about mobile treatment. We have not seen results that were successful. The Deputy Premier made a press release saying that we remain committed to investment, not only to take advantage of economic opportunities, but to improve the quality of life for all constituents.

This is a statement that I think should tell the Minister that the Cabinet is committed to putting facilities and trying to help all constituents. Will he commit to not only trying to look at programs but at putting facilities in? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 39-14(5): Addictions Facility for the Dogrib Region

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the government is committed to making investments into Health and Social Services to ensure that the level of service is appropriate for our needs. I am committed to that as well. The action plan that we are implementing will be seeking to address that. I can tell the Member that I will be coming back to Cabinet and to this House for appropriations as

we cost out some of the initiatives that are there once we get approval from Cabinet.

We are committed to making strategic investments as they are deemed appropriate. We will very seriously consider the Member's request. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 39-14(5): Addictions Facility for the Dogrib Region

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we are all aware, if someone is doing good things in the community, then we should reward them. I think this is one area where they should be rewarded.

I would also like to ask the Minister, we have liquor taxes. I am wondering, we are getting \$5.6 million now. Where are we putting that money for aiding prevention and addiction? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 39-14(5): Addictions Facility for the Dogrib Region

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure of the question. We have about \$5.6 million split out amongst the various authorities, as well as there are specific program areas such as mobile treatment for youth and for women and southern placements. If the Member wishes, I can go to my notes here and read off the list.

If he is asking where the liquor taxes are spent, I am not in a position to answer that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 39-14(5): Addictions Facility for the Dogrib Region

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you. My question was just to ask the Minister if some of this money we are getting from the liquor taxes is going back into addictions and healing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 39-14(5): Addictions Facility for the Dogrib Region

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, very clearly the money that comes from liquor taxes goes into general revenue. The departmental budget, which is almost \$200 million, has one component, about \$5.6 million, that is dedicated towards alcohol and drug services at present. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Question 40-14(5): Nature of Impact Benefit Agreements

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question this afternoon is for the Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. It is following the Member's statement I made today on impact benefits and the clawback policy of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

Mr. Speaker, I am trying to ascertain if it is a -- if chiefs and councils who provide their members with financial reward based on negotiated settlements with industry on impact benefit agreements, if that is an earned or unearned income. One of the ways we could determine that is to determine who is able to negotiate with industry for impact benefit agreements and participation agreements.

Asking the question to Mr. Ootes yesterday, his response was groups of people negotiating with industry. My understanding is Lutsel'ke, the Yellowknives, the Dogrib Nation, the Inuit of Kugluktuk, the North Slave Metis, have negotiated with Diavik. Those are examples of some of the communities.

I would like to ask the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs if he is aware of any other groups that have negotiated with BHP and/or Diavik? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 40-14(5): Nature of Impact Benefit Agreements

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to have to look at this carefully, because the honourable Member is asking who negotiates with the diamond mines. There are all kinds of negotiations that go on. He mentioned the impact benefit agreements, participation agreements. There are different companies that negotiate contracts and arrangements with these diamond mines as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah. If you could possibly phrase it a little differently, perhaps it would be a little easier to understand the question. It is a very complex one. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 40-14(5): Nature of Impact Benefit Agreements

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it would be nice to know of other groups and companies that have negotiated impact benefit agreements with industry. It does not have to be BHP and Diavik. I think negotiations of impact benefit agreements happen across and down the Mackenzie Valley. Can the Minister tell me if these are compensation for loss of use of the land and loss of resources? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 40-14(5): Nature of Impact Benefit Agreements

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I understand the line of questioning. I was listening to this line of questioning from yesterday and flowing into today with regard to the First Nations that have negotiated impact benefit agreements with the diamond mines, and to determine whether it is based on their traditional use of the land, compensation. It is an area where it is difficult to explain very specifically about it, so I am going to have to take this question as notice, as I think it is a very important question to review. I will get back to the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The question has been taken as notice, Mr. Nitah. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Question 41-14(5): Lot Development in Tax-Based Communities

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question at this time will be directed to the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, and falls in line with a question he was asked earlier by Mr. Braden in the area of municipal services and what programs are available. The Minister's response got my attention, saying that there are limited programs available for tax-based communities. Inuvik was mentioned, its programs and services and the impact of sudden development in a municipality of that size. He did say that developers that are in those communities would be able to take advantage of what was happening and be more ready to move on those.

Mr. Speaker, I will give an example to the Minister and will seek some information from him. The example, Mr. Speaker, is in the community of Inuvik. The municipality put out a request for proposals for development of a number of lots. No private developer would take that up. That was because of the fact that if the sales do not go well, they are left holding on to that and nobody wants to be in a position of losing money.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to know from the Minister, in tax-based communities, what programs are available for tax-based communities to access in land development? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 41-14(5): Lot Development in Tax-Based Communities

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member for that example. Those concerns were part of the reason why we initially had a proposal to Cabinet, whereby there was a suggestion that the government may be able to subsidize some of the lots in tax-based communities. In particular, those tax-based communities that were being impacted, like Inuvik and Yellowknife. However, FMB and Cabinet did not agree with that proposal, mainly because we felt that these lots were -- there was no shortage of lots. If we keep in mind that what we were trying to accomplish here was to assist communities to make lots available for the public in the smaller communities, what you have just described as a problem with developers coming in and taking the risk of developing lots on the chance of selling them is a fact of life in

the smaller communities. Therefore, MACA has agreed to come up with a program to develop an inventory of lots in small communities, say five, ten -- whatever the community sees as a possibility of being able to use in a given number of years.

Now, obviously what you have identified in Inuvik is part of the same concern that was in the smaller communities. However, the only policy MACA has to assist tax-based communities is what I said earlier to the Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden. We offered debentures to the community, or the other option they have is to go straight to the Minister of Finance and request a loan that the government may be able to take on behalf of them and offer them better rates. In other words, offer a loan to the community. That is the only policy I have in place at this time, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 41-14(5): Lot Development in Tax-Based Communities

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister then inform us that in fact, in non-tax-based communities, in small communities, that MACA already has a program in place that would see lot development and that they would qualify for that, correct?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs -- a short answer, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 41-14(5): Lot Development in Tax-Based Communities

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, a short answer. There was at one time a program in place in the small communities where MACA developed lots. That was phased out but we are putting it back in place now. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Short supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 41-14(5): Lot Development in Tax-Based Communities

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is that in small communities by debenture as well?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 41-14(5): Lot Development in Tax-Based Communities

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, that is not by debenture. That is simply MACA bearing the cost of developing and retrieving the cost through the sale of the land or through the leases. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 41-14(5): Lot Development in Tax-Based Communities

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So in tax-based communities, development of land is potentially by debenture or borrowing money through the government, but the people who would be responsible would be the ratepayers in that community, correct?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 41-14(5): Lot Development in Tax-Based Communities

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is correct.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 42-14(5): Harmonization of Housing and Income Support Programs

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. It is regarding the harmonization of housing and income support.

I still have a lot of concern with regard to the harmonization, especially for elders. A lot of the elders we are talking about who are now in housing units have either retired or built up a pension. They have worked 20 or 30 years, in most cases all their lives, to finally enjoy their retirement, and now we have a program where the biggest effect that I see, looking at the drafts we have, will be the increases that will affect the seniors. I really have a problem where these people have a fixed income, they have worked for their pensions, and now as a government here again we are clawing back revenues that our seniors should be enjoying.

I would like to ask the Minister exactly, between now and the review that is going to take place until October, will he do a thorough review with the focus on those seniors who have either given up their houses to move into low-income housing units that this government has, because they were told that they were going to get a better deal if they moved into the housing unit rather than trying to maintain their own unit?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 42-14(5): Harmonization of Housing and Income Support Programs

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to advise the Member that I have begun the discussion with our NWT Housing Corporation officials to itemize all the seniors who will be impacted across the Northwest Territories, so that we may provide them with other options in the interim, and to also look at perhaps those who want to remain in public housing to introduce a graduated rent scale. Those are at least two of several options we are currently discussing, and hopefully we will be able to roll that into the review and help

alleviate the stress that has been experienced by some of the elders. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 42-14(5): Harmonization of Housing and Income Support Programs

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my other concern was with regard to the seniors who had their own units, private residency, and then they made a choice. They thought they were going to be treated better by either relinquishing their houses to other family members and they moved into a housing unit of this government, being told that they would not be paying any rent. We are reviewing that and now we are going to charge them. Could you check and see what the implication of that will be on the seniors who gave up their own housing units to move into public housing?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 42-14(5): Harmonization of Housing and Income Support Programs

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, that is one of the areas that is well thought out. Again, that is going to be part of the discussion on a one-on-one basis with seniors, so that we can ascertain whether there was a commitment on the part of a previous government. Then it becomes more of a question of whether we are obligated to honour that commitment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 42-14(5): Harmonization of Housing and Income Support Programs

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the other area that I also touched on was pensions. A lot of these people have 20 or 30 years with either this government or they have worked their way through industry and they built up their pensions over the last number of years and they are now living off those pensions. They earned that pension.

I would like to know if the government is going to look at the pensions, knowing that some of these people have put a lot of money into these pensions and now we are going to be clawing them back based on a certain percentage. I would like to ask the Minister if he will also do a thorough review on the average pensions and also the ones at the maximum end of the scale and the ones at the minimum, to ensure that we are not taking anything more back from the seniors than we would be taking back from other clients of the Housing Corporation?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 42-14(5): Harmonization of Housing and Income Support Programs

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will speak in the context of the NWT Housing Corporation Act where we may

be able to introduce several options to the seniors. Again, in the context of public education, we want to make the seniors aware that they are entitled to heating fuel subsidies, taxation subsidy and a number of other subsidies that are in place. We want to take a comprehensive look at what we can do to assist those seniors who will be adversely impacted and then again, try to prorate what level of rent will be assessed. We want to give them an opportunity, if they want, to elect to go back into home ownership or perhaps remain in public housing units. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 42-14(5): Harmonization of Housing and Income Support Programs

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister also commit to have a thorough inquiry or review with all senior societies and seniors in general up and down the Valley, and take the time to ensure that they are being properly heard and that we are finding a mechanism here where we do not shortchange the seniors by this harmonization that is taking place?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 42-14(5): Harmonization of Housing and Income Support Programs

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the guiding principles in the harmonization, and the reason why we proposed a deferral, is to take a comprehensive approach to how we want to deal with all seniors across the NWT.

I think when the Member expresses those details, we need to comply with that request because we did talk to several seniors. Some indicated support for the program and others indicated they were not in support. We need to look at it overall and come back to the Members with some certainty as to how the seniors feel and where they would be most impacted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

Question 43-14(5): Legal Opinion on Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, the Honourable Jake Ootes. I would like to ask the Minister what funds were used to pay for the legal interpretation on the clawbacks of IBAs and PBAs when he received this interpretation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 43-14(5): Legal Opinion on Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not believe there were funds involved in terms of the transaction. It was provided by the Department of Justice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 43-14(5): Legal Opinion on Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad the Minister cleared that up. Since we know that the Department of Justice is representing the public, and the funding that was used was public funds, why is the Minister, Cabinet or the department withholding this public information? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. I would just caution Members on the language. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 43-14(5): Legal Opinion on Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In many cases, a lot of the opinions provided are such that they are provided on a confidential basis. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 43-14(5): Legal Opinion on Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we all know, everybody in the House here is working for the public and to be withholding information paid by the public from the public is not right. Could the Minister please work with his colleagues and his department to see if he cannot give the information to the public? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 43-14(5): Legal Opinion on Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly through the provision of a summary of this, we can provide the information that was provided. I think it will be clear what information was contained in that document. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 43-14(5): Legal Opinion on Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have an obligation to the public to give them everything that we have and we should be accountable for everything. I would ask the Minister that when he gives the information out that he does not summarize it, but that he gives us everything. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 43-14(5): Legal Opinion on Impact Benefit Agreement Payments

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the summary will be fairly comprehensive and should answer the questions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The time for question period has ended. Item 8, written questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

ITEM 8: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 1-14(5): Personnel Policies for Excluded Employees

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My written question is for the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Premier of the Northwest Territories. It is regarding personnel policies for excluded employees.

As you may be aware, there has been an increased discussion and concerns raised about the lack of personnel policies for excluded and senior staff of the GNWT. In particular, there seems to be a lack of formal process in which grievances between staff and officials can be dealt with in an acceptable manner.

Recently, these issues were brought to my attention by constituents and other concerned GNWT staff, who feel that a lack of a process may leave employees vulnerable to the whims of senior or elected officials.

If we wish to be able to recruit and retain top-level talent, this is a perception I believe we need to address.

Therefore, I would appreciate your views on how this government could effectively address these issues on behalf of this segment of employees who are not afforded representation by a union.

I believe it is vital we demonstrate the value we place on all our employees, including those in senior or excluded positions in this government, by providing them with the security, which is apparently lacking. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to the opening address. Item 11, replies to the budget address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

ITEM 14: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 1-14(5): NWT Health and Social Services System Action Plan 2002-2005

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled

NWT Health and Social Services System Action Plan 2002-2005. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Allen.

ITEM 18: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 1: Human Rights Act

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that Bill 1, Human Rights Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. We have a motion. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 1 has had first reading.

Item 18, first reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

Bill 3: An Act to Amend the Public Service Act

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. We have a motion. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 3 has had first reading.

Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 19: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 2: Appropriation Act, 2002-2003

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 2, Appropriation Act, 2002-2003, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the Government of the Northwest Territories to make operations expenditures and capital investment expenditures for the 2002-2003 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 2 has had second reading and accordingly, the bill stands referred to committee of the whole for today.

-- Applause

Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters; Bill 2, Committee Reports 1-14(5), 2-14(5) and 3-14(5), with Mr. Delorey in the chair.

ITEM 20: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): I will call committee of the whole to order to review Bill 2 and Committee Reports 1-14(5), 2-14(5) and 3-14(5). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend the committee consider Bill 2 and Committee Reports 1-14(5), 2-14(5) and 3-14(5) concurrently. Specifically, to get into general comments on the budget. Perhaps, depending on how quickly we get through that, we might even get into consideration of the budget for Health and Social Services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you. I will call a 15-minute break at this time.

-- Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): I will call the committee of the whole back to order. We are going to consider Bill 2, Appropriation Act, 2002-2003. I will open the floor to general comments. There are no general comments. Does the committee agree that we are done with Bill 2?

-- Laughter

We will proceed with the Department of Health and Social Services?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Okay. The Minister is not here.

We will proceed with the Department of Health and Social Services. Does the Minister have any opening comments?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, today I am pleased to introduce the main estimates for the Department of Health and Social Services for the 2002-2003 fiscal year. The department is requesting a total of \$199,282,000. This represents a 9.4 percent, or \$17.12 million increase over the department's 2001-2002 allocation. Just over \$147 million or 74 percent of the budget is allocated to health and social services authorities.

The department's budget request is allocated to five main areas of activity:

- Program delivery support, \$24 million, which provides a system-wide focus and assistance in the delivery of programs, both by the department and by the authorities. Supports include recruitment, training, systems development and support, as well as the administration of health insurance programs and authority operations;

- Health services programs, for \$103.5 million, include in-patient and out-patient care, public health, chronic care and physician services, which is largely delivered through health centres, public health clinics, physician clinics, hospitals and insured facilities in southern Canada;
- Supplementary health programs for \$13.4 million, which are additional benefits provided to NWT residents in accordance with various policies, and includes extended health benefits, Metis health benefits, indigenous health benefits and medical travel benefits;
- Community health programs for \$50.1 million, which are aimed at developing community wellness through health promotion activities, a range of services directed at children, including early childhood development, and family services to adults; and
- Ministry and corporate services, \$8.1 million, which provides systems, leadership and development planning, policy and legislation, monitoring and evaluation and administrative support.

Cost implications of the Health and Social Services Action Plan 2002-2005 are not included for the most part in the main estimates. The 45 actions outlined in the plan are focused on improving services through better coordination, collaboration and planning, primarily within existing resources. However, there is recognition that the implementation of the plan will require some investment. Detailed implementation plans, including associated costs, are being developed and any resource requirements will be incorporated into the business planning process.

The department is proposing to invest over \$9 million in several important areas during the 2002-2003 fiscal year.

Improving child protection and family support services, through the addition of ten child protection workers and enhanced training;

- Continued implementation of the early childhood development initiative, \$1.7 million;
- Standardized physician contracts, \$1.46 million;
- Fully funded medical clinic operating costs, \$1.4 million;
- Accelerated development of new and revised legislation, \$500,000;
- Enhancing communicable disease control, \$320,000;
- Enhancing access to cancer screening, \$270,000;
- Development of an on-call centre, \$250,000; and
- Supporting enhanced telehealth programs, \$200,000.

In addition, \$1.5 million is being invested in providing enhanced education and training opportunities for health and social services workers throughout the system. Support is being

extended to all categories of front-line health and social services providers, not only doctors, nurses and social workers.

Forced growth of \$8.1 million has been added to meet the increased costs of providing existing services. This is largely attributable to an extensive effort this past year working with the authorities to identify forced growth pressures on a system-wide basis.

Mr. Chairman, people of the Northwest Territories are our greatest resource. Continuing development of the North, whether it is social, economic or political development, is dependant upon the strength of our northern communities. As we continue our efforts to promote economic growth and prosperity, we are also working with our partners, including representatives of aboriginal governments and non-government organizations, to establish a social agenda that will provide a framework to affect change and improve the quality of life of our citizens.

The programs and services offered through funding of the department are an essential part of our social safety net. They are oriented to support healthy, self-reliant Northerners who can fully participate in the opportunities that the North provides.

The proposed budget for the 2002-2003 year will strengthen current activities and help Northerners to work towards their goals. I welcome the opportunity to answer any questions Members may have as you consider these main estimates. I also would like to take this quick opportunity to say hello to my wife, since she is going to be catching a plane and this is probably the only time I am going to see her this week. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Welcome, Jeri, to the House. Does the chairman of the Social Programs committee have any comments? Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Yes, we do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Social Programs met with the Minister and his officials on January 22, 2002 to discuss the 2002-2003 Main Estimates for the Department of Health and Social Services.

Since the review of the business plans, members noted a reduction of \$49,000 related to funding for boards for collective agreements; an increase of \$189,000 in the amortization estimate; a new initiative for \$500,000 related to the development of a legislative action plan and a transfer of \$50,000 to the Department of Public Works and Services for funding of office space, under operations expense.

Members noted that there were no changes to the capital acquisition plan since the review of the business plans for the Department of Health and Social Services.

A full and frank discussion on the future of the Health and Social Services system was held between the Minister and the members of the committee. It should be noted that the action plan for the Department of Health and Social Services has not been incorporated into these main estimates. Consequently, the Minister has admitted, and the members of the committee fully expect, that there will be supplementary appropriations relating to the implementation of the action plan.

The standing committee tried to keep its comments confined to the actual main estimates, but as the future of health and social services is dependent on the content of the action plan, overlap has occurred. A report outlining the concerns of committee with the action plan has been forwarded under separate cover.

Telehealth

Mr. Chairman, members of the standing committee are disappointed that there were no funds in the capital acquisition plan to expand the Telehealth Program into other communities in the 2002-2003 fiscal year. Members could get no sense of the department's enthusiasm for telehealth in the discussions with the Minister and his officials.

The standing committee is concerned that the department could not justify the expansion of the Telehealth Program over other seemingly less important capital projects. Members believe that if an established program like telehealth cannot survive the capital priority setting exercise, the system for allocating capital funding is fundamentally flawed.

Members believe that telehealth provides an opportunity for faster diagnosis and treatment that lowers chronic care costs in the long run. It is noted that the department has budgeted \$200,000 under operations expense for systems enhancements to the existing Telehealth Program. Members hope that the changes brought about by the implementation of the action plan will provide the department with an opportunity to refocus and expand the program in subsequent years.

Information Technology Plan

The Standing Committee on Social Programs noted that the success of the action plan is dependent on flow of information between the health and social services authorities and the department.

Members of the standing committee have commented in previous reports to the Assembly that it is imperative for the fiscal reporting relationship between the authorities and the department to be standardized and that there be a common software platform used by both parties. The committee has also identified a need to standardize human resource systems and reporting mechanisms.

Committee members were pleased to see that the Minister's action plan provides for the standardization of the human resource and financial functions of the health authorities and the Department of Health and Social Services. Members are however concerned, given the situation with telehealth not surviving the capital allocation exercise, that the same fate may happen to the IT plan. This is not acceptable. If the action plan is to have any chance of changing the health and social services system for the better, there must be clear and effective communication between the health and social service authorities and the department. Part of that clear and effective communication will involve upgrading software and computer hardware platforms.

In his opening remarks to the committee, the Minister advised that the comprehensive cost of implementing the action plan was not factored into this main estimate and that the committee could expect to see requests for supplementary funding. It is hoped that the capital requirements for the IT component of the action plan are included in a supplementary request.

Edmonton Nurses

The Standing Committee on Social Programs has some concerns about the nurses in Edmonton that provide support and make health decisions on behalf of Northerners. The major concern is that these nurses are employees of the Capital Health Authority and that their first loyalty is to that organization.

Members are not concerned about the quality of care provided or recommended by the nurses. Rather, they are concerned that medical decisions may be made without regard to cost to the Department of Health and Social Services. One example would be a nurse recommending a course of medical treatment in Edmonton without realizing that the same course of treatment could be readily delivered at Stanton with a little planning.

It is understood that the contract with the Capital Health Authority is under re-negotiation. Members believe that it is an appropriate time to do a cost-benefit analysis of hiring our own nurses to deliver services to Northerners in Edmonton.

Mr. Chairman, at the appropriate time, we will move the following recommendation:

Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Social Programs recommends that the Department of Health and Social Services examine the costs and benefits of hiring our own nurses to deliver the programs that are presently provided by nurses employed by the Capital Health Authority.

Board Deficits

The Standing Committee on Social Programs notes that the Minister will be coming forward with a supplementary appropriation to implement a 60/40 split with the health authorities on deficit reduction. This still means that each of the health authorities is responsible for 40 percent of their accumulated deficits with the exception of the Lutselk'e and Deninoo Boards, who will have any deficits wiped out prior to amalgamation with another health authority. Members also noted that the Minister stated that the new Sahtu Health Authority's share of the Inuvik Regional Health Authority's deficit would be the subject of negotiation. Members found it perplexing that the department would contemplate forming a new health authority in a deficit position.

The Minister's action plan calls for clarifying roles and responsibilities between the department and the health authorities by February 2003. The action plan also calls for the design and implementation of a revised funding model for the health authorities by April of 2004.

Members of the committee point out that the action plan makes it clear that accountability and fiscal frameworks for the health authorities are under development. There appears to be nothing to prevent the health authorities, under the current frameworks, from running up a further deficit prior to the implementation of accountability frameworks or funding formulas called for in the action plan.

The Minister asserts that the 60/40 split on the deficits of the health authorities coupled with the implementation of the action

plan will effectively wipe the slate clean for each of the health authorities and provide them with a fresh start. The Minister also implied that the health authorities would be responsible for their own deficits less agreed forced growth increases.

Members are concerned that some health authorities, either before or after the implementation of the action plan, may initiate programs that put the authority into a deficit position. The point is ultimately the Department of Health and Social Services is responsible for the deficit that any of the health authorities accumulate. The government and the department cannot allow any health authority to cut essential services to the public to deal with a deficit financial position.

The standing committee looks forward to receiving copies of each of the health authorities' deficit recovery plans incorporating the 60/40 split on accumulated deficit.

Medical Travel

The Standing Committee on Social Programs has commented on their concerns about the application of the department's medical travel policy in past reports to this Assembly.

Many of the complaints that MLAs get from their constituents are about the uneven application of the medical travel policy by the individual health authorities. As well, because many extended families have relatives in different health authorities, they talk about the differences of application for each authority. The lack of perceived consistency breeds resentment between communities and families.

Members of the committee look forward to the results of the review of the extended health benefits that is currently underway. There is hope that, as a result of this study, a clear, concise and evenly applied policy on medical travel can be developed and communicated to the residents of the Northwest Territories.

Child Protection Workers

Members note that ten new child protection workers are budgeted for in this main estimate. These workers are being hired as a result of recommendations contained in the Child Protection League of Canada's Report on Child Welfare in the Northwest Territories from a couple of years ago.

At the time of the review of the main estimates at the committee level, the Department of Health and Social Services had not yet determined which communities would be receiving child protection workers. Members look forward to the promised information on where these workers will be posted and the rationalization for the department's decision.

Child Advocate

During the review of the main estimates, Members noted that no mention was made of funding or creating a child advocate position within the Department of Health and Social Services. Upon questioning of the Minister, it was revealed that the department is expecting to complete a study on such a position by the end of fiscal year 2001-2002.

Members support the creation of a child advocate position and look forward to reviewing the results of the department's study early in the next fiscal year.

Southern Placements and Long-Term Care

Members are still concerned with the number of residents placed in southern institutions. It was noted in the Report on the Review of the 2002-2005 Business Plans that it was important for the department to continue to examine the costs of southern placements versus the economics of providing the service in the Northwest Territories. In our discussions with the Minister, he admitted that southern placements was one area experiencing forced growth and that he will be asking for a supplementary appropriation to deal with the funding shortfall.

The standing committee would ask that the department be ever vigilant in repatriating Northerners from southern institutions. The members look forward to reviewing the department's Continuing Care Strategy once it is finalized.

Increase in the Number of Children in Foster Care

The Minister informed the committee that he would be coming forward with a supplementary appropriation to deal with an increase in the number of children in foster care. Members, along with the Minister, are concerned that the department cannot readily identify the reason for the significant increase in the number of children in foster care.

The Minister agreed with the committee that we had to establish the reason for the increase in the number of children going into foster care and develop a response to the strain on the system. The department is conducting a review of the cases and will be providing the committee with their finding once the analysis is completed.

Members were also concerned that there were disparities in the rates paid to foster care parents between the different communities. This is a concern that has been brought to MLAs by constituents. The department has agreed to do a better job in communicating the rationalization for the differences in foster care payments to foster parents.

Prevention and Promotion

Members noted that prevention and promotion is highlighted in the Department of Health and Social Service's vision and in Towards a Better Tomorrow. Members could not find prevention and promotion programs highlighted in the main estimates or in the business plans.

The department needs to do a better job in communicating the consequences of destructive behaviour to Northerners. People need to have an understanding of the costs of their behaviour on the health and social services system in the Northwest Territories.

Access to Healthcare in the Communities

In those communities without a hospital, access to a healthcare professional is restricted to office hours unless it is an emergency. If you have a medical problem you go to the clinic and wait to see the nurse. If you have not been seen by closing time you are asked to go home and come in tomorrow. The next day the same process could repeat itself.

The wait to see the nurses is also complicated by the number of programs, such as Well Baby and prenatal clinics that are run during regular clinic hours. While the nurses run these

important programs, no one is seen in the clinic, which further compounds any patient backlog.

One Member had asked his health authority whether the clinic could be open in the evening. He stated that discussions with the staff of the nursing station had indicated that there were no objections to such a system. The health authority would not consider opening in the evening, citing union agreements prevented them from implementing such a schedule.

Members realize that it is not practical to staff nursing stations and health centres on a 24-hour basis. However, evening clinic hours should be considered to improve access to the healthcare system in the smaller communities. If it is true that union agreements do not allow such arrangements, this should be discussed during the current contract negotiations.

Health Authorities Support

If the action plan is to be successful, it will be necessary to dramatically enhance the board support function at the department level.

Members expect to see a supplementary appropriation in the near future related to increases required to provide the proper support to the new health authorities.

Administration Costs for the Health Authorities

It appears to members of the committee that the administration costs for the health and social services authorities are significantly higher than those incurred by the district education authorities.

This could be a false impression because it is not clear whether health and social services authorities consider the same items as administration costs as the education authorities do. Members are extremely interested in comparing administration costs between the two entities and in determining the reasons for any major differences.

The Standing Committee on Social Programs believes that there should be a standardization of what constitutes administration costs at the authority level between the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

Mr. Chairman, at the appropriate time, we will move the following recommendation:

Recommendation 2

The Standing Committee on Social Programs recommends that the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment work together to standardize, as much as possible, the allocating and reporting of administration costs at the authority level.

Family Violence Prevention Act

Members of the Standing Committee on Social Programs still see the development and passage of family violence prevention legislation as a major objective for this Assembly.

The Minister of Health and Social Services is strongly encouraged to press the Department of Justice to develop the necessary legislation.

Health Funding to the Dene Nation

Members noted that under grants and contributions for community health programs, there is a heading entitled Health Awareness, Activities and Education. This money is supposedly for organizations and local governments to promote increased understanding of health awareness, health related activities and education.

In actual fact, the \$143,000 listed is a grant made to the Dene Nation and there is no other money available to organizations and local governments for health awareness. This grant followed the transfer of health programs from the federal government in 1988.

The Minister has provided the committee with information on the programs and services that the Dene Nation uses the \$143,000 for.

In the future, members would like to see this grant properly identified as going to the Dene Nation.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes our report on the review of the 2002-2003 main estimates for the Department of Health and Social Services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Would the Minister like to bring in any witnesses?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I would.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Sergeant-at-Arms, would you escort the witnesses in please? Mr. Minister, for the record, could you introduce your witnesses, please?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me Mr. Mark Cleveland, deputy minister of Health and Social Services, and Warren St. Germaine, director of financial and management services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. We will go on to general comments. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, one of the areas that I am most interested in is an area that we did not hear anything about in the budget, as was highlighted by the committee report that Mr. Bell just read. That has to do with the child advocate. I was wondering if the Minister could update us as to the time lines? I know we were told that by the end of this fiscal year, we could expect to have some report, but knowing that we are going to be in session for half of the month of March, and then not again until probably June, I was wondering if there was any chance that he might have something to report to us on this initiative perhaps before the end of session?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I expect to be able to see the first cut of this report before the end of the fiscal year. Unfortunately, I do not think I will be able to commit to having something before the end of session but it is with the deputy minister and staff right now. Hopefully, it will be ready for my review by the end of the fiscal year, after which, I would be more than happy to meet with the Social Programs Committee to see where we go with this particular initiative. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Previously in this House, we had a very strong commitment from the former Minister of Health and Social Services that there was some significant interest in following up on this and establishing a position.

I just wanted to know if the current Minister maintains that position. Is he a strong supporter of the development of a child advocate's position within the Northwest Territories and will he be looking at ways to move the process along in establishing that position? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I like Mr. Dent's position. I think it has value and merit. I am interested to see how we can in fact make it a reality and in what shape that particular reality would take. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is the only issue I wanted to follow up on right now, thanks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is regarding the community health programs that the Minister mentioned. As we all know, in the last number of years, because of the stress on the system, especially in the Inuvik region where we actually had to have closures to our community health centres, in which, because of the lack of or shortage of nurses in our communities, I would like to ask the Minister a question.

What are you doing to ensure we have a system where we do not have the problems we have seen in the last number of years? It just seemed to be a regular occurrence in the last couple of years. We are seeing our health centres being closed down in our communities at certain times of the year. What are you doing to improve that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we are undertaking a number of initiatives, both broader ones and more immediate ones. Recruitment and retention has been identified by all the authorities as well as the department as the number one priority.

We are working to access a nurse locum pool. All of the authorities in the department agree that we have to work more effectively together in terms of recruiting nurses and retaining them.

We are working right now in the action plan and with the task groups to see in fact how we can do that more effectively. We have engaged in conversations and the involvement of the nursing association, as well as the doctors. We hope to be making some progress here.

We are also having a whole number -- dozens, I believe it is almost 70 nursing students -- who are currently in the system and we are looking at making all of the necessary arrangements to make sure that they stay in the North and fill these critical positions. So we have a number of initiatives underway. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The other area that I have concerns about is the lack of capacity in our communities to deal with the social issues, in light of the economic activity that is going on in our regions. We realize that there will be social implications in relation to that activity, especially in the area of alcohol and drugs, people who get into trouble with the law.

Elsewhere, we have seen the boom/bust scenario of the 70's. I would like to ask the Minister what he is doing to assist communities to deal with the social issues around economic development in our communities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that particular issue has been singularly identified within the action plan. The socio-economic impact of major resource development is recognized as having the kind of impact that Mr. Krutko mentioned.

We currently have a working group established within the Government of the Northwest Territories and we are going to be involving the federal government and we want to work with the aboriginal governments. I have also committed to Mr. Krutko and others that I am going to be going into the communities as well to see specifically and first hand what the concerns are.

The intent is to develop a process and a way to identify what those issues are and, on a project-by-project basis, come up with a plan that we can bring forward funds so that impacted communities can help mediate some of the negative impact of that kind of development. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on this particular matter, development has already occurred. It is in full swing. I think that, if anything, we are playing catch-up here. I do not think that we have the time to allow for this thing to go out to another committee or another special committee to travel around and try to find solutions to the problems.

The people in the communities know what the problems are, they know where the inequities are, and we know where the capacity has to be developed. Fort McPherson has developed a capacity development proposal and they have done a lot of work in that area. They are looking at focussing in other areas, not just the Government of the Northwest Territories. We are also looking at the Aboriginal Healing Foundation. We are looking through Brighter Futures and other funding sources out there. We cannot wait. We do not have the time to allow for what happened in the 70's and 80's to repeat itself.

In the communities I represent, we have had a lot of suicides since the last major boom. We have seen a lot of disparity to families, to people in our communities. I think as a government, we cannot continue to hesitate or even consider trying to reinvent the wheel here. We know what the issues are. We know how to deal with them. I think we have to start putting the resources where they are needed and not look at doing another major plan.

I would like to ask the Minister, where will the communities be able to fit into this process who may be in the situation where they have already started the legwork by developing plans and identifying resource people and identifying the areas of capacity that are needed to deal and cope with the stress and strain in our communities, and also the effects that we see from development?

Can the Minister tell me how soon this will take place and how do the communities fit into that process?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there are a couple of areas I would like to quickly touch on. As I indicated in my previous comments, steps are being taken to bring the departments to the table within government to put some special attention and focus on this particular issue.

As well, we already have in place in the regions and communities fairly extensive health and social services systems. It is the intent to use the systems that are there, the authorities that are there, the representatives that are there, along with the community leadership to identify not only the issues but the type of project that is determined to be best suited to meet some of those needs, at which point we will be doing this in a whole number of communities. We have to pull together the cost and then we have to go forward with an attempt to get the funding necessary to make these particular projects a reality.

The commitment is there in the action plan to do that. I agree with the Member. This is not a time for, as he said, reinventing the wheel, or taking months and months of study. We know that we are running late and it is not just oil and gas. We have the affected areas in the North Slave and other areas where there is resource development possibly pending.

This is a job that needs to get done and we do not have time to waste, as the Member indicated. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: One of the other areas that I feel this department has to look at is the whole area of identifying the inequities between what resource people in communities are being paid by way of salaries and benefits. Also, the community programs that are presently being carried out by the band council for mental health workers, social workers, alcohol and drug workers, that we have to bring them in line with the rest of the public sector in regard to the professional people in the different areas.

We cannot have an imbalance of salaries and wages between the community professions and people at the regional centres or the headquarters level. We have to somehow ensure that equitable resources are there so that we can pay these people for the job they are doing and the qualifications that they have. We should not continue to downgrade or undermine people's abilities simply by offering a community \$30,000 or \$40,000 and say, here, get a mental health worker.

You cannot do justice to that position by nickeling and diming it. That is something that I do not see in here. I think as a department that you should look at the ways people are treated because they are either not a government employee, they are employed by the community through the band or community councils. We have to somehow bring that in line that these people are working for the public. They are public employees in the sense of the word but we are not treating them like other public employees within the government.

I believe we really have to take a look at the inequity of the salaries of these people. I would like to ask the Minister, what are you doing to ensure that the inequities in salaries and benefits for the workers in our communities, that they are being treated fairly compared to other professions?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Krutko points to one of the human resource and funding problems we have within the current system. We recognize the benefit of having one employer, which is why, in the South Slave, we are initiating attempts to bring in Lutsek'e, Fort Resolution and Hay River under the UNW and under the department as employees.

There is, as the Member pointed out, a discrepancy or a difference between what our government employees are paid and what NGOs are funded for their staff. I do not have a quick answer. I know that part of our human resource strategy deals with that issue, I know there are very modest increases built into the budget for salary increases for NGOs.

In terms of dealing with it to the extent that the Member has suggested, at this point, I do not have the numbers to put on the table to demonstrate what the cost would be. I know that there is a significant difference and we have to quantify that and plan best how to move ahead if we are going to address it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The other week through the committee, we had a very interesting hour or so with a group of students who enrolled in the nursing program here in the Northwest Territories and we got some very interesting perspectives about the job and the profession and

the system that we have, and hopefully they will be going to work with.

One aspect that we asked them about and got a really strong endorsement of was telehealth. In fact, it was surprising to me how strongly and how vividly they endorsed this tool as something that would really make a difference. As we are focusing on the delivery of reliable quality health services, especially in the smaller communities, it would seem that accelerating the installation of telehealth as a diagnostic tool, and a good one, is an opportunity that we are missing as far as getting better health care services out to the communities in an economical way.

I wanted to see if the Minister could offer some information about when we will be able to see an actual expansion of that program. We know the \$200,000 is in the budget this year for an enhancement under the Telehealth Program. I do not know exactly what that means. Maybe we can get some information about that as well.

It is really the expansion into more communities of telehealth that I would like to see if we can find a bit more about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, for this current fiscal year that we are still in, there will be four new telehealth sites up and running; Holman, Deline, Hay River and Fort Simpson, which will bring the total to seven plus. For the reasons we discussed with the committee, in terms of the capital planning process, telehealth did not make the cut.

This coming year, we have the enhancements for the current services, which is to look at the equipment and services that are there for current programs. The following year, we plan to address once again the increased and continued expansion of the telehealth sites.

I share the Member's commitment that this is a very valuable way to do business and to deliver service and we have to possibly do more to address it more effectively than how we are making the case with the rest of government that this is definitely a service of benefit.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to that point, how able or how capable are we of actually expanding it? Are there some other barriers to getting this into more communities from a technological point of view? Is there enough infrastructure, in terms of wires and circuits and capacity, to be able to make this doable? Do other departments or perhaps industry have a role to play in making this possible? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is our assessment that the technology is there for the communities, for the basic service. We just have to ensure that the communities that the service is put into have the infrastructure on the ground as well to make use of the service.

We are going to be looking at, as time goes on, some bandwidth issues that have to be addressed, but very clearly one of the fundamental inhibitors right now is the money.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One other area that I would like to explore again relates to the committee report, the section called Edmonton nurses. Not so much the nurse situation there, but it is the broader area of how the Alberta system is looking at its overall process.

In the last three weeks, I think there was the Mazankowski report on how Alberta should go about reshaping or reprofiling its health care system. I wanted to ask the Minister, given our heavy reliance on the Alberta care system, what kind of impact or implications does or could the Mazinkowski report have for the quality of service that we get and the cost? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as I have indicated in some interviews with the press, we are watching very closely. We have a historic long-term relationship with the Capital Health Authority. We are renegotiating the contract, which has not been looked at since 1996. The Mazinkowski report makes some very specific recommendations such as de-listing some services.

Given the fact that the contract has not been looked at since 1996 and the possible impacts of some of the recommendations of the Mazinkowski report, we anticipate that there will be no real loss in quality but almost invariably, given just the time alone, that there are going to be cost increases. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does the department expect that those increases in cost could come into effect as soon as the upcoming fiscal year? Are we going to be looking at more appropriations to handle any increases? Should we be anticipating that? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The current contract expires at the end of March, so we do have some time pressures. There will be no break in service, but very clearly, the new contract will be coming into effect effective April 1st.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is going into the realm of speculation here, but given that we are expecting increases in costs, there may be -- I guess to whatever extent, we are going to be facing a bigger bill from Alberta. Is the department going to be looking, at the same time, at the value of trying to bring some of those services into the NWT rather than paying Alberta to provide them, if it is going to be costing

that much more? Are we going to be looking at equal value, if not savings, of perhaps bringing some of those things here into the NWT? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we look at trying to do the restructuring and realizing the better efficiencies in the system, it is only good sense that we are going to be looking at wherever we think there are possible efficiencies to be realized.

The area of southern services, be it for medical services or southern placements, are always under review. If there are clients capable of being repatriated, we want to be looking at how we do that. If there are services that can be demonstrated or that we can deliver more effectively in the North, we are going to look at that, but it is a very expensive business and it is very highly specialized. The more complex the medical situation, the more complex the procedures and equipment required. We are a jurisdiction of 42,000. We are cognizant of that, but our key goal is to make sure we have access to those services for our residents. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in the area of the Department of Health and Social Services, the Minister stated that there is going to be an increase of 9.4 percent, or \$17 million, in Health and Social Services, and goes on to state in a number of areas where there is going to be some new investments. I would like to get some information in these areas. One of the areas that the Minister has touched on is improving child protection/family support services through an additional ten child protection workers and enhanced training. I would like to know if the department has considered the impact that this potentially can have. Usually when you have more staff to be able to look after the issues, you are going to also have, for example, more child apprehensions. Is that something that is taken into consideration? You will see an increased cost to those child apprehensions as well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We very clearly have our fundamental issue of the protection of children, but the Member raises a good point. As you will no doubt note, I made a reference as well to foster care rates. We are trying to determine what in fact caused that.

There is the Child Welfare League Report that clearly identified that there was a shortfall of social workers and child protection workers, and we are just continuing the process trying to address that particular issue. Will there be cost due to increased apprehensions? That is definitely within the realm of possibility, and we are trying to determine what in fact has caused the spike in foster care, for example. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In that area, one of the concerns that comes up is the plan of care committees that

become established and that families are to work with department social workers to ensure that they are meeting the needs of their children. When they agree and sign these plan of care agreements, the department has put some resources to ensuring the family is able to deal with some of the situations they find themselves in. Not one where, in some cases, for one reason or another, that it almost becomes adversarial, where the child, as it is clearly stated, child protection worker is almost going against parents instead of keeping families together. We are seeing families being pulled apart. Now, there are legitimate reasons why this occurs from time to time, but hopefully, we will see families being pulled together instead of pulled apart as we get more staff being able to deal with them. Hopefully, with these new workers and existing ones, we will be able to deal with families as families, not as separate individuals.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member makes a very critical point in the issue of dealing with children and families, that you cannot effectively deal with a child separate from the family. The intent of the system is not to tear families apart, and that is a very good reminder to us. The intent is to try to work with the families, with the resources we have, to deal with the issues and when at all possible, keep the children in the homes and work through the issues and situations so that there is no further action required. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated, he talked about several important areas about putting more investment in, and this is an example of where we are actually seeing front line workers and staff added, which is a good thing to see.

There are a number of other areas that it went on to list. In the area of new initiatives, for example, standardizing physician contracts, and it lists about approximately \$1.46 million; fully funding medical clinic, operating costs, another \$1.4 million; accelerated development of new and revised legislation, \$500,000; enhancing communicable disease control, enhancing access to cancer screening, development of on-call centre, enhanced Telehealth Programs. Now, my concern is that -- it is good to hear that we are putting more money into initiatives with health and social services. A concern that I would have is how much of this is actually going to front line people, to programs that actually help individuals on the street who are in need of programs and services through this government.

For example, I can name a few of these right off the bat, that I do not see actually increasing the staff front line. It is, in fact, more of an internal program changes -- standardizing physician contracts, will that give us more doctors? Or is that going to just clear up the situation that we find ourselves in here in the Northwest Territories? Fully funding medical clinic operating costs -- sounds like it is something we are catching up with and will not provide enhanced services. It might maintain them. Accelerated development of new and revised legislation -- that again, purely internal working and I am surprised to see that because we know in all departments right now, there are staff in place to deal with legislation, legislative proposals. When it

says accelerated, I have underlined that because I want to know if that has anything to do with the Minister's announcements that he has made recently in changes to the Family Law Act, where he intends to move forward with some legislation that could be seen as quite controversial. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There were a number of questions there. I will do my best to respond to them all. Either directly or indirectly, what is being proposed, the intent is that it will improve or maintain services that are currently being provided to people. If we can deal with the physician contracts and ensure that the environment within the clinics is dealt with and it is off the table and it is not an irritant or an obstacle, then people can get about their jobs.

Telehealth is a service, as Mr. Braden indicated, that the nurses are saying is very important. The legislative base has been clearly identified by the department and by the Social Programs Committee over the last number of years as being out of date and inadequate, and has to be updated so that, in fact, we have the framework and legislative base for the people doing the work to operate with the proper authorities.

The other legislation referred to by my colleague, Mr. Roland, is a separate issue from this budget and it is not tied into any of the legislation being put forward by the Department of Health and Social Services in that context. In fact, I will be giving notice tomorrow for that particular legislation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Another area in the revised legislation, I did not get it quite clear if the Minister was mentioning, for example, about nurse practitioners. Is that legislation being looked at and under development? That was a concern that was raised in this area. It is seen as an important initiative, or it has been in the past. I am not sure if there has been any further movement in that area. In fact, it sounds like it has almost come to a stalling situation where we have not seen movement in that area for a while. Is that going to be included in some of this legislative action?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to reassure my colleague that the whole concept and issue of nurse practitioners is alive and well, and we are going to try to make it work even better. We do have interim legislation coming forward this session that will deal with the Nursing Profession and Pharmacy Acts to allow us to do collaborative pilot projects in that area. The longer term legislation is being drafted and will be going through the due legislative process in the coming months. That particular initiative is very important and we are making every effort to make sure that we can keep it moving -- not only moving but possibly more effectively than it has. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the Minister's opening comments, he referred to the investment in these areas I spoke about, but he also talked about forced growth of \$8.1 million needed to meet the increased costs of providing existing services. As we were going through some of the numbers earlier, it almost sounds like more of that could be considered forced growth as we are, in fact, cleaning up some of the areas and making changes, and not necessarily adding new or enhanced services that are out there. Can the Minister confirm whether that would be an accurate review of the information that he has provided? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we talk of forced growth, we use the standard definition used by government. In the case of the money referenced by my colleague, there was work done with the authorities on all their budgets, recognizing that the budgets in the past may not have been historically accurate. There was re-basing done to all the budgets, which consumed a significant portion of the \$8.1 million. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Chair will recognize Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do have some general comments about funding to the Department of Health and Social Services, and specifically to our health care system. Obviously, I think nationally we are engaged in a debate, as was referenced earlier, about the ever-increasing amount of money being spent on health care. In fact, health care costs seem to be spiraling out of control and people around the country are wondering when we will be able to get a handle on this because we can see that the future may, if we go the way we are going now, consist of provincial budgets that are just primarily health care spending, and then whatever is left over.

I would like to reference specifically a report released by the Canadian Institute for Health Information that does confirm that health care is steadily gobbling up a larger proportion of provincial budgets. I know this year our Health and Social Services budget is around \$200 million, and this seems to be growing from the last few years. Can the Minister indicate how he proposes to deal with this problem of health care costs ever increasing? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think this issue is key to the debate on health and social services, not only in the Northwest Territories but in Canada. I would like to acknowledge as well that it is one that Mr. Dent has raised repeatedly. The whole intent of the action plan is to try to deal with that issue in one capacity of how we are doing business right now, the structures, the processes, the efficiencies that are there and looking at how do we restructure ourselves to make better use of a lot of services so that we are not tied up because we are not doing things efficiently. There is a lot of friction within the system and the way processes and procedures are set up is not effective. That clearly is one focus of the action plan.

We also recognize that, and things like a comprehensive human resource strategy and coming out with a service model that we can use and accountability frameworks that are clear so that we can see and monitor how effective the programs are that we are putting into place, and if they are not effective, how do we fix them?

We recognize that there are significant pressures and ongoing pressures in terms of things like salaries for allied health professionals, for doctors and for nurses. There is a constant growth of not the sophistication of disease detection, but there is also the cost of technology and medical services. We have to look through our core services as to what are the critical things we are going to do. The fundamental sustainability issue to my mind was referenced as well in the committee report. Until we deal with the front end of the process, until we get people to make the right decisions in terms of, for example, pregnant mothers not drinking when they are pregnant, smoking issues, the diet issues, all of the problems that result from alcohol abuse, the majority of which are initially personal decisions -- if we do not deal with that issue at the front end then we will never have enough money.

That is, in my opinion, a very sad but true reality. We can have the best technologies. We can have the best group homes. We can have the best support systems for children with FAS and FAE and adults with FAS and FAE, for example, but the goal has to be to have children born healthy. That has to be our fundamental goal as a government. As a department, that is an issue for us because we are constantly faced with the unending tide of demand far exceeding the revenue and resources we have available.

We have a number of areas where we are trying to deal with this issue. It is an issue that is going to require debate, as Mr. Dent has pointed out repeatedly. It is a debate that requires possibly hard decisions, but it is one that we have to engage in. We have an action plan that is going to start putting some pieces in place, but the action plan is not an end in itself. It is not an event. It is part of a process and we should be doing this on an ongoing basis. It is going to require the involvement of not only the department and the authorities, but very clearly the wise advice of Members of this Legislature and the help of the committee to put the best possible order and sense to this very complex issue. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our committee did receive some information from the department, which breaks out the percentage of the Health and Social Services' budget by health costs and social services costs. I was quite surprised to see that a full \$138 million of the \$199 million budget will be spent in the area of health costs. I would like to ask the Minister if he sees this as, I guess not surprising, but would he not indicate that this is quite a lot of money to be spending on health costs?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On a comparative basis, if you look at some other jurisdictions, I would suggest that we are more in the middle or bottom half of the spectrum in terms of the amount of money for 42,000

people. Yes, it is a lot of money. Absolutely. Is it something we have to look at and constantly monitor? Yes, it is.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. I am not so sure we are in the middle to the bottom half. I would say we are, from the information that I see from the CIHI report, almost if not totally dead last. We are spending 16 percent of our territorial budget on health care costs. Ontario spends 43.9 percent of its budget on health care. Nova Scotia and Manitoba spend 39 percent. You go right down until you come to the lowest of provinces. PEI spends 30 percent of its entire budget on health care. We spend 16, Mr. Chairman.

You wonder, when we live in a Territory that, unfortunately, probably leads the country in preventable injury rates, suicides, teenage pregnancies, sexual assault, drug and alcohol abuse, STDs...you know, these are very unfortunate categories to be leading the country in. Then I ask, as a government, why would we only bother to address these profound issues with 16 percent of our total available budget? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I do not want to engage in a debate over percentages. I am not sure, and that is the issue that comes up when you look at percentages and big numbers and other jurisdictions. We include health and social services. Some other jurisdictions split things out differently. I would suggest the numbers are somewhat higher than 16 percent.

The issue is, though, are we spending enough and should we spend more and can we afford to spend more? Very clearly as the Minister for this department, as we come forward with requests for supplementary appropriations, we are going to be indicating that the \$200 million that we now have is not adequate. I think that is the point the Member is making and I think that is the point we are going to have to deal with as a Legislature. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. Just my final comment. That is the point I am after. I hope the Minister will take this to his Cabinet colleagues and press on them that we spend \$138 million on health care out of an \$856 million budget. It comes to 16 percent. I am sure other jurisdictions may include other things in there, or not include the same things, but it is hard to imagine that it is at all comparable with Ontario spending 43 percent of its budget on health care costs.

Obviously there is a balance. As the Minister has said, if we do not deal with the front-end drivers, we will never have enough money. I would ask him to certainly not only take that message to Cabinet but take the message that we are going to have to find more money. We are a long way from the situation where we have poured so much into this that we are never going to have enough money.

I think we really need to address this problem. I know our committee will be looking to support the Minister as he goes forward to Cabinet to press this upon them. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the comments from the Chair of the Social Programs Committee. He can rest assured that as we, together, work through the implementation of the action plan that we are going to be fully engaged with his committee and the Legislature, bringing forward the best possible advice and decisions in terms of doing the work that is necessary to maintain and enhance the services to the people. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Northwest Territories could easily be considered a problematic area for reasons that Mr. Bell just pointed out, the high suicide rates, high alcohol consumption rate, the STDs, et cetera. Sixteen percent of a budget does not seem to be appropriate to address those problematic areas.

However, I would like to ask a question that is not addressed in the budget or the business plans of the department, I do not think. Mr. Chairman, in the last year, I myself have been to too many services for people who have passed on. I probably only hit into a small percentage of the services that were happening in the Northwest Territories.

As I travelled up and down the Valley on different government business, speaking with people, that is an issue that seems to be on everyone's mind. There are too many people who have passed away in the last few years. I am wondering if the department makes it a practice to keep track of the number of deaths in the Northwest Territories, the causes of those deaths, men, women, illnesses.

I think they have done a study in Nunavut. Someone had mentioned bowel problems was the leading cause of death in men. The question to the Minister is, is his department keeping track of the number of people who are passing on, what are the reasons? Geographical locations would be a good way to monitor them. Is there a monitoring system? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, in fact we do track deaths in the Northwest Territories and their cause across the Territory. Within the department, we track, for example, cancer statistics that give us the cancer rates for some of the key cancers, such as colorectal, lung, prostate, stomach, so yes, we attempt to track this and I as well, in the last six years, have gone to far too many funerals, often for reasons that were not very clear. It is an issue that we can track. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It would be nice to get some clarity on why these events are happening. In monitoring the number of people who are passing on, how long has this monitoring been happening? Has it been happening the last ten years, or since the government has been established in the

Northwest Territories? If so, do we see trends? Are there trends we can start following?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the statistics in one way or another have been monitored for a very long time, but as the technology has improved so has the tracking of the statistics.

For example, this document I refer to that speaks to cancer statistics gives us the statistics from 1992-2000. We put out a regular health status report that give us an indication of a broad number of key indicators in terms of health.

They go back some way, but we are getting better at it as our systems improve. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister share with us from the statistics if there is a consistency in deaths related to one particular area of illness, like bowel cancer, for example? Is there an increase in the number of people dying of this particular cancer, or any other illness that are contributing to the deaths of people of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would be happy to get the Member a copy of the most recent statistics we have that will show him the key cancer statistics we use. He can look at the numbers and they are between men and women. It will give you a clear idea.

To my layman's eye, looking at this, there are some increases and it looks like in many cases, we are below the national average, but our numbers are going up. They are moving up towards the national average and in a couple of key cases, I think we are in fact ahead. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not sure if I am interpreting Mr. Miltenberger's response correctly. The way I am thinking of interpreting it, when he says we are reaching the national average, I am assuming that is a good thing, or is that a bad thing?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for my lack of clarity. In this case, being below the national average is a good thing. Our cancer rates are less than, in many instances, the national average, but there is an indication that they are moving up and that is the concern. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is not a good thing then. All right, Mr. Chairman, in the areas of the cancer rate, slowly moving up to reach the national average, is there a particular cancerous area that is coming out? Jumping out from the statistics? What is the main area of concern here?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Two examples that I can give the Member are lung cancer and colorectal. These are two cancers that are, in fact, past the national average in terms of they are worse. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you. How much higher are we above the national average and how long did it take us to get there? I know the reason for lung cancer, one of the reasons, anyway, is the smoking. There is a big push by this government and governments across the country to get that off the ground. Colon cancer, what is the main cause of colon cancer, for the benefit of our viewers, Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not really qualified to answer that. My own laymen sense is that it would have a lot to do with diet. It would be one of the causes. I could be wrong on that, but that is my own response that I would make to you as a layman. The other questions that you asked, the technical ones, we would have to provide that information to you. I do not have that level of detail in terms of cancer rates, but the department can definitely pull together a comprehensive list of information for the Members here in terms of cancer issues that you referred to. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the monitoring process of these diseases and the death rate it has caused among our people of the Northwest Territories, do they track by geographical location? Where are these symptoms predominant in the Northwest Territories? If it is diet, then we should know what kind of diet it is. If it is drinking water, we should know it is drinking water. I am just trying to determine the location of causes. Also, do they follow from geographical locations the number of bed days we use up from these communities respectively? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe there is some tracking by geographical area. The issue of bed days and such I cannot really speak to. I will just commit once again to the department pulling together a comprehensive package on the tracking of statistics related to illness and death and by gender, by what we have by geographical location and if we can attribute a cause. In some cases, as the Member indicated, some of it is somewhat self-evident with, for example, lung cancer and cigarette smoking, but we will get that information. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me to ask one more question just under the gun here. We are starting to recognize trends in diseases. What are we doing to prevent them and what are we doing to recognize them earlier than we have been? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chairman, we are trying to bring to bear the best testing and diagnostic tools we have for things like breast cancer. We have learned through hard experience that how we detect tuberculosis has to be improved. We are doing work on that. We are spending money on trying to convince people not to smoke, pregnant mothers not to drink, those types of things. We are spending a considerable amount of money on diabetes information, to make people aware of the significant impact that diet has on that particular illness. So we are trying to do a whole host of things to address the issues that my colleague has mentioned. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Before I go to Mr. Dent, I will just pass on an update that I received from upstairs that the hockey game between Canada and the United States, Canada is leading one-nothing. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: That is good news, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. I would like to start first talking about sustainability. I appreciate the Minister's comments earlier about the need to embark on a dialogue on sustainability, because it is probably the first time I have heard a Minister admit that is what we need to do. I am pleased that there is a recognition that we need to get some discussion happening. However, I did not hear the Minister say how we were going to get it started or when. He said we needed to embark on it and that Members of this Assembly needed to be involved in all of the stakeholders in the system, but when are we actually going to get into that?

The action plan itself does not really address the biggest issues of sustainability. While I think that on a percentage basis, we are spending far less on health care in the Northwest Territories than what we should be when you compare us to other jurisdictions, eventually we are going to get to the position that other jurisdictions have gotten to where it has become a significant problem. So, when is this dialogue going to get started? When are we actually going to sit down and start talking about some of these difficult choices that we may have to make?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that we have already started that dialogue. That I, for example, have come into this position, having spent the last two years with Mr. Dent on the Social Programs Committee and having discussed this issue a number of times and having heard his comments, and I as well have made my own assessments.

As he has indicated in his recollection, this has never been publicly stated before as an issue and a process that has to be

engaged in. I believe the action plan does set the stage, not only to try to do things, but also to set the stage for the discussion as we look at what kind of service delivery model is most appropriate.

What are the core services that we require as a territory to maintain the critical services to the people that we serve? Do I have a full-blown process or consultation plan to do that? No, I do not and I would very much seek the advice and the direction of the committee as we try to move forward in this because I know that Mr. Dent has been saying for some time we have to start this process and we have to engage in this debate.

So the political signal is that I agree and we have some pieces there that will allow us to do that, but obviously we are going to have to do more if we want to have it focused enough to come to some sort of conclusion at the end of this process, and that is where I will need advice and direction from Mr. Dent and the authorities and the professional associations because it is...we cannot wait any longer, I do not believe. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister's action plan talks about a document that sets out core services and he just mentioned that document, but the timetable that I see for the preparation and final distribution of that document does not leave a lot of time for the sort of dialogue that I think needs to take place. So what we are going to be talking about in that, I assume, is a listing or snapshot of what we can offer today and where we are today. I suspect though that the kind of discussion we are going to need to have before too long is going to take some time and there is going to have to be a real plan to involve the public and get them talking about it. I am hoping that the Minister will take a look at that and be prepared to take the lead to start the public dialogue.

This is going to take a significant amount of time, I believe. In fact, I think it will take longer than what we have left in our mandate, but if we get the process started, maybe there is a chance of getting it wrapped up in three or four years, within the time we have before the situation becomes critical. I think we owe it to the citizens of the North to make sure that we do not let the system get to the critical state. We have a responsibility to start moving this dialogue along.

I am hoping that he will recognize that it is going to take more than what he has in his action plan. It is going to take a concerted process that he is going to have to take the lead in developing, and I welcome his offer to work with the standing committee to shape that process, but I think we need to get started on that. It has to be almost separate from what we are doing right now because this is much more immediate.

I think one of the things that I have not seen yet, that I am hoping that we will see, is some way to start talking about the resources that we need to put into health budget that we need to bring it up to the level that it should be at. The Minister has mentioned that we need to start looking more at health promotion and population health, and I think that is good. I think we have to start putting dollars there. We are not going to see those long-term savings unless we put significant dollars in. This is really a tough one for government because you need a significant investment, but we are not going to see the payback probably while we are still in office. That has always been a problem, to make this switch. We are talking about a

payback that is probably more than five years away, maybe as much as 30 years away.

However, if we do not start putting money into population health and if we do not start putting our money into an emphasis on prevention instead of treatment, we are never going to get there. Unfortunately, when I look at this budget, I do not see any switch from the treatment side to dealing with improved spending in population health or prevention areas.

That dialogue needs to start very soon and I hope the Minister will recognize that it is not the same as the dialogue that he has with his action plan, which is dealing with much more immediate governance and sustainability problems. We have to start talking about significant new investments in health and where they should be in order to make sure that we can maintain the system 30 years from now.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Member raises some good points. If we see ourselves as stewards of the system, then very clearly we have to think in more than four year increments. We have to think in the long term, especially something as critical as health and social services. As politicians, we come and go. This is a transient occupation, but the health requirements and system have to be there and in operation regardless of who is here. It has to be well set up.

I agree that what Mr. Dent is referring to is probably a companion process, but I would like to say again that I think we are raising the profile on this particular issue and the need to start that particular conversation. I have been raising it since November 1st when I got here at every opportunity.

The action plan itself, as Mr. Dent indicates, deals with the immediate, but a lot of the immediate will flow into the longer term as we look at service models and, of course, service documents. It is also not an event. It is going to be a process that the action plan is going to evolve. I would also like to suggest that possibly the committee would consider at some point when we next meet with, for example, the JLC at a formal physical sit-down together possibly coming. We could have a discussion on the issue of sustainability and how best to address this issue so that it gets the full range of public involvement, and we do it in a way that has a beginning and an end and has a structure to it, but allow us to move it along at the same time as we try to make sure that we take care of the business of the day, which is what the action plan attempts to do. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will not spend any more time on this one. I think the committee will work with the Minister to try and encourage this process along. One final comment in this area is that I recognize that the Minister has in his action plan emphasized the importance of an individual's personal responsibility for their own health. I would agree with him that is one of the key steps to getting this dialogue happening. I think that we need to make sure that we are really taking a long-term look at this, and it is going to take us working together over the next 18 months to even get it kicked off.

One other area that I have a particular interest in is the addictions, mental health and family violence strategy. The department has been working on this strategy for some time and a framework has been developed. I know that the standing committee following the business plans asked the department when we might expect to see some action on this. We were told January in the response to the business plans that we could expect to see the strategy probably by March this year. I would like to ask the Minister if we are expecting to see that strategy within the next couple of weeks, and will it come forward in time, for instance, to be tabled in this sitting of the Legislative Assembly?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This strategy is being pushed hard, and I am as Minister hoping to see a document by the end of March so that we can move on this. There are a lot of issues on the table tied into this, as evidenced by some of the discussion earlier this afternoon. I am looking at the end of March to do that. It ties in, of course, very clearly to the action plan and to a number of other initiatives that we have on the table that require completion and are going to have to be linked. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have a real problem with regard to the increased number of children in foster care. I think as a government, we should learn from our history and from the past when there was a system of basically assimilating aboriginal children into white society during the 1920's and 1930's, when children were taken away from their parents for five to seven years. They have lost that connection with their parents. They lost that connection to their culture. They lost that connection to the rest of their family.

I think it is important that as a government, we should not be implementing something that is going to reinvent what we are seeing today. We have an aboriginal review that took place by way of a Royal Commission, which made some very strong recommendations on aboriginal children being put into institutions to the point where they are practically bounced from one form of institution. That could be with respect to foster care to juvenile delinquents going into that system, and eventually ending up in our correctional facilities.

I have a real problem with this major increase with regard to children in day care. One of the higher statistical phone calls that I have received in the last year is in the area of children being taken away from their parents. It seems like it has become a point of contention where social workers are now basically law enforcement officers who are going out apprehending children and having to come through the court system with their parents. For me, that is not the way you deal with trying to heal a family or even to protect a child -- to take a child away from its parents regardless of the statistical problems with their parents because of their social conditions such as unemployment.

Everybody knows that in order to find a way to resolve this, we have to look within. The legislation that has been in place, was this the intent of having to see this major increase in the number of children in foster care, because the legislation that

was brought forth a couple of years ago? My concern is that we have to change the way we think. We have a major federal initiative going on right now regarding the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, which the majority of their focus is on children. I am trying to find a way to reunite children, families in aboriginal communities across the country because of the effects they have seen with hostels in the Northwest Territories.

In the communities I represent, Fort McPherson, the first hospital was built in 1897. In Aklavik, it was 1943. Yet today, we as a government are going back to the same mentality as almost a hundred years ago. I think we have to change the mentality of this government and quit trying to be the lord of the state and start institutionalizing children and the parents where they become social statistics and we need bigger facilities and institutions. Bigger jails. Build bigger care facilities for women, for juvenile delinquents. We have to find a way that we do not start going back to the mentality where we become a system where we are controlling everything.

People should have the ability to raise their families within the means of having the resources at hand to assist them when they need assistance. One of the programs that they have had in my riding with the Tl'oondih Healing Society who developed a family program to assist children, their parents, their grandparents and deal with the whole mentality of dealing with the family as a family -- not an individual that you see someone going to jail and that person is taken care of because he went to jail. You come back to the community and nothing is changed.

Here again, we are taking the children away from their parents, putting them in a different environment, and then wondering why the parents are continuing to drink or continuing to have a real problem trusting the people that they have out there to trust. The RCMP, the social workers, people within their communities that...

I think as a government we have to change the way that we implement programs and services. I believe with Mr. Dent, we do need a child advocacy group out there to ensure that the policies and regulations of this government are in place to protect children, not to protect us as an institution from the parents or the family or the different groups that are out there.

I think we have to somehow change the way we develop and implement programs and services because right now, the majority of the social workers in our communities are dealing with child custody matters. That is taking away the focus on our elders, our focus on people with disabilities, because they do not have enough time in the day to deal with every other issue that is in our communities.

I would strongly suggest to the Minister that you consider looking at some sort of a system that assists families to deal with their problems, deal with it within the family. You can either call family counseling or you can look at a program like they had with the Tl'oondih Healing Society, but implement programs to assist families, not to start institutionalizing our children and our people within our communities, within our society.

I would like to ask the Minister, will you consider looking at implementing a family program to assist families that are in crisis where the children are being taken away and put in foster homes so that they can find a mechanism to reunite those people so that these children do not grow up, as to what

happened to their grandparents and their great-grandparents in the 1920's and 1930's, and reinvent the wheel by doing it all over again.

For me, I have a real problem with what is going on with this government, where we see the major increases that you are talking about regarding children who are in foster care today. I would like to ask the Minister, will you consider such a...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as Minister, I am very sensitive to the issue of child welfare matters. I have about 15 years of time that I spent within the department running facilities and such and I know some of the issues of which Mr. Krutko speaks. I also had the good fortune to be in the 13th Assembly when the family law bills came before our committees and the Legislature. I can tell Mr. Krutko that my recollection -- very clearly -- of the intent of the legislation was to try to address some of the issues and some of the shortcomings of the days of old that Mr. Krutko referred to, where children were apprehended, put into permanent custody at a very young age and spent usually, not usually, but often their entire teenage years in one facility or one program or another and then, when they turned 18 were shown the door and expected to survive and go on as if life was okay with no connection to their families or the cultural issues that Mr. Krutko realized. The sad reality is that often times, there was a transition very quickly into the adult system.

For me, and I know for many social workers, not all of them, the intent is to deal with children as part of a family. I agree wholeheartedly with Mr. Krutko that you cannot successfully take a child out of the family and fix the child and send the child back home with no work being done in the community and no support being provided.

I am concerned about the foster care rates. The department is concerned. We want to assess why that is. I know that we are putting in another ten positions this year to deal with child protection issues and I have heard the concern Mr. Krutko has raised from other groups. The Dene Nation has raised it. When I have been into the Dogrib region, it has come up. It has come up in other communities that I have been at. I am very interested to sit down to look at the process that we have, the system that we have, the legislation that we have. I know what the intent was. If it is not working effectively, then I think we have to work together to make the changes that are necessary.

The bottom line goal is we want to keep children at home. Like Mr. Krutko indicates, we want to try to focus all the resources we can at the community level to do that, and we can do it as a department in isolation from the communities and from the services that are there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. General Comments. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: I move we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. I will rise and report progress. I would like to thank the Minister and your witnesses for appearing.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will come back to order. Item 21, report of the committee of the whole. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

ITEM 21: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. DELOREY: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 2 and Committee Report 3-14(5) and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: We need a seconder. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta seconds the motion. There is a motion on the floor. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 23: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, meetings at 9:00 am tomorrow of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight, as well as the Cabinet House Strategy.

Orders of the Day for Friday, February 22, 2002:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Replies to Budget 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 1-14(5), Establishment of a Special Committee on Rural Community Affairs
18. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act
19. Second Reading of Bills

- Bill 1, Human Rights Act
- Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act

20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Bill 2, Appropriation Act, 2002-2003
- Committee Report 1-14(5), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates
- Committee Report 2-14(5), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates
- Committee Report 3-14(5), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Friday, February 22, 2002, at 10:00 a.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:05 p.m.