



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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17th Assembly

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Thursday, October 8, 2015

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The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, October 8, 2015****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Hon. Tom Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Blake, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Dolynny, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Hon. Jackie Jacobson, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Moses, Mr. Nadli, Hon. David Ramsay, Mr. Yakeleya
Dene First Nations, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Sahtu

The House met at 1:31 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Good afternoon, colleagues. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 243-17(5):
INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS WITH
ABORIGINAL GOVERNMENTS DURING THE
17TH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, building a strong and sustainable future for the Northwest Territories by strengthening our relationships with Aboriginal governments has been one of the key priorities of the 17th Legislative Assembly. For the past four years, our government has worked to strengthen our partnerships with Aboriginal governments.

That work started even before Cabinet was selected, when all Members met with Aboriginal leadership in Detah at the beginning of our term. Cabinet continued this engagement and made it a priority to reach out to our Aboriginal government partners to look for common ground and identify areas where we could make progress together.

In June 2012, I tabled Respect, Recognition, Responsibility: The Government of the Northwest Territories' Approach to Engaging with Aboriginal Governments in this House. It is the foundation upon which our government's actions and commitments to strengthening and renewing our relationships with our Aboriginal government partners have been built.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that the Northwest Territories continues to lead the way nationally in establishing government-to-government relations with Aboriginal governments. During the life of this Assembly, our government has concluded separate intergovernmental cooperation agreements with the Tlicho Government, the Gwich'in Tribal Council, the Northwest Territory Metis Nation, the Akaitcho

Secretariat Incorporated and the Salt River First Nation.

Mr. Speaker, the 17th Assembly's goal of a strong and sustainable future also depends on the successful conclusion of land, resources and self-government agreements. Our government has been focused on building a solid foundation by working effectively with our federal and Aboriginal partners to finalize Aboriginal rights agreements in all regions of the Northwest Territories.

With several sets of negotiations having reached significant milestones during the life of the 17th Legislative Assembly, we have seen firsthand how partners working together can achieve significant results.

The Deline Final Self-Government Agreement Act was passed on March 12th of this year. In January 2014, the Acho Dene Koe Agreement-in-Principle on land and resources was signed and final agreement negotiations are well underway. Earlier this year I had the pleasure of signing, on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Inuvialuit Self-Government Agreement-in-Principle as well as the Northwest Territory Metis Nation Agreement-in-Principle on Land and Resources.

Mr. Speaker with the devolution of land, water and resource management responsibilities from Canada to the Northwest Territories in 2014, intergovernmental cooperation within the Northwest Territories has never been stronger.

Increased collaboration and engagement with Aboriginal governments continues to be important to government decision-making processes. We have seen this reflected in the two groundbreaking transboundary water agreements we have negotiated with the active participation of the Aboriginal governments during this Assembly. This approach was also used in developing legislation that directly affected Aboriginal Government interests, such as the collaborative approach to drafting the Wildlife Act.

A key aspect of the Devolution Agreement was the establishment of an Intergovernmental Council, which enables the Government of the Northwest

Territories and Aboriginal governments who have signed on to devolution to collaborate on matters related to lands and resource management. The council allows Northwest Territories governments to share ideas and discuss common priorities and interests and will greatly benefit the Government of the Northwest Territories as it considers potential changes to lands and resources management in the Northwest Territories. This approach is unique in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, since devolution, the Government of the Northwest Territories and Canada has shared the resource revenues from public land in the Northwest Territories. This means tens of millions of dollars will stay in the Northwest Territories each year. To ensure that as many people as possible enjoy the benefits of devolution, our government has committed to sharing a portion of those revenues with participating Aboriginal governments.

I am pleased to say that in July of this year, \$6.3 million was paid out to all Aboriginal government parties that signed on as part of the Devolution Resource Revenue Sharing Agreement. Nowhere else in Canada have resource revenues from public lands been offered to Aboriginal governments on this level. We are working to have all remaining Aboriginal governments sign on to devolution.

Mr. Speaker, the 17th Legislative Assembly has continually made it a priority to build and maintain respectful government-to-government relationships with Aboriginal governments. I believe that partnership and mutual respect is the key to success for our territory. Strong, effective and efficient governments are essential for helping Northerners achieve their social, environmental and economic goals. The Government of the Northwest Territories has made significant and meaningful partnerships with Aboriginal governments during the 17th Assembly that have resulted in positive outcomes. The foundation for working together has been solidly established by this government and this spirit of cooperation will continue to benefit all Northerners for years to come. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 244-17(5):
HIGHWAY CORRIDOR PLANNING

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, transportation infrastructure and services are important to our residents, communities, businesses and our future. I am pleased to provide an update on three key highway corridor initiatives in progress in the NWT.

In June the Department tabled Connecting Us, a 25-year Transportation Strategy focusing on all modes of transportation in the NWT and

highlighting our transportation challenges and opportunities.

Three strategic priorities were identified including Capturing Opportunities, which refers to expanding the NWT transportation system. The Department is making significant progress under this new strategic priority with plans to increase and improve access in various parts of the territory by opening up three new all-weather corridors.

A Mackenzie Valley Highway running from Wrigley to the Arctic coast is a long-standing priority of the GNWT. The northernmost section of this project, the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway, continues to advance and will enter its third season of construction this winter.

The department has recently submitted a detailed business case to the Government of Canada for the next section of the Mackenzie Valley Highway, from Wrigley to Norman Wells. With funding approval from the federal government, the department's next goal would be to begin constructing this section. Significant planning is already underway to prepare for this next step and the route will closely follow the existing winter road alignment where 38 permanent bridges are already in place.

Improved access into the Sahtu presents a significant opportunity to increase mobility and reduce the cost of living for Sahtu residents. By providing reliable access, industry exploration and development costs will be reduced, allowing us to tap into the rich petroleum reserves located in the region.

Both GNWT and the Tlicho Government have established the Tlicho Road Working Group which has been working together on studies related to the development of an all-weather road to Whati since 1999. The road would provide several benefits including eliminating problems experienced in the southern sections of existing winter road and extending access into the region. Increased access to the NICO mine project will increase investor confidence to continue developing the region's economic potential. Work continues on the project to secure funding and advance environmental approvals for the project.

Mr. Speaker, the potential of improving access into the mineral-rich region of the Slave Geological Province and connecting to a deepwater port in western Nunavut holds significant possibilities for a strengthened, sustainable partnership with industry and our government partners. The region holds world-class deposits of base metals, precious metals, and diamonds and is a significant contributor to the NWT economy. Increased all-weather access would improve industry's ability to operate successfully in the North.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard about the forecast in resource development activity over the next five to

15 years and its possible effect on the NWT economy. With a flat revenue outlook, the GNWT will be challenged to sustain programs and services or make capital investments in future years. Continuing to make strategic investments in infrastructure to support responsible development is one way our government can promote economic growth and prosperity for all residents.

These road corridors demonstrate NWT preparedness to capture opportunities to develop a sustainable economy and continue to improve access and reduce the cost of living to our residents.

The department is prepared to maintain the momentum on these corridor projects as we prepare for decisions that will be made by the transition to the 18th Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 245-17(5):
TRANSBOUNDARY WATER MANAGEMENT
AGREEMENT REACHED WITH
BRITISH COLUMBIA**

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to advise Members of this Assembly that our government will be signing a transboundary water management agreement with British Columbia for the shared waters of the Liard and Petitot basins.

This agreement, the second one to be signed with an upstream jurisdiction this year, is another step in ensuring the waters of the Northwest Territories remain clean, abundant and productive for all time.

Similar to the one signed with Alberta in March, this bilateral agreement with British Columbia was shaped by the input of Aboriginal governments in the Northwest Territories and incorporates many of the best principles and practices in water management today.

The bilateral agreement with Alberta covers the waters shared between Alberta and the Northwest Territories. British Columbia and Alberta are negotiating a similar bilateral agreement for their shared waters, including the Peace River.

The Northwest Territories - British Columbia Bilateral Water Management Agreement promotes a cooperative approach to the management of our shared water resources and establishes a framework for our governments to jointly maintain the integrity of our shared aquatic ecosystems.

The agreement addresses the concern of future upstream development in British Columbia as well

as response to environmental emergencies and their potential effects on water quality, quantity and biological elements of our shared aquatic ecosystems.

Mr. Speaker, this is a matter of great importance to our residents because of our close ties to the land and water and the significant dependency on healthy aquatic systems for food security, travel and economic growth as well as mental, physical, cultural and spiritual well-being.

The agreement will be signed in Vancouver on October 13th.

I want to extend my congratulations and gratitude to the many people who worked so hard to finalize this agreement, including our negotiating team and Aboriginal governments who provided support and input into our objectives and approach to negotiations.

Mr. Speaker, as Members of the 17th Legislative Assembly, we can be proud of our achievements in safeguarding our water resources through the signing of bilateral water management agreements with both Alberta and British Columbia.

It will be up to the 18th Legislative Assembly to keep this momentum going and provide the encouragement and support needed to implement the signed agreements and sign similar agreements with Saskatchewan, Yukon and Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 246-17(5):
COMMUNITY FUEL PRICES**

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, the cost of energy is one of the leading contributors to the high cost of living in the Northwest Territories. Wherever possible, our government has been seeking opportunities to pass savings to our residents, and today I can report that the ongoing low wholesale price for heating fuel and gasoline has made it possible for the Department of Public Works and Services to pass on savings to residents in two of our smaller communities.

Sixteen NWT communities receive essential fuel products through the department's Fuel Services Program. On August 17, 2015, the fuel services division was able to lower the price of Lutselk's gasoline by seven cents per litre, heating fuel by four cents per litre and diesel fuel by 13 cents a litre. In Tulita, heating fuel was lowered 10 cents a litre and diesel was lowered 18 cents a litre.

The other marine resupplied communities, Sachs Harbour, Paulatuk and Ulukhaktok, have not yet had their final prices calculated, but projections are

that there will be price reductions in the range of four to 16 cents for heating fuel, 12 to 24 cents for diesel and two to 14 cents for gasoline by late October.

Our commitment to pass on savings through the Petroleum Products Program is evidenced by the price reductions we have achieved in the past year. In looking at gasoline prices in communities served by Public Works and Services, they have declined as much as 12 percent, with heating fuel prices declining as much as 21 percent compared to the prices this time last year. On average, the price of gasoline has dropped by 7 percent and the price for heating fuel has dropped by 9 percent over the past year.

While lower fuel prices have provided some relief from the high cost of living to residents, the Department of Public Works and Services is committed to improving energy awareness and the adoption of efficient technology and behaviours in support of our government's vision of an environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories.

The fuel services division is a key function in the newly established energy activity within the Department of Public Works and Services. The energy activity is also actively engaged in identifying renewable and alternative fuels and energy solutions to better support the GNWT's goals of energy efficiency, sustainability and greenhouse gas reduction.

Mr. Speaker, the fuel services division is committed to passing on cost savings on fuel products it provides wherever possible. We anticipate that with the present stability in the market price for fuel, the department will be able to pass savings on to the other communities that are resupplied by barge this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister of Lands, Mr. R.C. McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 247-17(5):
NEW WESTERN ARCTIC CENTRE
FOR GEOMATICS

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, technology could be a game-changer for Inuvik's economy. Due to its northern location and the frequent passes of satellites, Inuvik is becoming an attractive area for technological investment.

Inuvik is already home to the Inuvik Satellite Station Facility, with one Canadian-owned and two internationally-owned satellite antennas, and growth expected to increase in the coming years with the completion of the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Line. This state-of-the-art telecommunications link will connect the Beaufort-Delta to southern Canada and is expected to attract additional business from around the world to Inuvik.

Inuvik has the potential to become the high-tech hub of the Northwest Territories. This government is committed to investing in infrastructure and building capacity that will lead to new partnerships, economic development and job opportunities. The new Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics is an important part of that investment.

Mr. Speaker, the planning phase for the centre in Inuvik is well underway and we are working with our partners at the Aurora Research Institute to officially open next spring. Last month three new employment opportunities for the centre were advertised and these positions will all be based in Inuvik.

The centre in Inuvik is part of the Information Shared Services Centre in the Department of Lands. Once opened, the centre will increase the level of geomatics support for our programs and services that support land, resource and infrastructure management through remote sensing technologies, as well as economic development initiatives.

For example, satellite imagery can be used to monitor sea ice conditions for shipping channels and off-shore oil and gas exploration. It can show changes in water levels over time, providing critical information into the feasibility of hydroelectric dams. It is useful to help monitor burn severity from forest fires, and that information could help determine future reforestation patterns, including crop predictions for the morel mushroom industry.

Staff at the centre will work with various partners, including Aboriginal and federal governments and researchers, to coordinate remote sensing research in the Arctic and Subarctic and to implement monitoring programs. Staff will also work closely with the Aurora Research Institute to enhance existing education programs and to develop educational opportunities to raise awareness about the technology industry. This is particularly important for youth in the NWT who may be considering future career opportunities and want to learn more about geomatics.

Mr. Speaker, with a flat revenue forecast for coming years and expected slow economic growth, the GNWT needs to be making efforts to contribute to growth and diversification in all communities and regions. Investments in infrastructure that will help make the NWT a more competitive and attractive place to do business is a key part of that.

The Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics is a great example of this government's commitment to growing other promising sectors of our economy, in addition to the resource sector, through investment in technological infrastructure and partnerships that will help to create prosperity and benefits for NWT residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Minister of ITI, Mr. Ramsay.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 248-17(5):
SUCCESS OF THE SMALL SCALE FOODS
PROGRAM IN ALL REGIONS

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, the high cost of living has been identified as a significant concern for Northwest Territories residents. The Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to addressing the many factors that contribute to this challenge, including the high cost of food in many communities.

One of the ways we are doing that is by supporting the production of local food. I am pleased to report that the Northwest Territories' agriculture and small-scale foods sector has grown significantly in the last decade. With renewed interest and commitment toward re-establishing Behchoko's community garden, I can share that all 33 communities in this territory now have established community gardens or greenhouse projects.

With the installation of greenhouses in our northernmost communities of Ulukhaktok, Sachs Harbour and Paulatuk, we have a small-scale food production sector stretching the length and breadth of the NWT.

The governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories have provided tremendous support and leadership for the expansion and support of this sector. This sector has also been championed by individuals and organizations committed to diversifying their own food baskets, increasing the availability of locally grown and produced food, and reducing the cost of healthy, freshly grown food alternatives in their communities.

As we approach the Thanksgiving weekend and the traditional harvest season, I would like to highlight some of the success stories.

Mr. Speaker, every Saturday throughout the summer, the Inuvik greenhouse hosted an arctic market that sold fresh, organic produce. The Inuvik greenhouse was the first community greenhouse in the Beaufort-Delta and remains the hub for agriculture above the Arctic Circle.

Tsiigehtchic, meanwhile, is one of the fastest growing gardening communities in the Beaufort-Delta. Thirty of this community's 120 residents are currently growing food in raised garden beds outside of their homes.

Mr. Speaker, thanks in large part to the work and dedication of the Whiteman family, Norman Wells has held the unofficial title as the NWT's potato capital for a number of years. This year, however, there is a challenger in the North Slave.

The community of Whati's 40-by-70-foot community garden, under the care and guidance of community

volunteers like Mr. Jim Stauffer, this summer yielded 1,013 pounds of potatoes. It was a phenomenal harvest that was shared, in the same collective spirit that it was grown, with more than 50 families and individuals in that community.

In Gameti this spring, a pilot project saw the purchase of 38 chicks for harvesting. I would like to recognize Mr. Judo Dominicata for his passion and leadership on this project, even housing the chickens in his own home while infrastructure was being completed at the community farm. Mr. Speaker, healthy, fresh chickens are being processed this fall, at approximately half the cost of a frozen chicken in Gameti. Community residents are looking forward to repeating this project on a larger scale next year and expanding it to include egg-laying chickens.

In August, residents of Fort Simpson enjoyed the second annual arts and crafts workshop and demonstration, and community trade fair, which was hosted by Industry, Tourism and Investment's Deh Cho regional office. This year's event also included gardening workshops on composting, animal husbandry and soil fertility.

Mr. Speaker, the Fisherman's Wharf in Hay River remains a hot spot where residents and visitors can buy fresh northern produce from the likes of Ms. Helen Green and Ms. Jackie Milne. Jackie, of course, is also well-known to northern growers for her work with the Northern Farm Training Institute, envisioned as a vital component for an emerging NWT agriculture sector that will eventually contribute to home-grown products displacing the high volume of imported food into the NWT.

We are currently working with CanNor, the Territorial Farmers' Association and the Town of Hay River to build a campus for the institute that, through training, will help to establish agricultural employment in farming, greenhouses and livestock, and related employment in value-added areas.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Industry, Tourism and Investment's North Slave regional office hosted an Agricultural Awareness and Planning Workshop earlier this week in Yellowknife. It was an opportunity for government program delivery and resource staff in the North Slave region to share their experiences, challenges and success, and to add to their skills and knowledge base to support even greater growth in this sector next year. Furthermore, it afforded us the opportunity to collaborate with the Yellowknife Garden Collective on October 3rd to also share this information and expertise with local gardening enthusiasts in a public event.

Mr. Speaker, the NWT Economic Opportunities Strategy, released in 2013, recognized much of the potential that I am highlighting for Members today. It identified the NWT agricultural sector as one in which investment, economic growth, employment

and income opportunities for NWT residents all exist.

This summer, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment led community engagement visits to inform the development of an Agriculture Strategy that will guide future investments and initiatives in this area. At the appropriate time this afternoon, I will be tabling a report of what we learned.

This report will further demonstrate that the NWT's agriculture and small-scale foods sector is growing and thriving and in a position to be a contributor to the sustainability, health and economic potential of NWT communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognitions of visitors in the gallery. Honourable Premier.

Sorry. We have to do Members' statements. I'm sorry. Anyway, item 3, Members' statements.

---Laughter

Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON APPRECIATION FOR CONSTITUENTS, COLLEAGUES AND SUPPORTERS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, I will be recognizing people, many of whom are in the gallery today. It's been a huge privilege to represent the people of Weledeh and the people of the Northwest Territories, people who have my utmost respect and good wishes.

I would like to thank you all for the faith you have placed in me to speak on your behalf for the past eight years. Being your MLA has brought me closer to people and their issues and the struggles we all engage in to provide for healthy families and communities.

While I came into this position through concerns for the land, of which I am a student, I was soon engaged in the health, social and economic concern of the people in communities and the relationships between all of these. It is the interconnectedness of all issues that I have tried to emphasize with my colleagues and that I have strived to have recognized in any solution we propose.

I thank all those Ministers and their staff who have helped with so many constituency issues. Their willingness to try to look deeper and seek systemic solutions to those issues that arise all too frequently is much appreciated.

I thank the government and my colleagues for supporting more in-depth looks into policy options

that prevent problems and attack underlying issues, rather than just symptoms.

The people we surround ourselves with are critical to achieving our goals. I would like to recognize the amazing Weledeh constituents who I've had the pleasure of working with over the past eight years, particularly Mr. Craig Yeo for fully half of my years in office. They have all left their mark and contributed to my work as scribes and sounding boards and to compassionate attention to myriad constituency issues. For those seeking a great CA, by the way, in the 18th, I suggest they give Bob Wilson a call.

My office neighbour, MLA Bisaro, has been a supportive colleague through my eight years and provided a fine example of the high standards we all strive for.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot say enough about the NWT Legislative Assembly's outstanding Clerk, research, corporate, library and security staff that have supported us in our work. Completely dedicated, patient and thorough, they have been inspirational and enabling, and I thank them for their exceptional service.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BROMLEY: My wife, Marianne, in the audience today, has made many sacrifices and contributions to support my work. It is with the greatest love and appreciation that I say thank you, Marianne. I could not have done this without you.

Mr. Speaker, to you and all my colleagues in this Assembly, I say a big mahsi and onwards.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON APPRECIATION FOR CONSTITUENTS, COLLEAGUES AND SUPPORTERS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the words of our deputy clerk, Mr. Schauerte, "day last." When he starts our meetings he says that. Day last of the 17th Legislative Assembly and day last of 20 years in this Chamber for me.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to also make some thank yous. To my colleagues first, who are the mosaic and the diversity of the Northwest Territories and who bring that to the work here that we do together in the Legislative Assembly, I'd like to thank them.

To my colleagues who served in the Cabinet during the 17th Legislative Assembly, thank you for the extra hours and time that you've put in. It has been a pleasure to work with you and you have been most attentive to concerns we bring to you.

I'd also, especially today, like to mention our Minister of Finance, Minister Miltenberger, who came to this Chamber at the same time as I did in 1995. He does look after the money, but he is also a man with a heart and I have gone to him on numerous occasions with stories of constituents that needed a little extra compassion from this government, and he has responded. He is a get 'er done kind of guy. I'd like to thank him.

To yourself, Mr. Speaker, serving as your Deputy Speaker, thank you for that opportunity. You must have given me all of five minutes in that chair in the last four years.

To my two colleagues who will not be returning, Mr. Bromley – and I always tell him this in private and I'll say it in public today – he thinks a little differently than I do and he made me think outside of the box and always brought a different perspective than what I might have normally concluded or gone to. I'd like to thank him.

To Ms. Bisaro, the other half of the women's caucus – the caucus of two – for her professionalism. I would say without Mr. Bromley and Ms. Bisaro's contributions in committees, things would have been a lot different. They were extremely diligent. I always tell Ms. Bisaro that when she speaks, she speaks amazingly. She doesn't have any filler words. It's just solid material and I enjoyed listening to her speak here in the House.

I would like to thank my colleague Mr. Bouchard from Hay River North. I've mentioned this before, but I didn't know Mr. Bouchard very well before we came to this Chamber together four years ago. It has been indeed a great pleasure to get to know him so well and to work so closely with him. I have particularly enjoyed his wonderful sense of humour.

If I can seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement, I'll tell you one funny story about that.

---Unanimous consent granted

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Like I said, sometimes things get a little tense around here, but Mr. Bouchard does have a wonderful sense of humour and I'll just tell you one little incident. We were co-chairing a constituency meeting and I wanted to say something kind of off the record. I said to the whole audience – there were 100 people there – “So, if I can just take off my MLA hat for one minute,” and he turned to me in front of these 100 people and said, “You cannot take off your MLA hat at your own constituency meeting.” He put me right in my place. Of course, I laughed because, I mean, that's just the kind of comment that he would make.

To both of my assistants, Orlanda Patterson, who works in my Hay River office, I'd like to thank her for her four years. She's been an amazing support there. To my other constituency assistant who is here in the visitors gallery today, Wendy Morgan,

who has been with me for 17 years. I can say categorically, without any hesitation, that I could not have done my job without Wendy's support. We are a team and people know us as a team and I cannot thank her enough for everything that she's done to support me in every way possible.

To my family, my husband, Rick, is here in the visitors gallery today. He is my biggest supporter. On those cold mornings when it's 40 below and you have to get onto that Buffalo flight and I complain and whine, he goes, “Hey, sweetie, you wanted this job. Get out there.” And once I go through the front doors, I'm fine. Sometimes it's just getting on that plane and getting here in the morning. But Rick has been an amazing support.

To my daughter, Jillian, who is also in the visitors gallery, who was six years old when I was elected. So maybe she doesn't have much memory of her mother other than as an MLA. It's been wonderful to have her here in Yellowknife for the last 14 years and somebody to come here at the other end. I don't think I could have done this. I would have been lonely without her here.

I also wanted to thank my other two children, Jeffrey and Jordan. Jeffrey stood up at our 35th wedding anniversary and said, “I had an unconventional upbringing. My parents are not sentimental. They never look back and the most interest for them is yet to come.” You know, that is kind of true. We're always in the moment. We're always moving forward and that kind of sums up the way we are. I would also say I'm very proud of my son Jordan, who is away, finally, at RCMP depot right now down in Regina and not here to be with us today.

So to all of my colleagues, I wish you all the best. This is a rare, rare opportunity for community service. I hate the word “politician” and I hate the word “power.” We're all here as servants of the people and it's not about us, it's all about them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON APPRECIATION FOR CONSTITUENTS, COLLEAGUES AND SUPPORTERS

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been four years since I got up here and I think I was nervous the first time. It's been a steep learning curve. I've been learning lots as a first-time MLA.

I'd like to thank Jane for all the hard work.

Obviously, we like to thank our constituents for all their support, even those ones who challenge us. Those who challenge us make us work harder as MLAs to answer those hard questions, take those hard questions to the floor here, take them to our Cabinet. So, a big thank you to all of them.

I'd like to thank my constituency assistant, as well, Myrtle Graham, back in Hay River.

My other constituency assistant, Wendy Morgan, who is everybody's help. I think she's helped everybody here, Mr. Speaker. She puts a lot of work in. She helps a lot of people in the Northwest Territories.

I'd also like to encourage everybody to come out and vote, both in the federal, municipal and territorial elections. The federal and municipal is October 19th and our territorial election is on November 23rd. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON APPRECIATION FOR CONSTITUENTS, COLLEAGUES AND SUPPORTERS

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I, too, just want to talk a bit about my past 12 years as the MLA for Nahendeh. I've stood up in this House on behalf of them, being the people's voice and raising their many concerns and those of my six communities. Despite my colleagues saying my favourite two words are Highway 7, but if you go to Hansard, my favourite word is actually "communities," because I'm the MLA with the most communities. I have six.

It has been an honour and privilege to serve my constituents and I thank them very much for the confidence that they have shown in me during my third term in the 17th Assembly and for the past 12 years. I believe I have carried out my duties as MLA for Nahendeh with energy, commitment and dedication, and that I worked hard to bring their issues to the attention of our Cabinet, our Ministers and to this House and that I responded promptly to their calls for requests for assistance.

This November I will be asking the voters of Nahendeh to use my experience to serve them and ask for their vote for a fourth mandate. I want to assure them that I will continue to be available, reliable and approachable.

We have seen many improvements to our community services and infrastructure. For example, Highway No. 7. The people and our communities are telling me already there is much more to be done: improve health delivery, more housing, lower the cost of living and settling the Dehcho Process.

In closing, once again I want to thank the voters and residents of Nahendeh for allowing me to serve you. With your continued support, I will use my experience to make a difference in the next government.

I want to say happy retirement to my colleagues Bob Bromley and Ms. Wendy Bisaro. Good luck to

my colleagues in the upcoming election and all the MLA candidates who will be putting their name forward.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON 18TH ASSEMBLY PRIORITIES

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I covered the good, the bad and the ugly. Today I want to take this last opportunity to speak to the House and use the prerogative that comes with my age to provide some advice to the Members of the 18th Assembly.

This Assembly has accomplished a lot, in spite of my negative comments yesterday. Work has been done, reports have been written, action plans developed, and I don't want that work to get lost, so I will again subject the House to my views about what the 18th Assembly needs to follow up on.

- First – and these are in no order of importance – the promised junior kindergarten review report and the recommendations that may come with it.
- The promise of an energy efficiency act.
- Universal daycare report and actions that should be taken with that.
- The Aurora College report and actions that are contained therein.
- Dechinta and College Nordique requests for inclusion in secondary school legislation.
- Mental Health Act report recommendations and the Mental Health Act regulations.
- Child and Family Services Act review and the recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General regarding the child and family services.
- The Social Issues Committee of Cabinet's Anti-Poverty Action Plan must not get lost.
- The Our Elders: Our Communities report on seniors' needs to be followed up on.
- BDIC has had a program review. Were any actions taken on that?
- Hydraulic fracturing regulations consultation. It must continue. It must. There must be consultation.
- Health and Social Services recent quality assurance review and action plan that is apparently coming from that. Make sure it comes.
- The Program Review Office work. Ensure that reviews are received and considered by committee.

- Population Growth Strategy. Monitor the results and keep the government's feet to the fire on that.
- The Justice Action Plan regarding corrections from the Office of the Auditor General's report.
- The Education, Renewal and Innovation Strategy and Action Plan.
- The Early Childhood Development Strategy and Action Plan.
- Health and social services authorities amalgamation. Monitor it and make sure it happens correctly.
- The Health Information Act implementation. Monitor it and make sure it happens correctly.
- Ensure there's a review of royalty regimes and taxation.
- Find a way to get Heritage Fund legislation amendments done.
- ENR and Lands have promised assessments for developments.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. That's also not unusual.

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. BISARO: Thanks again, colleagues.

- ENR and Lands have promised assessments for the developments that we have within the territory to chart the unknowns. Make sure that they're done.
- ENR and Lands have promised securities for those developments and liabilities to make sure that those happen and that we get the money that is deserved in order to clean up.
- Climate Change Plan. The development of a Climate Change Plan is necessary.
- Health and Social Services has promised us a Pharmaceutical Strategy.
- The Human Rights Commission has done a wonderful review of the Human Rights Act. We need to make sure that amendments are followed through on.
- Justice needs to bring forward legislation for an ombudsman, please.
- Health and Social Services is promising Medical Travel Policy and Program changes. Follow up on those.
- Education infrastructure and schools is lacking and the need to find some solutions to the court case, which has been ongoing forever.
- The Mineral Development Strategy and the Economic Opportunities Strategies. Those are both well developed, but we need to monitor the actions that are going on in them.

Some of these are well developed; some of them just need monitoring; some are in development and need watching to make sure they happen. Some of them need to be developed. It's a long list and it only covers my personal recollections of what needs to be done.

To the 18th Assembly I say, it's a lot of work to do it right, but please roll up your sleeves and get 'er done.

Finally, I'd like to say some thank yous that I didn't include yesterday at my peril. Thank you very much to the staff of the Assembly. Mr. Bromley said it extremely well. All of the staff here are excellent and they have made our job, my job, our job much easier. To you, Mr. Speaker, thank you for your support. To my CAs, I've had three in the course of my eight years here and all three of them have been excellent support and excellent help for the work that I do.

Lastly, although not least, to my family and my friends who have provided support. I don't have much family here, but I certainly have friends here and some of them are in the gallery and they have been extremely supportive and have made my job a lot easier. So, thank you all.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON APPRECIATION FOR SOCIAL PROGRAMS COMMITTEE COLLEAGUES

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A team is a group of people linked in a common purpose. Teams normally have members with complementary skills and generate synergy through a coordinated effort, which allows each member to maximize their strengths. Each member helps other members realize their true potential and create an environment that allows everyone to go beyond his or her limits. Nothing could be more true of a team than the members and the staff of the Standing Committee on Social Programs.

I'd like to use my last Member's statement to acknowledge such a good group, a strong group, a compassionate group of individuals that I've had the very honour to work with for the last four years.

Back in 2011, five members and two staff went to Hay River to work on our priorities, work on our transition document from the 17th Legislative Assembly, not knowing where we were going to go, what was going to be laid before us. Five different personalities from different backgrounds coming together.

When we look back on the four years that we've been together, we've accomplished a lot. I was very fortunate and honoured to chair this committee and I just want to thank each and every one of them and all the staff that have helped us throughout those

four years, for their dedication and their commitment not only to the work that we do but to people, the residents of the Northwest Territories.

I just want to let people of the Northwest Territories know that these individuals made a lot of sacrifices. They have family members back home here in Yellowknife and they have a lot of late nights, early mornings. This past year we put on a lot of kilometres on three significant bills to make sure that we have the best bills possible that are going to be reflective of this government, but for the residents of the Northwest Territories. I just want to let residents know that these five individuals sacrificed a lot on your behalf.

Many times, as a chair of the committees, I've heard a lot of times we can't give this report its undue process. We can't not look at the legislation before us. We need action, we need commitment and we've got to keep going. On that note, I'd like to ask to conclude my statement. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. MOSES: On many occasions as I chaired this committee, Members and individual Members said, "We need to keep on going." A lot of times there were very huge documents, 20, 30 pages, eight o'clock at night, working through the late hours just to make sure that we got the work done for people of the Northwest Territories.

Just to highlight a few: the Anti-Poverty Strategy, the Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan, Education Renewal and Innovation. A lot of pressure and effort was put on the Department of Education to work on that. A huge one: Early Childhood Development; and also some very significant acts. Most recently, the Mental Health Act was a lot of commitment on behalf of committee. Child and Family Services Act, which has gone through so many different governments, but this government got 'er done with the work, and hard work, from committee. As well, the Health Insurance and Health and Social Services Administrations Act. That was a big one that was completed this past year. Although we couldn't do it all in four years – it would've been nice – we did do a lot. I want to let committee know, you guys all did a great job.

Mr. Speaker, four years ago the reason I chose to run for this position was to create a strong voice for the people who I represent. I did that to the best of my ability. What's stronger than a single voice? Five strong voices, and that's what I had the opportunity to work with as my first term in the Legislative Assembly and, once again, Standing Committee on Social Programs.

I want to also say the success of that committee, and probably the only committee other than P and P within this government, was we had the two women representatives in this 17th Legislative

Assembly working on this committee and I think that's why we got a lot of work done this session, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

I'd also like to acknowledge all the NGOs, the stakeholders, all the compassionate residents who have offered input into our bills. The work that we've done, we couldn't have done it without the input that they provided us. We can only do so much, but with their input, they just make the bill stronger and the work and the efforts give us motivation to continue.

As usual, it takes two to tango, so I'd like to thank the Executive Council. I know there are Ministers who came before committee on many occasions. I know that sometimes it wasn't always pleasant, but you know what, we had to ask the tough questions and have some of those debates to make sure we did what was best for people of the Northwest Territories.

I'd also like to thank, one last time, my parents for their support through these four years, as well as some great friends. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. Mr. Dolyunny.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON APPRECIATION FOR CONSTITUENTS, COLLEAGUES AND SUPPORTERS

MR. DOLYUNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand before you with my last statement in the House with some bittersweet retrospectives. Before I do, I want to commend my colleagues here today for their reflective and, indeed, moving comments and, sometimes, stories.

It is without question that some sentiments today might invite a certain cynical rejoinder, particularly as one may observe the sometimes cacophony of our oral question period or view the potential toxicity of our political arena. Certainly, and with fondness, I still retain a great respect and a reverence for this institution, which is the centrepiece of democracy and a cradle for our northern way of life.

For the first time ever, I was able to shepherd my way with an arsenal of parliamentary instruments at my disposal, from motions, petitions and oral questions, that have helped me advance the public good. Some of this good took many forms, and here are just a few Mr. Speaker: As a policymaker and legislator, I'm especially proud of convincing a need of the rewrite of the Human Tissue Act and, on the eve of a private member's bill, I thank Cabinet for bringing it forward themselves. We are anxiously and patiently waiting for the new organ donor program to come online very soon.

Overseeing the resurrection of the responsibility of the public purse in the review of public accounts is a milestone to which all members of the Standing Committee on Government Operations should be proud of. As a chair of that committee now, it is indeed an honour.

Finally, our 11 official languages make us unique in culture and spirit. It is with this reverence that inspired me to speak four of those languages in the House: Tlicho, North Slavey, South Slavey and, of course, French.

There are many more milestones than time would allow and I would like to do them at a later time.

Of course, none of this parliamentary work would have been possible without the commitment and care of those around us.

For Mr. Grant Pryznyk in my constituency office, to the professional and personal legislative personnel from the security detail to the library staff to the technical staff to our Pages to research staff and to House and committee clerks, to all I say thank you very much.

Now a word to my family.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. DOLYNNY: Now a word to my family, who are first in my heart and mind. It is with admiration and commitment and care my wife, Cindy, has provided me all these years in my political trenches. She is my rock, Mr. Speaker.

I started this journey with two young boys. Now one of them is in university and the other is about to leave the nest. So to Tanner and Bronson, who might be listening in, you've been a source of humbling support and I thank you.

This building is not just a place where I work; it has been my home, where my colleagues have become my family. We are losing two family members who are not seeking re-election. So to Mr. Bromley and Ms. Bisaro, we do wish you well and thank you for your guidance.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, it has been a privilege to serve this Chamber with you and to serve the people of Range Lake. This is not farewell but merely goodbye for now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
APPRECIATION FOR CONSTITUENTS,
COLLEAGUES AND SUPPORTERS

MR. BLAKE: [Translation] Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I would like to say a few words in my language as I am trying to pass on some of my thoughts. I'd like to thank each one of my

colleagues in the House today. I try to speak as much as I can on behalf of my people within the Mackenzie Delta. I know I haven't spoken very often; however, I'd like to try to speak as much as I can within the 17th Assembly.

I wish you all the best of luck in the November election. For those who are going to be putting your name back in the hat, I'd like to wish you all good luck. [Translation ends]

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for allowing me to make this statement in my Gwich'in language. I want to thank my colleagues for making my first term serving the people of the Mackenzie Delta so exciting and quite the learning experience. I have overcome many battles and I have learned so much more, working closely alongside each of you.

As we go our separate ways and end the 17th Legislative Assembly, I wish each of you safe travels and good luck in the November elections.

Thank you again. I look forward to working closely with each of you in the coming years.

In closing, I would like to thank my constituents of the Mackenzie Delta for this honourable opportunity to serve as their Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Also, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Liz Wright, my constituency assistant in Fort McPherson; and also my contact in Aklavik, Michelle Gruben. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
17TH ASSEMBLY BUZZWORDS

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to take the opportunity to thank two colleagues who are retiring. It's been an honour to serve with Mr. Bromley and Ms. Bisaro during this term. I've learned a lot from them and it's been a privilege.

In a statement to their constituencies, I know they're not seeking re-election, but you've placed two very honourable people who have effectively done their work and represented their constituency to the best of their ability. They have been remarkable models, in terms of trying to model my work, and I really thank them. It's been truly an honour to serve with them.

Also, with the colleagues here, mahsi, and the staff as well. It's been a growing experience for the past four years.

I just wanted to take a moment to reflect upon the buzz words of the 17th Assembly, so with your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to read my statement.

I have learned a great deal as a Member of the 17th Legislative Assembly. Our verbal jujitsu with Minister Miltenberger and other Members has expanded my vocabulary and given new meaning to words and concepts I thought I understood. I offer a quick piece of this not so brave new world.

I'll begin with the words yes and no. Simple, eh? Not so fast. It is very common for yes to actually mean no. For example, when Cabinet said yes to Regular Members' persuasive arguments to boost its health promotion budget ever so slightly, it actually meant okay, but no, we will not spend that money anyway. Was there money available? Yes. Was it put to good use? No. I now pin promises to my desk here with six inch nails from now on.

There's a fancy term, "fiscal restraint." That is a close relative of the word no. But the meaning of fiscal restraint has at least 150 shades of grey. In the rare air of the Cabinet room, fiscal restraint is good for a million dollar pop in a supplementary appropriation, normally called extra dollars. Good for, say, five new positions in communications for the Department of Executive right out of the magician's hat.

Fiscal restraint of an entirely different shade is at work when Members try to get nurses, health workers, alcohol and addictions counsellors, social workers, wellness workers and policing to our small communities. The vacant jobs are the very stuff of fiscal restraint.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. NADLI: There's money in the budget for some of them, just no bodies in the jobs. So, big savings of a very perverse sort. Big savings that cost our people and our government.

As you can see, fiscal restraint can also mean shameful neglect. Having had some of the boundaries of my comprehension stretched so far, no wonder I came to believe, thanks to my colleague from Nahendeh, that the seven deadly sins were all related to the perpetually pot-holed and pot-marked Highway No. 7, along with many other sins of deadly fiscal omission. So I thank the Member for correcting me with his e-mail the other day. It seems that a handful of the seven deadly sins actually apply to the Inuvik-Tuk Highway.

I cannot leave this topic without a few words about the oft spouted, ever nebulous devolve and evolve. Seductive. Devolve and evolve. Oh yeah, it sounds great. Devolution is going to be good because it really means evolution, almost like revolution. The kind it takes to truly recognize Aboriginal rights, including control of our land, and I've worked all my life for that.

I thought and thought about these words, devolve and evolve. I've dreamt about them at night. Finally, one day, walking down the boardwalk in Zhatie K'oe, it came to me. The meaning of devolve and evolve is just a spin-o-rama of hogwash. It comes out of the machine all neat and dry and sounding sweet. Devolve and evolve. It's just the same old federal government bunk. It will be up to the Members of the 18th Assembly to recast these words. We have not lived up to the heady promise of devolve and evolve.

Just one more thing. I don't mean to be harsh. As Members, some of us facing election and some not, we're all about to devolve and evolve in a more meaningful way. Let us all do it right. Let us stand by our deeds and be measured by them.

I wish you well, colleagues. I'm glad all our judo has been verbal. To my constituents, mahsi, mahsi cho, thank you for helping me. Thank you for standing by me through thick and thin. That has been the real meaning.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Mr. Yakeleya.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON "I DON'T NEED YOUR ROCKING CHAIR"

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my Member's statement is going to be consistent with my Member's statements in the last 12 years. I'm going to do a Member's song following the song from the legend George "Awesome" Jones. The title is "I Don't Need Your Rocking Chair."

Mr. Speaker, I don't need your rocking chair, but it would be nice to get medicare, such as escorts for our seniors' care. No questions asked, our health care. I've still got politics in my veins. So does Michael and Jane.

---Laughter

This grey hair doesn't mean a thing. I do my rocking in the hills, mile 222 to Norman Wells. My body is old, but it's not frail. I ain't seen you on the Canol Trail. Retirement don't fit my plans just yet. I'm getting on, but I don't project. They make rules on how to frack. Sounds good to me, I might just come back.

I don't need your rocking chair, but it would be nice to get medicare, such as escorts for our seniors' care. Until we get a road to the Sahtu, I'll see you and you'll see me before someone releases it to CBC.

I ain't ready for retirement yet, and I don't need unanimous consent. It may take a little longer, but I'll get there.

One more verse, Mr. Chair.

At the liquor store in Norman Wells, no restrictions on how much they can sell. We wrote a bill and got

it through and it's in the books. Hey, no more dirty looks.

Now, no, I don't need your rocking chair. It would be nice to get medicare, such as escorts for our seniors' care. My eyes are good, and so are my ears. I'm coming back for four more years.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, an Inuit needs a Frigidaire like I need your rocking chair.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank some people, so I would seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. YAKELEYA: This being the last session of our Assembly, I want to thank the people in the Sahtu for the privilege of serving them for these number of years. I also want to thank the support and staff through my role as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, Ms. Lorraine Bezha, who has been there to support me through thick and thin. I also want to thank Mr. Andrew John Kenny, my confidant and elder who stood by me through some very hard times in my personal life.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank my two colleagues who are leaving us and taking on a different role in their lives. Although Mr. Bromley and I at times do not agree on points of issues, I respect the gentleman and I wish him well. After all, we all want the same thing, but we're just coming from a different process of how to get it. So, I thank him for the opportunity of working with him.

I also want to wish well my colleague Ms. Bisaro for her work and her steady eyes that were not off task. When we're off task, she gets us back. So, I ask Ms. Bisaro to take care of herself and look after herself. It's been an honour to sit and work with you.

Also, with our staff that we have before us that guide us through this whole process through our office. Number one, number one people to work in the books. Number one to work with us.

Lastly, to my family, my wife and my son and my family members, I really appreciate what they have done for me so I could do this work here. They made sacrifices, whatever it took them, so I could stand here and work on behalf of my people.

I do want to say to my people in the Sahtu, they have allowed me to be their voice for the last 12 years and it's a very sacred privilege I hold for them.

I want to wish, as my colleague Mr. Menicoche said, all the other Members around here well in your life. Look after yourself. I got a little tear coming down because when I first became elected – Mr. Speaker, I know I'm running out of time – my mom said, "I never thought in my dreams my little

baby boy would become an MLA. Never in my wildest dreams," she said, "I'll see my son be in a situation like this." That's why I think about her and this is why I wear this coat. She made it along with my aunties, to honour her for the love that she's given us. With strict discipline, she brought us up to live a good life and sometimes we don't listen to our parents.

So, I just want to say that to my colleagues here across the table, it's an honour. We had a lot of work and, you know, you're like us. I want to say good luck to the people who are going to put their names into this row here. May God bless you. You are called and I wish you well. It's an honour, Mr. Speaker, to stand here and to say that.

To my wife and to my son Chase, I love you. Like some of the Members said, in my heart you walk with me. I want to say to the elders in the Sahtu, thank you so much for allowing me to carry your voice in the last four years. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Ramsay.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON APPRECIATION FOR CONSTITUENTS, COLLEAGUES AND SUPPORTERS

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been an honour and a privilege to continue to serve the constituents of Kam Lake, this House, its Members and the residents of the Northwest Territories. I want to wish everybody good luck and best wishes as the end of the 17th Assembly comes to close, especially my colleagues Ms. Bromley...

---Laughter

Ms. Bisaro and Mr. Bromley.

A bit of a Freudian slip. There's never been any jokes about that.

But all kidding aside, I wish both of my colleagues all the best in your retirement. It's been a pleasure to work with you both. I know the constituents in both Weledeh and Frame Lake have been very well-served with both MLAs.

I also want to thank very much my support staff in my office upstairs: Ryan Strain, my executive assistant; Corinne Kruse, my executive secretary; and I want to thank Mrs. Groenewegen for allowing me to share the services of Ms. Wendy Morgan. Wendy's been a great constituency assistant and I want to thank her very much for her work.

I also want to thank all the staff at the Department of Justice and the Department of ITI, especially deputy ministers Peter Vician and also Sylvia Haener for all the work that they put into supporting my position here as Minister.

Mr. Speaker, others have mentioned it and we wouldn't be able to do our jobs if it wasn't for the

love and support of our families back home. For me, I just want to say a special thanks to my wife, Michelle, my kids, Malachi, Elijah, Adeline, and now Donovan, and for all the love and support that they give me. Really, I wouldn't be able to do the job without the support of my wife, so thank you very much, Michelle.

Thank you very much, again, to the constituents of Kam Lake. They put their faith, their trust in me to do the job here at the Legislature on their behalf, and I'm certainly looking forward to getting back out on the election trail and talking to all the constituents in Kam Lake again during the election campaign.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for your role here in heading up the Legislative Assembly. It's been a pleasure to work with you. The Board of Management, my Cabinet colleagues and everyone, I wish everybody all the best and Godspeed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. McLeod.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON APPRECIATION FOR CONSTITUENTS, COLLEAGUES AND SUPPORTERS

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This being the last day of session for the 17th Assembly, I thought it was a good opportunity to stand up and give some thank yous and some highlights of the last four years. I can't believe how quickly, I think a couple Members mentioned, the last four years have gone. It seems like we were just getting sworn in and now we're out the door.

Some highlights for myself personally in the 17th Assembly was being a witness on behalf of the Government of the NWT to the Gwich'in signing on to devolution. Speaking of the induction ceremony for Sharon and Shirley Firth's induction into the NWT Sport Hall of Fame was also another highlight, and officially opening East Three School. I mean, that was a fantastic and exciting time for myself, for the people and students and Inuvik.

Finally, as a witness on behalf of the government to the Inuvialuit Self-Government Agreement-in-Principle was another fantastic highlight.

I, along with the rest of my colleagues, would like to wish Mr. Bromley and Ms. Bisaro well in their retirement. I've had fun working with you, and, Bob, I was just kidding about you being left out in the Delta somewhere.

---Laughter

You will have lots of time to explore the Delta now and I'll come look for you. Our support staff, as Mr. Ramsay mentioned, make doing our job a lot easier, from the staff here at the Legislative Assembly, who have been mentioned a few times,

to the two constituency assistants that I've had, Leah Ipana and Krysten Cardinal and executive secretary Daylyn Kakfwi. Mr. Rob Collinson is a great source of advice. I call Robert my Jiminy Cricket. He keeps me on the straight and narrow. Robert said, "We have to let committee know," and I say, "I don't want to let committee know." He says, "No, we have to." I say, "I know we do. I'm just playing with you." It gets him going. He's been a great help in my career as a Minister. I appreciate that.

It's been said on a number of occasions about our constituents. It's been an honour to represent the constituents of Inuvik Twin Lakes the last 11 years. We don't always get the results we wanted, but we continue to work through the issues. I look forward to the opportunity, if they are willing, to represent them again for the next four years.

To my colleagues, again, it's been...

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: To all my colleagues in the Assembly, we've brought issues forward to each other. Again, we haven't always gotten the results we've wanted, but I respect the passion that you've brought to your issues. Your constituencies were well-represented.

Most importantly, we aren't able to do this job, as many Members said, without the support of our families. When I started in 2004, I had my wife, Judy, three children and one future son-in-law. We're up to 12 now. I've got five grandchildren who just wait for Grandpa to come home, especially if he stops by the store on the way home. I've appreciated their support. My wife, Judy, has been a huge support and it makes doing what we do a lot easier. We come down here and do what we do, but they're at home looking after the household and making sure things continue to run along smoothly. So, I appreciate all the support.

I thank Members again for I wouldn't call them vows, but I thank Members again for the relationship over the last four years and I wish you all well in all that you do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON APPRECIATION FOR CONSTITUENTS, COLLEAGUES AND SUPPORTERS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I first want to start off saying it's been an incredible honour to be here for the last 12 years. The journey as being the MLA for Yellowknife Centre has always been an exciting one. Some days have been more fun than others, but I can tell you, all

Members of this House can agree it's a passionate challenge we all do.

Most of my colleagues – except for the two lucky ones here – we will all be putting their case to the constituents once again, hoping for another mandate, if their support thinks I'm worthy.

I have to stress wholeheartedly that I'm grateful for my supportive home. I couldn't do this job, like my colleagues have said, without my wife and my two sons, McKinley and Hudson. When I was first elected 12 years ago, I had one wife. I didn't get 12 family members like the Minister just said, but I had one wife and a two-year-old son. We used to come here every day and I'd be tripping over Thomas the Train and little cars and things. It evolved into two sons and we were playing trains on the weekends sometimes, as I'm supposed to be reading my briefing stuff, but we always found family time. That's what we did and we evolved, not quite how Mr. Nadli described it, but we devolved and evolved our relationship here and I brought my kids into it from the start. It's interesting, as they continue to be some of my most passionate and greatest supporters.

Like my two colleagues next to me, I do want to talk about some of the reflections and highlights over this last term. I think it's important to talk about devolution. I will start with devolution. Devolution was certainly an incredible first step on the journey and the aspirations of the people of the Northwest Territories. It was a rough ride, but by all means, as I have described it before, Home Rule was an important step for this territory to take and I'm glad we took it. I'm glad we took it in this Assembly so we can look back and say we finally did it. How many successful Assemblies previous to us tried to get it done? This is the first one that we can actually say we have the key to the cars, the keys to our own destiny and we're driving forward.

Over the last four years, we've continued to see challenges with addictions and it does bother me seriously. I wish our territory could do more. I know, no matter how much money we throw at the problem, it may be challenging. We need to address these problems. I have to admit that I was very glad to see, the other day, that the Mental Health Act has finally gotten through. It will make a difference in people's lives and saving lives.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. HAWKINS: The last four years have seen the troubling brick of the high cost of living weighing down on our northern families, struggling with the power rates or even the cost of fuel. Within this great vice, there is also a huge opportunity. There are the renewable areas such as biomass and solar, which our government hopefully will be

looking forward to in the near future. We must not forget, we must look towards population growth.

Everywhere I look around, I've seen people struggle trying to get jobs, whether they are summer students, people with disabilities or even seniors. Even the public service jobs that constantly get funded but sit empty is a struggle.

The last few years my favourite people to work with are certainly youth and seniors. To that, I have loved every opportunity to get out to the schools and talk to the kids or even at Avens and visiting. That has brought great enjoyment to my life and sometimes it reminds us how important the work we do here is.

Speaking of which, I was glad to be part of the missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls motion. I was very excited this House could support that. As a matter of fact, it still stands to the test that this is such an important issue that more work needs to get done. Interestingly enough, no other Legislature, to my knowledge, has passed a similar motion. I think that's a statement of the type of Legislature we are and the issues we care about. It was an important message and it certainly is an important motion.

The days ahead will see many opportunities for us, and I'm always concerned about the working family. I'm always worried that our government can't seem to find consumer protection on its agenda. But worrying about our citizens under the context of 911, we finally took the first step this year to say we're going to do it. I guess, as my colleague said, we've devolved and now we will evolve on that issue.

One of the neat things about downtown is the Yellowknife Day Shelter will continue to strive forward. More importantly, I am so excited to see that this term, under Minister Abernethy, they finally heeded some of the goals and concerns of trying to provide proactive programming. I thank him for that. I'm glad. If you could do a little more on the Aurora College file, it would be greatly appreciated.

As I bring this to a close – I know time is running out – I just want to say thank you very much to my wife. If I'm allowed a second or two more, Mr. Speaker, I'm not allowed to hold up props, but in the 12 years I've been an MLA, I have always had a picture of my children here as a reminder of why we're here.

May I leave this thought with each and every one of us: Of course, we are all excited to get on the campaign trail and, obviously, we all hope for the best. But always remind yourself about what's important. Each day I come here as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, I've always had the picture of my two children sit in front of me to remind me about the values we are supposed to represent here. It doesn't mean we're perfect. It

doesn't mean we haven't had troubled days, we've moved along, but we always have to ask ourselves what is the touchstone and it always has to have family and friends.

To my constituents, once again, I say thank you; and to my family, it's always been an honour to have your help and support through this process. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
APPRECIATION FOR CONSTITUENTS,
COLLEAGUES AND SUPPORTERS

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been sitting here thinking about how everybody is thanking the people they have worked with over the last four years. I thought that perhaps I didn't do that the first four years I was in here. I have had a lot of help. Lots of people helped me from my constituency. I have a lot of people in the communities of Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution to thank. I've worked for them. I've travelled often to the communities.

I have had several constituency assistants. I started a constituency assistant initially with Mr. Joe Bailey. We did a lot of good work together. Joe had some experience as a constituency assistant and taught me a lot about writing Member's statements and getting the point onto the floor of the Assembly. It was interesting because a lot of the stuff that we got we kind of hit the ground running because of the experience he brought working for other veteran MLAs. After that, I had Edith Mack who worked as a constituency assistant. I'd like to thank Edith. She worked for me the longest, for about four years. Now, in the last couple of years I've worked with Beverley Catholique from Lutselk'e.

I have community reps, I like to call them, but they end up as constituency assistants anyway, and James Marlowe from Lutselk'e continues to work for me, and the same with Velma Delorme from Fort Resolution. These people work in the background. They don't do anything other than organize things for me, take calls for me, tell me when I'm coming into the community, who I should go see, what I should be doing and so on while I'm in the community. A lot of the prep work that goes on as I enter the communities, I'd like to say thanks to those people who have been working for me. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Lafferty.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
APPRECIATION FOR CONSTITUENTS,
COLLEAGUES AND SUPPORTERS

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I just want to highlight the importance of us being here as representative Members of the Legislative Assembly.

First and foremost, I just want to say thank to the Members. As Members, we serve the public. We have two Members who are leaving us, Mr. Bromley and Ms. Bisaro. I'd just like to say thank you for your time as being part of this Cabinet here for eight years, and I've also served two years as a Regular Member. Every time a Member approaches me, obviously, I put my MLA hat on as well to deal with those issues. At the same time, this is an opportunity for us to reach out to our constituencies.

Most of us have stated that, obviously, we want to return because there is a lot of unfinished business ahead of us. At the same time, we have to keep in mind, as I heard around the table, that there is a lot of support staff that we have to recognize. Even with myself, being a Regular Member, all the resource staff that we've had, and even sitting here as the executive. Just highlighting my executive assistant, Morven MacPherson has been with me since day one. I'd just like to thank her for all the hard work and keeping me in line, and through secretaries as well. Not only that, the CAs. I've gone through plenty of them over the years. I've been through eight of them. But at the same time, it's given me an opportunity to work with different people.

I've been through approximately 14 different chiefs and grand chiefs since I became an MLA. I've worked with a lot of them with different experiences and different walks of life. I'm very appreciative of all the work experience. My constituents, I'd just like to say thank you to them for giving me the opportunity to serve them over the past 10 years.

Last but not least, obviously, my family. My wife, Diane, and my five beautiful kids. As I've been sitting in the House, when we first started, our kids were young. Now I have kids in university, kids working as well. Without them, this would not be possible to stand here to speak to you.

With yourself, Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to say thank you for your support, as well, over the years, and the support staff that we have.

Best of luck to all the Members who are running.
Best wishes to Members who are retiring as well.
Mahsi cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
APPRECIATION FOR CONSTITUENTS,
COLLEAGUES AND SUPPORTERS

HON. JACKIE JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Well, I'm going to do one today. I'd like to start by saying hello to my son Joseph, who's watching this back home in Tuk – he's two and a half years old now – he can switch it back to cartoons. I can't wait to see you, son.

I'd like to start off by thanking my Deputy Speaker, Mrs. Groenewegen, for all the hard work you've done with me in the last four years and supporting me and making some crucial decisions during our time and working together. Thank you so much.

To my board of management, thank you so much for all the hard work you've done for the benefit of all our Members. It's been a good time. I really cherish all you guys, and my two friends. Before you, I was there in the middle between Wendy and Bob. Obviously, I was the rose between two thorns. But they taught me so much, just like you, and I respect them so much.

Bob, yesterday Ms. Spence brought up your mother. God rest her soul. She was always here and always giving us encouragement. She was an awesome lady, and I know you have that in you too. You have a good heart and you want the best for the people.

Wendy, I always called you Mother Superior, because you're always so hard, making sure everything went down. But I really admired you for that and I really thank you because you've been helping me, too, along my way as a Member and as a Speaker too.

To all the Cabinet, thank you so much for all the hard work you guys did, and all my Regular Members, every one of you. I could go on for an hour or so if I was allowed to, but I'm not going to do that to you.

Our support, my support staff, I'd like to thank Nina Larsson, my executive assistant; and my CA back home, Donna Bernhardt, who does so much for us, for the people of Nunakput. People don't see the hard work that you guys do and the hours you put in and I want to thank her.

I want to also thank Wendy Morgan. Wendy has been there for me too. So, I think there's about four or five of us that share Wendy. Thank you so much for all your work that you've done for the people of Nunakput.

Where do I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement?

---Laughter

---Applause

And there are no nays. How about I keep going? To all my constituents back home, thank you for your support and being there for me when I go visit the communities. To my elders, who we cherish so much across our territory, thank you so much. To all the families that are hurting right now with the stuff that's going on back home, thoughts and prayers are with all the people who are hurting across our great territory today. Thoughts and prayers are with you from this House.

I'd like to thank my clerks, which I have the best clerks in the Northwest Territories and in the Commonwealth of 170 countries.

---Applause

Thank you, Gail; thank you, Tim; and thank you, Doug; and thanks to all your support staff and our security. Like you guys said earlier today – you said it best, Bob – like you said, we have the best.

To my wife, Jenny, who has been the biggest supporter here, and to all my kids, Chelsey, Kristin, Matthew, Mitchell, Mikayla, and my son Joseph, and my grandson, Alexander. I know I'm a young grandfather too.

It's been really an honour to work with every one of you. Bob, Wendy, I'll never forget our times together and Sandy always trying to hit me.

But like I said, again, thank you guys so much, every one of you. God bless you and good luck in your future endeavors. We have 17 days left in this government. So I want all my Members to try to finish all of your constituency work in the last 17 days to try to get some help for the constituents and for the people that we serve. So thank you, Members.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to recognize my wife and to thank her for all her support, Melody McLeod, and her aunt Germaine Michel. I also would like to take this opportunity to recognize Jim Stanton, president of Stanton Associates, who was here earlier, and Paula Walsh, a senior associate with Stanton Associates. They're both here as keynote speakers at the LGANT Professional Development Conference and they also spoke on how to communicate effectively to manage crisis and they also put on a one-day crisis management conference.

Jim is a former journalist, director of communications with Canada Post. He was an expert on communications and emergency

preparedness. Paula has more than 32 years in the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize two people in the gallery today. First, Kieran Testart who is a resident of the Great Slave riding. Second, a long-time friend, more like family. He's a source of wisdom; he's a source of advice; he's a creative conveyor of criticism when needed; he presided over my wedding to my amazing wife, Caroline; and he in fact introduced my parents, so you can kind of blame him for me. Mr. Speaker, in the gallery today, Dr. Ian Gilchrist. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to use this opportunity to recognize my wife Judy and appreciate all the support that she's given me in the last 36 years. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize my constituent from Hay River South again today, Germaine Michel, and I'm so glad she came to see the Legislature and have a tour here. It's her first time, and anybody who lives in our territory should come and enjoy this wonderful building. I'd also like to, again, recognize my constituency assistant of 17 years, Wendy Morgan, and thank her for all of her support and all of her help over these years. To my husband, Rick Groenewegen, he is a good man. Just think of how boring his life would have been without me.

---Laughter

To my beautiful daughter, Jillian, it's so good to have her here in Yellowknife. As I said, she keeps me company when all of the rest of the family is not here. So I'd like to recognize them today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce a fine young man from the riding of Range Lake, a man who has joined us on many occasions here, who is a staunch advocate for transparency and accountability with his recent Open NWT website. That is Mr. David Wasylciw. Keep up the good work. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize constituent Rick Groenewegen and his daughter, Jillian, obviously, and I'd like to thank

Wendy again, recognize Wendy Morgan and Hay River resident Germaine Michel as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always special when we have family members in the gallery and I'd like to particularly start by recognizing my wife, Marianne. Perhaps you could stand up.

---Applause

Much to be said there. I appreciate your comments about my mother. She was here when we started and I'm missing her today. I'd also like to recognize Chief Edward Sangris from Detah. Great to see you here, Chief.

I had quite a number of people show up in the gallery today in support of the work I do. They all seem to be movers and shakers, whether it be in our economy, our social work or our environmental work or putting the dots together for all three; my CA of four years, Craig Yeo; Ian Gilchrist, who we just heard mentioned; Peggy Holroyd; Lloyd Thiessen; Dan Wong; John Stevenson; Tasha Stevenson; Julie Green; Sue Wahner; Rose Marie Jackson; Christine Wenman. I see Kevin O'Reilly has lasted out our droning on here today, and his wife, Suzette Montreuil, was here earlier, too; and I'd particularly like to recognize my CA, Bob Wilson, whose phone number is... Well, ask me if you don't know it.

---Laughter

With regard to families, Melody, Judy, Rick and Jillian in the audience, I'd like to recognize them too. It's always a special moment when you have family members here. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was a real pleasure to come into the House today and see so many people in the gallery, and as Mr. Bromley said, some of them have lasted through our droning, others have had to go, but it was great to see so many people. It was also great to see so many people sitting on that side, the far side of the Assembly so that we can actually see them from the Regular Members' seats.

I have two constituents who I want to recognize, Suzette Montreuil has had to go, but Mr. Kevin O'Reilly, who both he and Suzette have been great supporters. So, thank you both of you for coming and for all the work that you do on behalf of residents of the NWT and particularly Yellowknife. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd also like to recognize Ms. Judy McLeod and thank her for supporting my colleague here, Mr. McLeod, over the eight years. You're doing a great job, and also for all the work you do, again, for the region, in the health area.

It is Fire Prevention Week and I'd like to recognize Mr. John Moore from Inuvik, who is a volunteer firefighter for the community. I'd also like to recognize my constituency assistant, Ms. Weronika Murray. When my previous assistant decided to take a year off, there were some big shoes to fill and I was wondering how that was going to happen with all the work that our office does, and Weronika came in and jumped right into the position and she's been doing a very great job and keeping the office in order and keeping it efficient for constituents back home and even residents throughout the Northwest Territories. So, thank you very much. I'd just like to welcome everybody here to our last day in the House. I think they're just making sure we leave. So, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I want to also recognize the family members that have come today to support the Members in this House here. It's very nice to have them come. I know the sacrifice they have to do so that we can do our work with the fullest attention to our constituents.

I also want to recognize Chief Sangris, Mr. Bromley's constituent, with the Akaitcho. The Yellowknives people here wanted their ancestors here so we can stand here and do this work.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to recognize Geraldine with Mrs. McLeod here. It's been a while since I've seen Geraldine. I had to ask the Premier, "Is that Geraldine?" I wanted to say that. Sometimes it's good to see old friends come back still in good spirits.

I want to also recognize my constituency assistant, Ms. Lorraine Bezha, and the other constituency assistants who have been with me. For Ms. Bezha's hard work and commitment and dedication to the people of the Sahtu, I'd like to say thank you so much to her and all the other constituency assistants that our Members here have to make sure that we do our job effectively and efficiently. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think I have any constituents left in the gallery. They came and then they went, as previously mentioned by colleagues. But I do want to take a second to mention and certainly pass on my kindest regards to Melody McLeod. She's the Premier's wife. Every time I see her I'm reminded of an anecdote that Ms. Barbara Bush once said when they asked her

what's it like being her, and she said, "Well, I've been married to the President of the United States and my son's the President of the United States and another son is the Governor of Florida," and she goes, "I'm the most powerful person in the world." Every man knows there's some truth to that story, if your wife knows that. But I first met Melody back in 1987 when I was stolen from the clutches of the warm embrace of Fort Simpson to go to Akaitcho Hall, and I'll say I'm a better man for it, knowing her there. She had been there for me many times, and I hope sometimes in the future too. Even though I pick on her husband from time to time as the McLeod government, hopefully she'll still have a warm spot for me in her heart. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize all of the visitors that we have in the gallery this afternoon. Especially I wanted to recognize Chief Edward Sangris with the Yellowknives Dene.

I also wanted to recognize, I know she's been recognized before, my constituency assistant, Ms. Wendy Morgan. Thanks again, Wendy, for all of your hard work and your commitment to my office and helping me do my duties as MLA.

I also wanted to recognize Mr. Kevin O'Reilly, a former colleague of mine at City Hall.

I've also got in the gallery today a friend of mine, a consultant, David Wasylciw. Welcome to the House, David.

Also, I wanted to recognize Paula Walsh. I know the Premier did earlier, but I met Paula in Quebec earlier this year, and it's great to see you here in the Northwest Territories. Enjoy your visit. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Welcome to everybody here in the public gallery. Thank you for taking an interest in our proceedings.

Item 6, acknowledgements. Mr. Moses.

Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 27-17(5):
JIM SAWKINS – NWT FIRE SERVICE MERIT
AWARD RECIPIENT

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This week is Fire Prevention Week. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize this year's NWT Fire Service Merit Award recipient, Inuvik's fire chief, Jim Sawkins. Chief Sawkins has been a firefighter for the past 35 years, with the past 15 as fire chief. He has been a fire chief for the Town of Inuvik for the past four years and, through his experience, has provided the volunteer fire department with a great training ground and sense of professionalism.

Chief Sawkins is actively involved with various territorial committees. He's the president of the NWT Fire Chiefs' Association, regional representative for the Beaufort-Delta region and sits as a member of the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs' National Advisory Council. He also just recently received the chief fire officer designation.

Fire Chief Jim Sawkins would like to highlight the fact that any achievements were only possible through the acceptance, hard work and dedication of the Inuvik volunteer firefighters and through the assistance of the NWT Fire Chiefs' Association executive. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. Mr. Bromley.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 28-17(5):
SARAH ERASMUS – SAIT POLYTECHNIC
OUTSTANDING YOUNG ALUMNI

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise in the House to acknowledge my constituent Sarah Erasmus, a Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, or SAIT, Polytechnic Outstanding Alumni for 2015.

Through launching her own clothing company, Erasmus Apparel, she's woven herself into the very fabric of Yellowknife and transformed an idea into a thriving business.

With eight employees, unique northern designs and a growing reputation, she's sold more than 60,000 items through a storefront and online operations and proved that homegrown, sustainable businesses can thrive here.

I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating Sarah Erasmus for a job well done.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Blake.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 29-17(5):
PETER KAY SR. – 100TH BIRTHDAY
CONGRATULATIONS

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure today to wish one of the most respected elders in the Mackenzie Delta a very happy 100th birthday on October 18th. Gwich'in elder Peter Kay Sr. from Fort McPherson is to be commended on healthy living and for taking care of his family and also living the Gwich'in cultural lifestyle for a whole century.

Mr. Kay's livelihood, active living and positive outlook on life and family have given him the opportunity to spend precious time with his family at 100 years young.

I might add that Peter has passed down precious traditional knowledge to his sons and daughters as well as grandchildren whom he helped raise. His knowledge and storytelling will continue to be

shared with his huge family as he blows out his 100 candles.

Mr. Peter Kay and his wife, Mary, who is 96 years old, are the oldest living couple in the Mackenzie Delta. They celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary in 2014. I would like my colleagues to help me extend warm wishes to this happy couple.

Mr. Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly, please join me in congratulating Peter Kay on his 100th birthday. They are also still living at home, too, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. Before I call a 15-minute break, I'd like to wish Mr. Kevin Menicoche, for yesterday, a happy birthday.

---Applause

And for today, Mr. Jackson Lafferty turns 50.

---Applause

Happy birthday. I will call a 15-minute recess.

---SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER: Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Blake.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 952-17(5):
ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE DAYCARE

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just have a few questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. The feasibility study of universal affordable daycare in the Northwest Territories was tabled in this House on June 4, 2015, and recommended consolidating early childhood education and daycare grants, including small community initiatives grants.

What actions is the Department of Education, Culture and Employment taking to make daycare more accessible and more affordable in our small communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. We've initiated the feasibility study that's been undertaken by my department through a consultant. There's been a lot of engagement with the general public and stakeholders across the Northwest Territories. Obviously, one of the key points that they've highlighted is for us to work very closely with the communities, all nine remote communities and the most isolated communities in the Northwest Territories. Some community members and also organizations feel left out of the core programs that are being delivered at the regional basis.

That is some of the emphasis that's been highlighted as part of the recommendations which

will be brought forward to the 18th Assembly to decide if they want to move forward on that. Mahsi.

MR. BLAKE: The Department of Education, Culture and Employment offers funding to licenced daycare centres and day homes. There are different rates for different regions and communities.

What options are available for communities in the Mackenzie Delta? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, we are currently subsidizing the daycare establishments and early childhood centres across the Northwest Territories. We have provided funding for programming, the mortgage. There are various subsidies that we provide to these establishments. One of the highlights, obviously, part of this feasibility study is to capture what is being provided currently and how can we improve in those areas. Again, capturing those small communities has been highlighted by the stakeholders, and some of the recommendations, obviously, will capture that. It is an integrated approach, working with various organizations, so that will be put forward to the 18th Assembly.

MR. BLAKE: What will the Minister be recommending to the 18th Legislative Assembly to improve support and funding daycare centres and family day homes, especially in our small communities?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: The feasibility study, the outcome of the report and then the recommendations that came out of that will be brought forward to the 18th Assembly government. It does cover a spectrum of how we can improve our current programming that we have. As I stated before in this House, there's always room for improvement in the programming, in departmental division areas. We look forward to those types of discussions as we move forward.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister, I know we are closing the 17th Legislative Assembly here, but is the department open to pilot projects?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Those are discussions that need to happen within the next government. We're at the end of our session here and we only have a couple weeks as Regular Members now, so our term will be up as Ministers, Cabinet and Executive. This, what the Member is alluding to, obviously, will be brought forward within the next government to decide if they want to proceed with that other project.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Dolynny.

QUESTION 953-17(5):
NWT TOURISM MARKETING

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to give Mr. Miltenberger a break here today. I'd like to talk about tourism for my last set of questions. NWT Tourism likes to market the NWT as a premier world-wide tourist destination. However, hampered with a limited budget and a complex five regional marketing plan, it does beg to ask how we're able to compete on the national and world stage when it comes to tourism. The traveller is more sophisticated than ever and is looking for that wow factor. My question has always been are we able to deliver at that level. With that in mind, my questions will be for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

A successful tourism economy depends on a skilled workforce and a world-class hospitality program.

Can the Minister inform the House how his department supports the development of human resources that will ensure that the visitors to the NWT will have this experience that exceeds this wow factor?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. The Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud of our record of support for skills development in the tourism industry. ITI has hosted numerous courses on boat safety and first aid to improve the level of safety of our tourism operations. We've developed a tourism hospitality program focused on Aboriginal people, and conducted many hospitality training workshops over the life of this government.

Our Tourism 2015 plan rested on three pillars: people, communities, and business. Continued investment in the skills of the people in this industry is essential for future economic growth, and I hope that the new government will continue to support the development of business acumen of our tourism entrepreneurs and the skills of people that they employ.

A recent article in the Huffington Post had Yellowknife as the fastest growing tourism destination in Canada. That's a testament to the hard work and commitment of the folks in our tourism industry.

MR. DOLYNNY: During the life of this government there have been two trade missions to China, costing taxpayers significant investment.

Can the Minister stand before this House and clearly demonstrate a tangible benefit from these junket missions?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Again, we're very proud of the work that we've done in China. We've seen a dramatic increase in the number of visitors from

China, since a handful in the low hundreds in 2010, to between January of last year and July this year, well over 7,000 Chinese visitors. We have recently hosted the ambassador from China to Canada here in Yellowknife, in Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk.

We've only really scratched the surface at the potential of the Chinese market. Markets in Asia remain fertile ground for us when it comes to tourism and attracting more folks here, and undoubtedly, the next government will be conducting further missions to promote and market the Northwest Territories to Asian markets, specifically China, Japan, and others.

MR. DOLYNNY: For the record, NWT has a handicap in tourism and marketing investment compared to the rest of Canada. Two years ago this Assembly approved a substantial increase to its marketing budget for the NWT Tourism.

Can the Minister of ITI provide us with a brief description of the benefits with that increased funding that he received?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The numbers I spoke of earlier, I think a direct correlation can be drawn with the fact that this government, and with the support of that side of the House, supported the increased efforts in marketing our tourism industry here in the Northwest Territories, promoting the products that we have here, and I think the numbers we're starting to see now are paying off. That investment is certainly paying off.

We shouldn't kid ourselves, though. Out of the 13 jurisdictions in this country, the Northwest Territories ranks 12th in terms of what we put into marketing the tourism industry. We have seen some substantial growth. But if we look across to our west and into the Yukon, they spend \$7 million on marketing their tourism industry on an annual basis and we're at about \$2 million. Really, we have to find a way and a means to continue to support the marketing efforts and promoting the products and services in the tourism industry here in the Northwest Territories, not just domestically here in Canada or in North America and the United States but also internationally. We have made some big strides over the last four years, and as I had mentioned earlier, the potential is immense when it comes to the Asian market.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister is aware, his department was provided additional funding for tourism programs under the Economic Opportunities Strategy.

Can the Minister tell the House what benefits were derived from this investment?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: One of the primary contributions through the EOS and the

recommendation was for a convention bureau. We funded that at \$100,000 a year. That's had a direct impact. We've been able to attract conferences, hopefully, bringing well over a million dollars in economic impact here to the Northwest Territories. Looking at the regional marketing dollars, \$50,000 goes into each region to allow the regions to market products specifically in their own region. We have resources for product development that have allowed investment in community tourism, leveraging over a million dollars in federal funding from CanNor. EOS funding for community tourism infrastructure was invested in projects and communities across the Northwest Territories including Tsiigehtchic, Inuvik, Jean Marie River, Kakisa, Hay River, Tulita and Yellowknife.

As I mentioned, we don't have the biggest marketing budget, so wherever possible we need to take those dollars we have and leverage them to try to maximize the exposure that the Northwest Territories gets both on the national and international stage.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 954-17(5): SECONDARY DIAMOND INDUSTRY

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have recently learned that the Bower Group is a trustee out of Vancouver and they've come to Yellowknife to take possession of the two diamond cutting plants owned by Deepak Kumar, and he's also known as Deepak International. Now, the actual possession itself is not the concern of this Assembly, and certainly the people of the Northwest Territories, but it's more about the message of what's happening with our diamond cutting industry that is of great concern.

To set the questions up properly, some time ago the government agreed to give Mr. Deepak Kumar the ability to have the polar bear logo and to provide access for rough, and of course, they took almost three years to get through this process so he'd finally end up with the buildings, which is part of the issue. I'm going to start my first set of questions off to the Minister of ITI. Knowing that he's in receivership and they're now liquidating his assets, what happens to the polar bear logo and what type of messaging are we getting out there as a government to say which way our diamond industry is going? Because, frankly, it appears more that it's a fledgling industry and we had someone who came in, we gave them whatever they wanted and they've been unable to succeed. I'm concerned, as well as many others are, where our diamond industry is going. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The secondary industry and the benefaction when it comes to diamonds around the world has been hit very hard. There have been factories closing in locations like Namibia, Vietnam and even in India, lower cost environments. So the economics right now aren't, obviously, the best.

The issue the Member talks about is a private business matter and really we shouldn't be discussing that on the floor of this House. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: I'm not getting into his private, personal matter, but it is a matter of public record out there. So it's not a secret, but where it really matters to the people of the Northwest Territories is a particular issue of concern about where diamonds are going and that's certainly it. You cannot have one without the other. So the Government of the Northwest Territories gave this person the ability to have sole, exclusive rights on the polar bear logo and I want to know what the next steps are.

Is the government going to retract that offer, suspend it? I don't even know what they take back for goodness sakes.

So, is the government in a position to take back his sole, exclusive right to use the polar bear logo on diamonds? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Officials at the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment continue to work with the proponent on the factories, and again, it's a private business matter and best not discussed on the floor of this House. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Three years ago this Minister talked about this being the rebirth of the industry and I even brought it up not that long ago about what's happening, because clearly the gestation of this first cycle is a very long one. But the point, in a serious note, is if the department continues to work with them to cut diamonds and get our polar bear logo on diamonds, in three years how many diamonds have been cut using this cut and how many diamonds have the NWT polar bear logo on it that the government holds and certainly tried to market? A lot of dollars went into marketing diamonds, a lot of effort, we have a diamond division. I mean, a lot of focus from this government has been to promote diamonds, and if we have one that we've given all the rights to, frankly my concern is we don't know where we're going and the public won't know either. So, will the Minister be willing to answer that? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Again, the secondary industry is in a bit of a downturn. The economics aren't very good. Factories are closing around the world. We sold the two factory buildings on Archibald Street a year and a half ago and we continue to hope that at some point in time those

factories do open, but right now we don't have people banging our door down to get into this business. We've also got revenue from leases on those buildings.

Again, the purchase price of those buildings was somewhere near \$2 million that the government was able to recoup.

Again, our hope is that at some point in time those buildings are producing diamonds. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While the Minister says we don't have people banging our doors down, but the last three years when this deal had been made, nothing has been cut. He said maybe we'll get lease money, but my understanding is the lease has been in arrears. Reading in the Yellowknifer a number of weeks ago, you could see they weren't even paying property taxes. We weren't the only ones fooled in this deal. Callidus is a lending agency and they were sold a bill of goods about how great things would be. So, what is the Minister willing to do to help revoke their authority of having the polar bear logo on diamonds, because I don't know what they're doing outside the Northwest Territories, and furthermore, is the Minister willing to step in and give the department direction so they can end any type of informal or formal agreement they may have with diamond companies where they are guaranteed a supply of rough? We don't know what they're getting and what they're doing with it. This is very concerning. This has never emerged to result in anything positive. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you. I guess I take a different view on this than the Member. We recouped close to \$2 million. To my knowledge, lease payments are up to date; taxes are up to date on those two buildings. So, again, we will work through the process and this is a legal agreement that we have with the proponent. We will continue to work through the processes that are there and involve the right people in sorting this out. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 955-17(5):
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY
AND ACCOUNTABILITY

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for Premier McLeod. They focus today on transparency and accountability. I hear from many constituents and colleagues that there are far too many decisions made by this government behind closed doors and in secret. Transparency can help our public become engaged and contribute to making progress on issues and

becoming a more effective democracy. So I'm wondering in what ways does the Premier see that we can improve our performance in providing the transparency that people of the Northwest Territories expect from their government. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we are a very transparent government. We have process conventions and protocols that we have negotiated with the committees and we've all signed on and we follow those processes, which lays out a process for sharing information and for making sure that we provide them on a timely basis.

Certainly, we also consult, consult and consult on all the legislation. We work with committees on legislation and we post just about everything we do. It's posted on the website. We post the Minister's mandate letters, we post ministerial travel reports, we post outside meeting reports and we offer and brief committees on a regular basis and we do travel to communities to do consultation. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Premier. There are also many calls for improved accountability from our leaders. The promised, now cancelled review of the Deh Cho Bridge, the overdue energy efficiency discussion paper, the delayed junior kindergarten review, the failure to renew the Greenhouse Gas Strategy as promised in that document are examples that come to mind.

What are the Premier's thoughts on how to improve the level of Cabinet accountability for our successors in the 18th Assembly? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We're accountable on a daily basis on everything that we do. At this late stage in the 17th Assembly, those items that the Member listed, we have a transition process. We have a joint transition committee and if those could be on the transition list, then they could be dealt with by the 18th Assembly. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: During the 17th Assembly we've moved far from the inclusive form of decision-making called for under consensus government, in the opinion of some, with Members commonly learning about significant decisions after the fact in the media or by word of mouth on the street.

What changes would the Premier recommend to the 18th Assembly in the area of including Regular Members more thoroughly in the decision-making process? Mahsi.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: With the protocol agreements and conventions that we have in place, the Members are made aware of everything that we do. They're provided with timelines and so on and I believe the 17th Assembly has followed it from day

one. These protocols were introduced in the 16th and they've been reviewed and updated and we continue to update them on a regular basis to deal with issues like the Member is raising. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Premier. Many think this government has lacked imagination and progressive thinking in seeking new solutions to long-standing issues and to the public's repeated attempts to be recognized. For example, impacts of a global economy with the majority of benefits flowing away from the NWT and the costing left to our people is something the people have been questioning for some time.

How does the Premier think this government could become more responsive to the changing realities that global forces now subject the North to and to the public's voice and input? Mahsi.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We recognize that those changes are happening and we commit, as we go forward, the 18th Assembly will review those processes and consult with the people to ensure that we are on a program which we can deal with along with other provinces and territories. A lot of the changes are national and international, so we have to make sure that we also participate in those processes as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 956-17(5): SAHTU MINERAL STRATEGY

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of ITI. I want to ask a question to the Premier in light of our economic opportunities in the North.

Knowing that oil and gas is not going to be looked at for a while due to the global world prices, has the Premier's colleagues looked at a mineral assessment strategy in the Sahtu given that Selwyn-Chihong is going to be racking up their business with their mine close to the Yukon/Northwest Territories border? There are other areas in the Sahtu we haven't looked at with regard to a Sahtu mineral strategy.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Premier McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know the Sahtu has a rich history in mining. We think that with the downturn in the oil and gas, there is certainly potential in that area.

With the mineral strategy, there are opportunities to have regional mineral approaches. Certainly, this is something that we would like to pursue and work with the Sahtu government since they have the land claim settled. I think there are opportunities there

that we can work together on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: The Premier is dead on with this exchange. Within the realm of our government, an election will be happening soon, and something the government can look forward towards, and maybe put together, is a Sahtu mineral strategy conference in region so we can have a good, accurate assessment of what is there in the Sahtu with regard to a mineral strategy.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We think that's a very important initiative not only for the Sahtu but in other regions of the Northwest Territories. Despite the fact that we're very close to election mode and we are also having to follow transitional operational guidelines, we will have our bureaucracy, so we can set the wheels in motion. They can start doing preparatory work so when the 18th Assembly is in place, we can hit the ground running or start working on it and get them to deal with it right away. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: What the Premier is saying is indeed good news. We can get the motion in gear and have some discussion with our leadership, land corporations, and look at some maps and see what needs to happen in terms of a good conference to get a good, accurate assessment of what is in the Sahtu and what areas we can look at to improve the development of a mineral strategy that the Sahtu region can work towards in five or 10 years as to how to extract or develop a mineral strategy and something like the Selwyn-Chihong operation that is expected to go into a billion dollar production sometime in the future.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I've had the opportunity to travel to Selwyn with the Member in the 16th Assembly. Certainly, the potential there is tremendous and the largest portion is in the Territories. It's a tremendous opportunity for not only the Sahtu but the Northwest Territories. We will have to pursue that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I enjoyed the tour with the Premier when we had that visit into the Sahtu. I know other areas in the Northwest Territories are rich in minerals. When we look at the Sahtu mineral strategy, we are looking at also the types of infrastructure that can help us with our mineral strategy. One of them is the Mackenzie Valley Highway.

Is that something we can look at in all aspects of the mineral strategy, so we can get our people to look at the area, look at the environment, look at the infrastructure and say we have a plan for the Sahtu to extract, develop and produce some of our rich minerals?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I know the Member was listening very closely when the Minister of Transportation was talking about our highway priorities. Certainly, the Mackenzie Valley Highway would certainly facilitate development in those areas. A highway would change the logistics of quite a number of projects, not only on the mineral side but oil and gas side. I really believe it would facilitate those projects to move into production. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Yellowknife for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 957-17(5):
RCMP PRISONER TRANSPORT POLICY

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Minister of Justice. It's regarding RCMP and their side job, if I may describe it that way, in transporting prisoners back and forth between the jails. It's been brought to my attention that the RCMP do this activity regularly. The question came as why doesn't the sheriff's office either use their existing resources or bolster their resources to do that particular job?

Frankly, we all know that a member of the RCMP, when you do what's called the all-in cost, runs in the range of \$175,000 to \$200,000. It's much more cost effective to have the sheriff's office doing those duties between their other ones if they are shuffling prisoners back and forth between the jail and the courthouse. The point is I think it's better use of RCMP time to put their service in the community, responding to crime and investigating crime.

Has the department investigated this idea and what consideration have they put to it? If they haven't, will they?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister of Justice, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To my knowledge, it's corrections services that transports people back and forth between the facility and the courthouse. I can look into this matter further for the Member and get some further detail, but to my knowledge, it's corrections services that provides that service and not the RCMP. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: I know that that's probably normally the case that the corrections services does that one, but there's also interjurisdictional travel that is required by shuffling inmates back and forth or other types of similar situations, and we bring the RCMP off duty and they have to find folks to wear that duty outside of normal operating hours, and that affects the RCMP, and everyone complains in this community that they're unable to get more RCMP on the ground doing the job that they do, and they certainly do so well.

When it comes to interjurisdictional transfers of prisoners and usages of those types of resources, would the Minister investigate the possibility of using the sheriff's office? If they don't have the resources, bolster the resources appropriately, because it's cheaper for us to afford a few extra hours as the sheriff doing that duty than it is taking an RCMP off the street.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: It would go back to the circumstances surrounding the individual who was being transported, but again, to my knowledge, the corrections service does supply that type of duty or obligation in getting inmates transferred from facility to facility. But again, depending on the nature of the individual and security risk, the RCMP may be involved in that. As to whether or not the sheriff's office could take part in transferring folks around, again, that's something that I'll go back to the department and ask them about.

MR. HAWKINS: Well, if the Minister is not sure it happens, I can tell you, I was in a plane recently and there were two RCMP officers shepherding an inmate from a court duty in Alberta back to the Northwest Territories. I do know it happens. I've seen it personally, and I've seen it personally from my experience working at the correctional centre many years ago, that I know that they do this duty occasionally.

What I'm asking for is: Is the Minister willing to do an evaluation of the resources on that particular matter that evaluates the cost effectiveness of taking RCMP off the street, from providing policing, responding to crime and investigating crime, to considering putting the sheriffs into that particular role? They do it in other regions such as all the provinces across Canada. Why can't we consider the same type of functionality of our sheriff's office?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I do know and I am aware that the RCMP do provide transport and do that type of work. I've seen it myself as well. I will go back to the department, as I mentioned in response to a previous question, and get some further detail on this.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the information and I certainly look forward to it coming before the dissolution of this Assembly, because I'll have to wait until next term, if things all go well. In all fairness and in all seriousness, I'm asking for an evaluation of the cost effectiveness of the Government of the Northwest Territories paying RCMP to do this as an overtime job, an extra duty job, finding a couple of them, when we could be using our own resources internally through the sheriff's office, so an evaluation and a little bit of a strategic look needs to be done on this. It's not just I'll go look and get the

numbers. Will he be willing to do an evaluation on this possibility?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: To my knowledge, that type of evaluation hasn't been conducted, but it may have and I may not be aware of that. Again, I'll go back to the department, I'll ask them and we'll see what we can do. I know there are only 17 days left, so I will see what we can do.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Mr. Hawkins.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees

COMMITTEE REPORT 26-17(5): STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT ON TRANSITION MATTERS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly the Committee Report 26-17(5), Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure Report on Transition Matters.

MOTION THAT COMMITTEE REPORT 26-17(5) BE DEEMED READ AND PRINTED IN HANSARD, CARRIED

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that the Committee Report 26-17(5) be deemed read and reprinted in Hansard in its entirety.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Committee Report 26-17(5) is deemed read and reprinted in Hansard in its entirety.

Introduction

As the 17th Assembly concludes, the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure continues to monitor several issues and initiatives with long-term implications and to remain engaged with the vital themes of energy and devolution.

The next Assembly will be the first to inherit post-devolution responsibilities from territorial colleagues. These will require close consideration in the next committee. Energy and heating concerns also remain a priority, including costs of living and cost-effective power delivery, continuing low-water conditions and territory-wide dependence on diesel and other fossil fuels, the regulation of

resource extraction, and the incorporation of renewable energies into our daily lives.

The committee recognizes challenges of the projected downturn in mining, prospecting and exploration. Going forward, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has the opportunity to use its legislative, regulatory and economic strengths to increase community sustainability and self-sufficiency through growth in "green" jobs and in traditional and conservation economies, in addition to established industries. This will empower current residents, encourage much-needed population growth and foster economic diversification.

This report informs the public and Members of the 18th Assembly of work in progress and highlights areas we believe will require the continued attention of our successor committee.

Background

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure includes six Regular Members of the Legislative Assembly. The committee's role is to consider the following matters with respect to the departments of Environment and Natural Resources; Industry, Tourism, and Investment; Municipal and Community Affairs; Public Works and Services; and Transportation:

1. review multi-year business plans and budgets, bills, and boards and agencies, including the Workers' Compensation Commission of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation and the Public Utilities Board;
2. review departmental performance, including that of boards and agencies; and
3. consider any other matter referred by the House.

Legislation and Regulations

Hydraulic fracturing has been a matter of great public interest throughout this Assembly. Our successors are encouraged to consider the committee's Research Summary and Report on Horizontal Hydraulic Fracturing, and seek an update respecting ongoing developments.

The committee also encourages our successors to pursue the merger of the Territorial Lands Act and Commissioners Lands Act and to ensure that mandatory financial security applies consistently.

Interdepartmental Matters

Energy and Climate Change: Initiatives, Strategies, Solutions

Climate and Energy

Climate change continues to impact NWT people, landscape and wildlife, from shoreline erosion in Tuktoyaktuk to hunt-disrupting permafrost melt near Jean Marie River and from sweeping forest fire activity in the parched forests of the North Slave, South Slave and Deh Cho to record-low water levels across the regions. Climate change also impacts energy needs and capacity, affecting local and regional costs of living, barge transportation and community resupply, residents' quality of life and GNWT spending and planning.

Energy charrettes held in 2012 and 2014 affirmed that stabilizing energy costs, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and ensuring a reliable energy supply are among the top territorial priorities. It is necessary to continue the work of existing strategies and to develop an action plan specific to climate change. Such a plan would describe concrete actions and target dates toward ending reliance on and divesting from fossil fuels, implementing effective and enforceable renewable energy standards for industry and transportation, and assessing carbon pricing. While great strides have been made improving GNWT energy performance, further advancement is needed in helping residents, business and institutions make similar improvements.

Action is the order of the day. Recognizing the success of past energy initiatives (e.g., biomass capital projects and over-subscribed rebate programs), the committee stresses the immediate pursuit of initiatives with effects that can and will be measured both qualitatively and quantitatively. Members also highlight improved energy conservation as a key continued pursuit.

The committee particularly notes its support of the proposed Energy Efficiency Act and forthcoming discussion paper, the GNWT's proposal to develop a territory-wide system for fuel data, and the Colville Lake solar-diesel-hybrid system. We highlight the need for additional and continued funding to the renewable energies Net Metering Program and the Renewable Energy Technology Fund, which was over-subscribed four months into the current fiscal year. Much-welcomed work on community funding formulas, particularly capital funding, would also do well to assess and account for climate impacts on territorial infrastructure

In the past twelve months, the GNWT has twice expended tens of millions of dollars in one-time subsidies to the NWT Power Corporation, while subsidy programs to address energy needs in the long term, like the Net Metering Program, consistently run out of funding. Additionally, community renewable energy infrastructure has been excluded from GNWT planning. The GNWT has committed to supporting international efforts to limit the increase in global temperature to below two degrees Celsius and our successors might

consider how these factors will impact territorial policy and development.

Strategies for the Future

Both the Biomass Energy Strategy 2012-15 and the Greenhouse Gas Strategy for the Northwest Territories 2011-2015 expire this year. However, the GNWT's goal of success in a low-carbon economy is as yet unresolved, while biomass projects continue to show great promise, particularly in the South Slave and Deh Cho. Similarly, though the Solar Energy Strategy concludes in 2017, several goals remain as yet unresolved, while solar projects continue to grow in popularity and practicality. The committee urges our successors to recognize various renewable energy opportunities to reduce energy costs and our dependence on diesel and other fossil fuels, and to press for updated strategies and action.

The committee suggests visiting NWT biomass operations. We also note the Inuvik Storm Hills Wind Farm and the Yellowknife wind feasibility studies, and point to our work on the successful use of wind energy at the Diavik Wind Farm. We also flag waste management, including industrial and mining waste, for further consideration.

Departmental Matters

Environment and Natural Resources (ENR)

Forest Fires: Seasonal Reviews and Preparedness

While the 2015 season was not as severe as the previous year, it remains the second worst on record, with similar conditions experienced across Canada and in other nations. Forest fires are a natural part of our forests' lifecycles, but fire severity combined with climate change, ongoing drought and severe environmental pressures on Boreal forests have serious implications for forest health and GNWT fiscal status. Approximately \$99 million has been spent fighting NWT forest fires in the past two years, a total that does not account for related impacts, including human health, lost business, and service and transportation interruptions.

The committee encourages our successors to assess GNWT performance in the identified priority areas of public engagement, safety, and human resources, as well as the anticipated new air tanker fleet. Emerging opportunities associated with fires, including biomass operations, mushrooms and other non-timber forest products are also noted.

Mushroom Harvest: Successes and Lessons

The 2015 morel harvest drew significant attention from pickers and buyers. The committee encourages our successors to actively foster these and other young, home-grown industries rooted in conservation economies and notes that future work on the Forest Management Act must address more

than one type of mushroom or one category of forest resources.

Industry, Tourism, and Investment (ITI)

Abandoned and Suspended Oil and Gas Wells

The committee encourages our successors to press for further clarity on the number of abandoned and suspended wells under territorial jurisdiction, and to urge the development and implementation of an action plan for monitoring and management, including identifying and addressing leakages and site reclamation.

Members feel strongly that the number of wells and specific locations for each should be made public and further note the need to manage orphaned wells.

Commercial Fisheries

The next committee is encouraged to evaluate the Fresh Fish from Great Slave Lake branding strategy and to seek an update on the fisheries business plan.

Diamond Potentials

The committee urges our successors to continue to press industry on socio-economic agreements and quotas for northern employment and contracting, and to monitor currently proposed expansions. Further, the committee has been eager for progress in the territorial diamond manufacturing sector, particularly Yellowknife-based processing plants, for some time, but with no result. Decisions must be made and action taken. NWT artisans and jewellery may prove a useful future focus for value-added diamond potentials.

The Economic Opportunities Strategy: Evaluation and Next Steps

The committee recommends that our successors pursue a thorough review of the Economic Opportunities Strategy (EOS) to clearly assess its costs, benefits and impacts.

Several other government strategies emerge from the EOS and the next committee will likely be interested in monitoring their progress, including but not limited to those discussed below. Notably, the committee's review of the Mineral Development Strategy included a commissioned analysis by the Pembina Institute. We also encourage our successors to review the new China Strategy and Action Plan and to monitor the development of a new tourism plan.

Agriculture Strategy:

The committee highlights the matter of lease rates for Commissioner's land used for agriculture and encourages our successors to press the department for timely development and implementation of the strategy itself.

Film Strategy and Action Plan:

The next committee is encouraged to meet with the new NWT Film Commissioner to discuss the commission's direction and marketing strategies.

Oil and Gas Strategy:

This strategy is currently under development and the matter of oil and gas development, even during the current exploration downturn, is one of great interest to the committee and to the public, and with great potential impact on the NWT. The committee points to the report on public engagement on the strategy and encourages our successors to closely monitor developments, as oil and gas development carries great potential impact for the NWT.

Mines and Mining

Northern benefits are key: In 2014, fewer NWT residents held diamond mine jobs than those from other jurisdictions, increasing by nearly 50 percent, while the number of residents holding positions increased only 20 percent. The next committee may also wish to examine royalty rates and other opportunities for northern revenue. We also encourage our successors to pursue a full-cost accounting analysis of net benefits gained from NWT-based mines where the majority of wages leave the NWT.

Additionally, we recommend industry requirements for investment in and commitment to renewable energies to reduce diesel consumption. Wind farm technology has already been proven viable in the NWT.

Northern Workforce

Workforce readiness and GNWT worker retention are vital to territorial capacity for growth

The committee highlights NWT manufacturing and support for territorial businesses' competitiveness in tender processes. We point to the NWT Business Incentive Policy and NWT-based providers of solar energy technology.

Northwest Territories Geological Survey

The committee suggests expansion of NTGS environmental geoscience projects, including baseline data collection; investigation of permafrost slumps, including resulting catastrophic lake drainage and water impacts; and petroleum work.

The Northwest Territories Mining Advisory Board

To maximize benefits to NWT residents, the next committee may wish to pursue further evaluation of the board's composition and operation (e.g., expert representation in environmental regulation, poverty reduction, and Aboriginal affairs and governance).

Oil and Gas Exploration

The GNWT initiated its first call cycle for oil and gas exploration in October 2014 and lessons learned will likely be of interest. The committee also recommends a review assessing subsidies to industry, including a responsive action plan.

Lands

Recreational Land Use Framework

There is an ongoing need for a clear plan to address concerns with squatters in the Yellowknife River watershed and the Inuvik Airport Lake areas. Members also flag the ongoing matters of leases and sales along the Ingraham Trail and at Cassidy Point, and the collection of securities for all land-use sites.

Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA)

911 Services

The next committee is encouraged to explore service model options, inter-community disparity, costs and cost-management, and consultation with Aboriginal and community governments.

Sport and Recreation Funding

The funding structure for territorial sport and recreation is notably complex and the next committee is encouraged to seek a status update from the department.

Public Works and Services (PWS)

Departmental Reorganization and Energy Planning

The committee urges its successors to monitor the delivery of the department's new responsibilities in energy planning, including the development of an Energy Efficiency Act, for which a discussion paper is expected near the end of the 17th Assembly.

Transportation (DOT)

Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway

We urge our successors continue to monitor the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway Project as it enters its third year of planned construction.

NWT Transportation Strategy 2015-2040: Connecting Us

The committee highlights two long-standing infrastructure initiatives: the Mackenzie Valley Highway and potential infrastructure development in the Slave Geologic Province.

Additionally, airport repairs and the dredging of territorial rivers remain significant issues for several NWT constituencies. These include airports in Hay River and Inuvik as well as the Hay River and Tuktoyaktuk harbours. Loss of permafrost and storm surges are causing persistent damage, while drought and low-water conditions continue to impede marine transportation as well as the quality of the territorial waterways on which our small communities rely.

Conclusion

This concludes the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure's Report on Transition Matters. Members respectfully suggest that our successor committee consider requesting updates on the above matters from the Government, and wish them the utmost success in fulfilling their mandate.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know a lot of people are disappointed we didn't read it in whole, but it's now on the record in Hansard.

MOTION TO RECEIVE AND ADOPT COMMITTEE REPORT 26-17(5), CARRIED

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Committee Report 26-17(5) be received and adopted by this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Committee Report 26-17(5) is received and adopted by the Assembly. Mr. Moses.

COMMITTEE REPORT 27-17(5): STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL PROGRAMS REPORT ON TRANSITION MATTERS CARRIED

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly Committee Report 27-17(5), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on Transition Matters.

MOTION THAT COMMITTEE REPORT 27-15(5) BE DEEMED READ AND PRINTED IN HANSARD, CARRIED

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Committee Report 27-17(5) be deemed read and printed in Hansard in its entirety. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called.

---Carried

Introduction

As the 17th Legislative Assembly draws to a close, the Standing Committee on Social Programs

continues to monitor a variety of important programs and initiatives. Through this transition report, the committee wishes to highlight areas that are likely to require attention in the 18th Assembly.

Background

The Standing Committee on Social Programs is comprised of five Regular Members of the Legislative Assembly. The committee's role is to perform the following, with respect to the departments of Education, Culture and Employment; Health and Social Services; Justice; and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation:

1. review multi-year business plans and budgets, bills, boards and agencies, including the Status of Women Council and programs for seniors, youth and persons with disabilities;
2. review departmental performance, including that of boards and agencies; and
3. consider any other matter referred by the House.

Transition Issues

I. Service Delivery

The committee has long-standing concerns about limited access to services in small communities. The reason is often a lack of presence on the ground; for example, no local police officer, social worker, nurse, mental health worker or addictions counsellor. This weakens the effectiveness of government programs. It is especially concerning in light of evidence from the Early Development Instrument and other sources, which shows that small communities are home to a disproportionate number of vulnerable individuals and families.

Another long-standing concern is departmental silos that create fragmented experiences for people trying to access services. The committee has consistently urged the government to provide services in a more integrated manner and to revise policies that operate at cross-purposes. An integrated case management pilot project is underway in Yellowknife, and the government has committed to adopting integrated approaches in a range of other settings. The successor committee is urged to promote this way of doing business because of its proven success in other jurisdictions and its far-reaching potential to help our most vulnerable residents.

II. Inter-Departmental Strategic Frameworks

1. Anti-Poverty Action Plan

In response to a motion carried in the 16th Assembly, the government began working on an anti-poverty strategy. In June 2013 the government tabled an anti-poverty framework. In February 2014 the GNWT action plan followed. In June 2015 a territory-wide action plan was released. The action plans are based on five priorities: 1) child and

family support; 2) healthy living and reaching our potential; 3) safe and affordable housing; 4) sustainable communities; and 5) an integrated continuum of services.

While the committee supports this initiative, it has urged the GNWT to allocate more funding to it. In 2014-15, \$2.5 million – the equivalent of \$60 per resident – was spent on a patchwork of activities. Moreover, the action plan contains no systematic approach for dealing with homelessness, a growing problem in the Northwest Territories. The successor committee is urged to track the progress of the action plan and to push for stronger, more comprehensive and longer term funding.

2. Early Childhood Development Action Plan

Scientific evidence shows that the degree of support and appropriate stimulation children receive before the age of four will have a crucial impact on their well-being and productivity in adulthood. Citing this evidence, the committee has repeatedly called for enhanced services for infants, very young children and their parents. A motion carried in May 2012 called on the Ministers of Education, Culture and Employment and Health and Social Services to develop a comprehensive plan. The Government produced a one-year strategic framework and a three-year action plan. While these documents were well-conceived, the government's commitment was disappointing. In the budget for 2014-15, only \$511,000 in new money was allocated, while the remainder of the budget was re-profiled from health promotion and prevention activities (Department of Health and Social Services) and the K to 12 school system (Department of Education, Culture and Employment).

A controversial component of the ECD Action Plan was the implementation of junior kindergarten. The rollout was to be accomplished by adjusting the pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) just within the legislated threshold instead of infusing new money into the school system. Implementation was to take place over three years, beginning in small communities in 2014-15, and following in the regional centres in 2015-16 and Yellowknife in 2016-17.

The proposed rollout drew a number of criticisms. First, the committee felt that the adjustment had been made without due consideration to the impact on the overall learning environment. Second, the committee felt that the funding model was ill-conceived, as it unfairly impacted mill rate communities. Third, the committee was concerned about the quality of programming, noting that junior kindergarten is most effective when it is delivered by specially trained early childhood workers in well-equipped play-based learning spaces. The evidence shows that schools are often not the appropriate place for early childhood programs such as junior kindergarten. Fourth, the committee observed that developmental delays are already

well underway by the age of four and asked why the government was not focusing resources on children aged zero to three. Regular Members also voiced concerns along these lines, as did numerous stakeholders, including representatives from the Yellowknife school boards and Aboriginal Head Start program.

The government subsequently suspended implementation in the regional centres and Yellowknife and agreed to complete an evaluation of the implementation that took place in small communities in 2014-15. The government has left it up to the 18th Assembly to determine whether or how to proceed. The successor committee is strongly urged to look for the government's evaluation and review it carefully.

The successor committee is also urged to review the government's feasibility study on universal daycare, which was prompted by a motion of the Legislative Assembly in 2013. The study compares the funding and policy frameworks of the Northwest Territories, Quebec and Scandinavia, and shows that our jurisdiction spends considerably less on early childhood development, including daycare, than other jurisdictions. As a percentage of GDP spent on early childhood development, the Northwest Territories allocates 0.4 percent, while Canada allocates 0.6 percent; Quebec 1.1 percent; and Denmark – the highest among countries belonging to the OECD, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – 2.2 percent. On average, OECD countries allocate 1.1 percent of their GDP to early childhood development.

A related topic is government support for daycare infrastructure. In the spring of 2015, Kids Corner Daycare in Fort Simpson asked for a contribution toward the cost of a new facility. The request was turned down, despite the fact that Children First daycare in Inuvik had received \$1 million in 2013 for similar purposes. The GNWT has promised to produce a multi-departmental policy on infrastructure funding for non-profit and private-sector organizations, and the successor committee should inquire into its estimated date of completion.

3. Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan

Released in February 2014, the updated Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan combines the 2012 action plan with the recommendations from the 2013 Minister's Forum on Addictions and Community Wellness. The updated plan points to a range of government services across the continuum of care. However, as Members are repeatedly told by their constituents, the reality on the ground does not always match up with the government's promises. The committee has asked for improvements in a number of areas, including withdrawal management services, community counselling and after-care. Members have also

encouraged expansion of on-the-land healing programs. The successor committee is urged to push for stronger action in all these areas and request performance evaluations of pilot programs and established activities.

In addition, the committee has expressed repeated concerns about the closure of the Nats'ejee K'eh Treatment Facility in 2013. Members would like to see more northern-based treatment options and less reliance on southern facilities. Moreover, the committee has urged the GNWT to partner with Nunavut and the Yukon in establishing a pan-territorial residential treatment centre. The incoming committee is encouraged to pursue this proposal.

The successor committee is also encouraged to push for stronger interdepartmental collaboration on the Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan. Three potentially fruitful collaborations are recommended. First, a stronger partnership between the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Justice would allow offenders to address addiction and mental health issues more effectively and increase their chances of rehabilitation. Second, a stronger partnership between the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment could pave the way for a mental health strategy specifically for youth, with schools serving as settings for service delivery. Third, a stronger collaboration between the Department of Health and Social Services and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation could set the stage for implementing the "Housing First" model in communities across the Northwest Territories. "Housing First" is an evidence-based intervention model whereby permanent housing is secured for individuals who are homeless and living with a mental illness.

During its review of Bill 55, which will replace the outdated Mental Health Act and come into force in the 18th Assembly, the committee made a number of recommendations, including developing a strategy for addressing the mental health needs of youth and adolescents, hiring staff to fill long-standing vacancies among front-line workers and expanding suicide prevention efforts. The successor committee is urged to track the government's response to recommendations arising from the review of Bill 55 and the development of regulations for the new act.

III. Departmental Programs and Issues

Department of Education, Culture and Employment

Education Renewal and Innovation Initiative

During the 17th Assembly, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment launched the Education Renewal and Innovation (ERI) Initiative. Through a one-year strategic framework and a

three-year action plan, the aim is to enhance relationships between schools and communities, promote student wellness, renew the K to 12 curriculum, and ensure that the education system is monitored, evaluated, and financially accountable. While Members are impressed with the scope of the initiative, they have expressed several concerns: first, the volume of new activities runs the risk of intensifying workloads for principals, teachers and support workers; second, the large number of working groups, operating simultaneously, seem to be making slow and unwieldy progress; third, not enough attention is being given to the problems of truancy and poor attendance; fourth, there seems to be a lack of focus on educational basics: reading, writing and arithmetic; and fifth, the amount of new funding is very limited so there is a danger of attempting to accomplish too much with too little. The successor committee is also urged to monitor the effectiveness of strategies to promote "self-regulation," defined as the student's ability to stay calm, alert and ready to learn. An update on the ERI Initiative should be requested early in the 18th Assembly.

Auditor General's 2010 Report on Education

In 2010 the Auditor General's report focused on education in the Northwest Territories and included nine significant recommendations for improvement. While the department committed to fulfilling these recommendations, it has made slow and uneven progress. For example, the Auditor General recommended that the department report regularly to the Legislative Assembly on key performance indicators, noting in particular that the department has not been tracking the extent of compliance with the directive on Adult Literacy and Basic Education (ALBE), which is run by Aurora College, or whether training is yielding the desired results. The department promised to evaluate the ALBE Program under the Accountability Framework for the Education and Training of Adults in the Northwest Territories, yet no results have been tabled. Thus, more than five years have passed since the Auditor General's report and we are no closer to knowing the strengths and deficiencies of the department's educational programs. The successor committee is strongly urged to look into the department's readiness and capacity to generate results on key performance indicators. In addition, the committee should request an update on governance reform at Aurora College and on the department's compliance with daycare legislation, including annual inspections of daycare facilities.

Inclusive Schooling

The Inclusive Schooling directive was reviewed during the 17th Assembly, and the government's plan is to continue funding it through an enrolment-based formula. The committee believes this

disadvantages “magnet communities” which attract higher numbers of students with complex needs. Moreover, the committee wants assurance that funding assigned to support any particular student will migrate with the student if he or she moves to a different school. Members have recommended an alternative funding formula, based on a blend of enrolment numbers and the actual number of students who have special needs. The successor committee is encouraged to pursue this line of reasoning and to monitor a number of related activities, including the department’s methods for identifying student needs and evaluating the true effects of inclusive-schooling expenditures on market communities.

Skills 4 Success

In the closing months of the 17th Assembly, the government presented its 10-year strategic framework known as Skills 4 Success. The goals of this initiative are to build residents’ skills and post-secondary credentials, enhance employment supports, improve the recruitment and retention of qualified workers, and provide Northerners with the information they need to make smart career decisions. In the 18th Assembly, the committee is encouraged to monitor this strategic framework for its effectiveness. The labour-market forecast and the territorial needs assessment, as prepared by the Conference Board of Canada, may also be of interest.

Auditor General’s 2013 Report on Income Security Programs

In 2013 the Auditor General’s report focused on income security programs. Deficiencies were identified in a number of areas, including the management of client files, financial oversight, program evaluation, staff training and staff safety. The department responded with an action plan, and the committee has been tracking the department’s fidelity to its commitments. The successor committee should continue tracking the department’s progress, including the corrective action plans for addressing deficiencies, the evaluation of five new employment transition officer positions, and the expansion of public housing units for clients on income assistance.

Enhancements to Student Financial Assistance

Since before the 16th Assembly, the committee has been asking for enhancements to the Student Financial Assistance program. Members are pleased that some enhancements are finally in place. Students can now give their consent to be connected with potential employers in the Northwest Territories. In addition, basic grant amounts have increased, and debts will be forgiven more quickly if students reside in the Northwest Territories. A northern bonus will also be offered to any student who settles here. As these enhancements are part of the government’s

Population Growth Strategy, the successor committee should monitor data on key performance indicators, including the current proportion of students who have chosen to settle in the Northwest Territories upon completion of post-secondary studies and any subsequent increases. In addition, the incoming committee may want an update on the appeals process.

Anti-Bullying Legislation

During the 17th Assembly, a motion was passed urging the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment to address bullying in the schools. The government’s subsequent decision to amend the Education Act was also based in part on compelling independent research. A survey of 1,600 NWT students showed significantly higher levels of bullying here than in most of Canada. In addition, cyber-bullying has had tragic results across Canada, sometimes leading young people to take their own lives. Accordingly, the amendments to the Education Act sought to define bullying, including cyber-bullying, and provide, through regulations, for a territorial school code of conduct and safe school plans. The bill was passed on November 1, 2013, but the regulations have not been developed to date. This points, once again, to the department’s tendency toward slow progress. The successor committee is encouraged to request a status update on the development of the regulations, territorial school code of conduct and safe school plans.

Aboriginal Language Revitalization

Aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories are struggling to keep their languages alive. This is largely due to the combined impact of colonialism, residential schools and the dominant use of English in the North. Over the past 20 years, the percentage of residents who speak their Aboriginal language has declined by nearly 20 percent. If this trend continues, the Northwest Territories may lose its Aboriginal languages altogether. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment, together with key stakeholders, has initiated a new approach to language revitalization. Funding has been allocated for five-year regional Aboriginal language plans, including enhanced funding to help Aboriginal governments build capacity in implementing the plans. The department also recently reviewed its directive on Aboriginal Language and Culture-Based Education (ALCBE) under the Education Renewal and Innovation Initiative. The incoming committee is urged to track the effectiveness of the five-year language plans and the renewed ALCBE directive and to ensure that financial accountability mechanisms are in place for the five-year language plans.

Department of Health and Social Services System Transformation

During the 17th Assembly, the Department of Health and Social Services began to modernize and streamline the health and social services system. Bill 44, the amended Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act, received assent in March 2015 and will allow the Minister to combine the regional authorities into a single territorial authority. The new legislation will also allow for the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority to be brought into the public service at a later date, but at considerable cost. The committee urges the Minister to continue communicating openly with the committee and the public on this important endeavour. The successor committee should request status updates on several activities, including contract negotiations with the Union of Northern Workers Local 21 in Hay River; the Privacy Impact Assessment, which is the formal process for identifying potential privacy risks associated with the amalgamation of regional authorities; and the implementation of new provisions pertaining to critical incidents.

Child and Family Services

In recent years, the child and family services system in the Northwest Territories has received significant scrutiny. The committee's 16th Assembly report on the review of the Child and Family Services Act contained over 70 recommendations, and called for a less adversarial approach, including the use of least-intrusive measures.

Then in March 2014, the Office of the Auditor General released its audit of child and family services. The audit identified serious deficiencies in a range of areas, including accountability, investigations, risk assessments and screening of foster homes. The department responded with an action plan that promises to provide greater voluntary supports for families and to usher in a more collaborative approach. While some progress has been made, several initiatives are delayed or stalled, and the annual compliance audits have yet to be released. The successor committee is urged to assess the extent to which these audits replicate the Auditor General's key indicators and thus provide a sound method for tracking improvements over time.

In addition, in the spring of 2015, the committee completed its review of Bill 47, the government's long-awaited response to the committee's 2010 report. The successor committee is urged to monitor the department's response to the committee's recommendations, including its recommendation to rewrite the Child and Family Services Act during the 18th Assembly.

Continuing Care

Over the next 15 years, the Canadian population is expected to age dramatically, and one of the highest proportional increases in the over-65 population is expected to take place within the

Northwest Territories. This demographic shift will strain the health care system and increase demands for housing and infrastructure. Hundreds of new care beds will be required, and demands for home care services will rise. Indeed, the needs of seniors are already pressing, as there are waitlists for long-term care and concerns that home care services are too thin on the ground. The committee has urged the government to go beyond its preliminary framework entitled *Our Elders: Our Communities* by establishing a comprehensive action plan. The lack of thorough long-term planning is a serious concern, and the successor committee is encouraged to pursue this issue.

Pharmaceutical Strategy

In 2012 Alberta Blue Cross prepared a report for the GNWT to look at cost-saving options for the management of drug benefits. A pharmaceutical strategy was subsequently initiated for the purpose of revising the GNWT's policy and regulatory framework, establishing procedures for bulk procurement, introducing catastrophic drug coverage and considering alternatives to the NIHB formulary. A comprehensive rollout of the pharmaceutical strategy did not take place as planned in the 17th Assembly. Accordingly, the successor committee should request an update.

Medical Travel Policy

Since the 16th Assembly, the committee has been urging the government to modernize the Medical Travel Policy and address inconsistencies in its application. The committee asked the government to complete this task within the life of the 17th Assembly, but the goal was only partially realized. The incoming committee should ask for an update on the new ministerial directives in the first quarter of 2016.

Water Quality Testing

During the 17th Assembly, the committee repeatedly urged the government to improve its water testing regime through more rigorous standards and better public reporting. Concerns about water quality have been amplified by recent drought conditions and boil-water advisories. A new public website on drinking water quality was launched in 2015, and the successor committee is encouraged to monitor the website, the frequency of monitoring activities and overall compliance with national water testing guidelines.

Health Information Act

Bill 4, the Health Information Act, received assent in March 2014 and is expected to come into force on October 1, 2015. With this legislation, the Northwest Territories is joining several other Canadian jurisdictions with health-specific privacy legislation. The successor committee is urged to request an early status update on the implementation of the act, including the Health

Information Act Manual; the risk-management tool kit; the delivery of staff training across the Northwest Territories; the communication plan, which should include broad circulation of plain-language materials; and measures being taken to ensure that Aboriginal language speakers understand their rights and what the legislation means.

Health Promotion and Prevention

Throughout the 17th Assembly, the committee has recommended more resources for activities that promote good health and prevent diseases or family dysfunction. The successor committee may wish to request an update on these activities, including how funding has been allocated and results from key performance indicators.

Chronic Disease Management

Many chronic diseases are preventable, yet they cause a lot of suffering and drive up health care spending. The committee urges a stronger response to chronic diseases such as diabetes and cancer. Diabetes is a particular concern, as more than 3,000 NWT residents have the disease and over 200 new cases are diagnosed every year. The committee may want to request an update, including results from the diabetes prevalence study, which is due in January 2016, and evaluations of the various prevention and disease-management programs.

Health and Social Services Professions Act

Once in force, the Health and Social Services Professions Act will enable the GNWT to regulate numerous professions under a single law and ensure that only qualified professionals are licenced to practice. The legislation will also empower the Minister to establish a mechanism for reviewing professional conduct. The successor committee may want an update on the drafting of regulations, including the extent of stakeholder involvement and an indication of the professions that are next in the queue for regulation. Fee amounts may also be of interest.

Department of Justice

Auditor General's 2015 Report on Corrections

In 2015 the Auditor General's report focused on the correctional system within the Northwest Territories. The audit found that the Department of Justice has not met its key responsibilities for inmates and has failed to comply with key rehabilitation and reintegration requirements. Deficiencies in case management were also found to limit the department's efforts to rehabilitate inmates. The successor committee is strongly urged to track the department's action plan for correcting deficiencies and to assess the extent to which the audit tools replicate the Auditor General's key indicators and

thus provide a sound method for tracking improvements over time.

In addition, during its review of Bill 63, An Act to Amend the Victims of Crime Act, the committee noted that corrections services division is struggling with capacity issues and that the changes associated with Bill 63 will place even greater strain on the courts and correctional resources when offenders cannot pay their fines. There will also be greater pressure to find work opportunities for offenders who participate in the territorial work/Fine Options Program. The successor committee should urge the government to track additional costs and fund the anticipated shortfall.

Wellness Court

In the previous Assembly, the Standing Committee on Social Programs conducted research on specialized courts which divert accused persons from mainstream courts and address underlying causes of criminal behaviour. During the 17th Assembly, the government responded by introducing the Wellness Court. This alternative court provides treatment and community support for offenders with addictions, mental disorders or cognitive challenges. The successor committee may want an update on the program's effectiveness in providing timely and reliable supports such as counselling, housing and income assistance. The new committee may also want to inquire into the potential for expanding the program beyond Yellowknife.

Integrated Case Management Pilot Project

The Integrated Case Management (ICM) Pilot Project is adopting a client-centred, multi-departmental model of service delivery and is geared to clients with complex needs. The successor committee may want to inquire into the results of the first evaluation phase in Yellowknife, the number of clients in the program, the proposed expansion to Inuvik and strategies for overcoming barriers to multi-departmental program delivery.

Outdated Information Systems

The IT systems supporting the courts of the Northwest Territories, corrections services and legal registries are outdated and at risk of failure. Minor improvements and interim measures are no longer proving adequate and the committee believes these aging systems should be replaced. The incoming committee is encouraged to take up this concern and push for its inclusion in the 2016-17 operations budget.

Recalculation Services

Recalculation services allow for adjustments to court orders for child or spousal support, based on updated financial information. Most Canadian jurisdictions offer this service, but the Northwest Territories does not. The only recourse for our

residents who fall behind on support payments or become unemployed is to seek legal counsel and have the matter resolved in court. This is expensive and inefficient. The committee has repeatedly asked the government to provide recalculation services. The Department of Justice completed a feasibility study in 2013 and has since advanced the policy work necessary to develop a bill. The successor committee may want a status update on the development of a legislative proposal.

Northwest Territories Housing Corporation

Housing for Seniors

The committee's view is that the government is placing too much emphasis on aging-in-place strategies and should do more to address seniors' housing by retrofitting existing stock and constructing new facilities. Members believe that future housing needs of elders and seniors cannot be handled by the government alone. To this end, Members urge the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation to engage in creative problem-solving with other GNWT departments, non-profit organizations and private-sector investors. Members also urge the successor committee to pursue this theme.

Core Need and Public Housing Quotas

The committee would like the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation to review its method for evaluating core need. Members question the extent to which housing shortages throughout the Northwest Territories are accurately captured by the existing core-need template. The method for determining community quotas for public housing should also be revised in light of local needs and demand. With the recent decline in housing affordability in Yellowknife, the demand in the capital city far outstrips the supply, and this trend seems likely to continue. The successor committee is urged to pursue these concerns.

Recommended Actions

The Standing Committee on Social Programs recommends the following actions:

1. that the Government of the Northwest Territories focus on delivering services and monitoring performance in a more responsive and efficient manner, working against the current preoccupation with process and bureaucratic complexity.
2. that the successor committee strategically review the reports released by the 17th Assembly Standing Committee on Social Programs.
3. that the successor committee hold a two-day strategic planning retreat early in the 18th Assembly.

Conclusion

This concludes the Standing Committee on Social Programs' Report on Transition Matters. Members extend best wishes to the successor Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Moses.

MOTION TO RECEIVE AND ADOPT
COMMITTEE REPORT 27-15(5),
CARRIED

MR. MOSES: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Committee Report 27-17(5) be received and adopted by this Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Ms. Bisaro.

COMMITTEE REPORT 28-17(5):
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PRIORITIES AND PLANNING
REPORT ON TRANSITION MATTERS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly Committee Report 28-17(5), Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning Report on Transition Matters.

MOTION THAT COMMITTEE REPORT 28-15(5)
BE DEEMED READ AND PRINTED IN HANSARD,
CARRIED

Mr. Speaker, I move seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Committee Report 28-17(5) be deemed read and printed in Hansard in its entirety. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Introduction

The Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning remains fully engaged in matters with government-wide implications as the 17th Legislative Assembly draws to a close. Through this transition report, the committee highlights areas Members believe will require the ongoing attention of our successor committee in the 18th Assembly. We have footnoted some key documents that may be of use.

Background

The Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning includes all 11 Regular Members of the Legislative Assembly. The committee's role is to:

1. review issues which have government-wide implications including the overview of the budget and fiscal framework;
2. review Government of the Northwest Territories reports on financial and performance results and program and policy evaluations to ensure anticipated outcomes are being achieved and accountability is maximized;
3. coordinate sessional business scheduling and planning in cooperation with appropriate ministerial representatives;
4. coordinate committee public consultation efforts with respect to budget and fiscal matters;
5. coordinate committee strategic planning efforts;
6. monitor and evaluate ministerial performance issues;
7. consider the budgets and financial management of any boards and agencies that are outside the responsibility of any standing committee; and
8. consider any other matter referred by the House.

Transition Issues

Devolution Legislation, Land and Resource Management, Resource Royalties and Taxes

Now that the Northwest Territories is the steward of its own land, resources, water and environment, our government must deliver on its pledge to devise an effective, efficient and made-in-the-NWT regulatory system. It must reflect the values of our residents and partner governments. Consistent with the Land Use Sustainability Framework and evolving regional land use plans, we must ensure the right balance between development, sustainable use, and conservation. The tax and royalty regime should provide fair revenue in return for the use of public land and resources. This regime has not been fully reviewed since devolution. Members of the 18th Assembly may wish to consider doing so.

Devolution implementation is substantially hampered in regions lacking settled Aboriginal land claims, increasing the need to advance negotiations that have gone on for decades. With the Government of the Northwest Territories in a more senior role, there is both new opportunity and advantage in resolving outstanding claims. This should be a high priority for the 18th Assembly.

The Intergovernmental Council was created as the forum for collaboration with Aboriginal governments. Its mandate is to review the existing regulatory system, including land-management and resource revenue, and recommend improvements. The lack of participation by some Aboriginal

governments without completed land claims is not productive. Every effort should be made to include them in the Intergovernmental Council. Advancing this work, along with public engagement – a crucial process that is currently undefined – is the necessary next step to take in the 18th Assembly.

To date, the Intergovernmental Council has agreed to invite the chair of the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning to attend council meetings with representatives of the GNWT. Members of the next standing committee should assess whether this level of involvement, coupled with the government's public engagement process, is sufficient and whether additional action is needed.

Decentralization

The transfer of federal positions to the GNWT as a result of devolution has provided both an opportunity and a challenge in the process of building the government's presence across the territory.

While progress has been made, human resource and infrastructure planning have not kept pace. This contributes to growth of the public service in Yellowknife and the inevitable difficulty of transferring positions to the regions once they have been established elsewhere. Implementation efforts to implement the decentralization policy should be thoroughly evaluated on a regular basis, with a view to ensuring strong coordination between departments. Every effort must be made to locate remaining devolution-related positions in the regions. The new committee may wish to request the government's plan for doing so early in its term.

NWT Energy Plan

The challenges of providing abundant, cheap and clean energy to the people and businesses of the Northwest Territories are reflected in the fact that, after decades of study and debate, there is no comprehensive NWT energy plan. Most communities using diesel-generated power still lack clean, supplementary, renewable alternatives. Hydroelectric generation is declining due to low water levels, causing greater reliance on diesel generation in the North Slave region, at much higher and unsustainable cost. The government has taken large strides to reduce its own energy use through attention to heating systems and building efficiency. An NWT energy plan must address all these issues, based on patterns of community energy use.

Investments in individual projects in biomass energy, a solar-diesel hybrid generation system in Colville Lake, potential wind-generation projects at Storm Hills and the Snare River, and others, are encouraging and should be expedited under the aegis of an NWT energy plan. Creating and implementing it should be an immediate priority of the 18th Assembly.

Following up on the 2014 NWT Energy Charrette, the committee recommended that in 2015 the government prepare a public discussion paper to begin work on an NWT Energy Efficiency Act. To date, this has not been done. If it remains undone in early 2016, our successor committee may wish to expedite it.

Planning for the Impacts of Climate Change

The impacts of climate change on the Northwest Territories are already very serious and expensive, with fallout in many aspects of our lives, business and government. As a small sample, forest fires have caused community evacuations, low water is restricting transportation and power generation, permafrost is melting and Arctic coastlines are fast eroding. Costs to government already tally in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

The impacts of climate change will likely accelerate. Scientific knowledge is advancing daily. The GNWT must adapt, develop and adopt best practices and plan for what is ahead. Working with affected communities and informing our residents will be crucial as we mitigate impacts and reduce our own greenhouse gas emissions. Specific plans and targets are required. The committee should ensure the government responds to these needs.

Cost of Living

Controlling the rising cost of living in the NWT is a daunting but extremely important task. The cost of living is closely related to the growth of the population, expansion of the economy, and GNWT employment and retention. It also has a substantial bearing on the health and well-being of NWT residents. High cost of living is a major contributor to the high rate of poverty and hinders the ability of people in entry-level jobs to support themselves. Implementation of the holistic approach taken in the Action Plan to Reduce and Eliminate Poverty in the Northwest Territories would improve the lives of low-income earners and likely deliver substantial community, economic and health benefits, and help control health care costs. The committee urges its successor to ensure this takes place.

Food security is another close relative of the high cost of living and poverty. Members are extremely pleased to see so many communities growing their own food, renewing traditional harvests and building local knowledge. The committee strongly supports the successful Small Scale Foods Program component of the Canada-NWT Growing Forward strategy and advises that it continue and expand as opportunities arise.

Changes to the federal Nutrition North program have done little to lower the cost of food sold in remote NWT communities. The criteria for inclusion are so restrictive that many high-cost communities are left out; need is not the decisive factor. Our successor committee may wish to urge the

government to exert pressure on Canada to follow up on the Auditor General's suggested reforms and ensure that Nutrition North serves NWT communities as intended.

Population Growth

Concerted action is required to stimulate growth of the NWT population. Far too little has been done to date. Growing the NWT – Supporting Population Growth of the Northwest Territories, tabled in June 2015, does not describe a strategy. It is largely a description of current activities, lacking focus and a plan of action. Notably, the background document does contain the admission that “current actions will not be enough to achieve the NWT Population Growth Strategy's five-year goal.” The committee could not agree more and suggests that the situation be remedied as quickly as possible, with encouragement from the 18th Assembly if necessary.

Financial Reporting

The government's financial reporting to standing committees and the public is good, and has improved steadily over the past decade. Business plans describe the work to be done each year, the resources required, cost, and often outline challenges and future needs. The main estimates, stripped of operational detail, list the specific expenditures Members vote on in the House. And finally, the public accounts report how the money was actually spent.

Information about the activities and spending of boards, authorities and agencies could be improved in annual business plans. The need is most acute for Aurora College and education authorities, which account for \$187 million of Education, Culture and Employment's budget for 2015-16. Health authorities are somewhat different, as most are run by public administrators and will be amalgamated into a single authority. However, business plan information is lean for individual health authorities, in light of their total spending of \$287 million in 2015-16. Standing committees have raised this issue before; the Committee on Priorities and Planning recommends that it be remedied in subsequent business plans. By contrast, financial reporting on the NWT Housing Corporation is excellent.

In addition, direct comparisons between main estimates and the public accounts can be difficult and could be improved, as several provinces have done. Additional recommendations have been made by the Standing Committee on Government Operations.

NWT Heritage Fund

Legislation to establish the NWT Heritage Fund was passed at the end of the 16th Assembly to benefit future generations from today's non-renewable resource development. Members of the

17th Assembly approved the first deposits to the fund. It is a modest start.

The committee requested the government act upon the following recommendations within the life of the 17th Assembly, but this did not occur:

- Amend the act to entrench the current practice of contributing an annual minimum of 25 percent of the net fiscal benefit to the GNWT from resource revenues to the Heritage Fund;
- The Heritage Fund should be managed at arm's length from the government, with independent management in place by the time the fund balance reaches \$40 million;
- An independent committee must be established to oversee management of the Heritage Fund, and it should be required to table an annual report in the Legislative Assembly for review by the Standing Committee on Government Operations.

Legislation should be amended as needed to incorporate these changes. These measures should be seriously considered by the 18th Assembly.

Hydraulic Fracturing

To date, very little horizontal hydraulic fracturing has occurred in the Northwest Territories. The government proposed new regulations for hydraulic fracturing and the responsible Minister has extended consultation on them into the 18th Assembly. This is a welcome development. Much remains to be done to ensure that regulations and policy on hydraulic fracturing are consistent with the Land Use and Sustainability Framework and protect precious resources and health. Industry practices for "fracking" are advancing rapidly, with study of the environmental and health implications emerging more slowly. It is essential that ongoing developments are considered and applied in the best interest of NWT residents now and into the future.

Departmental Matters

Health and Social Services

Ongoing problems with mental health and addictions treatment, support for rehabilitation and recovery programs, extended care, staff shortages and nursing services were identified in committee business and resulted in motions passed in the House. It is worth noting that despite the Department of Health and Social Services' large budget, spending on its programs is proportionally smaller in the Northwest Territories than in other Canadian jurisdictions, even with high northern operating costs. This is both a credit to our system and an indicator that adjustments may be needed in certain areas.

Critical vacancies in community-based Health and Social Services staff must be filled. These vacancies hamper program delivery most in smaller communities where backup is limited or non-existent, casting a dark shadow on the accepted Canadian tradition of universal health care.

Mental health and addictions treatment, including follow-up support, is another critical area insufficiently addressed by the current government. The only residential treatment centre in the NWT was closed and service is now provided primarily by southern facilities. A territorial treatment centre and an associated mobile treatment program are options that have been under study for some time, but decisive action must be taken.

The committee recommends that the 18th Assembly focus on remedies to these problems and improved efforts to promote better health and combat preventable conditions.

The replacement of Stanton Territorial Hospital will present challenges for service delivery, project management and fiscal control. Committee members advise vigilance by the committee as the project moves into the construction stage. Attention should also be given to extended care services, which are being removed from the hospital itself to a new facility nearby. The renovation of the current Stanton Territorial Hospital building and its new role in the community may also require scrutiny.

Education, Culture and Employment (ECE)

The Standing Committee on Social Programs has made extensive comments on the many transition issues facing the department of Education, Culture and Employment. There is no need to reiterate them here. However, slow progress on the Education Renewal Initiative and others is a serious concern and may warrant intervention by all Members.

Junior Kindergarten implementation has been another major issue for the committee. The program is being delivered in 19 communities. It has recently been evaluated in preparation for a decision about expanding junior kindergarten to the regional centres and Yellowknife. However, funding reallocations for junior kindergarten have already impacted schools in the larger schools. For example, pupil-teacher ratios in Yellowknife schools have been driven to the legal limit of 16 to 1, which is significantly higher than any other school district. This is not ideal for students, teachers or staff. At this writing, results of the evaluation of junior kindergarten are overdue. Decisions on junior kindergarten will have profound effects on both education and child care – and young people across the territory – and therefore should be addressed both carefully and promptly by the 18th Assembly.

It is well-known that educational success is strongly rooted in each child's first years of development. Research done by ECE and education authorities during the 17th Assembly shows that an alarming number of our children – more than 38 percent – are behind in their development at age five. Developmental delays are especially common among children in small communities. This is a burning social issue, but the economic implications and impacts are equally important to the well-being of NWT residents and society. Coordinated efforts by the departments of Education and Health are essential, covering children from the prenatal stage through age five and involving health programs, early childhood development programs, child care, kindergarten and potentially junior kindergarten. Much work remains to be done by the 18th Assembly in these critically important areas.

There is currently no system for accrediting institutions of higher learning as universities or colleges, although there has been interest in their establishment. The Education Act requires that an act be passed to establish or create any degree-granting institution; the Aurora College Act is the only one to date. In addition, the Minister must authorize any institution operating as a university. The committee advises the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to examine the need for an accreditation system in the NWT, compare accreditation methods in other jurisdictions, and publicly report the findings early in the life of the 18th Assembly.

NWT Housing Corporation

The NWT Housing Corporation has done good work during the 17th Assembly and implemented creative solutions to address housing shortages in the face of declining federal support for public housing. Nevertheless, housing remains a critical problem in the Northwest Territories, with one in five homes in core need. The situation is even worse in smaller “non-market” communities, where more than 32 percent of homes are in core need. Among smaller community homeowners, core need stands at 38 percent. Behind these numbers are the real impacts on residents' quality of life and health.

Members observe that homelessness is a growing problem, despite the best efforts of the Housing Corporation and the government.

The committee suggests that its successor committee encourage the NWT Housing Corporation to adjust its stock to meet the need and demand in each community. In addition, the federal government must be persuaded to renew its investment in northern housing.

Conclusion

This concludes the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning Report on Transition Matters. We wish the Members and committees of the 18th Assembly great success in serving the people of the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Bisaro.

MOTION TO RECEIVE AND ADOPT COMMITTEE REPORT 28-15(5), CARRIED

MS. BISARO: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that Committee Report 28-17(5), be received and adopted by this Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Motion is carried.

---Carried

Mr. Hawkins.

COMMITTEE REPORT 29-17(5): STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT ON HORIZONTAL HYDRAULIC FRACTURING

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly Committee Report 29-17(5), Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure Report on Horizontal Hydraulic Fracturing. We've agreed to read just the executive summary.

Executive Summary

Since the beginning of the 17th Assembly, the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure has worked steadily on the complex matter of hydraulic fracturing in the Northwest Territories, looking at horizontal hydraulic fracturing in particular. We have gathered information, undertaken study tours, monitored government strategic planning and kept abreast of developments in scientific knowledge and public policy. Most recently, we reviewed the proposed Hydraulic Fracturing Filing Regulations. Throughout, it has been clear that hydraulic fracturing is a matter of great significance to residents and the future of the Northwest Territories.

As knowledge and best practices respecting hydraulic fracturing operations, regulations and impacts continue to evolve, so does the committee's understanding. As such, we agree that work must continue to the 18th Assembly and we contribute to the process with this report.

This report identifies six themes that have reoccurred throughout work:

1. complex or “wicked” problems;
2. a precautionary approach;
3. economic potential;
4. water;
5. the pursuit of global, local and regional knowledge; and
6. roles for residents.

It also makes eight recommendations in the following priority areas:

1. the proposed regulations themselves as well as
2. human factors;
3. monitoring;
4. natural environment;
5. reporting and disclosure;
6. waste management;
7. well construction; and
8. well suspension and abandonment.

Notably, many filings – or applications – requirements in place under the National Energy Board were eliminated in the proposed regulations, including requirements about water, environmental assessment and northern operating conditions.

We do not expect the GNWT to manage its new responsibilities exactly as federal departments and agencies have done, but rather that it would strive for a truly northern approach, one that includes fair and effective benefits for all residents honoured, enshrined Aboriginal rights and assured protection of air, human health, land, water and wildlife.

However, we would equally expect any territorial statutes and regulations, at minimum, to match, if not better, their federal predecessors.

As the work proceeds, decision-makers must be in continual support of the best possible knowledge, recognizing that regional and local knowledge are in particular demand. We recognize, too, that members of the public are typically well-informed and provided the GNWT with insightful views on a range of matters of public concern. Across all regions, while some residents speak in favour of development and the jobs it can bring, others also raise concerns regarding hydraulic fracturing, including the accessibility of benefits and the exposure to risk as well as the engagement of the process itself.

The GNWT has highlighted “four areas of interest to Northerners” within the proposed regulations. Yet, Northerners have called on the GNWT for much more than these. We continue to insist upon meaningful public consultation and we recognize that to provide all communities in all regions with opportunities into the future, the NWT needs both a diversified economy and an environment that will sustain present and future generations. This will be challenging work, certainly, but with great rewards.

We look forward to the work of the next Assembly and our successor committee, and we encourage all residents to review the committee’s report and recommendations, including the research summary on hydraulic fracturing and filing regulations tabled on June 4, 2015. All these are available online at the Legislative Assembly website.

That concludes the presentation of the executive summary of the committee report on horizontal hydraulic fracturing.

**MOTION THAT COMMITTEE REPORT 29-15(5)
BE DEEMED READ AND PRINTED IN HANSARD,
CARRIED**

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, that the remainder of Committee Report 29-17(5) be deemed read and printed in Hansard in its entirety. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Motion is carried.

---Carried

Introduction

Since the start of the 17th Assembly, the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure (“the committee”) has worked steadily on the complex matter of hydraulic fracturing in the Northwest Territories (NWT), looking at horizontal hydraulic fracturing in particular. We have gathered information, undertaken study tours, monitored government strategic planning, and stayed abreast of developments in scientific knowledge and public policy.

Most recently, this work led the committee to review the proposed Hydraulic Fracturing Filing Regulations, including observation of public engagement across the NWT in which hundreds of residents have shared passionate and insightful views.

Hydraulic fracturing is clearly a matter of great significance to residents and to the future of the NWT. The committee continues to insist on meaningful public consultation and to recognize the vital need for a diversified economy – one that provides all communities in all regions with opportunities – and an environment that will sustain present and future generations.

As knowledge and best practices respecting hydraulic fracturing operations, regulation and impacts continue to evolve, so does the committee’s understanding. As such, the committee agrees that engagement, consultation and investigation must continue into the 18th Assembly. Here, we contribute to this process with a report on

our work during this Assembly, highlighting areas that have not been adequately addressed and providing comments on the proposed regulations. We identify six themes emerging from our work and make eight recommendations.

As we have previously reported, it is beyond the committee's mandate and capacity to comprehensively address all regulatory and policy issues associated with hydraulic fracturing. We look forward to the work of the next Assembly and our successor committee, and we encourage all residents to review the committee's reports and recommendations, including the Research Summary: Hydraulic Fracturing Filing Regulations, tabled on June 4, 2015.

General Themes

The following themes emerge from the committee's work on hydraulic fracturing.

Theme 1: "Wicked" Problems:

The matter of hydraulic fracturing in the Northwest Territories cannot be separated into independent discussions of economic, environmental, or human concerns. Regulation of this industry in our unique northern environment poses a "wicked" problem, a high-stakes issue impacted by complex and sometimes competing factors, including insufficient knowledge, infrastructural capacity, wide-ranging perspectives, and significant economic, environmental and social considerations.

Theme 2: A Precautionary Approach

Though associated activities continue, no hydraulic fracturing activity is taking place in the NWT, largely due to remoteness and a world-wide industry downturn. While resource extraction holds profitable potential, the NWT is not currently positioned to take advantage, while scientific knowledge and understanding of the cumulative and long-term impacts of hydraulic fracturing and its processes on human health, landscapes, water and wildlife are poorly understood, particularly at local and regional levels, as is the capacity of hydraulic fracturing infrastructure – even the best available today – to maintain its integrity over time. Further knowledge is needed and the absence of evidence of harm today does not mean that protective measures should not be taken by government and by proponents.

Theme 3: Economic Potential

Shale oil and gas development has significant socio-economic impacts associated with the creation of many permanent and temporary high-paying jobs, and offers possibilities for economic growth to NWT communities and regions, including those where such needs are keenly felt. Young people and those seeking to enter or re-enter the workforce need training and employment

opportunities that will enable them to continue to work in and contribute to their home communities.

The committee's work and the work of our colleagues in the Legislative Assembly has highlighted training, employment and revenue needs across the NWT, particularly in light of the current downturn in oil prices and exploration. The GNWT's approach to economic development, which includes hydraulic fracturing, will be of significant concern during the next Assembly.

Theme 4: Water is Fundamental to Life

Territorial and transboundary waters are essential to northern life and to Aboriginal traditions in the NWT. Waters ensure healthy, productive ecosystems, but they are currently subject to increasing pressures, including continuing low-water conditions and extra-jurisdictional impacts. Water remains a priority issue for the GNWT and for residents.

Theme 5: Pursuit of Global, Regional and Local Knowledge:

To keep abreast of a rapidly developing field in which much remains unknown, all decision-makers must be in continual pursuit of the best available knowledge. Discussing the state of scientific knowledge about the impacts of hydraulic fracturing, the Council of Canadian Academies reported,

"There has been no comprehensive investment in research and monitoring of environmental and health impacts for either the implementation of best current practices or in the case of accidental releases that cannot be reduced to zero. Many of the pertinent questions are hard to answer objectively and scientifically, either for lack of data, for lack of publicly available data, or due to divergent interpretations of existing data."

All monitoring must include local and regional conditions, and the further pursuit of, and response to, knowledge of unique northern operating conditions, including permafrost, remote communities with limited municipal infrastructure, and winter roads, is essential.

Theme 6: Roles for Residents

Social licence – public support of government legislation, regulations, policies, and programs – is an integral component of GNWT practice, as is meaningful and timely public communication, consultation, disclosure and engagement. Truly enhanced reporting and disclosure will include information disclosed to the regulator and to the public.

Members of the public are typically well-educated in the matters in which they address the GNWT and the assumption of an "uneducated" public has been recognized "as a form of stakeholder silencing."

The pursuit of partnerships “with those willing to share the risks” demonstrates the GNWT’s willingness to engage with variant stakeholders and perspectives, and the GNWT has a responsibility to form and foster partnerships between industry, communities and Aboriginal governments.

The Draft Hydraulic Fracturing Filing Regulations

As discussed in the committee’s research summary, the draft Hydraulic Fracturing Filing Regulations (HFFR) put forward by the Department of Industry, Tourism, and Investment (ITI) draw extensively on the National Energy Board’s Filing Requirements for Onshore Drilling Operations Involving Hydraulic Fracturing (NEBFR).

It is both expected and desirable that the GNWT will not manage its new duties exactly as federal departments and agencies have done, but rather that the GNWT will strive for a truly northern approach, one that includes fair and effective benefits for all residents, honours enshrined Aboriginal rights, and assures protection of air, human health, land, water and wildlife. It is equally expected and desirable that territorial statutes and regulations will at minimum match, if not better, their predecessors.

Despite this, the proposed regulations eliminate many requirements in place under the NEB, including requirements respecting environmental assessment, proof of financial responsibility, management systems, safety culture and planning, human factors, lessons learned, northern working environments, environmental protection plans, well descriptions, groundwater protections, wellbore integrity, well control systems, well completion and hydraulic fracturing operations, hydraulic fracturing design, well suspension and abandonment, and waste management. Notably, the requirement that a proponent must demonstrate “how hydraulic fracturing will be conducted safely while protecting the environment” is among those eliminated. These are further detailed in the committee’s Research Summary: Hydraulic Fracturing Filing Regulations, which also assesses how the proposed regulations address the GNWT’s identified “four areas of interest to Northerners” (baseline surface and groundwater information, public disclosure of chemical additives, air quality, and enhanced reporting).

Recommendation 1

Any regulatory framework must encompass clear minimum standards for evaluation of all applications, demonstrate fully capacity and firm parameters for enforcement with meaningful consequences to non-compliance, and review and account for areas not carried over from federal requirements to ensure that all issued have been addressed.

Approaching Hydraulic Fracturing in the Northwest Territories

Human Resource Elements

Human Error

The committee previously highlighted the risks of human error and its potential for serious impacts. When Members toured the Bakken in 2013, they were not informed of a significant oil spill. Inadequate monitoring was a factor and the spill itself was not reported in the media until two weeks later.

In its research summary, the committee noted that human error is a repeated cause of hydraulic fracturing incidents. These include the mistaken injection of fracturing fluids into a shallow aquifer in Alberta and the “Innisfail blowout,” when an Alberta operator drilled too near a producing well, and these and a lack of long-term knowledge complicate the claim that hundreds of thousands of wells in Canada have been hydraulically fractured “without incident.” Researchers at Pennsylvania State University advocate increased incident analysis and public disclosure of results to encourage better management practices and to avoid similar incidents.

Partnerships

Effective regulation of hydraulic fracturing requires “planning, people, partnerships” and the committee has recommended that the GNWT develop strong partnerships between industry, communities and Aboriginal governments.

The committee also continues to recognize the role of industry partners in setting best practices. For example, when reviewing Saskatchewan’s self-disclosure-based regulatory system, the committee noted its requirements for comprehensive baseline water and geological data and flowback monitoring, explicit guidelines for contaminated water management and disposal, and provisions for environmental protection, remediation and enforcement. However, the proposed regulations refer to “industry best practices” as a standard nine times, while the role of the regulator in approving “best practices” remains unclear.

Communities, Infrastructure and Workforce Readiness

The committee has “highlighted the need to enhance and establish training facilities and opportunities for workers both in the oil industry and related service fields” and identified workforce readiness “as a key piece of Sahtu exploration readiness.”

If residents are to benefit from any development associated with hydraulic fracturing, they must be prepared to do so. Skills- and trades-based training is vital, but it does not stand alone. Financial management training could support residents in

managing new and/or increased wages, while business training and mentorship could support local and Aboriginal businesses. Many of these are not currently available or specific to oil and gas development, and despite the current lull in activity, any training would need to begin promptly.

Communities would also need to be prepared for increased demands on already strained local infrastructure, including recreational facilities, roads, and water supplies, as well as potentially increased substance abuse and crime, including sexual crimes. The committee has also heard of many negative social impacts associated with industry work camps, while increased sex trafficking and abuses of prostituted women often accompany increased resource extraction activities.

The benefits of development, including increased employment and business opportunities, higher wages and royalties, are best enjoyed in communities that are healthy, stable and well-prepared for rapid and significant change. Such principles apply in all regions that could be impacted by hydraulic fracturing, including the Sahtu, Deh Cho and Beaufort-Delta.

Recommendation 2

Any hydraulic fracturing regulatory framework must account for human factors, including error. Government oversight must ensure that reliance on self-monitoring in such a competitive industry does not hamper compliance. Budgeting for the Office of the Regulation of Oil and Gas Operations (OROGO) must not restrict access to expert advice from partners at the Alberta Energy Regulator or the NEB.

Any preparations must also include community support, including capital planning, work training, and strengthened supports, as well as plans to integrate newcomers into NWT communities, account for varied needs in all affected regions. The committee recommends a critical assessment of the economic costs and benefits associated with hydraulic fracturing in the NWT, including anticipated pre- and post-development impacts.

Monitoring

Baseline Monitoring

The committee previously recommended that any territorial hydraulic fracturing framework include "a strategy to gather environmental and geological baseline data, with federal support." The GNWT's response noted collaborative efforts through the Environmental Studies Research Fund (ESRF) and a regional study, proposed in 2013. The committee recognizes these and projects currently underway as well as a provision in the proposed regulations requiring proponents to submit baseline surface and groundwater data.

Continued local and regional monitoring, including effective measurement of air and water quality and effective mitigation strategies to address all results, can better scientific understanding of hydraulic fracturing's immediate, long-term and cumulative impacts. Without this, any initial framework is of little practical use. Notably, regulatory and scientific inattention and unpreparedness elsewhere have prevented regulators and researchers from establishing useful baselines, leaving it "too late in many oil and gas areas to collect true baseline data."

Enforcement

The committee has repeatedly highlighted the need for a quality management program for all stages of any drilling process, yet the proposed regulations eliminated related provisions in place under the NEB. Enforcement capacity, with meaningful consequences to non-compliance, is required to confirm operators' statements and to perform checks to ensure that operators maintain their conditions of approval. During a tour of Saskatchewan, the committee heard that despite increasing permit applications and revenues, enforcement was hampered by program funding that did not grow accordingly.

Regulatory Authority

Under the proposed regulations, the regulator may waive any requirements, a sweeping power the committee has highlighted for further review.

The committee also understands that Alberta is currently contemplating a formal review of the mandate of the AER which, like OROGO, combines a mandate of industry growth with that of industry regulation. The next Assembly may wish to monitor any such review.

Recommendation 3

Any regulatory framework must include a strategy for establishing and maintaining such a framework, including regional and local monitoring as well as baselines for all impacted regions. Further, baseline data is needed not only for surface and groundwater but also air quality and greenhouse gas emissions, forest health, land, permafrost and wildlife as well as geology and seismicity, all areas highlighted by the committee in the past. Data collected under disparate umbrellas must be marshalled to create an effective and accessible baseline framework.

Effective enforcement demands clear parameters for proponents' submissions, stringent requirements, careful and regular monitoring and meaningful penalties for non-compliance. OROGO's inspection and enforcement capacity must reflect a commitment to regular inspections and to proportional growth as needed and to ensure

transparency and the fair application of any regulatory exceptions. Strict parameters must apply to any exercise of the regulator's authority to exempt operators from any requirements.

Natural Environment

As discussed, the cumulative and long-term impacts of hydraulic fracturing remain largely unknown, while local and regional impacts are unique to local and regional conditions. In its first report on hydraulic fracturing, the committee wrote,

The central Mackenzie Valley is home to many species of wildlife. Land consumption and disturbance, habitat fragmentation and noise pollution are areas of serious concern for Members as well as for the people of the Northwest Territories. Strategies to monitor the impacts of industry on wildlife and habitat should include the development of independent and project-specific environmental monitoring.

The committee also points to the Environmental Studies Research Fund (ESRF), funded by industry and previously managed by the NEB. Though the fund existed before devolution, it has since become a GNWT responsibility. It is unclear whether funding was carried over, or if the NWT fund has begun from scratch.

Air Quality and Emissions

Flaring, Incineration and Green Completion Techniques (GCT)

Members have repeatedly highlighted GCT as an alternative to venting, flaring and incineration. GCT reduce wastage of natural gas, offering economic benefits and reducing impacts on air quality and climate by reducing methane and other greenhouse gas emissions, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and particulate emissions (e.g., soot and ash). As previously noted by the committee, both Alberta and British Columbia have set clear targets for flaring reduction, while as of 1 January 2015 all newly fractured or re-fractured wells in the United States are required to use GCT. Additionally, there are no territorial regulations respecting incinerator stack testing, and industrial flaring at other sites within the NWT has resulted in significant emissions exceedances in the past, due in part to incinerators operating at inappropriately low temperatures (low efficiency).

Despite this, the NWT does not have flaring reduction targets in place, and while the regulations address GCT, operators may forego them where "impracticable" or "based on an economic evaluation." The Committee is concerned this may result in the effective absence of GCT in any development and that enforcement would prove prohibitively difficult.

Measuring, Monitoring and Reporting

The proposed regulations require flaring reporting only where flaring takes place for more than 72 hours, within 500 metres of a residential area, or involves sour or acid gas, or if air quality exceedances are identified in a proponent's initial emissions assessment. Since such assessment would take place before any approval, drilling, or on-site work, it appears unlikely that any such exceedances would be identified.

Similarly, while the proposed regulations permit incineration at 99 percent efficiency as an alternative to both flaring and GCT, neither industry nor regulators typically differentiate between flaring and incinerating, complicating monitoring and reporting. Efficiency also ranges between 66 and 99 percent, dependent on a wide range of factors, including weather.

The committee further notes that while in Alberta and British Columbia, the minimum public notification radius for flaring is 1.5 kilometres, while it here appears to be unspecified, and that proponents' submissions regarding air quality do not appear to be included in the (voluntarily) publicly disclosed pre-fracture report, despite being part of any proponent's required Environmental Protection Plan.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The committee has previously recommended that any hydraulic fracturing policy include requirements to quantify, report, and manage greenhouse gas emissions, a requirement reflected in the proposed regulations, though evaluation parameters and/or enforcement mechanisms remain unclear. The committee also seeks to determine how the proposed regulations engage the Greenhouse Gas Strategy: 2011-2015.

Additionally, the GNWT recently committed to taking action to support international efforts to limit the increase in global temperature to below two degrees Celsius, while it is estimated that up to 80 percent of fossil fuels resource world-wide must remain in the ground to prevent catastrophic climate change. The committee asks how these factors may impact the GNWT's approach to flaring regulation, greenhouse gas emissions management and mitigation, and/or growth of the NWT's oil and gas industry.

Environmental Assessment

As detailed in the research summary, the proposed regulations eliminate environmental assessment requirements, including consultation and socio-economic assessment in place under the NEB. The post-devolution landscape provides an ideal framework for environmental assessment, as overseen by territorial regulators, specific to the potential impacts of hydraulic fracturing on unique territorial environments.

Human Health

The committee understands that human health concerns are among those raised by participants in public engagement on the proposed regulations.

The Yukon Select Committee completed its final report in January 2015 and included two recommendations related to human health, one respecting the collection of health-related baseline data and the other, a human health risk assessment to be undertaken by the territory's Chief Medical Officer. In Alberta, where substantial hydraulic fracturing activity takes place, the AER is currently developing "a new process for handling recurring multi-year and multi-stakeholder complaints involving human health concerns."

Seismicity

Scientific knowledge has advanced since the committee began its work on hydraulic fracturing at the start of the 17th Assembly. The disposal of wastewater by deep-well injection is increasingly linked to induced seismicity, or earthquake activity, as is horizontal hydraulic fracturing itself. Residents of Fox Creek, Alberta, previously experienced roughly one measurable earthquake per year, yet regional monitors have detected 160 since December 2013, including two at 4.4 on the Richter scale. The British Columbia Oil and Gas Commission attributes 231 "seismic events" to both wastewater disposal and fracturing in the Montney Basin between August 2013 and October 2014, including a 3.8- and 4.4-magnitude earthquake, respectively. These are reported to be the strongest associated with hydraulic fracturing recorded globally to date.

Local and regional geology are also factors in seismicity, again demonstrating the need for useful baselines not restricted by arbitrary boundaries (e.g., provincial borders or proponent land blocks), while the proposed regulations do not provide baseline parameters for notification of suspected seismic events or for related suspension or termination of operations.

Water

Conscientious management of all water resources remains a priority issue for residents, and many factors contribute to decisions on the regulation of water use as well as local and regional water studies. These include regulatory frameworks, regional geology and hydrology, stages of development, proximity to communities and to above- and below-ground water sources, water condition, technology and infrastructure capacity, and disposal options.

In its research summary, the committee considered a number of water contamination incidents associated with hydraulic fracturing, including those mentioned previously, 38 fracture communications incidents in Alberta and British Columbia prior to

2010, and the inappropriate injection of wastewater into 452 California aquifers.

Fracturing Fluids

The committee agrees that the pre-fracture disclosure of fracturing fluid ingredients and drilling chemicals is vital. However, such disclosure remains imperfect, often excluding proprietary information and impeded by a general lack of scientific understanding of the wide variety of chemicals used and their interactions with each other, with formation geology, and with surface water and groundwater (e.g., in flowback).

Wildlife

Landscape change due to increased oil and gas development is the primary management concern for boreal caribou, yet the proposed regulations eliminate requirements expressly addressing boreal caribou, as well as requirements addressing other wildlife and heritage resources with particular attention to species at risk. During its Bakken tour, the committee observed that,

When questioned about wildlife concerns, a State legislator noted his view that wildlife could move and take care of itself! This situation demonstrates to the committee that if adequate planning to address wildlife and other environmental concerns does not take place in advance of and alongside development, it will likely be neglected. Wildlife is highly valued in the Northwest Territories and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Sahtu leadership have significant roles in ensuring continued wildlife and habitat protection.

In the NWT the Bathurst and Bluenose-East caribou populations also urgently need conservation and management action, while the habitat provided by boreal forests is under extreme environmental pressures.

Recommendation 4

Any regulatory framework must include an overall environmental mitigation strategy recognizing the unique demands and impacts of hydraulic fracturing and addressing the matters noted above, including clear plans to monitor and manage emissions and flaring, to mitigate and manage material effects on air quality, and to evaluate air quality through specific and measurable requirements as well as micro-seismic monitoring. The committee recommends that the GNWT monitor the work of other jurisdictions, including Alberta and Yukon, in their studies and best practices, including work on hydraulic fracturing and human health.

Additionally, the committee again urges water withdrawal limits that would account for developmental stages and periods of low water

as well as the development of tracer chemical standards and development plans indicating both sources and limits. Industry must demonstrably minimize water use.

Respecting spills and other incidents, any regulatory framework must be prepared to respond to such events, which are often unpredictable, even with stringent precaution. Fracturing chemicals and fluids, including wastewater, released into transboundary waters, either intentionally or accidentally, would also require address.

Much of this work would be required prior to any hydraulic fracturing.

Reporting and Disclosure

Reporting and disclosure are essential and encompass monitoring, testing, and data storage protocols. While under the proposed regulations, all public disclosure remains voluntary; there are no minimum standards to guide or otherwise encourage disclosure.

Databases

The committee observes that separation between GNWT participation in FracFocus.ca and any GNWT online database storing other publicly disclosed information (e.g., the pre-fracture report) may cause confusion amongst stakeholders and the general public.

Voluntary and Mandatory Disclosure

The matter of voluntary versus mandatory disclosure as well as public disclosure has been one of great public discussion. The committee recognizes that the pre-fracture report outlined in the proposed regulations would contain a wide range of information. However, public disclosure remains voluntary, including the manner and time of disclosure. Excepting the voluntary disclosure of annual environmental and safety reports, it also remains unclear which provisions of the proposed regulations enhance post-fracture reporting. Arguably, the number of NEB provisions eliminated in the proposed regulations would result in reduced reporting.

Recommendation 5

In keeping with the GNWT's post-devolution authority, the committee recommends amendments to the Petroleum Resources Act to address mandatory disclosure and legislated privilege periods. Until that time, it is expected OROGO would continue the NEB's practice of explicitly requesting that operators waive such privileges.

Waste Management

Storage, treatment, transportation, and disposal of waste materials, including emergency planning and protection of vulnerable communities and habitats,

remain key areas in committee discussion. Members point to Kennetcook, Nova Scotia, where hydraulic fracturing wastewater has sat in open storage pits for more than two years, subject to flooding and overflow, due to regulatory ill-preparedness and mismanagement.

The committee previously emphasized the importance of monitoring flowback, because heat, pressure and time can alter fracturing fluids' composition, both in formation and when stored as wastewater. Monitoring of naturally occurring radioactive material (NORM) may also be relevant. The GNWT has stated that it is a "long-term goal to manage [wastewater] very effectively, treat it, if possible, and reclaim it, if possible, in the NWT," while the committee has previously stated,

Transporting waste out of the Northwest Territories on the winter road system appears to be an adequate temporary solution; however, industry emphasized that in order to advance to production, a made-in-the-North water treatment or disposal system must be found.

However, even with current technology and best practices, wastewater cannot be re-integrated into the water table or re-used except, typically, for later stages of hydraulic fracturing. Even then, the general robustness and applicability of wastewater recycling remains poorly understood and large quantities of freshwater remain a core requirement as brackish or saline water damages both formations and equipment.

Recommendation 6

Any regulatory framework must implement and enforce stringent waste management requirements, including transportation and emergency management expectations.

On-surface storage of waste materials (e.g., lined pits) remains unacceptable to the committee, which again emphasizes its support of tank storage only. Additionally, emerging scientific knowledge must be taken into account in any future pursuit of deep-well injection in our region. Risk assessment must account for the possibility of restricted access in other jurisdictions.

Well Construction: Casing, Cementing, Logging and Drilling

As the committee has repeatedly emphasized, stringent casing and construction regulation, including compliance monitoring and enforcement, as well as regular monitoring and maintenance of suspended and abandoned oil and gas wells, are essential to reducing methane leakage and the risk of inter-well communications. The committee has recognized the existence of best practices.

Nevertheless, insufficient scientific and practical understanding of the long-term impacts of active,

suspended and abandoned wells leave considerable uncertainty respecting the ability of even the most stringent rules to prevent leakage and communications over extended periods. Further, the regulations appear to eliminate requirements respecting blow-out prevention specific to hydraulic fracturing and previously in place under the NEB.

Recommendation 7

Any regulatory framework must impose clear and stringent well construction standards and require thorough, consistent and long-term well monitoring, including procedures to effectively and efficiently identify and address any loss of integrity.

Well Suspension and Abandonment

Abandonment and Decommissioning

As the committee has previously recommended, any regulatory framework must address the full lifespan of a well, including abandonment and decommissioning.

Securities and Proof of Financial Responsibility

Sufficient securities are a vital component of development, as demonstrated in other jurisdictions. Saskatchewan has implemented a liability management program, while Alberta is currently facing an increasing number of newly orphaned wells, presenting public environmental, financial and logistical liability. Further, the Auditor General of Alberta, reviewing securities policies for mines and the oilsands, recently reported,

“improvements are needed to both how security is calculated and how security amounts are monitored. Without these improvements, if a mine operator cannot fulfill its reclamation obligations and no other private operator assumes the liability, the province is at risk of having to pay substantial amounts of public money.”

Recommendation 8

A review of territorial securities policies and the implementation of clear securities criteria are required to aid the GNWT in preventing the negative impacts experienced elsewhere. The GNWT must continue the NEB's practice of refusing surety bonds as proof of financial responsibility.

Conclusion

This concludes the committee's Report on Hydraulic Fracturing and the Northwest Territories. All committee reports and tabled documents are available online at the Legislative Assembly website (www.assembly.gov.nt.ca).

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Hawkins.

MOTION TO RECEIVE AND ADOPT COMMITTEE REPORT 29-15(5), CARRIED

MR. HAWKINS: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, that Committee Report 29-17(5) be received and adopted by this Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Ramsay.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 357-17(5):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITIES STRATEGY: CONNECTING
BUSINESS AND COMMUNITIES TO ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES – PROGRESS
REPORT 2014-2015

TABLED DOCUMENT 358-17(5):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES MINERAL
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION:
PROGRESS REPORT APRIL 1, 2014 – MARCH
31, 2015

TABLED DOCUMENT 359-17(5):
TOWARDS A NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
AGRICULTURAL STRATEGY – WHAT WE
LEARNED

TABLED DOCUMENT 360-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION
881-17(5): SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL
TOURISM CENTRES

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following four documents, entitled “Northwest Territories Economic Opportunities Strategy: Connecting Business and Communities to Economic Development Opportunities – Progress Report 2014-2015;” “Northwest Territories Mineral Development Strategy Implementation: Progress Report April 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015;” “Towards a Northwest Territories Agricultural Strategy – What we Learned;” and “Follow-up Letter for OQ 881-17(5): Support for Regional Tourism Centres.” Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Abernethy.

TABLED DOCUMENT 361-17(5):
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW
OF WITHDRAWAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES –
FINAL REPORT – MARCH 31, 2014

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled "Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Health and Social Services Assessment and Review of Withdrawal Management Services – Final Report – March 31, 2014."

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. R.C. McLeod.

TABLED DOCUMENT 362-17(5):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HOUSING
CORPORATION ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015

TABLED DOCUMENT 363-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION
829-17(5): PUBLIC HOUSING WAITING LISTS

TABLED DOCUMENT 364-17(5):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION
901-17(5): MACKENZIE DELTA
ELDERS FACILITY

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following three documents, entitled "Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Annual Report 2014-2015;" "Follow-up Letter for OQ 829-17(5): Public Housing Waiting Lists;" and "Follow-up Letter for OQ 901-17(5): Mackenzie Delta Elders Facility." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Miltenberger.

TABLED DOCUMENT 365-17(5):
INTERIM FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED
MARCH 31, 2015

TABLED DOCUMENT 366-17(5):
INTER-ACTIVITY TRANSFERS EXCEEDING
\$250,000 FOR THE PERIOD
APRIL 1 TO JUNE 30, 2015

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following two documents, entitled "Interim Financial Statements of the Government of the Northwest Territories for the Year Ended March 31, 2015;" and "Inter-Activity Transfers Exceeding \$250,000 for the Period April 1 to June 30, 2015." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

TABLED DOCUMENT 367-17(5):
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
2014-2015 ANNUAL REPORT

TABLED DOCUMENT 368-17(5):
SUMMARY OF MEMBERS' ABSENCES
FOR THE PERIOD OCTOBER 27, 2011
TO OCTOBER 7, 2015

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I hereby table the 2014-2015 Annual Report of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. Pursuant to Section 5 of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I wish to table the Summary of Members' Absences for the Period October 27, 2011, to October 7, 2015.

Item 14, notices of motions. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Mr. Bouchard.

Motions

MOTION 51-17(5):
APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR TO THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
HONOURS ADVISORY COUNCIL,
CARRIED

MR. BOUCHARD: WHEREAS Section 21(1) of the Territorial Emblems and Honours Act provides for the creation of a Northwest Territories Honours Advisory Council to review nominations and recommend appointments to the Order of the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS in June 2015 the following members were appointed to the Northwest Territories Honours Advisory Council;

Ms. Grace Blake of Tsiigehtchic;
Ms. Sabrina Broadhead of Hay River;
Mr. Paul Delorey of Hay River;
Mr. Danny Gaudet of Deline; and
Ms. Anne Peters of Yellowknife.

AND WHEREAS Section 23(1) of the Territorial Emblems and Honours Act provides that the Legislative Assembly, on the recommendation of the Board of Management, shall designate a member of the council as chairperson of the council;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, that Mr. Paul Delorey of Hay River be appointed as chair of the Northwest Territories Honours Advisory Council.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Motion is carried.

---Carried

Mr. Blake.

MOTION 52-17(5):
APPOINTMENT OF LANGUAGES
COMMISSIONER,
CARRIED

MR. BLAKE: WHEREAS Subsection 15(1) of the Official Languages Act permits the appointment of a Languages Commissioner by the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, after the approval of the appointment by resolution of the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly considers the appointment of a Languages Commissioner essential for ensuring recognition of the rights, status and privileges of each of the official languages and compliance with the spirit and intent of the Official Languages Act;

AND WHEREAS the term of the Languages Commissioner has expired;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly is of the opinion that the appointment of a Languages Commissioner should now be made;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that pursuant to Section 15 of the Official Languages Act of the Northwest Territories, that Ms. Shannon Gullberg of Yellowknife be appointed as Languages Commissioner for a term of four years;

AND FURTHER, that the appointment be effective immediately. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Motion is carried.

---Carried

Mr. Yakeleya.

MOTION 53-17(5):
LANGUAGE TRAINING FOR
SENIOR GNWT MANAGERS,
CARRIED

MR. YAKELEYA: WHEREAS the Northwest Territories Official Languages Act recognizes 11 official languages;

AND WHEREAS, under the Official Languages Act, residents of the Northwest Territories have the right to communicate and receive services from any regional, area or community GNWT office in any official language spoken in the area, other than English or French, where there is a significant

demand for service in that language or where, due to the nature of the office, it is reasonable to provide service in that language;

AND WHEREAS GNWT Policy 71.10, Official Languages, states that a government's ability to communicate in the official languages of the public it serves is an important part of the operation of good government;

AND WHEREAS GNWT Policy 71.10 further states that a government's provision of services in its official languages recognizes and supports the efforts of communities in maintaining and developing these languages;

AND WHEREAS the GNWT supports a competent and well-trained public service and provision of training and development opportunities that support employees' ability to effectively and efficiently deliver department and agency mandates to serve the residents of the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS the GNWT programs and policies support government employees in pursuing relevant training and skill enhancement;

AND WHEREAS our fellow northern jurisdictions, Nunavut and Yukon, offer official language and cultural training to their employees, thereby improving public service delivery and supporting the continued health of minority languages;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable member for Range Lake, that the Legislative Assembly strongly recommends that the GNWT consider development and coordination of government-wide programs to teach official languages of the Northwest Territories to senior managers of GNWT departments, as appropriate to the regions for which they are responsible;

AND FURTHER, that the government provide a comprehensive response to this motion to the 18th Legislative Assembly by June 2016.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Mr. Bromley.

MOTION 54-17(5):
CLIMATE CHANGE PLANNING,
CARRIED

MR. BROMLEY: WHEREAS the 17th Assembly's Minister's Committee on Energy and Climate Change failed to make any evident progress on planning for climate change;

AND WHEREAS the GNWT's estimated annual costs associated with the impacts of climate change have increased rapidly to hundreds of millions of dollars;

AND WHEREAS the projected costs in public infrastructure damage caused by climate change through the loss of permafrost in the next 15 years is projected to be in the order of billions of dollars;

AND WHEREAS there is every reason to expect equally severe costs to private, commercial and institutional infrastructure as climate change impacts accelerate;

AND WHEREAS there continues to be a lack of understanding and acknowledgement of the ongoing and worsening impacts of climate change to infrastructure, health, economy, food security, community viability in coastal and low-lying regions, community resupply and energy security in our fiscal and operational management planning;

AND WHEREAS we are leaving the 18th Assembly with restricted financial potential in large degree due to unanticipated and unplanned extreme costs to manage climate change-related events;

AND WHEREAS acknowledging, anticipating, planning for and being prepared for climate change impacts can substantially reduce costs and enable actions that benefit our residents and communities associated through jobs and locally focussed activity;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that the Legislative Assembly strongly recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories develop a comprehensive and long-term climate change mitigation and adaptation plan in anticipation of the projected effects of climate change;

AND FURTHER, that this action plan include a strategy for shifting the Northwest Territories from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources, including targets recommended by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent to 40 percent by 2020, and by 80 percent by 2050, each from 1990 levels;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the government provide a comprehensive response to this motion to the 18th Legislative Assembly by June 2018. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently, I think it was on the 5th of October, Minister Miltenberger said, and I quote from Hansard: "Most of us would accept the reality that extreme weather is now upon us. Indeed, in fact, the science of climate change is firm, unwavering and conservative."

Over my eight years in office, I have been a keen student of climate change and I've had a particular interest in seeing how it is reflected on the ground here in the NWT. It behooves good government to face the realities of what is happening and to face issues frankly and to deal with them.

As I go over my observations of NWT impacts from climate change, the exercise is not meant to be fearmongering, but rather to motivate clear thinking and thoughtful response to help mitigate and adapt the serious impacts upon our people and the society we live in. Here are some of the real events and costs we are experiencing as a result of climate change, impacts, at least events clearly aligned with climate change science. The community of Nahanni Butte was almost completely flooded after record-setting downpour and snowmelt in the mountains, costing millions in damage and having impacts on people's homes and lives. The loss of the store led to impacts on people's diets and access to groceries.

We are going into our fourth year of extreme drought, as low water levels have cost \$50 million in diesel subsidies – on top of normal diesel budget – for electricity in Yellowknife alone over the past two years, with no sign of relief.

Recording-setting severe forest fires claiming huge swaths of boreal forest and caribou winter habitat in the North and South Slave and Deh Cho, costing almost \$100 million over the last two years, have emitted millions of tons of additional carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Just this fall, Tuktoyaktuk was again battered by storms and rising sea levels, damaging infrastructure and leaving a GNWT building hanging out over the sea, with unknown and ongoing costs to infrastructure. The island protecting the community harbour is rapidly disappearing and despite pouring resources into shoring up the land against this erosion, the loss of permafrost has meant the land is being easily washed away by these new unleashed forces of nature. The shoreline loss of some nearby areas is some 10 metres per year.

The Mackenzie River, the major artery to bring needed annual resupply to communities, has become less navigable each year due to periods of low water, causing delayed resupply or substantial cost for air resupply and increasing cost of living in already expensive communities. This represents a stressful lack of security for community well-being in the lower Mackenzie River Valley.

Melting permafrost is causing millions of dollars in public/private commercial and institutional infrastructure annually, with exponentially more to come. A startling example was the \$14 million Arctic Tern Youth Facility in Inuvik that we wrote off after only a few years of use. As I mentioned, great new impacts are substantially greater by an order of magnitude.

Caribou numbers fail to recover and even continue to decline, undoubtedly at least partially related to climate change, with serious generational impacts on our cultures, food security and community self-sufficiency. These impacts reverberate throughout the ecosystem and are emotional and tragic in the lives of many people.

Highway and airport impacts from loss of permafrost, Highway No. 3, for example, has cost millions of dollars per year for a decade. Ongoing damage to the Inuvik and Hay River airstrips have cost us millions. The shorter construction season and permafrost challenge in a warming climate have added tens of millions in original cost estimates, most recently increased by up to another \$32 million of the Inuvik-Tuk Highway at the halfway point in construction. The long-term viability and maintenance costs for this fragile road are in question given the projected impacts of a warming climate.

Mr. Speaker, the one thing we can be certain of is there are impacts everywhere we look for them. In some areas, they may not be apparent yet or they may be the opposite impact from an adjacent area in our large jurisdiction. For example, one area may suffer extreme drought and an adjacent region extreme precipitation and flooding. One area may have no impacts apparent, yet wake up the next day to find their world vastly changed. This is consistent with the science which shows a high variability in how impacts are expressed in any one area. It also means impacts are difficult to predict and forecast, with the exception that there is no normal anymore.

This means that actions to prepare for impacts must be well thought out and must take into consideration high variability and weather that comes with climate change. Clearly, in recent years, the dollar and human costs of impacts have soared to hundreds of millions of dollars annually and much anguish with costs forecast to increase exponentially over time.

In Paris this December, governments and other entities from all over the globe will gather to decide on required action, but as the Minister has said, every jurisdiction must do its part, and we are no exception. Things can happen much more effectively and quicker at the level of subnational governments. The challenge is how to be effective and efficient in both mitigating, adapting and planning for unavoidable impacts of climate change. We are no longer in a position to avoid some of these substantial impacts.

As we know, climate change affects every aspect of our lives: food and security, cost of living, housing, energy, jobs, public and private infrastructure from homes to hospitals. A thorough and comprehensive plan for mitigation, adaptation and dealing with the unavoidable impacts is now overdue if we are to

minimize impacts and cost to our people and our government. Within that, a detailed strategy giving specific targets, actions and a schedule for weaning ourselves off of fossil fuels and switching to renewable energy is required, as acknowledged but not acted upon in our Greenhouse Gas Strategy.

Such a process requires work to thoroughly understand at the community level what the science tells us, what our vulnerabilities are, and how we are going to address them. It requires working with all entities to determine implications to our public, private and commercial infrastructure, to the health of our citizens, to food security, to economic development, and to the roles that each entity can play in addressing these. It means wrestling with the realities of the costs that we are experiencing and that we know will increase in bringing those into our fiscal planning.

In 2008 the Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Report was written, I believe, by ENR, and concluded with a short, very brief three paragraph summary on planning for the future. It was what I would call a very light document. This is now woefully inadequate, as I'm sure we all understand.

Mr. Speaker, colleagues, I hope you will support the call to bring this understanding to a comprehensive plan that will serve our public by minimizing and managing costs and impacts of climate change to the extent possible and preparing effective efforts to best deal with unavoidable impacts that we know will come.

I will be calling for a recorded vote, and I thank you, colleagues. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I'll allow the seconder, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to make some brief remarks.

The fact that we need to have this motion indicates that the GNWT, the government and the Cabinet, have not recognized that climate change is having huge impacts on us as residents and on the territory in terms of environment and our lands. I would say we've paid lip service to climate change. We have reacted to climate change. But this is asking for us to plan for climate change, and to plan for climate change and mitigation of the effects of climate change, and it's long overdue.

Mr. Bromley has laid out a number of the things that have occurred within the territory that have been caused by climate change. We're going to get more. Fires is one, the low water is another that we have, over the past couple of weeks in discussing our budgets, said, yes, these things are going to happen again and again. As a government, we don't have a plan to deal with these sorts of events. We react to them but we don't have a plan to be proactive in recognition of them.

The second operative part of the motion talks about reducing our targets and moving away from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources, and I am totally in support of that. We rely far too heavily on fossil fuels. As I mentioned yesterday, I'm very disappointed that we don't have large energy projects that have come to fruition in my time here.

I'll just leave it at that. I also, as Mr. Bromley has done, urge my colleagues to be in support of this motion. It's something that is forward looking and I think we, as a government, need to recognize that we need to be proactive and look forward as opposed to reactive and in the now.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the motion. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if Mr. Bromley is rubbing off on me, but I stand here to support this motion today, mainly because in my travels on the land, I see all the erosion happening in the last number of years, especially over the summer with all the rain we've had in our region in the Beaufort-Delta.

It's very important that we start planning all our major projects to do with erosion and all the other effects of climate change, water levels rising, dropping in many areas, like Mr. Bouchard of Hay River mentioned, the dredging that's needed. Also, along the Mackenzie River, as well, the water levels are extremely low. A barge had to turn around on its way down the Mackenzie River due to low water levels this fall. I'm sure we're going to hear about that this winter, all the added costs to that. It's time we start preparing, building the infrastructure that's needed, whether it's a highway down the Mackenzie Valley, to prepare and come up with other options that are needed due to climate change.

With that, I'll be supporting this motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. Mr. Miltenberger, to the motion.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Member for raising this issue yet again here in a very clear way. As I indicated in the House, we are revising our Greenhouse Gas Strategy and we're going to convert it to a climate change strategy. That document will be out in the next couple weeks as a discussion document. I can assure the Member that regardless of who's in this House, in these chairs, the issue of climate change is going to continue to play a major role.

I would, as well, point out that in the last eight years, if you added the money we've spent on low water, not even counting the fires, but the money that we've invested into projects, into energy, into solar, into rebate programs, into biomass, we'd be well over \$200 million. That is very, very serious investments. I agree that we have to have a long-

term plan, but we cannot avoid, as well, the need to respond to things that we don't control or we can't really anticipate, like the magnitude of fire season, for example.

His motion is helpful. It brings attention to the issues. I just want to make the point, as well, that while we talk about it in this House, the Environment and Natural Resources, the government is at work on a climate change strategy. This motion binds or suggests that we somehow could bind the next Assembly through this motion. It will be there for advice and direction, of course, and when the incoming government is in place, they will look at all the work that's been done as a government and determine what steps they're going to take.

But I can assure the Member that his motion and the work he's done in the last eight years have helped push this forward significantly.

As this is direction to Cabinet, Mr. Speaker, we will be abstaining from the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. To the motion. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do want to thank the mover, Mr. Bromley, and second, Ms. Bisaro, for this motion here. I'm going to just make a few points.

I had an earlier conversation with Mr. Bromley and I wanted to say to the House that, certainly, this issue is up in front in a lot of people's minds in our communities, and at points of our discussion that Mr. Bromley and I agreed to disagree in how we looked at these issues. I've mentioned to Mr. Bromley that I probably needed some more time to understand what the issues are, and I appreciate his openness and willingness to hear me out.

I disagree with the fossil fuels. It's something that we depend on in our region, and until I see some real dollars coming into our region that would offset the fossil fuels, that is our workforce, that is the fuel that drives our economy, those are areas that we know that fossil fuels could be something that we do not want to get away from until we start seeing some areas where we could look at changing it over. Gas emissions, that's something that we've got to study.

So this would be a good motion to bring to our region to look at the long-term effects of our weather and our land. I've stated that there are areas where there is a dry area and our region has suffered that somewhat; however, I have to make sure that we specifically ask and make statements that some areas being affected. Water is one, and in our region there seems to be different opinions. So I just want to say that I will not be voting against this motion, I'll be abstaining from this motion. I think that there are some pretty good points in here but I'm not there yet to lend my support until I bring

this back to the region to look at this and study it. Certainly, it will be on the radar for the 18th Assembly and I wish we had more time to look at something like this in our region. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. To the motion. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand in support of the motion and I would like to thank my colleagues, Mr. Bromley and Ms. Bisaro, for putting this motion forward. A couple of years back I had the opportunity and the honour to work with some elders. The elders were talking in their language, and this must have been about 20 or so ago. They were talking about phenomena that will happen in the natural environment when the sun floods, and today the motion speaks to those natural phenomena that have impacted several of our communities. Somehow those disasters that we face, fortunately, there weren't any human fatalities, but there was a cost to infrastructure. You know, the governments, at some point, have to try to assist communities, and this puts the government in that position to seek the federal government to look at perhaps an increase in the operational budget of the governments so communities that face disasters will be assisted somehow. So that motion perhaps would set an opportunity in stage for that to happen. With that, I'll be supporting this motion. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nadli. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Mr. Bromley, do you have closing remarks on it?

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very briefly, I want to thank all my colleagues who spoke today and I recognize that this is symbolic more than anything but sometimes symbols can be very important, as we all know. I appreciated the comment about elders and Mr. Yakeleya's comment. We all can have different perspectives, I think. The more we learn about this issue, I think the more we will all speak with one voice, and our elders are one source of knowledge. They are very important on this issue. I want to recognize that Mr. Miltenberger has been a champion for the entire eight years that I've been in office, of policy and actions to deal with environmental issues such as this and his comments are relevant again today. I guess I'll leave it at that and thank my colleagues for speaking and considering this motion. Mahsi.

RECORDED VOTE

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The Member is asking for a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

PRINCIPAL CLERK, COMMITTEES AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS (Mr. Ball): Mr. Bromley, Mr. Menicoche, Mr. Blake, Mr. Dolynny, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Hawkins, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Moses.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand.

PRINCIPAL CLERK, COMMITTEES AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS (Mr. Ball): Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. McLeod - Yellowknife South, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. McLeod - Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. All those in favour, nine; all those opposed, zero; abstentions, eight. Motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 17, first reading of bills. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 5 on our Order Paper, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mahsi.

---Unanimous consent granted

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery (Reversion)

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Madam France Benoit in the gallery today, the widow of the late Doug Ritchie and a major crusader on doing things better for our people and for the land. I think it's very appropriate that she's in the gallery today as we discuss this last item. I've certainly had Doug in mind as I've been doing a lot of my work and I know that a lot of my colleagues have too. Thank you very much.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 54, An Act to Amend the Forest Management Act; and Minister's Statement 221-17(5), Sessional Statement, with Mr. Bouchard in the Chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Members, I'll call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of the committee? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that we report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): I will now rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 20, report of committee of the whole. Mr. Bouchard.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee would like to report progress and, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with for the last time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Do we have a seconder? Mr. Bromley.

---Applause

Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Abernethy.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 55: MENTAL HEALTH ACT

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Bill 55, Mental Health Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 55 has had third reading.

---Applause

Speaker's Closing Comments

Colleagues, this is the last time we will meet formally as the 17th Legislative Assembly.

After today, we will head in many different directions. The work of the Executive Council will, of course, continue. Many of you will begin to prepare for our November election, and some of you will be looking forward to starting a new chapter in your lives.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Members for allowing me the honour and the privilege of serving as your Speaker. I have taken my role very seriously, to protect both the privileges of the House and for all Members and to uphold the dignity of the institution. I have tried to assist each of you to carry out your duties to the best of your ability as you serve the people of the Northwest Territories. I appreciate the respect you have shown me and the assistance you have given me over these last four years.

I would like to take a moment to share some of my most enjoyable memories with you.

I particularly enjoyed working with the youth of the territory, whether as Pages in the Chamber, as participants in our Youth Parliament, or meeting them in schools and communities during our Mace

tours. It has always been a pleasure and a source of great pride to meet and speak with our young people. It gives me great hope for our future.

It was equally inspiring to meet and listen to the generous advice shared by our elders when I hosted our Elders Parliament.

I have also enjoyed my work with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work with colleagues from all across Canada and the world. I have learned a great deal from them and have also taken the opportunity to promote and educate everyone I meet about our unique form of government and about our beautiful land.

Certainly a highlight during my term as Speaker was the honour of presiding over the 20th anniversary celebration of our Assembly building. The celebration marked the final payment on the building mortgage and was a wonderful opportunity to bring together former Premiers and Government Leaders, both former and current Members, former Commissioners and other territorial leaders. The celebration event was filled with stories and laughter and were a testament to our shared history and to this institution.

As part of the celebration, and due to the dedicated stewardship of the board of the Legislative Assembly Building Society, the Assembly was able to develop the Water's Edge Park and add new signage to enhance the capital site. The Assembly was also able to establish a scholarship for Northwest Territories political science students.

Legislation was also adopted during this Assembly to establish the Order of the Northwest Territories, with our first investiture ceremony yesterday.

I would now like to extend my personal thanks to those people who have assisted me in my role as Speaker.

Thank you to my executive assistants, starting with the late Ms. Shirley Firth-Larsson; my current assistant, Ms. Nina Larsson; and Ms. Melanie Coleman.

On behalf of all Members, I would like to thank our contract staff for their excellent service. Thank you to PIDO Productions, Thien Huyny Janitorial, and Epic Grill for feeding all of us for the last four years.

Finally, Members, I would like to acknowledge the love and support we receive from our families and friends. They support us and care for us and we cannot thank them enough.

I wish you all safe travels and good fortune as you leave today, whatever your future may hold.

Mr. Clerk, would you ascertain whether the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable George L. Tuccaro, is prepared to enter the Chamber to assent to bills and prorogue the Fifth Session of the 17th Legislative Assembly.

Prorogation

COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Hon. George Tuccaro): Good afternoon, friends, colleagues and visitors to these proceedings. As we close the chapter on the 17th Legislative Assembly, I want to commend each and every one of you for your hard work, dedication and commitment to achieving this milestone toward good governance.

Over the past four years, you've accomplished much towards self-determination and have paved the way towards our march towards provincehood. It has been my honour to be your Commissioner and I look forward to the formation of our new government and the opening of the 18th Legislative Assembly.

ASSENT TO BILLS

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I am pleased to assent to the following bills:

- Bill 45, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act;
- Bill 49, An Act to Amend the Deh Cho Bridge Act;
- Bill 55, Mental Health Act;
- Bill 56, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2015;
- Bill 59, Estate Administration Law Amendment Act;
- Bill 60, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act, No. 2;
- Bill 61, An Act to Amend the Public Airports Act;
- Bill 62, An Act to Amend the Coroners Act;
- Bill 63, An Act to Amend the Victims of Crime Act;
- Bill 64, An Act to Amend the Co-operative Associations Act;
- Bill 65, An Act to Amend the Safety Act;
- Bill 68, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act, No. 2;
- Bill 69, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2;
- Bill 70, Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2016-2017;
- Bill 71, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2015-2016;
- Bill 72, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2015-2016.

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I hereby prorogue the Fifth Session of the 17th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, merci beaucoup, mahsi cho, quanani, koana.

---PROROGATION

The House prorogued at 5:19 p.m.

