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The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Monday, February 29, 2016****Members Present**

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

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty): Item 2, Ministers' statements. Honourable Premier.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 14-18(2):
FIRST MINISTERS MEETING**

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, later this week I will be participating in the meeting of First Ministers in Vancouver where I will have the opportunity to collaborate on areas of priority to residents of the Northwest Territories, including the economy and climate change. Meetings of First Ministers are chaired by the Prime Minister and attended by all provincial and territorial premiers. The meeting called by the Prime Minister for this week will be the first such full-day meeting of First Ministers in over six years. It is important that we as Canada's First Ministers to have the opportunity to collaborate on priority areas affecting all Canadians.

The Prime Minister has also publicly committed to resetting Canada's relationship with Indigenous people. I am pleased to report that our meetings this week will include time for First Ministers to meet with leaders of the National Aboriginal Organizations. This is an area where the Northwest Territories has substantial experience, and I am looking forward to talking to my colleagues about why it is so important and how we make it work in our territory.

The federal government and the Government of the Northwest Territories share many common goals and priorities. Some of the areas where we can benefit from a strong partnership include climate change, infrastructure, and the cost of living. I appreciate the federal government's commitment to making public investments to encourage economic growth, job creation, and broad-based prosperity. This is essential for the Northwest Territories as we work to evolve towards a stable, secure economy. Productive and effective intergovernmental

relations between the Government of the Northwest Territories and the federal government depend on a sound understanding of each other's interests and priorities, strategic engagement, and focused communications on key priorities that support both governments' short- and long-term objectives.

Earlier this month, I met with the Prime Minister to continue discussions towards meaningful federal engagement on key areas of interest. The Government of the Northwest Territories is also in the process of developing a strategy to ensure that the federal government understands territorial priorities, and sets groundwork for active partnerships in areas of common interest.

In the interim, I am looking forward to meeting with the Prime Minister and my provincial and territorial counterparts this week. It is my hope that we will have fruitful discussions and begin to lay the groundwork for meaningful federal engagement on key areas of interest to the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 15-18(2):
NEXT STEPS FOR JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN IN
THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to providing quality early childhood development programs that will help our children reach their full potential. We want our youngest citizens to have the best opportunity to become healthy, educated, successful adults who are well prepared to embark on meaningful and rewarding careers.

One of the programs that support this commitment is Junior Kindergarten for four-year-old children in the Northwest Territories. Junior Kindergarten emerged as a result of comprehensive stakeholder engagement with community leaders, parents, families, elders, educators, and early childhood professionals, and is underpinned by international and national research.

Free, safe, play-based early childhood programming, such as Junior Kindergarten, provides every parent and caregiver with a quality

early learning choice for their child. For some, it may be the only early childhood education option in their community. In larger communities, where there is a range of choices available, it provides another option for children to learn and grow, and prepares and familiarizes them with the future school setting. While it is up to us, as territorial leaders, to provide optimal early learning and development opportunities for all children across the North, it is ultimately up to the parents and families to make their own choice about what is best for their child.

While we believe that Junior Kindergarten is the right thing to do, its initial implementation raised concerns from some stakeholders. As a result, Junior Kindergarten was made optional in our 29 smaller communities and we committed to postponing further implementation beyond those communities until a comprehensive external review was completed.

The results of that review were shared with you last month, provided to our stakeholders, and made public. The report demonstrated a positive response from parents and educators in Junior Kindergarten settings, who identified multiple benefits to their children and families. It recommended that Junior Kindergarten continue in the existing sites and that expansion to additional locations must take into account community contexts, strengths, and needs.

Any further implementation must also consider quality early childhood learning programs already available in communities, a review of the funding model, a clear communication strategy, implementation plan, professional development, and a targeted curriculum with necessary supporting materials. I welcome the recommendations the independent consultants put forward. Our next step is to talk to key stakeholders who were part of the review, to ensure a transparent and inclusive approach in moving forward with this initiative. Once we have heard their suggestions for smooth and effective implementation, we will be better placed to decide the future of the Junior Kindergarten program.

Everyone benefits from investments in our children and families. My priority is to work with the Standing Committee on Social Development to continue to advance the actions in the Early Childhood Development Framework, jointly developed with the Department of Health and Social Services, to ensure we have the right programs and supports in place to care for our children.

We are listening carefully to the concerns of parents, elders, educators, daycare operators, Aboriginal Head Start coordinators, divisional education councils, district education authorities,

and other stakeholders. We will move forward in a way that is respectful to all and will give our children, no matter where they live, the best programming we can offer right from the start. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TERRAX MINERALS INC. EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're all aware that we are living in an uncertain economy right now. The lower prices of oil and gas and diamonds have directly affected industrial activity and the northern economy. Exploration is declining and very little development of new activities is going on. That's why, at this point, it is very important for this government to actively support companies that are willing to invest in our territory.

One such company is TerraX, which is currently developing the Yellowknife City Gold Project just north of the capital city. TerraX is making a significant investment in exploration. The company raised \$6 million last summer and resumed drilling near Walsh Lake in January. According to Mr. Campbell, TerraX president, in a recent presentation to MLAs it was indicated that the company is fully funded for the exploration through next year. TerraX has also demonstrated positive corporate citizenship in the North. It has shown that its operations can be done in an environmentally sustainable way. It has developed a constructive relationship with respect for Northerners, including the Aboriginal governments. Mr. Speaker, TerraX is an example of a company that is making a genuine long-term commitment to the North. Its activities will respect the environment and will bring employment and social and economic benefits to our territory.

Companies like TerraX are doing their part to make economic activity happen. We need these kinds of corporate citizens and this kind of development to create jobs and wealth in the territory, but their project is challenged by a lack of energy, infrastructure, and potential land-use issues. These are things the company can't fix. They need to rely on the government to help resolve these issues. To make this kind of growth happen, our government needs to do its part. We need to encourage this kind of development. We need to create the infrastructure that is needed and resolve issues around land-use and permitting. I will have questions for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and

Investment at the appropriate time today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GOVERNMENT OF
CANADA POSTHUMOUS PARDON OF EVERETT
GEORGE KLIPPERT

MS. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the Government of Canada's decision to right a historic wrong by pardoning Everett George Klippert. Mr. Klippert was the last man in Canada to be charged, convicted, and sentenced to life in prison for being gay. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, gay men were routinely harassed by police even though they engaged in sex that took place between consenting adults. They were charged with gross indecency. Mr. Klippert had been charged with gross indecency in his hometown of Calgary and jailed for three years. When he finished his sentence, Mr. Klippert decided to make a new start and moved here to the Northwest Territories. He lived in Pine Point and worked at the mine as a mechanic's assistant. In 1965, the RCMP arrested Mr. Klippert and again charged him with gross indecency. A court-ordered psychiatrist assessed Mr. Klippert as an "incurable homosexual." Judge J.H. Sissons agreed he was a dangerous offender based on his two sets of convictions for gross indecency. Sissons sentenced him to life in prison. In effect, he was sentenced to a life in prison for being gay.

The Supreme Court of Canada later upheld this decision, and then all hell broke loose. Tommy Douglas led the charge in the House of Commons, saying that homosexuality should not be considered a criminal issue. He found an ally in the Justice Minister of the day, Pierre Elliot Trudeau, who said, "There is no place for the state in the bedrooms of the nation. What is done in private between adults doesn't concern the criminal code." The modern movement to acquire equality rights for gays and lesbians began in Canada. Trudeau decriminalized homosexuality when he became Prime Minister. The day after the bill received royal assent, gay men in New York rose up against harassment by police. The Stonewall Riots of June 1969 drew the line on public harassment of private behaviour between consenting adults. Mr. Klippert remained in jail all this time. He was finally released in 1971, returned to Calgary, and died there 20 years ago. There have been significant changes in the last 50 years, which I will talk about in a moment. I would like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Some things haven't changed. It is difficult to be openly gay in grade school. Last week we celebrated Pink Shirt Day, a means to combat bullying in school. This began as an important initiative to support gay youth, to promote their self-acceptance and acceptance by the rest of us, and has of course gone on to cover all forms of excuses for bullying. What has changed in 50 years? While the law changed, many gays and lesbians live their sexuality quietly and privately because society as a whole is not supportive of us.

Fifteen years ago, I was part of a gay and lesbian organization called Out North. We lobbied to have the government grant the same rights to us as to the rest of society. After a court battle, we won the right to adopt children, and in the new Human Rights Act, the right not to be discriminated against on the basis of sexuality. Yellowknife is a welcoming community for gays and lesbians, and we are in important roles throughout the community. I am proud to be the first woman married to a woman elected to this Legislature. All this started with Everett Klippert. I am grateful to him for being the catalyst of these changes and join in congratulating the Government of Canada on righting this historic wrong. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TRIBUTE TO THE
NORTHERN JOURNAL

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to salute the tremendous public service performed by the Northern Journal over many years. It may seem odd that a Yellowknife MLA is making a statement on the publication based in Fort Smith, but I have no hesitation whatsoever in saluting this newspaper as a standard of excellence in the Northwest Territories, setting an example for all other media to follow. The Northern Journal was founded in 1977 by Don Jaque as the Slave River Journal. It has been a family affair with his wife Sandra and has spawned some of the best journalists we have had, including Meagan Wohlberg, Craig Gilbert, and more. The newspaper has undertaken investigative journalism from an objective public policy perspective for decades, and I cannot say enough good things about it.

It was very sad news I heard last week that the publisher has announced that he intends to close down the Northern Journal unless a buyer is found. I hope our more enterprising journalists will have a good look at the opportunity to take over the Northern Journal and build on its solid foundation and reputation. If the Northern Journal does not find

a new life, it will fall into an unfortunate trend around the world where the print media is being replaced by the Internet and social media. Call me old school, but I still like to hold a newspaper in my hands, and I love the Northern Journal. I wish to sincerely thank Don and Sandra Jaque for devoting a large part of their adult lives to better informing Northwest Territories' residents about the key issues of the day. I believe I can say that all MLAs wish them all the best with their retirement and whatever challenges may lie ahead. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement on Supporting Small Businesses with GNWT Contracting Policies

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all know that in the NWT, government contracts account for a large portion of private industry revenue. By changing the way the government does business, we can alleviate some of the fiscal pressure on small- and medium-sized businesses, and help grow our economy from the ground up. For example, to bid on government tenders worth over \$100,000, a five per cent cash bond or 10 per cent security bond is required. For a small operator who may not have access to conventional bonding, this can pose a significant obstacle. When people are just trying to make ends meet, they can't afford to have tens of thousands of dollars tied up for months at a time. This puts smaller businesses at a disadvantage, which should never be the effect of government policy. I recommend increasing the threshold for requiring bonds, while increasing the holdback percentage to ensure the government still protects its interest.

Our policy on sole-source contracts also needs to be re-examined. According to the Government Contract Regulations, all purchases over \$5,000 must go to tender. This is an antiquated amount that hasn't risen along with the cost of goods, and needs to be increased. The time and resources of small businesses and of the government are already being stretched, and these regulations only serve to further burden all parties with needless paperwork. One of the biggest opportunities to help small businesses has to do with how the government awards contracts for large multimillion-dollar capital projects. The argument is that it is more cost-effective to award these contracts to a single company. However, what often happens is that money flows out of the territory and local small- and medium-size companies miss out entirely. We need to stop looking at costs in simplistic terms and realize the true cost of our actions and our inactions. It may be more work and it may be a little more expensive to break up these big contracts, but by doing so we can give small local companies the

opportunity to get a real piece of the action. This would keep money in the territory and would help us build capacity.

Most importantly, it would put Northerners to work, and that's what we need right now. The money we spend on capital projects belongs to the people of the NWT, and we have an obligation to ensure we are using it to their utmost benefit. We can't continue to think that simply getting the lowest price on a project means we fulfilled that obligation. I've highlighted just a few areas that we need to re-examine, but there are many more. Our economy isn't the same as it was last year, five years ago, or 10 years ago. We need to constantly critique and improve how we're doing business in the face of ever-changing economic realities. Later, I will have questions for the Finance Minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SAHTU REGION HOUSING CHALLENGES

MR. MCNEELY: Good afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, my statement is related to the Housing Minister here, in regards to the housing situation we have in the Sahtu region. It faces many challenges here aside from the current needs, like many other small remote communities across our Northwest Territories, but I'll be having some questions to the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation later on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONNIE LOUITTIT MEMORIAL SOCCER TOURNAMENT

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would take the opportunity to talk about a great event that happened this past weekend in Fort Simpson. On Friday, I was able to go home to be part of the Connie Louttit Memorial Soccer Tournament. The tournament was developed about 13 years ago to give youth from the Mackenzie region another opportunity to play soccer and to meet other athletes from the other communities, all important part to youth development. Unfortunately, one of the huge supporters of this tournament passed away and the Mackenzie Recreation Association decided to ask the family if they would be willing to name the tournament after her. The family was honoured, and ever since, the tournament has been named the Connie Louttit Memorial. This past weekend was the 11th annual tournament. This weekend, the tournament had teams from Detah, Ndilo, Fort Resolution, Hay

River, Whati, Behchoko, Fort Liard, Whitehorse, Fort Simpson, and athletes from Nahanni Butte, Enterprise, Jean Marie River, Wrigley, and Fort Smith, who were placed in various teams throughout the weekend.

There were over 160 athletes ranging from the ages of 11 to 52, and you guessed it, the 52-year-old who was trying to play with these young people was myself. Unlike the Paul Stipdonk Tournament, this tournament is competitive, soccer with winners and losers. The amazing part of the tournament, all the games were competitive and a lot of great sportsmanship was shown throughout the weekend. All finals were very close, including a shootout between Behchoko and Fort Liard in the 14-and-under division. The games started at 2:00 p.m. on Friday and ended Sunday at 2:00 p.m. There were over 33 hours of soccer over the weekend. This involved a lot of coordination of the teams, staff, facilities, and officials. Unfortunately, I can't name all the volunteers and that, or I'd be here for the next hour or so, but I would like to thank all of the volunteers, staff, and coaches for helping out. However, I do need to think three special individuals for all their hard work. They are Nathan McPherson, Ashley Gillis, and Jacqueline Thompson. They were there from 36 hours to 40 hours over the weekend. As well, Jessica VanOverbeek, the executive director for the Mackenzie Recreation Association who continues to show support for this tournament. I can say I'm very happy and comfortable passing the torch to these young people who have taken it to the next step. Mr. Speaker, I would seek unanimous consent to conclude my Member's statement. Thank you.

--Unanimous consent granted

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks, colleagues. As you can imagine, it involves a lot of coordination, especially for food for all these athletes. A big thank you to Bernie Leader and the Thomas Simpson Secondary School students who ran the concession all weekend, and the women's group for doing the meal packages for the athletes. There were a lot of smiling faces after each meal. I'd be remiss if I do not thank the sponsors of this tournament. They are the Mackenzie Recreation Association, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, the Village of Fort Simpson, Thomas Simpson Secondary School, P.R. Contracting, and The Soccer Shoppe from Whitehorse. In closing, I'd like to thank my children and my soccer children for allowing this old guy to be part of the team and play in the tournament for the past three years. For the record, we did win the co-ed division. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Laughter

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INCREASED ROLE FOR CANADIAN RANGERS

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, many times in the House I spoke about the lack of employment in small NWT communities. Currently most communities have Canadian Rangers. I think they should and could play a greater role in our communities. Speaker, I intend to discuss the needs with the communities I represent that have Rangers. My thought right now is to change five or six Canadian Rangers into part-time or seasonal jobs in these communities. The Rangers can fill many important roles at the community level. They can be responsible for environmental clean-ups, search and rescue, while continuing their current roles as Rangers. In addition, there are many other important community-based tasks, like helping with community functions such as setting up for community meetings or events, on-the-land healing, and spiritual and cultural gatherings, just to mention a few.

I've often said in the House over the years we need jobs in our small communities. These are jobs that can be done by community members and will help communities and their members to see positive role models who can lead good traditional lifestyles and display their Ranger skills. There are also Junior Canadian Rangers, who are taught about addictions, good nutrition, staying in school, and promote structural life activities. Once people have employment, we'll all see the benefits at schools with the children attending, fewer addiction and health issues, and having families with income support their families. We need to start discussions with the federal government to see what's possible in creating good positions in the small communities of the NWT. There are about 4500 Canadian Rangers across our country, many of them in the NWT. I intend to talk to the Rangers in the communities I represent. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ON-THE-LAND HEALING PROGRAMS

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during my last constituency tour I held in the communities, one of my constituents wanted me to bring forward the need for more on-the-land healing programs in our region. I know a couple years back there was some programs held in Beaufort-Delta, but my constituents would like to see more happening within our riding. With the

report that was done, I believe it was about a year and a half ago, under the Mental Health Act, our residents wanted more on-the-land healing programs. I know the department has been working with the Gwich'in Tribal Council. He gave an update to us a couple weeks back, but later today I'll have some questions for the Minister. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HAY RIVER RESERVE HOUSING CONCERNS

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if there were an award for bureaucratic bungling, surely it would go to the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation for their epic fail on the Hay River Reserve. It is an absolute disgrace that six homes have been sitting vacant on the reserve for well over a decade while people are in desperate need of housing. These homes were brand new when they were built in 2002, yet they remain unoccupied to this day. Meanwhile, the K'atl'odeeche First Nation estimates that more than 60 band members are living 25 kilometres away in Hay River because they have other choices. The impacts of homelessness on the reserve are enormous. Families are forced apart; band members living in town lack the support they would have at home making them more susceptible to drugs and alcohol and they risk losing the tax benefits that come with living on the reserve.

Meanwhile, on the reserve families try to stick together in overcrowded living conditions. The vacant homes suffer seasonal wear and tear and the band, which receives its funding on a per capita basis much like the GNWT's Territorial Formula Financing, faces decline in revenues. Imagine vacant homes with people who need them. Seems like a no brainer, yet the GNWT, which has had responsibility for housing on the reserve since 1981 appears incapable of doing so, so while we're handing awards, let's give a Commissioner's award for patience to Chief Roy Fabian and the KFN who have tried over and over again to get the issue resolved.

Here's the problem in a nutshell. To qualify for the Housing Corporation's PATH Program, which provides assistance for territorial home ownership, potential homeowners must have an income that falls below the core need income threshold on the reserve. Those with an income above the CNIT can qualify for partial funding, but they will be unable to get a mortgage from a bank to fund the rest because the house is on reserve land which cannot be sold. Without title to the land, potential homeowners cannot get a mortgage from the bank. In 2012, Chief Roy Fabian pointed out that no one in the community fell within the necessary income

brackets to qualify them for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's Homeownership Program in the previous seven years. So the houses remain vacant. Also in 2012, the band held a forum in an attempt to resolve this issue. The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation was invited but did not attend. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Masi.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Representatives from Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada who did attend committed to work with the KFN to resolve the problem. They said the problem could be fixed within six months by undertaking the process to designate the lands for leasing which would require ratification by the band council. Mr. Speaker, that was four years ago.

Now that I have spoken about the problems with these vacant units on the Hay River Reserve in my next Member's statement I will turn my attention to possible solutions. In the meantime, because this issue involves not only Housing but also Lands, later today I will have questions for the Premier. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PHYSICIAN- ASSISTED DYING

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Northerners deserve nothing less than the best possible healthcare during their lives that our government can provide. The same is true for end-of-life care. It should be no surprise to any Member of this House that the Supreme Court of Canada ruling on physician-assisted dying places new requirements on governments across Canada. With this rapidly approaching deadline of June 6, 2016, the Government of Canada is obligated to pass legislation permitting physician-assisted dying. Our government must now plan to regulate this process.

The debate on physician-assisted dying has been decided by the courts. The question is not should we permit this now necessary form of care, but rather how our government implements physician-assisted dying in a way that respects the dignity and values of our people.

Northerners are now looking to this government to provide certainty around doctor-assisted dying. I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services later on today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NUNAKPUT
HEALTH CARE SERVICES

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Quyanainni, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I'm going to talk about the healthcare system in Nunakput. The Nunakput region is served by the Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services Authority based in Inuvik. Pharmaceutical products are flown into the community health centres from the hospital pharmacy in Inuvik. Medical travel allows people in the Beaufort-Delta to access the same quality and standard of care enjoyed by most Canadians. The services in the communities: each community has a health centre, two nurses, except for Tuktoyaktuk which has a staff of five nurses who typically work a six-week rotational shift consistent with hiring practices in remote communities across Canada. This practice helps the Northwest Territories recruit and retain staff, but it does not necessarily build consistency and some people's perception of continuity to care.

Some people feel nurses are very dedicated to their community and know their people, but others feel like there is a lot of turnover. This perception often varies between communities. An Inuvik-based doctor visits each community every four weeks for one to three days. Extending doctors' visits will help improve the lives of elders and youth. Each community has a designated physician in Inuvik who the nurses can call to discuss clients' issues, continuing care plans, and emergent needs.

Medication: medication is prescribed and dispensed in communities according based on the products nurses are allowed to administer. Many types of antibiotics vary, and a variety of other medications may only be prescribed by a doctor or a nurse practitioner during the visits. Requests for medications are faxed to Inuvik from outlying communities. It is among the responsibilities of the nurse in charge to monitor, including medication and operations of the health care centre.

Medical travel: As much as possible, practitioners try to arrange medical travel to achieve the most efficiency. Medical travel escorts may also be assigned by a physician and requests must be justified. Elders who require assistance, Mr. Speaker, should be accommodated to ensure that they get the best care possible while travelling. Medevacs are most frequently sent to Inuvik.

Birthing and other obstetrical services take place in Inuvik. Since 2014-2015, a nurse practitioner with midwifery training has been providing educational, prenatal and post-natal care in the Beaufort-Delta region.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Nunakput, your time for Members' statements has expired.

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

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Quyanainni, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my last point: Midwifery education is important as mothers-to-be are being brought to Inuvik during the most vulnerable time before giving birth, while this should be the very strongest part, as women need support from their families during their last month of pregnancy. This concludes my statement. Quyanainni.

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

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce Josee Clermont. She is the [English translation not provided] of College nordique francophone and she is one of my constituents. We welcome her here. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Honourable Member for Great Slave.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the CEO of Avens, Mr. Stephen Jackson, who is also a constituent of the Great Slave riding. Thank you.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided] I too would like to recognize Josee Clermont. She is the [English translation not provided].

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

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Quyanainni, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the Pages who are here working at the Ledge this week. Welcome all of you. Welcome to Mitchell Inuktalik who is a grade 8 student in Helen Kalvak School in Ulukhaktok. Also, welcome to Kolton Inuktalik who is a grade 9 student from Helen Kalvak School in Ulukhaktok. Also to their chaperone, Gary Okheena, who may be in the gallery. I do not see him on the other side. Gary has spent time volunteering and was recently at the Northern Dene Games Summit in Inuvik two weekends ago. Thanks, Gary, for volunteering your time towards youth and keeping our culture strong. Quyanainni, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. I'd just like to welcome all those in the

gallery here today. It's always great to have an audience viewing our proceedings. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 71-18(2):

INCREASED ROLE FOR CANADIAN RANGERS

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement I spoke about Canadian Rangers. I have questions for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. There's no real direct ministerial portfolio that lines up with the Canadian Rangers, so I'm going to start here and see where it takes us. I'd like to ask the Minister if he's prepared to reach out to the federal government to start discussions on an increased role for the Canadian Rangers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister for Environment and Natural Resources.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that question. The Canadian Rangers do not fall under my responsibility, but under Environment and Natural Resources and Transportation a number of initiatives do. We can reach out to the federal government to see what type of programs and services are available to help the Canadian Rangers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BEAULIEU: Would the Minister look into the possibility, with the federal government, if the Canadian Rangers can play a greater role in the environmental cleanups, whether they fall under the responsibility of the GNWT or whether they fall under the responsibility of the federal government.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Since devolution, a number of waste sites are still under the responsibility of the federal government, but through the department of Environment and Natural Resources, I could sit down with the Member and discuss the possibilities that he is talking about with the Canadian Rangers and the federal government.

MR. BEAULIEU: I'd like to ask the Minister if he's prepared to champion the possibility of creating jobs for the Canadian Rangers through the other Cabinet colleagues.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I would be glad to champion jobs for the Canadian Rangers across the north. As maybe a number of Members aren't aware, there are approximately 4,000 Rangers across Canada and 3,000 Junior Rangers in the country, so I would gladly take up the cause for that.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister if he sees a role for Canadian Rangers in the Protected Areas Strategy. Thank you.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: The Protected Areas Strategy is something that's right across the Northwest Territories and region by region. That would be something we'd have to discuss with all of the proponents of these strategies.

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

QUESTION 72-18(2):

SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES WITH GNWT CONTRACTING POLICIES

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I spoke about some changes that the government should undertake that would help small businesses grow, help build our capacity, and keep Northerners working. These are cross-departmental issues, but I will address my questions to the Minister of Finance. As I stated, to bid on government tenders worth over \$100,000, bidders must put down a five per cent cash bond or a 10 per cent security bond. Given that this requirement may unduly penalize small businesses that are just doing their best to get ahead or stay afloat in this economy, and given that there's other, more accommodating ways that to protect the government's interest, will the government commit to reviewing this policy and ultimately, increasing that \$100,000 threshold to an amount that allows and helps small businesses to compete and grow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Finance.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Finance, we will work with our three infrastructure departments -- Transportation, NWT Housing Corporation, and Public Works and Services -- to review the requirement value of the security required on government tender for contracts, recognizing that the regulations for this particular issue are quite old. We will have a review of it and see if there are any changes that can be made. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you for the answer. I will follow up with the Minister on that in the future. According to the Government Contract Regulations, all purchases over \$5,000 must go to tender. Given that this is also an antiquated amount and doesn't reflect the reality of doing business in 2016, will the government commit to amending the Government

Contract Regulations by increasing this \$5,000 threshold.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: On February 18, 2016, the Financial Management Board approved increases to the GNWT sole-source limits effective April 1, 2016, and that is concurrent with the implementation of the modernized Financial Administration Act. Specifically, the sole-source limit for goods and non-professional services will increase from \$5,000 to \$25,000; professional services from \$25,000 to under \$50,000; and for architectural and engineering professional services, to under \$100,000.

The Modern Management Initiative is friendly to northern businesses and also addresses inflationary increases since the GNWT sole-source limits were established 20 years ago. This initiative has broad stakeholder support and is consistent with what is being done with other government jurisdictions in Canada and the province of Ontario. ITI will be seeking approval in March to make the corresponding changes to BIP to increase from \$5,000 to \$25,000, and the Department of Finance is actually preparing a letter to send to the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning informing them of these changes. But since the question is being asked today, I thought I would respond to that today.

MR. SIMPSON: That is very good news. I appreciate that. When awarding contracts for large multi-million-dollar capital projects, do factors such as the ability for local businesses to participate in the contract, the potential for capacity building, the cost savings associated with having locals employed and so on, ever factor into the decision? Or are contracts awarded without consideration of these potential benefits?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: For tenders, the Northwest Territories Manufactured Products Policy and the BIP bid adjustments are other factors that are taken into consideration for request for proposals. A number of other factors other than price are taken into consideration when evaluating proposals; criteria may include but are not limited to team experience, methodology, design and construction, project schedule, and BIP adjustment. PWS has developed, in my understanding, has implemented new evaluation criteria for design-build RFPs called community engagement.

As part of this new evaluation criteria, proponents are asked to explain and demonstrate the following: how local labour will be recruited and utilized as part of the project; what plans are in place to provide and maximize on-the-job training opportunities for local residents; understanding the local economy, highlighting how their proposal addressed any economic constraints or challenges;

and the approach for communication and collaboration with local government and First Nations organizations. PWS is working with client departments to start using the community engagement criteria for large, multi-year RFP contracts to assist with supporting local labour and businesses.

MR. SIMPSON: Lots of good news out of the Minister of Finance today.

---Laughter

That last response answered my next question, so I just want to thank the Minister and let him know that I will be following up with this on the floor of the House and privately.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. More of a comment. Oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

QUESTION 73-18(2):
MEDICAL TRAVEL BENEFITS POLICY

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Quanan, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Medical travel is an important part of health care in the NWT, especially in Nunakput where all communities are fly-in communities, so accessing services outside the community requires air travel. This is a necessary but significant expense. Could the Minister tell us what the cost of medical travel is for the NWT, and if you're going to look at ways to reduce that cost? Quanan, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Medical Travel Policy is designed to reduce financial impact on residents who are accessing insured health services. Those benefits are in place mostly to help address the geographical realities and needs that we have in the Northwest Territories for people who are accessing these insured services. There is a significant expenditure. The total budget for the medical travel program in 2015-2016 was \$36.9 million, with projected expenditures actually over that, of \$38.2 million. The total cost, we are able to recover some of those dollars from other revenues, such as including non-insured health benefits for First Nations and Inuit as well as third-party employer and insurance.

Medical travel has been underfunded for many years. The department is working on a medical travel modernization project to help improve program and patient experiences for those who are accessing medical travel. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: The Minister mentioned that the department is working to modernize the medical travel program. Could he please tell us more about the project, and what progress has been made?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The medical travel modernization is an ongoing project. The first step in the work was actually revising the Medical Travel Policy, and that was actually revised and came into effect on April 1, 2015. The policy revisions included moving the program administration detail out of the Cabinet-approved policy into a ministerial policy. These are now subject to periodic reviews, and may be updated so that they can continue to meet the needs of the public and the health system.

Under the revised policy, we have also been able to establish an appeals process, which is new. One of the major elements being looked at is improving guidelines for patient escorts, which is one of the issues that I have heard the most about as I have travelled around the Northwest Territories. We're also streamlining business processes to make it more efficient.

Other projects underway as part of medical travel modernization are focused on improving the patient experience. A medical travel handbook is nearly developed, almost ready to go, and will be made available to all individuals who are going on medical travel, and the staff have been working and have taken additional training to become certified service professionals to improve customer service at the front line.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Medical travel escorts is something I hear a lot of concern about from my constituents, especially for elders. Could the Minister explain how decisions are made about escorts and how the process is being improved? Quyanainni, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: As I indicated, I've had the opportunity as Minister to travel to all the communities in the Northwest Territories, and when I've been there one of the things that I hear the most about is medical travel and frustrations that exist around medical travel. The policy on escorts actually sets out that the requirement and criteria for an escort to travel with a medical travel client is known as a "non-medical escort," and they may be approved if: the patient is under the age of 19; the patient is breastfeeding an infant and requires an escort to assist with the baby; the patient has a mental or physical disability and is not able to travel unassisted; the patient requires an escort for interpretation; or if an escort is needed to learn how to care for the patient after they are discharged.

Escorts are not automatically provided for elders unless they meet one of those criteria. There's been a lot of discussion. I've heard a lot of elders actually

talking about this, and I've heard some of them say we don't want an escort because we are an elder. I've heard other people say we should have an escort because we're an elder. I've heard individuals say that the escorts should be a family member, somebody known to them. I've heard other people say that we should have established escorts. There's no one simple solution, and we've pulled all this information together through public consultations and others and we are moving forward with an escort policy, which I'll be discussing with Regular Members as we move forward.

One of the first things that we're doing is getting out the handbook so that when individuals are going medical travel they know the information of where they're going, what they need to do, what information they need to bring with them, and what information they'll need to bring back. I'm happy to share the results of medical travel review as we take steps forward with committee and all Members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 74-18(2):
ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES AT AURORA COLLEGE

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment some questions regarding Aurora College. As the Minister may know, students with disabilities have plans set in place while they are in school for their success. As well, it helps them prepare when they get on to post-secondary school. Does the Minister know if Aurora College has a plan or a policy in place that deals with students with disabilities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do agree that developing these kind of plans for individuals and students right from K to 12 to post-secondary is very important and we need to look at those kinds of options moving forward. Yes, the college does have a number of policies designed to assist students in post-secondary. We have barrier-free facilities, so all of our campuses include accommodating persons with physical challenges.

We also have inclusive approaches for students when they do get into colleges, but also in terms of making sure that admissions and applications presents fair and equitable considerations for all students, so there are a few programs in place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for his answer. Does the Minister know how each campus implements these plans and policies in place?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I did mention that our three campuses do have these policies in place. I don't have the detailed information, but I can get that information for the Member. We also have 26 community learning centres that also follow these policies, and as mentioned, I can get some more of those details for the Member.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for his answer. However, I'd like to really get into depth with these students who have learning disabilities, and how the college actually implements their plans. Does the college actually look at down south and how they're implementing these plans? Because I know if we go to Grande Prairie, they actually have a process where they guarantee success of their students.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Yes, when we go through developing our policies we also review the Canadian post-secondary policies and look at what's going on down south. We've got to ensure that any students that are going post-secondary that might need assistance, whether it's financial or whether physical challenges, that they self-identify and let the institutions know what might be some of their challenges to get that education they need. We need all parties to be onboard with this. But yes, in terms of the question, we do look at other policies when we do our review.

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

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Minister for his answer. I know from personal experience that I've had individuals who have self-declared their disability. I've had the college say, "Well, we can work with you when it fits into our schedule," and unfortunately, these individuals do not succeed. However, if they were down south when they do this, there is a policy, there's an action plan in place that actually guarantees these people with disabilities success. Therefore, will the Minister commit that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and the college will review their existing policies and plans and enhance it to reflect the policies of other jurisdictions so we can guarantee success for our people who have disabilities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I do agree that we need to see some successes moving forward with people that are living with disabilities that want to get that post-secondary education. We want to look at ways that we can make it easier for them to access programs, get into post-secondary college, and

offer the supports that they do need. I can advise the Member that the college does review these policies on a regular basis and as I mentioned earlier, they look at other jurisdictions and Canadian institutions for the best practices moving forward. I can work with the department and the colleges and learning centres to see how well they're being implemented and how we can better make those policies reflect what is needed with our residents.

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

QUESTION 75-18(2):
NORTHERN POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

MR. O'REILLY: [English translation not provided] Earlier today, we had an interesting public presentation from Dechinta today at the Standing Committee on Social Development. Then last week, as an Assembly, we adopted the Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2016-2019. One point in that document states that we should be refocusing support for post-secondary institutions in the Northwest Territories. Can the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment tell this House what is meant by "refocusing support for post-secondary institutions in the Northwest Territories?" Merci.

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

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member knows, we just had our mandate done last week. What it really means is we're just looking at post-secondary education and making sure we are providing the programs and that we are doing it right. As Members also know, we have a Skills 4 Success Initiative and next month we'll also be making public the Labour Market Information Report, so we want to reflect our programs to what is needed in the communities. We also want to make sure that we're aligning our post-secondary education with the vision and the priorities of the 18th Legislative Assembly moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: I appreciate the answer from the Minister. We have a number of post-secondary institutions in the Northwest Territories, including Aurora College, Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning and the College nordique francophone. What role does the Minister see for each of these post-secondary institutions in the future?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Right now, I believe that College nordique does offer diploma programs and that our department is working with them to look at possibly how we can work with Aurora College at the same time. I know Dechinta has been

mentioned in this house on numerous occasions. They have a partnership with the University of Alberta where their students can possibly transfer to the University of Alberta. Dechinta and College nordique do not require any authority of an act to operate this way, and we do fund some of these institutions. Aside from College Nordique and Dechinta, we also do give some program dollars to other post-secondary institutions in the North.

MR. O'REILLY: I thank the Minister for his answer and we all understand that the Education Act allows for the granting of post-secondary education degrees, but can the Minister tell us which institutions in the Northwest Territories have such authority and for what types of degrees?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Under the Education Act, I believe it's section 130 that needs to be reviewed if anything needs to be changed with that. We have the Aurora College Act. That's the only institution I can think of that can give out degrees or diplomas.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, and I want to thank the Minister again for his answer. Earlier today, though, I just spoke about how there are other post-secondary institutions here in the Northwest Territories, including Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning and College nordique francophone. Can the Minister tell this House whether he's prepared to enable these other institutions, Dechinta and College nordique in particular, to grant degrees, and when does he believe such authority will be in place? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: As I mentioned, there do have to be some changes to one of our acts. Like I said, we have the Aurora College Act and then there's also -- I'll just correct myself here, but it is section 150 of the Education Act that provides that a university or degree-granting institute cannot be created or established in the Northwest Territories without the express authority of an Act. If those discussions need to be made right now, we just support them financially, and that's something that would need to be changed within that act if something were to move forward.

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

QUESTION 76-18(2):
ENCOURAGING INVESTMENT IN MINERAL
EXPLORATION

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of ITI. In my Member's statement today, I spoke about the need for our government to encourage investment in

mineral exploration in the territory. It is an important way to encourage the growth of employment for Northerners and of course, wealth in the territory, but a recent media release from the NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines last week called for changes. It says that time, transparency, and certainty around permit approvals for exploration projects is causing exploration companies to have lower confidence in an already high-risk endeavour. Could the Minister tell us what steps the GNWT is taking to help reduce the lengthy timeframes that companies have to wait to receive permits for exploration? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Minister of ITI, we take these reports very seriously as our exploration and mining industry depends on being able to obtain permits in a timely manner. Of course, this is a concern for the Government of the Northwest Territories and proof that we need to improve on and streamline our policies, and make the necessary changes in order to attract and reinvigorate our mining and exploration sector.

We are also committed to regulatory streamlining. One of next steps in our process of devolution and evolution is to examine our legislation and related processes in support of mineral resources to ensure that they meet the needs and priorities of our territory. With devolution, the Government of the Northwest Territories is now in a better position to address industry concerns and work with our land management partners to improve regulatory processes.

We also have to remember that a key piece of our regulatory framework still rests with the Government of Canada, such as the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act. The Department of Lands has lead responsibility for regulatory reform. During devolution, we agreed with the government of the day that they would review the MVRMA within five years and we would make a representation to move that up faster with this new Government of Canada. It is not a quick or easy process. We have also committed to developing a new, leading edge Mineral Resources Act in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you to the Minister for his answer. According to the release, on the ability for exploration companies to understand the rules and how they are applied, the NWT emerged with the poorest rating. Could the Minister please explain for this House what action the GNWT is taking to make process and procedures clearer and more transparent for applicants?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The Northwest Territories also ranks in the top in the survey for mineral potential. We have the right building blocks and are committed to providing increasing certainty for industry and other parties. We are looking at a combination of legislative amendments, regulations, and strategic policy to achieve a responsible, sustainable, and balanced approach to industrial land use moving forward. The Government of the Northwest Territories will work with stakeholders as the government evolves with this new devolved responsibility, keeping a transparent process underway.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thanks again to the Minister. It is good to hear that we have the right building blocks to build certainty because that kind of encompasses my next question. Lastly, the statement from the Chamber of Mines says that almost one third of mining companies feel "low to no confidence" that their exploration applications will be granted. How will the GNWT rebuild certainty and encourage industry to maintain and increase their investments in the territory?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As a government, we recognize that it is very important to develop confidence. We have been working very hard at it to gain the confidence of the industry. We know the importance of exploration in the Northwest Territories. Those people that are filling out these surveys, like the Fraser Institute, have long memories. Some of them have been in the North a long time ago and haven't been back since. But we've done a lot of work in this area.

We have developed a Mineral Development Strategy, which is a strategic plan to increase mineral exploration and mine development in order to ensure residents with a sustainable economy. Some of the ways that we are encouraging exploration is through the Mining Incentive Program where we spend \$400,000 a year. We also have an Assessment Work Incentive, developing a regulatory roadmap for explorers; development of a Mineral Resources Act, as I said already; education and awareness, ensuring that our residents understand all aspects of the mineral industry in the Northwest Territories, and investment in infrastructure. As Minister of ITI, we contribute to the studies being conducted by the Department of Transportation in this regard. We are very heartened by the federal government's stated plans to invest in infrastructure in the North and throughout Canada. We see this investment in strategic infrastructure as very important in helping us gain more confidence for investors to come to the Northwest Territories.

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

QUESTION 77-18(2):
CONSTRUCTION OF RCMP STAFF HOUSING
UNITS

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Today my questions are for the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation. Today, we learned via the media that the NWT Housing Corporation is planning to provide brand new housing units in Norman Wells, Inuvik, Fort Smith, Hay River, and Fort Simpson for the RCMP. Why is the NWT Housing Corporation taking on this role when the federal spokesman is quoted as saying that it doesn't provide value for money? Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The federal government, as people know, is getting out of the staff housing for the RCMP. They approached the NWT Housing Corporation. We look at this as two things. One is that to retain employment within our communities, we need to have housing for the RCMP to be in the communities. The other thing is it will be a revenue resource. With the declining CMHC funding, we are looking at the revenue that would come from that to be able to transfer into the operating and maintenance for public housing. Thank you.

MS. GREEN: I know from the same media source that this plan has not yet been taken to the Financial Management Board for approval, and I do wonder if that is putting the cart before the horse. But before going to FMB, can the Minister confirm there is no existing capacity to meet these RCMP housing needs in the privately owned market in the communities where they are getting out of housing?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: The priority for the RCMP housing would be non-market communities where there are no landlords that provide it. Those would be the first ones that we would be looking at.

MS. GREEN: Thank you to the Minister. This list of communities, I believe, has some market capacity. Once again, Norman Wells, Inuvik, Fort Smith, Hay River, and Fort Simpson. It was the Minister of Justice who told us that the RCMP was looking at getting out of housing in these communities. I just want to reiterate my question, whether the Minister can confirm there is no existing capacity in any of those communities to meet current RCMP housing needs.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: The agreement with the federal government was to look at the housing for RCMP territory-wide. We are, however, willing to meet with the SCOSD committee to be able to review it and see if they would like changes to it.

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

MS. GREEN: I would like to ask the Minister whether she knows what is going to happen to the housing that the feds no longer want or need.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: At this point, no, we don't know what their plans are, but we can inquire and we can get back to the Member on that.

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

QUESTION 78-18(2):

HAY RIVER RESERVE HOUSING AND LAND TENURE CONCERNS

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today, I spoke on the housing situation on the Hay River Reserve. If I could perhaps sum it up, before I get to my question: The issue is criteria for program and homeownership eligibility, at the same time in terms of homes and how lands are disposed to make them available for members. There is urgency to resolve this matter between the government and the First Nation. The reserve has been established since 1974. KFN is one of the outstanding land claim agreements or groups that we need to try to establish a relationship and settle a final agreement. Therefore, I have some questions for the Premier. Because this issue crosses jurisdiction, I ask the Premier: Am I correct in understanding that the responsibility for land administration on the Hay River Reserve did not transfer to the GNWT under devolution? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Honourable Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to report that the K'at'l'odeeche First Nation and the NWT Housing Corporation are working together to resolve the long-standing land tenure matters on the Hay River Reserve that have impacted the ability of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation to deliver its programs on the reserve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NADLI: I thank the Premier for responding to give me encouragement that this matter is being worked on. I understand through the Devolution Agreement, groups that have signed on have an opportunity to arrange a bilateral agreement. I'm optimistic that an agreement like that would be advanced and that a workable relationship would be worked out. My second question is: what is the nature of the arrangement between Canada and the GNWT, which gave the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation responsibility for providing housing on the reserve, for basically providing housing on non-reserve communities?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada is working with the K'at'l'odeeche First Nation and the NWT Housing Corporation to draw up the federal land leases that require the approval of their federal minister. In order for the NWT Housing Corporation to provide home ownership programs and public housing, land tenure must be in place. Once the designation process is concluded and federal leases are provided to the NWT Housing Corporation, up to 16 units will become available for NWT Housing Corporation programming, with 10 units going to public housing and the remaining six being used for other housing programming.

MR. NADLI: It's very promising that you know there are some steps being taken, and I commend the Premier for leading the charge with the Cabinet in terms of working with the K'at'l'odeeche First Nation. I'm seeking at least some encouragement that things are being done on behalf of constituents. The Premier indicated and stated that there was work being done with the Department of INAC and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation to designate some of the units to make them available for constituents. At what point would the question of land tenure be resolved and those homes been made available to constituents?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: On June 25, 2013, the K'at'l'odeeche First Nation approved the designation of six lots by majority vote, allowing Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada to issue 50-year federal Crown leases over the lots. Also, the NWT Housing Corporation has a loan guarantee for 10 lots for \$900,000 with Peace Hills Trust to support previous years' construction of 10 KFN-owned housing units. Upon request of the K'at'l'odeeche First Nation, the NWT Housing Corporation has agreed to pay out the loan guarantees to Peace Hills Trust in return for ownership and land tenure over the 10 units.

On September 10, 2010, the Minister and the NWT Housing Corporation met with K'at'l'odeeche First Nations, where they agreed a reserve plan could be designated in favour of federal Crown leases. The KFN was familiar with the practice as they had previously financed commercial developments on the Hay River Reserve through their principal banker Peace Hills Trust. This will allow the NWT Housing Corporation to obtain leases that would secure its investment of housing. Several steps needed to be completed before the lots could be put on a designation vote, such as surveying of the lots, completion of an environmental assessment, and the initiation of the formal designation process by the KFN. On June 25, 2013, KFN approved a designation allowing Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada to issue their federal leases.

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

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I'd like to thank the Premier for replying to the question. It seems like we're kind of reflecting upon some historical steps that have been taken and it's encouraging to see the progress in terms of the work between the government and the First Nations group, but the fact of the matter is that in my statement I've stated, that there are some empty units that are sitting basically boarded-up and they're not accessible to constituents on the reserve, so there's a level of frustration. How can we make those houses available to constituents now, and what is the government's position on the future disposition of these units? Mahsi.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that now we've all reached a clear understanding of who is responsible for what, and the fact that K'atl'odeeche First Nation have signed on to devolution. We've had some very good discussions with K'atl'odeeche First Nation, and I think we can work together to resolve the outstanding issue of the vacant housing that the Member refers to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 79-18(2):
ON-THE-LAND HEALING PROGRAMS

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, follow-up to my Member's statement earlier today: As I mentioned, many of my constituents in the Mackenzie Delta would like more on-the-land healing programs to be held within our riding. I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services, when will the first on-the-land healing program be held at the Gwich'in Wellness Centre? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Healing Voices Final Report from the Minister's Forum on Addictions and Community Wellness that was released in May 2013 recommended that the department adopt culture-based approaches to dealing with treatment and wellness of people suffering from addictions. The top recommendation in that report was to increase the availability of on-the-land programming. To that end, the department has put in their budget \$1.23 million for on-the-land programming that we flow to different governments and regions in the Northwest Territories.

We do have a contribution agreement with the Gwich'in. It's a multi-year agreement for two years, \$125,000 a year for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 to deliver on-the-land programming. We don't dictate

to them how they run those programs. They design the programs that they feel will meet their needs. At this time, I'm not certain if they are using the Gwich'in Wellness Camp as part of their on-the-land programming. Thank you, Mr. Speaker,

MR. BLAKE: That sounds great. I'd like to ask the Minister if he knows how often will programs be available, and will there be a schedule available to my constituents.

MR. GLEN ABERNETHY: The agreement that we have with the Gwich'in involves a number of different camps. Camps will incorporate cultural practices that support wellness and healing through traditional methods, medicine, and social interactions. It's my understanding that they are going to be delivering programs in all four seasons here in the Northwest Territories. As far as how one would apply, I don't have that information in front of me, but I'll certainly talk to the department, get the details, and share with the Member on how the Gwich'in are intending to advertise these camps and how they're encouraging people to attend. I'll certainly share that with the Member when I get it.

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

QUESTION 80-18(2):
SAHTU REGION HOUSING CHALLENGES

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my statement earlier, I mentioned I was going to address the housing minister on questions that are within our riding. As also mentioned earlier, housing needs are a fast-growing desire of many clients and many young couples and general public in all the communities.

My question to the Minister is: Can I get an inventory list on the assessment of the five set to communities? There are three types the units in all the communities. You got foreclosure units that are sitting there, as one of my previous colleagues have mentioned. They're sitting dormant doing nothing, collecting snow, kids broke the windows, so the value of these units is vastly deteriorating. Insulation, as you know, gets cold, gets wet, it's no good. You might as well burn the unit down, settle for the insurance income, and build a new one.

---Laughter

You've got those types of units and you've also got social housing units, and those are getting old. You've got them units out there and you've got market housing as well. In those categories, if I can lump that up and get the inventory, if that's possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department is actually, at this point, compiling a listing of all of the housing that we have available. Right now, we have no housing available for public housing. Just to let people know, the buildings that people see boarded up are scheduled for demolition, it's expensive to do that, or else they are public houses owned by the community members, but we can provide a list of those houses that the corporation owns that are empty. Thank you.

MR. MCNEELY: I look forward to the information. My next question is, once we have the information, and considering the next few days we have of this Second Session, there will be some time for some people, but I am hoping that the Minister will have time and if she is willing to attend the Sahtu Housing Conference.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I am more than interested in visiting the communities and the regions. I would, however, have to have a date, so I could check my schedule. If available, I would be pleased.

MR. MCNEELY: As advised here by a notable leader of mine, I would like to ask the Minister when and what dates she would be available within the next 60 days, so we could coordinate with the leadership of the Sahtu.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: If the Member would like to meet with me any time this week, then we would coordinate our schedules and see what times works good for both of us.

MR. MCNEELY: I will take up that offer of the Minister and correspond accordingly.

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

QUESTION 81-18(2):
PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED DYING

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Health and Social Services provide details on the work done to date by this government on regulations for physician-assisted dying? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last June, we formed a partnership with

the other provinces and territories and we actually had an expert advisory group pulled together to go out and do some research and analysis on physician-assisted dying. That report has been made available. We have had a number of discussions at the FPT level to see what other jurisdictions are doing so that we could have as coordinated an approach as possible. At the same time, earlier this calendar year, we actually went out for a public call for information and feedback from residents across the Northwest Territories. We sent letters to a large number of different stakeholders to seek guidance on what we should do here in the Northwest Territories with respect to facilitating physician-assisted dying. Later this week, I have a meeting with the NWT Medical Association here to have some further discussions on that as we move forward with a June 6, 2016 target date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister commit to releasing the details of that public consultation with the members of the Standing Committee on Social Development, and as a public document as well? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the expert advisory panel report that was done for the provinces and territories is already public. As far as the information we receive from different stakeholders, we are going to consolidate all that information as we move forward with putting in some interim measures that will come into effect on June 6. I will certainly be having a discussion with Members on what we have heard and where we are going prior to June 6. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: Yes, I was referring to the northern stakeholder information that was gathered by the government. If the Ministry could also detail what is the government's plan for moving forward on physician-assisted dying in the Northwest Territories following the June 6 deadline? I am looking for specifics, please.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We won't know what the federal legislation looks like until it is passed. We anticipate that it will be passed on June 6, which means we will have to be in a position to facilitate physician-assisted dying here in the Northwest Territories. Now that we have pulled together some information from stakeholders across Northwest Territories, we have the expert panel's report, we also have the report that was prepared for the federal government, and we also know that a number of the different provincial colleges of physicians are doing a significant amount of work on this. We are going to pull all that information together and, shortly, we are going to be pulling together a steering committee of key

stakeholders here in the Northwest Territories that are going to help advise what our interim measures should be for June 6.

We anticipate that there is going to be some legislative requirements here in the Northwest Territories to help facilitate this in the long term, but we won't know what those are until we actually see the federal legislation. Our first step here is to put the steering committee together, get some interim measures that we can put in place so that we can facilitate respectful, choice-based, physician-assisted dying here in the Northwest Territories on June 6, and then move forward through the legislative process once we know what the federal legislation looks like.

MR. TESTART: I would like to thank the Minister for providing those details and showing that the government has done quite a bit of work on this. That's appreciated. I trust that the government will continue to work with the committee moving forward. This is an issue that is very important and on the minds of many Northerners. I think there is a lot of concern on the part of our communities, and we need to do the best job we can at making people understand what options are available to them and what choices they can now take with it comes to end-of-life care. I look forward to the Minister continuing to work with federal and provincial colleagues and this side of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. I will take that as a comment. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 82-18(2):
CONSTRUCTION OF RCMP STAFF HOUSING
UNITS

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have some additional questions for the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation. I appreciate her offer to brief this side of the House on the plan with respect to housing the members of the RCMP and in which communities. I guess my more general question on this, at this point, is: What is the benefit to the NWT Housing Corporation of taking on the provision of housing to members of the RCMP? Thank you.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As previously stated in my answers, the benefit of the Housing Corporation taking on this initiative is that we will retain RCMP officers within the communities and we can use the market rent that we will be charging them to subsidize the operating maintenance costs to the public housing

considering that the CMHC funding will be dissolving. Thank you.

MS. GREEN: Thank you to the Minister for that. Could the Minister elaborate on the additional revenue that will be realized through the provision of this housing? To what extent will it subsidize public housing in those same communities?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Currently, it costs about \$18,000 to \$20,000 a year to provide the operating and maintenance provision for public housing. For every unit that we rent out, we would be able to support that cost.

MS. GREEN: I am looking forward to some additional detail on that, especially as it relates to which communities the housing is going to be provided in. The Housing Corporation staff have said that there will be absolutely no effect of the provision of housing to the RCMP on the current waiting list for social housing. Can she confirm that that is the case?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: As stated earlier, the initiative is not to displace public housing. It is a revenue source to be able to supplement the public housing. I also can give you some information on the federal units that the RCMP had. At this point, the federal government is saying that they're beyond repair for them to make them financially viable. They will be offering them out to market. If they are not taken up by the market within the communities, then they'll send them to negotiations with the Housing Corporation.

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

QUESTION 83-18(2):
MEETING WITH AURORA COLLEGE THEBACHA
CAMPUS STUDENTS

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Will the Minister meet with the college student body at Thebacha campus in Fort Smith? Thank you.

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

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the work that all our staff do on all campuses and the important supports that we have for our students. When time permits, we would like to get into the campuses and meet with the staff, meet with students, keep up to date with the Board of Governors. Yes. We can work on scheduling a time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written

questions. Item 10, replies to Commissioner's Opening Address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Transportation.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 16-18(2):
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY FOR 2015 UNDER THE
TRANSPORTATION OF DANGEROUS GOODS
ACT

TABLED DOCUMENT 17-18(2):
WASTE REDUCTION AND RECOVERY
PROGRAM 2014-2015 ANNUAL REPORT

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following two documents entitled "Annual Report to the Legislative Assembly for 2015 under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act" and "The Waste Reduction and Recovery Program for 2014-2015 Annual Report." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 18-18(2):
NWT LONG-TERM CARE PROGRAM REVIEW,
FINAL REPORT, DECEMBER 2015

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table to following document entitled "The Northwest Territories Long-Term Care Program Review, Final Report, December 2015." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents.

TABLED DOCUMENT 19-18(2):
SUMMARY OF MEMBERS' ABSENCES FOR THE
PERIOD DECEMBER 17, 2015 TO FEBRUARY
17, 2016

MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to Section 5 of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I wish to table the "Summary of Members' Absences for the Period of December 17, 2015 to February 17, 2016."

Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 2-18(2):
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), NO. 4,
2015-2016

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 4, 2015-16, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is in order. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 2 has had its first reading. First reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

BILL 3-18(2):
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES), NO. 3, 2015-
2016

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 3, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operation Expenditures), No. 3, 2015-2016 be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Bill 3. The motion is in order. The motion is non-debatable. All those in favour. All those opposed. Motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 3 has had its first reading. First reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 1-18(2):
AN ACT TO AMEND THE LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ACT

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, be read for the second time. This bill amends the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act to establish a two-year freeze on any upward adjustment of the indemnities payable to Members under Parts 1 and 2 of Schedule C. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Bill 1. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Bill 1 has had a second reading. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 74(2) and have Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, moved into Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 74(2) and have the bill referred to Committee of the Whole. Are there any nays? There are no nays. The bill is moved to the Committee of the Whole. Second reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

BILL 2-18(2):

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), NO. 4,
2015-2016

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South that Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 4, 2015-2016, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for infrastructure expenditures for the Government of Northwest Territories for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:Question.

MR. SPEAKER: The question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion carried. Bill 2 had its second reading. Second reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

BILL 3-18(2):

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES), NO. 3, 2015-
2016

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South that Bill 3, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operation Expenditures), No. 3, 2015-2016, be read for the second time. This bill makes supplementary appropriations for operations expenditures for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:Question.

MR. SPEAKER: The question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion carried. Bill 3 has had second reading. Second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 2-18(2), Interim Estimates, 2016-2017; Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, with the Member for Hay River North in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, committee wishes to review Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Does Committee agree? We will take a brief recess and resume with the first item.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I now call Committee of the Whole back to order. We have agreed to consider Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act. Mr. Blake, would you please introduce the bill.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am pleased to provide opening comments on Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act. This act currently provides for an automatic cost-of-living increase to MLAs' salaries on April 1 of each year. This increase is based on the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index for Canada over the preceding two years.

If Bill 1 is not enacted, MLA salaries will increase by 1.1 per cent on April 1, 2016. This amounts to \$30,000, including salaries paid to MLAs who hold additional responsibilities, such as Speaker, Premier, Ministers, and Committee Chairs. Bill 1 will eliminate the cost-of-living increase to MLAs' salaries scheduled to take place on April 1, 2016 and 2017. This amounts to a two-year freeze on MLA salaries at their current levels and is consistent with the freeze on salaries for deputy ministers, senior managers, and excluded employees recently announced by the government. The Board of Management of the Legislative

Assembly feels that MLAs must lead from the front during these challenging fiscal times. I look forward to answering any questions you may have. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber, Mr. Blake?

MR. BLAKE: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. BLAKE: Thank You, Mr. Chair. With me today is usually my right-hand man, but today he's my left-hand man. Here is Mr. Tim Mercer, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, and Mr. Ken Chutskoff, legislative counsel.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. I would like to now open the floor up to general comments on Bill 1. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know that informally, since the beginning of the 18th Assembly, many of us have talked about the idea of freezing MLA wages. I'm happy that at a point in time the Minister of Finance made a recommendation to the Board of Management to give this further and more official consideration. I am certainly supportive. I reiterate the fellow Member's comments that this is not going to a measure that is going to make a bunch of big savings for us, but that it's an opportunity to show that we are committed to leadership by example in trying fiscal times, so I will be supportive. Thank you.

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

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In times of economic downturn and fiscal restraint, it's important to show leadership and I welcome this amendment to the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act that does exactly that. It puts MLAs in a position where we can show our commitment to the public service we provide and to clearly lead on the front of accepting a reduction in our own salaries so we can get to work and find those cost savings that our government now requires to provide the things we were elected on and the same standard of government services that people have relied on. I only wish that this had come first, quite frankly. I think it would have been much bolder.

Considering the very limited amount of cost savings that this exercise will provide to the government, I think taking the lead on this should have come

before we made the announcement for other salary adjustments for the other classes of employees. I have made comments on or asked questions of the Minister of Finance on excluded employees before, and I still strongly caution that we might be taking a heavy-handed approach to freezing salaries for all public servants. However, I do support this measure and I will be in full support of this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I commend the leadership shown by the Member, the mover, and the seconder, the Board of Management, and all Members of this Legislative Assembly by, as a couple of Members have already pointed out, leading by example. I think it's something that we need to do and I will be happy to support this bill. Thank you.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I too support the bill. I think it's appropriate in this day of our government, when we are under some financial restraints. I think that the people of the communities and the people out across, even, all of the communities, including the regional centres and Yellowknife, would support us doing this, and I think it's something that shows that we are prepared to tighten our own personal belts as well, when it comes to looking for some additional revenue, so that we can continue to provide the programs and services to the people that they have become accustomed to. I support this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Seeing no further comments, does the Committee agree that we conclude general comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Does the committee agree that we proceed by a clause-by-clause review of the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): We will defer the bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses. Please turn to page 1 of the bill. I will give everyone a moment to find page 1. If everyone is at page 1 of the bill, clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Committee, to the bill as a whole, does committee agree that Bill 1 is now reading for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Bill 1 is now ready for a third reading. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 1?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

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

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

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Could I have the report of the Committee of the Whole. Member for Hay River North.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act. I would like to report that Bill 1 is ready for a third reading. I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Do I have a seconder? Member for Nahendeh. Masi. Motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: The question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion carried.

---Carried.

Masi. Item 22, third reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 2-18(2):

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), NO. 4,
2015-2016

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 4, 2015-2016, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: The question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion carried.

---Carried.

Bill 2 has had its third reading. Third reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

BILL 3-18(2):

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES), NO. 3, 2015-
2016

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 3, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2015-2016, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: The question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion carried.

---Carried.

Bill 3 had its third reading. Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Tuesday, March 1, 2016, 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees

5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Acknowledgements
8. Oral Questions
9. Written Questions
10. Returns to Written Questions
11. Replies to Commissioner's Opening Address
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Tabled Document 2-18(2), Interim Estimates, 2016-2017
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
 - Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act
23. Orders of the Day

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 3:49 p.m.