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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Great Slave)

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(Tu Nedhe)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	4141
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	4141
69-16(4) – Premier Absent from the House (Miltenberger)	4141
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	4141
Employment Opportunities in Small Communities (Jacobson)	4141
Nahendeh Residents Selected to Represent the NWT at the 2010 Olympics (Menicoche).....	4141
Opportunities to Access Federal Funding (Krutko)	4142
Funding for Inclusive Schooling (Bisaro).....	4142
Deh Cho Bridge Project (Bromley).....	4143
Deh Cho Bridge Project (Ramsay).....	4143
Canada's Northern House (Yakeleya)	4144
School-Based Multivitamin Program (Hawkins).....	4144
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	4145
ORAL QUESTIONS	4145
WRITTEN QUESTIONS	4157
REPLIES TO OPENING ADDRESS	4152
NOTICES OF MOTION	4158
13-16(4) – Community Long-Term Care Facilities (Krutko)	4158
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	4158
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	4177
ORDERS OF THE DAY	4177

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Friday, February 12, 2010****Members Present**

Mr. Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bromley, Hon. Paul Delorey, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Krutko, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Sandy Lee, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Michael McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 10:06 a.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good morning, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Miltenberger.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 69-16(4):
PREMIER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Floyd Roland will be absent from the House today to attend events related to the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my statement today is on economic development programs in Nunakput. In Nunakput communities every year we go through a huge time where youth have to leave the communities and go to places like Yellowknife or Inuvik. The primary reason this occurs is a lack of real jobs and opportunities for them in our home communities. This is a huge problem, Mr. Speaker. Our future, our communities are going to be a place where most of our people have holidays in the summer and where communities are empty of our youth.

The government needs to be active to assist communities with some serious programs and create jobs so our residents don't have to leave our home communities. One concern always raised by constituents is that government doesn't really care about our small communities, the residents believe it's only because of the federal transfers.

All communities have to be treated equally because of our unique conditions. Our unique economic limitations are considered when allocating resources to various programs all across the North.

The unemployment situation in communities is very serious and this government has failed on this. There is a lack of hope for our youth in communities that I represent in Nunakput and this government has failed in this. Many communities have a revolving door system due to the lack of jobs whereby several people share a full-time job and then go on unemployment insurance. That, Mr. Speaker, is a shame.

The government needs to place more attention and resources on small, remote communities regarding the community-based economic development programs. These resources should assist the area such as providing community-based training and financial assistance. All over the country, companies are proving the geographic limitations are no longer, thanks to the increasing use of technology. People work from home or even in another province. For example, with the current technology in the Northwest Territories, like, Sachs Harbour could take part of a call centre, Mr. Speaker. This government should take advantage of technologies to assist and develop community-based businesses.

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

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. JACOBSON: This government should take full advantage of technologies to assist our community-based businesses and not send them to the South. We should look north.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
NAHENDEH RESIDENTS SELECTED
TO REPRESENT THE NWT
AT THE 2010 OLYMPICS

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize the achievement of my constituents who were selected to represent the NWT at the Vancouver Olympics. They are: performers Gerry Antoine, a gifted Dene drummer from Fort Simpson, and Wesley Hardisty, a dynamic fiddler also from Fort Simpson. These men will be giving visitors from around the world a chance to enjoy our fine music from the North.

As well, our traditional arts and fine crafts will be showcased by Karen Cumberland from Fort Liard, who will be displaying the artistry of her birch bark basketry, and John Sabourin from Fort Simpson, who will be displaying his fascinating carvings and paintings.

Given the dedication of these musicians and artists to hone their talents and keep our culture alive, it is great to see them get such an opportunity to showcase this to the world.

As well, six youth ambassadors will also be representing us: Ms. Cheryl Bertrand, Mr. Calvin Loman and Tyson McLeod from Fort Liard, Mallory Nirlungiak from Fort Simpson, Vanessa Sangris from Jean Marie River, and Bhreagh Ingarfield from Nahanni Butte.

All the best to our participants at the Olympics and I know that you will do our North proud.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON OPPORTUNITIES TO ACCESS FEDERAL FUNDING

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We had a great opportunity to improve the quality of services in the 33 communities of the Northwest Territories. I'm talking about the stimulus funds, infrastructure funds, and Building Canada Funds. Out of the information that's been provided, only 14 projects have been approved. A lot of the communities were not able to take full advantage of this program, either because they do not have the capacity to take it on or they don't have the resources to match the 50 percent that's needed to match those funds.

I think it's critical that a government that's responsible to 33 communities, not just the larger centres who are the people that have the capacity to put the proposals in, the people can match the funds because of the amount of gas tax they receive, but work with those communities that are challenged on how they can take advantage of federal program dollars. I, for one, feel that this government had a perfect opportunity to ensure that the communities throughout the Northwest Territories, 33 communities, could have taken advantage of a major capital investment of funds from the federal government and ensure that it was shared across the Territory. When I look at the information I'm totally appalled that this government did not ensure that every community in the Northwest Territories was able to take advantage of this program. Some communities were totally left out of approval of these important dollars.

With regard to the government's way of handling communities, especially the small and rural or remote communities who were left off this list, we have to find ways around using the excuse that we

gave the money to the communities and it's their responsibility to spend it as they wish. The money you give to communities is not even enough to haul a couple loads of gravel. As far as the gas tax is concerned, in some communities it's as low as \$28,000 a year. I think it's important for this government to seriously look at what this government can do to improve the services in the small and remote communities so they can take advantage of these federal infrastructure dollars.

At the appropriate time I will be asking questions directed to the Deputy Premier.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FUNDING FOR INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Some years ago the government introduced an Inclusive Schooling Policy. Over the years it's become accepted practice for our schools to include every child in the classroom, no matter their mental or physical capability. Students in our schools who are special needs students range from those with minimal needs to those with very severe needs. Of these, according to a Canadian average, about 5 percent of these have severe needs for many different reasons. These children cannot manage in a classroom on their own and require a full-time aide to assist them every moment that they are in school.

The cost to the school board is about \$70,000 per year to provide that aide. If a child is in school from kindergarten to grade 12 with perhaps an extra year or two required along the way, the cost to the board becomes enormous.

Yellowknife Education District No. 1 is the largest school system in the NWT and has excellent programs with excellent staff to handle their high needs special needs students. But in the last seven years, the district has seen a number of high needs special needs students, those who need a one-on-one aide, increase dramatically from seven or eight in 2004 to 25 in this school year, with another two expected next year. The percentage of special needs students who will need a full-time aide is increased from 4 percent in 2004 to almost 9 percent this year, twice the national average. Needless to say, if those student numbers increase, so do the costs. YK 1 is looking at less inclusive schooling dollars next year but more high needs students.

The GNWT provides an excellent level of funding to education authorities. Over the years, ECE has recognized the high cost of inclusive schooling. They have provided steadily increasing dollars to fund the implementation of the policy, until now that is. The 2010-11 budget before us proposes a reduction in inclusive schooling funding. Yellowknife

school boards are concerned. ECE's funding formula assumes that high needs students are at 5 percent or less of a board's total special needs student population. If that percent rises, the cost to provide the extra aide required is borne by the school board.

Yellowknife Education District No. 1 brought this concern to the attention of the Minister of Education almost a year ago, Mr. Speaker, but there doesn't seem to be any recognition of the problem by the Minister and his department. Is this large increase in high needs students an anomaly for YK 1? It would seem so to them.

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

---Unanimous consent granted.

MS. BISARO: Or is this perhaps a trend all NWT education authorities are experiencing? The only way to know for sure, Mr. Speaker, is to undertake an independent count of the severe needs students in NWT schools. It is highly unlikely there will be an even distribution amongst all schools, but that's what the current funding formula assumes.

Boards with a higher incidence of severely disabled students must be funded to a higher level, Mr. Speaker. ECE needs to reconsider how education authorities are funded under the Inclusive Schooling Policy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the early days of this government, we called on the government to determine the cost of buying our way out of the Deh Cho Bridge Concession Agreement, and yet this government declined that opportunity. We are now saddled with this bridge project.

The most recent news of an additional \$15 million cost has severe implications for us. What does it mean? With the most recent news, we can forget about a new hospital wing in the immediate future and there are many other options we were considering that have now heard the door slamming shut with a disappointing bang. The soaring bridge costs puts undue pressure on our ability to meet our core social needs like improving daycare and early childhood education, protecting the environment and dealing with the onslaught of social ills we must address in more effective ways.

Mr. Speaker, I keep drawing the analogy of our personal lives as a test of our public policy. If we were a family, we would be getting close to living in the streets. Our credit cards are maxed out. We poured our money into building a new garage when the house is falling down. We are not penny wise

on our controllable costs like energy. We are at that point where we can easily spiral into crippling debt. So what's to do?

Mr. Speaker, I think we need to stabilize the current situation. We need to consider an assessment, perhaps a complete audit, of where we are at and how we got here and especially, Mr. Speaker, where our vulnerabilities are so that we don't experience unexpected events that push that spiral faster and deeper.

We need to consider those aspects that are currently difficult to predict and get our house in order so that we can afford those eventualities. They will happen. We will hear and we have heard that we are expecting this not to be the final word on the costs for this bridge. It would be wonderful if it was the final word and we could come in at the current price, but the final action that we really need, Mr. Speaker, will be to consider and put in place some sort of mechanism, be it legislative or otherwise, that will actually prevent this sort of thing from happening in the future. We were saddled with this as a result of a ridiculous action by the previous Assembly and previous Cabinet and we must deal with that. Sorry, Mr. Speaker, we came into this with a situation...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Bromley, your time for Member's statement has expired.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, we came in saddled with this situation, we need to be sure that we are not going to saddle future Assemblies with the same sorts of yoke we had to bear here. I think that's something we can do and I'll look forward to making sure that happens and I ask for support on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to speak today in response to the press release regarding the latest news on the Deh Cho Bridge. It was just two weeks ago that the Minister and his staff came before committee and said everything was fine even though numerous questions remained. The main contractor, ATCON, had been let go, the design work was still not complete and yet the Minister and even the Finance Minister in his budget address said the project could be completed on budget, although there will be a year's delay. The government was quick to say that the new design would be less expensive to construct and here we are just two short weeks

later and they want \$15 million more to complete the project, again, without a signed contract and without a firm design.

Mr. Speaker, I've been greatly concerned about the project on many different levels since my election to this House in 2003. The process that allowed the last government to enter into the deal in the first place is one that I maintain was greatly flawed. The project made some sense when it was a 50 to 60 million dollar project that would be self-financing. However, when the project went to \$160 million it was no longer self-financing. It defied any logic why the government would continue to pursue the project when the updated cost benefit analysis would indicate the project would have a \$53 million negative impact.

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. The alarm bells were going off on this project and so-called partnership many years ago. The sad thing is, Mr. Speaker, not everybody was listening. This project has had problems from the very beginning and we can sit here and blame the last government, but this government's been on the watch here for the last two and a half years and has to answer to that as well.

The question for government today is how to go forward with any confidence that this latest \$15 million to be thrown at this bridge will be it. Residents want to know what this bridge will ultimately cost. Now the government is telling Members and residents its \$182 million. Personally, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that it will be the final number. My guess is this project will cost close to \$200 million by the time all is said and done and this, Mr. Speaker, is a complete and utter disaster of a project.

Mr. Speaker, the darkest days may yet be upon us as we continue to look at this project in this complete and utter boondoggle that the Deh Cho Bridge Project has become. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CANADA'S NORTHERN HOUSE

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to use my Member's statement this morning to say how much I appreciate the good work of the people down in Vancouver at the Olympics who are making the Northwest Territories known for its beauty, for its uniqueness and a place to come visit and live and invest in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I was very impressed with the ITI staff. The Minister himself -- this whole Legislative Assembly -- should be congratulated because the number of people I spoke to at the Northern House, they were truly impressed by the magnificent opportunities of wealth and the beauty of the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and the Yukon.

However, with the Northwest Territories portion, people were in awe. They just couldn't say enough.

Actually, Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories or Northern House received the gold medal in terms of the open house, in terms of showcasing their things. There are a lot of good people from the Northwest Territories, people who are in Vancouver who are making this happen, people who we have on our staff that are dedicated and that are there. I met the youth ambassadors. I met some of the culture people that are going to be performing down there. People just couldn't get enough. It's amazing when you walk around in that little area in Vancouver. They've done a good job to host us, to be host to the Olympics. The thing about the Olympics is the buzz is in the air in terms of what's going to be happening the next couple of weeks there starting tomorrow.

I want to thank the Minister for allowing me to travel with him to see it firsthand. At first I wasn't too sure and I didn't know if we were spending money wisely on the Olympics, but now I see it firsthand that we are doing a good job and I think the return on investment is going to be tenfold in terms of what's happening in the future in terms of people coming up to live in the Northwest Territories.

So I want to say to the people in the pavilion at the open house, good job, keep up the good work, we sure appreciate your good work and what you say about the people of the Northwest Territories. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SCHOOL-BASED MULTIVITAMIN PROGRAM

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to rise today to talk about a potential idea of how we can help improve the health of our children and youth in the Northwest Territories. I firmly believe that the empowerment of parents to ensure that a child is fed and taken care of properly is certainly on their shoulders and within their abilities, but I also believe the territorial government has a supporting role to help provide, focus and promote health delivery ideas to help feed children and youth of our Territory.

Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to discuss something I think could help these children. The government could develop a program, a grant system, to provide NWT children and youth with a multivitamin on a daily basis. Multivitamins could be distributed through daycares, day homes, preschools and, certainly, regular schools. In this way we could improve the nutrition of many young children and our youth in our Northwest Territories.

We are well aware that children who are regularly provided with nutritional meals are better able to

cope with the demands of schools, they progress faster in learning, and getting enough to eat sometimes does not necessarily guarantee that that will make sure that they get the most out of the foods that they need. Mr. Speaker, sometimes children are not eating all the nutritional foods that we would like them too, but a multivitamin could be that bridge to make sure this happens, because we all know the high cost of good foods here in this Territory.

We have been hearing discussions about greater need for vitamin D among northern populations because of the reduced hours of sunlight. As well, children tend not to play outside as much these days as we did in the past. A multivitamin could address the need for children and teenagers to get those important nutrients such as vitamin A, vitamin B2, zinc, potassium, magnesium, calcium and iron. Mr. Speaker, a multivitamin can be the source of a great opportunity to make sure these kids are healthy and learning. Mr. Speaker, I think a universal program that is provided to the schools and day care facilities could go a long way to help improve the health of our students and our youth.

Mr. Speaker, when I was a young child growing up, our schools offered multivitamins and I think it was a good measure and a good show of support for a government that cared about their youth and the growing path that they take. Mr. Speaker, I think this is something that I'd like to see if the Department of Education, Culture and Employment examine and consider as we go forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert McLeod.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to use this as an opportunity to recognize the hard work of our Pages. We have two Pages from Inuvik. We have Robyn Rinas and we also have Nicole Ellsworth. I hope they enjoyed their time here. They had an opportunity to see the Legislative Assembly at work and I hope it was a learning experience for them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to recognize two Pages from Fort Resolution: Mr. Paul Boucher and Gerald Norn Dumas.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6,

acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 314-16(4): ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my questions are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Our gold medalist there at the Olympics.

---Interjection

MR. JACOBSON: Will this government place more attention and resources on small, remote communities regarding community-based economic development programs to assist small businesses? These resources should assist in areas such as providing community-based training and financial assistance.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of course, the direction we've given to the department is to try to make sure every community in the Northwest Territories has at least one development project. I think that in the Nunakput region we're fairly close to getting there and we do have a tool kit of programs we can provide for training for businesses and also to explain all the different funding programs that we have. We will be very pleased to work with the small communities so they can take advantage of these programs.

MR. JACOBSON: Will this government explore all current technologies and the needs of the Government of the Northwest Territories to try to find ways for small and remote communities all across the Territories to assist and benefit, such as call centres instead of having to use the ones in the South?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Certainly we look at all the modern technologies. We are limited to a certain extent by the communications networks that we have in the Northwest Territories. But we do have satellite technologies. We do have equipment so we can have conference calls. We do have TV so we can see each other when we have meetings. As a department we're working with the private sector so we can take advantage of any and all opportunities that come along.

MR. JACOBSON: Will the Minister commit to me today to work with me to see if we can put up a call centre or some sort of assistance with the territorial government and a pilot project in one of my communities that I represent?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I would be pleased to work with the Member for Nunakput to examine all these different opportunities.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 315-16(3):
SALVAGING MATERIALS FROM
DEMOLITION OF DEH CHO HALL

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This coming year we're looking at taking down the Deh Cho Hall in Fort Simpson. The constituents are wondering about accessing the material that's there. I've heard through the grapevine, I guess, that all the materials are contaminated and cannot be used. I'd like to ask the Minister of Public Works about the ability of residents and the community of salvaging some of the material should the Deh Cho Hall be taken down in Fort Simpson.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for Public Works and Services, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Taking buildings apart or demobilizing facilities that are of no more value to our government or communities is something that we do on a regular basis. We have fairly rigid guidelines of how to dispose of material. There are safety issues that we have to, of course, follow and contaminated material, as the Member has mentioned, has to go to, in a lot of cases, places that are designated for such use.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: The old Deh Cho Hall is a huge building. It has lots of materials that can and should be used for the community for other projects. It has some really good lumber in there, once we strip away the boarding and plywood. There is lots of structural lumber. I heard that all the material will be destroyed and I think that's a shame. I think the community and residents should access it. What can we do to ensure that the community residents can access any salvageable material at the Deh Cho Hall?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: In a lot of instances there is some discussion with the communities as to how the contractor awarded with the contract would dispose of it. We would make the necessary arrangements. In the case of Deh Cho Hall I'm not sure as to the specifics regarding how that is going to be handled. I would have to confirm that. But I certainly would agree that dismantling the Deh Cho Hall would provide a lot of lumber for a lot of cabins around Fort Simpson and the surrounding communities. I will commit to the Member to provide that information.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: The Minister gets it exactly. I'd like the department to provide an assessment and I'd like to see the report, too, that we can salvage

some of the material, and to ensure that assessment is being done as they deliberate any future contracts with the demolition of the Deh Cho Hall. Can the Minister assure that assessment about salvageable materials be done as soon as possible?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I would like to assure the Member that we have heard his comments. We will follow up on this project as we move forward and incorporate some of his concerns. I believe we have received similar comments from the Fort Simpson Dene Council some years ago and they had indicated they wanted to have some input and involvement. We had agreed at the time that we would follow up with them and I'd like to be able to do so and keep the Member informed of where we're going. The budget includes money for demolition, so that's something that's going to happen relatively soon.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. That's exactly part of it too. I look at that project as a make-work for Fort Simpson. If we just send in equipment to tear down the building, that's not doing anything to help improve our economy. Taking it apart and saving salvageable material can be good for Fort Simpson and for anybody who wants to access the material that's there. Once again, if the Minister will provide and ensure that there is an assessment done, that there is salvageable material and not just tear it down quickly for the sake of tearing it down.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I share the Member's sentiments on this issue. We, of course, have an obligation to stay within our budget that we have set for demolition. We have safety issues and contamination disposal regulations that we have to follow. But we're able to meet all those requirements and I'll be happy to ensure our staff has the discussion with the Member and the leadership in Fort Simpson as to the best way to move forward on this project.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

QUESTION 316-16(4):
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Transportation. I think the Minister has, obviously, some explaining to do to both Members of the House and the public when it was just a couple of weeks ago that the Minister stood up in this House and replied to some questions that I had for him at the time, stating that the new design on the Deh Cho Bridge would be less expensive to construct and they were still under the impression that the project could get completed on budget even though

there was a delay of one year. Here we are two weeks later and the Minister is stating now that the project is going to cost \$182 million.

There still is no, in my view, firm design. There still is no signed contract with the new contractor. I am just wondering how the Minister can explain that he can put a number out there like \$182 million with all these moving parts still in existence. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is correct; two weeks ago we were very confident that we had the makings of a deal that was going to fall within the target and goal of what we had set as a budget. Since then, there have been more negotiations with the contractor that we are talking about. In fact, I should mention that who we are negotiating with right now, today, yesterday had brought back new numbers. We have all the moving parts, as the Member has indicated, together, including lost revenue because of the delay in the construction schedule of one year, the deferral of the design, of course, and things of that nature and outstanding claims that we have to settle. It is summed up to a number, an excess of what we budgeted by \$15 million. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, in the press release that the government has issued this morning, they also talk about a new project management team. I would like to ask the Minister what is the future of the former project management team on the Deh Cho Bridge Project. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, as a result of a number of discussions for the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation, we felt that we needed to bring in a new team to provide project management on this job. We have since agreed and notified the people that were on the project management team that we will be bringing in a new company and new players to fill those roles. That has been accepted. We are now in the process of having discussions, how to do the transition and continue to make sure that we have a smooth transition as we move forward. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, I am just wondering why it has gotten to this stage, why something wasn't done further in the past. We should have done something about this a long time ago. I would like to ask the Minister, is it going to cost the Government of the Northwest Territories anything to remove the players from the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation and that former project management team? Are we going to be paying anything for that? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I can't predict what will happen in the future, but as of

now, our agreement is to terminate the services after transition period, after certain tasks are completed, which will happen in the next little while. The Member is correct; there was concern and he's raised it in this House that there was concern over how the project was being managed. We also had concerns some time ago. We felt that we needed to wait and see how things unfolded. We also needed a pause in construction so that we can start the next phase before we sat down and had those discussions with the Bridge Corporation. This is what we have done. It has resulted in a new project management team. Thank you.

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

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess ultimately we are going to be paying the price for the poor performance of that project management team. I would like to ask the Minister today whether or not the Government of the Northwest Territories is going to have any legal recourse with that former project management team on the increased costs and the failure to deliver this project, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I think all the players involved feel they have a recourse in terms of legal challenges. We are no different. I am assuming that we will see the fallout as the dust settles on this project. At this point, we are focussed on trying to get the bridge completed. We are really in a compressed time frame to get that done. We are, as I have stated, negotiating right now with a number of the players, the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation, the lenders and also a company that we hope is not going to be influenced by our discussion here today, but we are very close to concluding those discussions. We feel that these numbers are solid. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

QUESTION 317-16(4):

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO FEDERAL FUNDING

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regards to my Member's statement, one thing we continue to see is have and have-not communities in the Northwest Territories, especially the small and remote communities, which were the reason for a lot of communities not being able to take advantage of the stimulus funding in regards to Building Canada funds. The reason that we get this is because they have substantial deficits or they are unable to identify matching funds.

Mr. Speaker, I, for one, feel that this government should reach out to those communities and try to find ways to ensure that they are able to receive federal capital dollars through a workable relationship with this government.

Mr. Speaker, in the previous government, there was a community infrastructure fund which was put forward by this government. About \$30 million was given to all communities in the Northwest Territories based on a formula of base plus funding. I would like to ask the Deputy Premier, why is this government not looking at a system that is fair, transparent and that everybody can benefit when it comes to federal funding?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That deals with a specific program area under the mandate of the Minister of Public Works and Services. I want to defer that question to him.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is correct; a lot of communities have felt that they are really challenged to have input in some of the stimulus money that came in very short order to this government. The program was quite compressed from a seven-year period. With very limited notice, we were required to put in two years' worth of projects.

The Member has also referenced a Community Capacity Fund that was provided to the communities on a formula basis. It works quite well. That was the first area that we wanted to discuss with the federal government. The Minister of MACA did bring that concept up of formula funding for Building Canada funding and also stimulus program funding. That kind of arrangement was rejected by the federal government. They felt it wasn't something they wanted to do. We had to resolve to asking each community to come forward, to bring projects forward that were either on our government capital plan or on the community capital plan or projects that they were thinking about and had somewhat formulated and priced out. That is the rationale of how we ended up. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, one of the main reasons is because the communities either had substantial deficits, which tells me that they are in trouble. I think that we have to find a way with working with those communities that are in trouble, finding a way that we can match funds with them or have funds. Right now what I see going on with the government is that they have surplus funds in certain projects that they are going to bring forward and they are going to subsidize certain projects which are presently on the books. For me, that is not fair. I would like to know, what is this government doing to work with those communities that have a deficit situation so that they can take advantage of these federal infrastructure funds?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, once again the Member is correct. There are a number of communities that were in a deficit situation historically for long periods of time. Given our previous method of allocating dollars, I am assuming that this is changing. I get the sense from my discussions, at least, that communities are better prepared as a result of the New Deal funding and their larger formula funding dollars that are being invested in the communities. However, that is going to take time. In this case, not everybody was ready to put a project forward.

Although we have probably the biggest capital budget in our government's history over the last year, this year and possibly next year, there are still communities that need assistance. I don't speak for MACA, but MACA has committed to working with these communities. They have people in the different jurisdictions helping them. Of course, we have to recognize that planning and making decisions on their own or for their own communities is not something that everybody has been doing up to now. It is relatively new. It is going to take some adjustment. I hope that is going to happen fairly quickly. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you. I'd like to ask the Minister if he could give me a breakdown of exactly which communities received these federal dollars, what size the communities are and out of the 33 communities in the Northwest Territories, which ones weren't able to take advantage of these programs. Can I have that in writing? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you. I'll have to commit for the Minister of MACA, but there is I think roughly around 47 projects right across the Northwest Territories with the Building Canada funding and the stimulus funding and he's listening so he should know, but we'll commit, he'll commit or I'll commit for him, to providing that information to the Member. Thank you.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that it's time that this government did an assessment of this program and federal programs and see exactly who is benefiting from them and also who is losing out on these programs simply because they're having some financial problems or they don't have the capacity to do it, because I think from small communities that is one of the core problems we see in our communities, is they don't have capacity, they don't have the human resources, they can't take advantage of federal programs. So as a government I'd like to request from the Minister if they can commit to looking at that scenario and see exactly what we can do better to improve the programs next time around for all communities.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you. What the Member is speaking about doesn't only challenge

the communities, it challenges our government when there is a huge injection of capital into our jurisdiction with a very short time frame to spend it. It really challenges us. I've conveyed it, the Minister of MACA has conveyed those concerns to the federal government, that we need a stable long-term agreement that would flow capital dollars so we can have everybody take part and have a piece of the dollars invested in their areas and in the areas that they want to see invested. The Minister of MACA has informed me that they've also put some money aside in their budgets to do just as the Member is requesting, to help the communities so that they're prepared to move forward with other capital dollars that may come up free. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 318-16(4):
FUNDING FOR INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Education. When we reviewed the Department of Education budget I asked a number of questions of the Minister and his officials with regard to inclusive schooling and how we fund inclusive schooling to our education authorities and I have a few more questions for him following up on my Member's statement.

The Minister was presented with evidence from Yellowknife Education District No. 1 about a year ago, of a high number of severe special needs students within that district. I'd like to ask the Minister what his response was to the district officials at that time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. We did receive a letter from various school boards identifying the costs of dealing with special needs. It is across the board in the Northwest Territories, not just one organization, but, Mr. Speaker, we did increase the inclusive schooling. Since 2005 until today there's been a substantial increase in various locations within the school divisions. So, Mr. Speaker, we are looking at this very closely and we are currently dealing with enrolment issues that are challenging us right now and I think we need to focus in that area as well. But at the same time we're currently looking at this and we'll be discussing this in April at the chairs' meeting. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. My point is not so much that enrolments are going down and it's not so much that we necessarily have to increase funding. I don't think that's what perhaps the districts are asking for, but there is an unequal distribution of very severely high needs, very

severely special needs students within districts and the allocation of students is not even across the board. My point is, then, I think the point of YK1 is that the funding needs to be reallocated and redistributed so that severely impacted special needs students, the higher number in districts get more funding. I know the Minister has said that they're considering the issue, and again, he said that it relies on enrolments, but I'd like to know from the Minister how this consideration that he's talking about and the consideration that's going to be in April, how that translates into action. What is his department actually doing? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. We need to get the facts from all the education board levels. We are gathering the facts from our department with the superintendents of each school board. The Member talked about unequal distribution. So we need to identify that. What is she referring to? Is it just one school board that is saying this or is it all school boards? So those are the types of discussions we're going to have in April when I meet with education chairs. So this is the important discussion that we're going to be having and on a going forward basis we need to gather all the facts and also identify enrolment, because the number has gone down and that also has an implication on the funding as well. So we'll continue to discuss this on a going forward basis. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: Thank you. I appreciate that the Minister has made a commitment to gather facts, but I think the problem is that he's gathering facts based from a very subjective viewpoint. Each individual education authority, I believe, is being asked to provide this information and the point of YK1 is that we need to have an independent study, there needs to be an impartial gathering of the number of high needs students in each jurisdiction. So I guess with the suggestion from YK1 to do an impartial gathering of data to get at the actual facts, will the Minister consider doing that? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. I think that it's important to highlight the actual true facts that the school boards will be providing. We've heard over and over not to hire any more consultants. We have our in-house people that can certainly deal with these challenges that are at the forefront, but at the same time working with the chairs and also the superintendents and they have valuable information that we can certainly use. So, Mr. Speaker, this certainly will be discussed in the April meeting. Mahsi.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister, I appreciate that the department is willing to do this in house and that the superintendents and chairs are providing information, but if I were chair of a board, it would certainly be to my

advantage to pad my numbers and to indicate that special needs students who aren't severe may be severe and that's why I'm suggesting that there needs to be an impartial person doing this gathering. So to the Minister, I'm not suggesting a study. Again, would he commit to having an impartial, outsider gather this data? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. We trust the board chairs and we trust the superintendents' information that will be provided to us on the numbers that we need to work with. We will continue to work closely with them, because we provide funding to them and there's accountability attached to that as well. So, Mr. Speaker, on a going forward basis in April we'll be discussing and we'll develop an action plan from there. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 319-16(4):

SCHOOL-BASED MULTIVITAMIN PROGRAM

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today I raised the issue of the health of our young people and ways that we could improve that. Certainly I'd like to think of it as a way that we could develop a strategy over the next little while and certainly launch an ambitious plan that would be relatively cost effective but deliver great results, and that plan is coming up with a strategy for multivitamins for our youth and it could be implemented in such a way that day homes could access this, daycares and certainly provide it to our school districts so our young kids can have access to these type of important nutrients that multivitamins provide. So to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, I'd like to ask today, because we don't have one of these programs in place, would the Minister be willing to investigate the cost of this type of program and to see if it would be feasible if we could introduce something like this. Once again, I'd like to say, because there was a program like this in the Northwest Territories many, many years ago and I think it was quite successful. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this will certainly fall into play with the nutritious food that has been highlighted in this House, working along with my colleague at Health and Social Services with respect to what the Member is alluding to. In the past there has been some vitamins given out to the students. When I was at Chief Jimmy Bruno School back in the old days we used to get those colourful vitamins that we were taking on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, this can certainly be part of the discussion that the organizations will be having as an advisory group and giving us direction as this should be a part of the nutrition. So the group will certainly discuss that going forward. Mahsi.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge and appreciate the answer the Minister provided. Mr. Speaker, I know in an ideal world we'd be able to provide hot breakfasts to all our young folks and these types of programs. That's why I'm trying to take a measured approach and possibly a program that we could provide and afford. Would the Minister ensure that in this nutritional food basket study that they're planning to do, that this multivitamin concept gets a high priority of consideration? I'm not saying as in subject it to it has to come out as a high priority answer, but I want to make sure it gets full consideration up front. I don't want to prejudice the dialogue and the research that may come through this study, but I absolutely want to make sure it gets full consideration and costed out and weigh the pros and cons. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, we're aware that some schools are providing vitamins to some students. Not only that, but the organizations that I've highlighted in this House are clearly listening to the Member and I'm sure they'll take that into consideration. We, as the two departments working closely with these organizations as well, can take this matter into consideration and if it could be part of the nutritious food programming. Then, by all means, those are the discussions we need to have. Mahsi.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the faith that the Minister has that these people will be listening to Hansard, but just to ensure that they do get the message that this is an important issue that can deliver good things for our youth, would the Minister be willing to pen a letter to let this group know, that's doing this review, that it is a priority of some people in this House and it could provide significant if not, certainly, substantial benefits for the health of our young people, noting the lack of nutritional items I noted in my Member's statement? Would the Minister be willing to pen a letter to say, will you make sure you take this seriously? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, I cannot, as the Minister of Education, dictate where the money should be spent on specific items. It would be up to the group to give us an indication and also the inventory of where there are gaps and that's where we'll allocate the funding that's been identified. Mr. Speaker, it is noted that that will be part of the discussion that we'll be having with the group. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 320-16(4):
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are on the Deh Cho Bridge Project and they're directed to the Minister of Finance.

Certainly we recognize now that there has been a lot of mismanagement and contractors disarray, costs are soaring, and the Minister of Transportation is working hard to stabilize that situation. I'm wondering, Mr. Speaker, what is the impact of the new costs of the bridge on the government's debt, particularly with respect to our borrowing limit. As people know, we are obligated to stay within a limit of \$500 million. I appreciate that response. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the debt or the \$15 million that's being requested is equivalent to about 10 percent over the initial cost. So that will be \$15 million added to our cost as a government. So with the \$15 million factored in, as we've said, it will shrink our borrowing limit by that equivalent amount. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for those general comments. Perhaps the Minister could interpret for us what sort of flexibility we're giving up in terms of pursuing other things that this government might have wished to pursue. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: As we look at this \$15 million, the other point to keep in mind is that it's significantly self-liquidating through the tolls and all the other arrangements that have been signed as part of this deal. But going forward, because of this debt and other debt that we've agreed to accumulate as part of the current economic downturn, we are going to be going down in our borrowing limit. In 2011-12, available borrowing capacity will shrink to about \$85 million. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate that more specific information. In the immediate future, and I'm sure there are other implications in the longer term, but what is this government doing to minimize our risk? What are the additional risks that we're facing and what are we doing to minimize those risks? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The Minister responsible for Public Works laid out all the steps that are currently being taken to make sure that this project goes ahead. It's 50 percent complete. It's had some challenges, but it's going to be, at this point we hope, the final costs will be about 10 percent over the budgeted amount. We are going to

work closely, as the Member indicated in his own statement, to stabilize this particular project, where it is right now, sort out the current challenges and then take a critical look, along with the Members, about what we've learned from the exercise, how do we go forward and what other particular issues that may be out there that could become major concerns for us. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Your final supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, again, appreciate those comments. I think we, indeed, need to take some serious looks at what's happening. I mentioned the spiral into poverty that can happen in families and certainly when we have soaring costs in the midst of an economic recession and so on, these are the sorts of things that I'm talking about. There are more in the future. We need to plan for them. What is the Minister doing, though, Mr. Speaker, on the larger picture side to ensure that this government puts in place a mechanism to ensure that future Assemblies are not saddled with exactly this situation? Mahsi.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: That broad policy issue and debate and discussion, I think, has to take place as a Legislature, to lay out whatever specific conventions or protocols that we need to have agreed to, to address the concerns raised by the Member. I know at this point we are doing our planning collectively, looking at June 2011 as the date up to which we could make substantive decisions, but after that we're planning, recognizing that we'll be moving into an election year. As a Cabinet, we've picked that particular date as a target for us that we're working back from, recognizing that we're going to be into a whole different mode after the last sitting of this Legislature before the election. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 321-16(4):
MARKETING NWT TOURISM

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of ITI in terms of our recent meetings down in Vancouver and more particularly to the media people that were interested in the Northwest Territories such as the German newspaper and the Chinese television people there. They talked about the Northwest Territories and particularly important to the media person from Germany in terms of the tourism. I want to ask the Minister, in terms of the feedback that we received that was very positive from the media outlet in terms of promoting a place to visit, the Northwest Territories, is the Minister taking this type of feedback from the media outlet to track visitors from European or Asian countries, in terms of strengthening our territorial parks? The German newspaper did talk about, you know, is there a road and when are you going to build a road

-- Mackenzie Valley Highway -- to get into the valley here? Is the Minister going to be looking at a type of new strategy in terms of how do we attract visitors from Germany or the Asian countries?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the benefit of Canada's Northern House is our interaction with national and international media. Certainly the interview we did with the German reporter gave us a lot of insight as to what the German people would find of interest in visiting the Northwest Territories, understanding that there are a lot of German tourists already visiting the Northwest Territories. Basically I think we understand that Yukon has direct flights from Germany to Whitehorse and so they get a lot of German tourists in that fashion. So I think that is an area that we are, and have been, investigating and we do have a person that is working on our behalf in Europe to promote tourism to the Europeans, because that's a very important sector. I believe that, as a reporter said, if we can get the Germans that are in Whitehorse, drive to Yellowknife, then fly back to Germany would be a tremendous attraction. So, certainly, we want to examine that possibility.

MR. YAKELEYA: I was particularly interested with respect to this reporter when he was doing the interview with us talking about the unknown Sahtu region. The German people are very avid hikers. He talked about the hiking that could be done in the Northwest Territories. He was very interested in how to get into the Sahtu. He talked about the Mackenzie Valley Highway. In terms of that type of interest out there and attracting European visitors, would the Minister, with respect to all the feedback we've received regarding the Northwest Territories, take this to look at a strategy that will attract infrastructure and facilities in the regions that maybe we could have more visitors?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We recognize that the Sahtu, the proposed CANOL Park, and the roads to Mile 222 are very spectacular. I think if we can work it out so that the German tourists who come off the plane and jump into RVs and drive down the road that we can find a way to get them to stop close to the NWT border and come into the Territories to do a hike. I think if we can establish that type of product it would be very successful.

MR. YAKELEYA: One comment I heard at the Northern House was they hope they can come to Yellowknife, jump on a plane, and visit a diamond mine. It really intrigues them, these diamond mines. That was one comment. We're getting that type of interest at Northern House. I want to ask the Minister with respect to promoting the Sahtu that it would be nice to have these German people hike the CANOL Trail, jump in a boat, go up the Bear

River to visit the birthplace of ice hockey in Canada here, as we promoted it. It took a lot and had a lot of interest from the southern papers there in terms of this claim to fame here. I want to ask the Minister to see how much promotional awareness we have started over there to get this done in Northern House in terms of working with the people in this House here and the community of Deline.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We want to develop all of those tourism opportunities. Anything that will attract people to the Northwest Territories I think is very important. The amount of interest that was generated with regard to promoting Deline as the birthplace of hockey, there was a lot of interest in it and I think that will probably have reaction to it. I guess we'll see what kind of media exposure we'll get. I expect we'll get some articles about it and I think that you'll have to be prepared to defend that claim.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly I'm prepared to lace up with the Minister of ITI and defend this claim to fame in terms of the birthplace of ice hockey in Canada. I want to ask the Minister in terms of all the good publicity we have and now with the Olympics that are going to start, I think it's going to somewhat scale back and the focus is going to be on the athletes in that once we finish this whole event that's happening in Vancouver we'll be sitting down and looking at a bigger picture strategy in terms of how to go forward and continuing on the good work that this department has done on promoting the Northwest Territories. How do we go forward in bringing people into the Northwest Territories? Will we have a bigger strategy?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We are close to completing our Tourism 2010 Plan and we will be taking all the information we hear or are hearing from Canada's Northern House and we are working with NWT Tourism to develop a 2015 tourism plan. Using that approach we will endeavour to take all these opportunities into account. Also, as the Member recognized yesterday, we were getting a lot of interest from the international media to come up and find out more about the Northwest Territories so that they can promote it even further.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to the opening address. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Replies to Opening Address

Mrs. Groenewegen's Reply

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to use my reply to the opening address to talk about the Deh Cho Bridge. The

reason why it is important to talk about this today is that the people of the Northwest Territories have a right and need to know and understand what is happening with the Deh Cho Bridge Project because of its potential far-reaching impacts on the financial well-being of our Territory.

Looking at the history of this project, the enabling legislation called the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation Act was passed in the 14th Assembly. At that time the legislation contemplated a \$50 million bridge with a \$6 per tonne toll that would finance the cost of the bridge. When the cost of the bridge more than tripled, the business case and cost-benefit analysis changed radically. In spite of this, because legislation passed several years earlier allowed it, the GNWT was able to proceed.

Amid much debate about the need for the bridge, whether it was a priority in the investment opportunities and demands for much needed capital infrastructure, the project was still pushed ahead. If anyone thinks that I did not question the advisability about proceeding with the bridge at every turn, this is just some of the Hansard of the questions and statements that I made in this House.

Our financial commitment started off in the form of loan guarantees. The first being for \$3 million. We were told that would be the limit. Then it extended to \$6 million, then to around \$9 million. All the while Members were assured that this was the extent of the GNWT's liability and the project would never proceed unless the federal government came to the table with significant financial contribution and underwriting.

All through this process the normal scrutiny of public transparency was blurred by the public-private partnership model which put the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation out front as the private partner, allowing the GNWT to avoid fulsome disclosure of the dealings surrounding the bridge in the name of corporate proprietary privacy.

Some would ask why would we have the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation acting as both the management teams and the proponents of this project. It was a way to keep the debt of the project off the books of the Government of the Northwest Territories, who at the time had a borrowing limit of \$300 million. We have to be very clear about that. This was an attempt to build public infrastructure for public use while keeping that debt away from our balance sheet.

The argument was made for economic benefits that would flow to the community of Fort Providence from the construction, maintenance and management of the bridge. But as the proponent, the corporation had to have an equity stake in the project, equity which they had difficulty ever pulling together and at the 11th hour, even saw the project's general contractor, ATCON, coming to the

table to take advantage of the portion of the equity position in the bridge that they were about to build. I am not sure, Mr. Speaker, how ATCON's equity participation was going to benefit the people of Fort Providence or the Northwest Territories.

Now, there is some doubt as to whether every Member of Cabinet fully and wholeheartedly supported proceeding. That three days, Mr. Speaker, before the last territorial election, when the ability of Cabinet Ministers and outgoing Premier should have passed the point of making substantive decisions affecting the Territories, the Concession Agreement was signed.

Mr. Speaker, it took many months for the Concession Agreement to be shared with Members of the Legislative Assembly and only came out after literally hours of questioning on the floor of the House in attempt to get an idea of the GNWT's liability associated with this major piece of capital infrastructure, larger than anything the GNWT had ever undertaken. A project, although financed through the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation, was approved on the basis of a 100 percent guarantee of this territorial government. The GNWT went into this knowing full well that if anything went wrong, our government would be on the hook for the full amount of a loan. Mr. Speaker, this, in spite of my questions to Premier Roland dated February 20, 2008, in which -- and I quote from unedited Hansard, February 18, 2008 -- I had asked about the liability to the government. The Premier answered, "We are not guaranteeing the large loan. We have only guaranteed the \$9 million." The naysayers, as we were dubbed, were trying to ask questions we thought were responsible in the interest of holding the government accountable. That is our job, after all. We are often scoffed at and told, don't worry. In spite of the many red flags along the way, we had no opportunity to intervene, just told to trust.

I remember being in the sound rooms at CBC Radio on a panel including the project manager, while he waved his arms in exasperation as I asked what I thought were reasonable questions. In spite of pressing demands on the time and budgets of the Department of Transportation for much needed infrastructure and maintenance across the North, very much energy and money from within the department has been expended on the bridge project. The total amount of that time and resources has never fully been disclosed, articulated or accounted for.

Mr. Speaker, who wanted the Deh Cho Bridge, you may wonder. No one that I know personally, except for some local contractors, understandably, who were able to secure some of the work on a project primarily dominated by southern services. The GNWT proceeded without a clear message of support from the constituents of the Northwest

Territories. I was told, don't worry, the bridge will be paid for. Everyone north of the Mackenzie River crossing and freight coming to Hay River won't be affected by any bridge toll. Federal employees would lose their isolated post allowance. Yellowknife and points north consumers would shoulder the higher cost of getting goods into their communities and the truck hauling, the diamond mines would pay. We thought, they thought a small way to catch your benefit from mining interests in the absence of royalties. It was all good. The project started out under some of the highest commodity prices in history and still in a time of heated economic activity, thus the high cost.

The Bridge Corporation or not, public private partnership or not, let's call this what it was. It was a piece of public infrastructure financed in advance by a public government. The shell of the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation was only a means, as I said before, of a way to keep the project off the books with the GNWT so that we can stay within our federally legislated borrowing limit. There is probably a good reason why we have a borrowing limit. The inception and management of this project is the perfect point in case.

Strange how a project sold as having a fixed design, a fixed contract and a fixed price has recently gone through a major design revision, a change of general contractor and -- I'm coming to the price part -- just two weeks ago we were told in this House that the project was still on budget, if somewhat behind schedule.

So why are we talking about the Deh Cho Bridge today? The bridge is half built. The original general contractor of the project is gone. The management team for the bridge is now being handled in house because the lender is, understandably, getting nervous. We are way past the point of no return. The government is going to come to the people of the Northwest Territories, through us, for approval of an additional \$15 million of public funds. The sensitive negotiations that the Minister spoke of yesterday are not yet concluded. So who knows what other surprises await us in the future.

We are told, don't worry. It will be recaptured by the toll. Don't forget that we are still also on the hook for the administration and operation of the toll collection for the next 35 years, probably more than \$4 million per year and indexed. As to recovering all of this from the toll, the business case for the tolls revenue was really suspect, even before the recession and before the potential for an alternative to diesel-generated power existed for the diamond mines.

Mr. Speaker, I have always thought that there were more pressing needs for our government's attention and resources than a bridge at Fort Providence.

On a personal note, I have probably used the ferry and the ice bridge more times than anyone in this

room. I thought that, except for a brief interruption in the spring, it was a system that worked for me well. But somebody wanted to leave this Territory a legacy. We have been left with a legacy all right. I don't think we have even begun to see the end of it yet. We have been sold a bill of goods so many times already on this project that don't worry, trust us, this is the limit of our involvement, just isn't believable anymore.

So what options do we have going forward? Why do I think it is important for people to understand clearly where we are at? Yesterday in the House I said that the costs and mismanagement of this project has the potential of being the biggest thing that has ever happened to this government. This is why we have fiscal forecast scenarios that have been prepared. Option one would approve the \$15 million appropriation for the bridge. This option includes a few other assumptions going forward, keeping us from crashing into the debt wall, but still isn't too pretty for the interests of other capital projects and spending in the next few years. The other options aren't options at all, because they see us taking the bridge debt onto our books and taking this project over and operating it for what it really is: a government project. The reason why those two options aren't options at all is because the government would either be over the debt limit or essentially bankrupt.

Mr. Speaker, I can't predict what Ottawa will have to say about that. I was here in the 13th Assembly when previous governments had racked up \$150 million debt and then enacted the Deficit Elimination Act for the next Assembly. The first thing the 13th Assembly had to do was roll back costs and spending, including the rollback of all the public service salaries by 6 percent across the board and make deep spending cuts to balance future years' budgets.

Some would ask, why not just mothball the project and pick it up again in the future in better economic times? The problem with that idea is that apparently the pillars would have to be removed. That would cost more than it cost to put them there in the first place. Terminating the lending agreement that we are backstopping would also cost about \$50 million in interest and penalties. That idea of stopping the bridge at this juncture is probably a non-starter. But just in case...

MR. SPEAKER: ... (inaudible) ...

Point of Privilege

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, we have an understanding that we have confidential briefings with committee. We share information. It should be respected. The Member is clearly aware that there are processes and negotiations underway. This information was shared last night, yesterday morning and Tuesday night. My point of privilege is that by disclosing the

specifics, the scenarios and all the various things that we are trying to talk about as we try to resolve this issue are bringing forward into a public forum, from a confidential forum, information that was agreed to be kept confidential until we concluded our arrangements. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I am going to allow a little debate on this point of privilege. To the point of privilege. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Information was shared with committee and I did speak to the House yesterday and indicated to them that I felt that the information that had been shared really belongs to the public, because we expect feedback from our constituents on how we proceed and how we go forward with this. I think that I am just trying to explain that one of the options that people out there may think is available to us is not available to us and I did not use a specific amount. I talked about a ballpark amount and I, Mr. Speaker, believe that in representing the interest of the public to know what is before us, that it was acceptable to use this number. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. To the point of privilege. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also want to say a few words on the point of privilege. Mr. Speaker, while we have an obligation to provide Members with details, with explanations, with discussion of accountability, we also have an expectation for the Members of this House to act reasonably. Mr. Speaker, the Member has disclosed information that was provided to committee in confidence and I would submit that disclosing this confidential information constitutes a breach of privilege. I would also submit that this disclosure is a violation of the principles of consensus government that we use in this forum for the dignity of this House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. To the point of privilege. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, this issue is definitely in the public domain. There was a press release put out by the Minister this morning. The comments from my colleague Mrs. Groenewegen were about the situation that we had to deal with in the 13th Assembly and that reality is real. The issue of having a major deficit in this government has a major implication on all programs going forward. The press release clearly stipulates that this bridge is not going to cost us \$165 million. It's going to cost us \$181 million and we don't really know what the final price really is. Mr. Speaker, I think the question on privilege is information that has been revealed or released where someone else has the documentation.

In regards to the Member's comments talking about what happened in the 13th Assembly, that scenario is real. Where we are going with this particular project and other projects going forward puts us all at risk in this House. We have an obligation as Members of this House to protect the public purse, not to scandalize the system, not to lose money, not to put us into a situation where we go into the next election and have the next people coming in having to deal with the mess that we are going to have to clean up.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that by putting out a press release this morning, this information is out there. It's \$181 million; the public now knows. It's in the public domain and there's nothing to hide here. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. To the point of privilege. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to refer as well to some principles, building principles, that were approved by Caucus, Caucus at Blatchford Lake and released to the public where we talk about effective communication as a double-edged sword. For consensus government to work, all Members must agree to respect the confidentiality of information before it is properly made public. Similarly, Members should acknowledge the fact that information was shared in confidence once it has been released.

Mr. Speaker, the point is, properly made public, we're talking about a lot of other information other than the \$15 million and the concern is that the Members know there are sensitive negotiations underway and this type of discussion does nothing to aid that process and, in fact, brings confidential information into the House before it can properly be made public. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. To the point of privilege. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I remind this House it wasn't that long ago we were having serious discussions about leaking of information, committee confidence and whatnot. I don't think the information told today is necessarily a detriment to the project, but it still stands for the principles of frustration that were caused earlier. Information received is still being learned and understood. So perhaps laying it before the House was an ill choice at this time. Is it reasonable? I believe the public should be fully apprised of the information that will come forward, but I certainly hope that that will be in a timely way when there is a decision and a direction to weigh the pros and the cons of the project.

Mr. Speaker, I will just remind the frustration of this House... I will stress the witch hunt that was back here not that long ago about information leaking out of committee rooms and quick fingers were out there to point and how people were willing to frustrate the process. Yet, here we see slippage of it again. So, Mr. Speaker, I think today is another example of where consensus government isn't working, yet it's supposed to be the principles of how we share and work together. I don't think stating a ballpark number or an actual number does anything to our process but destroy it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the point of privilege. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just for the benefit of the public out there, I think it's important to know we have a very unique system of government. It's a system where everybody in the House has access to information in a way that's unthinkable in other southern parliamentary jurisdictions. This is a Legislature where all the Members have a preview of the entire budget, the entire capital project budgets, confidential briefings on negotiations and everything. I think that's a good thing. I think that's what we want to keep. But in order for that to work we have to follow some rules. The rules are confidential briefings and stay confidential until it's made properly public. The public needs to know that all that information does come out into the public and I am sure we will continue to have a full debate on the Deh Cho Bridge Project, but it's important to know we have rules in this House and those rules have to be followed. If those rules have been breached, then that is breach of parliamentary privilege. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. To the point of privilege. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think this is a very critical point to the operations of consensus government. Many times we hear that everybody wants information, as much information as possible. In order to function properly, we have to feel confident when we share confidential information that it will stay confidential. I don't think we want to allow ourselves to get into a situation where we can pick and choose what is confidential or not and that you can just use it for your own purposes. I think that if we start operating that way, then everybody will start picking and choosing whatever they want to say. On sensitive information that is confidential that can affect negotiations or discussions, we have to make a commitment to keep that principle and honour it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker's Ruling

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. To the point of privilege. Hearing no further comments on

the point of privilege, colleagues, I have heard a lot of discussion on this particular topic in the House. However, not having heard the specific information that I could tell was not released before, I will take this point of privilege under advisement and refer to Hansard. However, I will allow the Member to continue with her reply to opening address with the caution of knowing the rules about disclosing confidential information. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will respect whatever that ruling is. I don't suppose I can retract the number now. It's already out there, but, Mr. Speaker, it has been very, very frustrating as a Member of this Assembly to try to get information about this project.

I just provided a quote from Hansard. When we got elected as the 16th Assembly, I came in here and I asked specific question after specific question of the Premier about if any contracts, any agreements, any concession agreements, anything had been signed by this government and I was repeatedly told that nothing had been signed. Then I asked about the liability of this government and I was told we weren't guaranteeing the big loan, as I just quoted from Hansard, Mr. Speaker.

So I just believe that the public has a right to know what we're up against here. I mean, two weeks ago we heard that this project was on budget. Today the Minister, and I do thank him for being forthcoming with the press release, the press release says that in fact Cabinet's going to be coming back to the Regular Members and asking our support for another \$15 million for this bridge. I just want the public to know that we are in a very unenviable situation right now. It is not a nice feeling to be in a situation where we have a project that's half built, that we asked questions about all along, that we had concerns about, that the information was not fulsome coming back to the Members on this side of the House. I do not think that is... I think that's probably an understatement.

I will continue with my statement and hopefully nothing else in it will offend the Members in the House. I'm not going to be a part of... I want to be respectful of the committee process and the unique ability of the consensus government to share things, but I don't want to be a part of covering up things from the public. Already some people in the public have said – We get criticized if we know things and don't say them. They say, oh, you knew about that all along and you didn't do anything? You didn't say anything? And we get almost tarred with some kind of sense in the public that we were conspiring to cover something up. So I don't know, I guess the line between respecting the committee process, but I did give the Minister notice yesterday I was going to talk about this.

Anyway, let me continue on with my text. Just in case, in the matter of the loan guarantee, anyone

thinks that the GNWT is in the driver's seat on these fiscal forecast scenarios, in fact the lender is in the driver's seat on this and has the ability to call the loan just because of almost, well, the reasons that we've talked about, the ones that are already on the table, the changes and the revisions to the design, the management, the cost. These are all substantive changes to this project. So we may think that we are, and we are trying to, and I'm coming to the fact of what the Minister is trying to do. In that instance we would still be on the hook for the entire loan thus soon putting us over the debt limit or thrusting us into the exercise of scrambling to see what we could sell, how we could cut our capital budget, or where else we could make cuts in order to get ourselves under that \$500 million debt limit.

The other thing about these scenarios is that they do not account for anything unforeseen. We can make assumptions and we can say, well, if this happened or that happened, but we don't have a comprehensive list of unforeseen things. So for our government to operate in a way that financially puts us that close to our borrowing limit of \$500 million, well, I guess the public will have to decide if that is a good idea, because the impacts of this will be felt by everyone.

That is why, in the interest of public and transparent government, the people of the Northwest Territories have the right to fully be aware of how this could impact us all.

The Finance and Transportation Ministers along with their staff are trying to make the best of a very difficult situation that we find ourselves in. I believe they, like us, want to mitigate any negative impact as a result of this recent turn of events. But let's not forget that at least three of them across the floor of the House were at the table when the agreement was signed that got us into the mess that we are in today.

To those who have raised concerns about this project at every juncture along the way and to those who were not around, and some on this side of the table, too. Okay, there's some finger pointing going on here. To those poor folks who were not even around from the inception of this debacle, there has been a collective, sickening feeling as we have contemplated our options. I think that would characterize the last few days. So although we are grappling with potentially very bad news, I think that the people of the NWT have a right to know and hear and comment to us on the situation. We cannot sit here in silence while we know the behind-the-scenes truth of the potential magnitude of the challenge that could be before us.

The failure of our government to manage this scenario through to the best outcome possible would impact major projects in the future such as the Taltson hydro expansion, the Mackenzie Valley

Highway, and literally any other major project that the GNWT has the potential to be involved in. Transparency in public government is of the utmost importance. Trying to cover something like this from public scrutiny and input in spite of sensitive negotiations is not advisable. That's why I've taken the opportunity today.

It would seem to me that under normal circumstances there would be some fallout for those who have propelled us into this mess. But in the interest of working together to stabilize the situation, that is probably a discussion better left to a future time.

On a personal note, I was speaking to my son Jeffery on the phone last night, who, as you know, has a very keen interest in politics. It was very stressful to get involved in this debate. I said that I could say nothing about it. Who could fault me and who could criticize me if I just sat on my hands today and said nothing? I think it's very well known by people that I'm not planning to run again. I could say let the next government worry about it. I said, I don't even know why I care so much. And he said, Mom, you care so much because this is not right. We've got ourselves into a situation that is not right for the people that we represent.

Sometimes leadership isn't about doing what's popular, but it is about doing what's right. Your representatives, the MLAs of this Assembly, are about to be called upon to approve another \$15 million for the Deh Cho Bridge and to try and manage our way through this difficult situation with our colleagues in the Cabinet. There is a right way to go and we would like to take that path.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 11, petitions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 8, written questions, on the order papers of today.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. SPEAKER: Item 8, written questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Written Questions (Reversion)

WRITTEN QUESTION 21-16(4): BARRIER-FREE HOUSING

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

1. Could the Minister provide the official written definition that the Housing Corporation uses to define and demonstrate barrier-free housing?
2. Would the Minister provide details as to the location of each of the 300 barrier-free units in

the corporation's public housing inventory by community and by size of each individual unit with regards to the number of bedrooms?

3. Would the Minister list what modifications, specifically to each unit, which make it fall within the definition being used by the Housing Corporation where they have defined it as being a barrier-free unit?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 13-16(4):

COMMUNITY LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that Monday, February 15, 2010, I will move the following motion: now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that the government develop a program for community long-term care facilities for elders and that the funds for construction of such facilities be included in the 2011-2012 Capital Budget.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 2, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2009-2010; Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act; Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act; Tabled Document 62-16(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2010-2011; and Minister's Statement 47-16(4), Transfer of the Public Housing Rental Subsidy, and by the authority given to me as Speaker by Motion 12-16(4) I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider the business before the House, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I'll call Committee of the Whole to order. Today we have under consideration Bills 2, 4, 7, Tabled Document 62-16(4) and Minister's Statement 47-16(4). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee would like to continue the review of Tabled Document 62-16(4), Main Estimates, and continue with the Housing Corporation and hopefully get MACA read in today.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Okay. With that, we'll take a short break and then come back to deal with the Housing Corporation.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I'd like to call the House back to order. At this time, I'd like to ask the Minister of the Housing Corporation if he'd like to bring in witnesses. Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Robert C. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, Mr. Chair, I would like to bring in witnesses.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does committee agree if the Minister brings in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses in.

For the record, Mr. Minister, can you introduce your witnesses?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me today Mr. Jeff Polakoff on my right, president of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, also I have Mr. Jeff Anderson. He is the vice-president of finance for the NWT Housing Corporation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, witnesses. General comments in regards to the Housing Corporation. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have comments on the general observation of the Housing Corporation. I was reading the Minister's comments to the House here. Probably somewhere down the line I will ask the Minister in terms of the federal funding for the housing programs in the Northwest Territories. I know there is a decrease every year. I believe the Minister at one time, I must have forgot in terms him stating the amount that the federal government is decreasing revenue towards our housing in the Northwest Territories. So far, I understand that there is \$43 million for 2010-11 for housing programs and also that the stimulus federal government funding is going to be the final year in terms of the housing from the federal government as far as the initiative to deal with the economic downturn and to boost the economy in the Northwest Territories. I am going to ask him, in terms of going forward, if he can find any types of other funding that the federal government is going to possibly consider in terms of this initiative here. Of course, our share is 50 percent towards possibly a new type of federal government funding here.

Mr. Chairman, one of the issues I guess is where we have to wrestle with and look at in terms of how we improve our connection in terms of rents in our

communities. There are some discussions in the past as to how that has an impact in terms of our housing in the Sahtu and the more faulty houses in the Northwest Territories in terms of our rent collection policy and how we are working with the communities.

Mr. Chairman, the one initiative that worked really well in the past and was to have a community liaison person in terms of the programs, in terms of the policies and the staff sometimes in our smaller communities are so swamped and so busy. It is really difficult for them. Members of the local housing authorities are working full time and don't have the access to all the programs in detail. So that community liaison person would be a real boost in terms of improving and strengthening probably some of the programs in our communities. I am just going to ask for it in terms of is there something that can be done in terms of having one dedicated person just focus on housing programs that can go into small communities, go into people's houses, talk to them, sit down and have coffee and not rush through the program. Sit down and talk with them. Go back the next day. Talk some more week after week. Get them to ask the questions and not have any sense of urgency and get it out the right way. That is a very valuable program that the corporation didn't fund anymore. I will ask about that.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to state that programs such as health care, HELP care, those are good programs. As a matter of fact, just dealing with one of the programs, I sent a note over to the Minister's office in terms of when the programs people come into our communities as part of the program is to get some training in the format of a workshop or a conference. I think there needs to be some communication with the staff when they come into communities. There was an incident that was no fault of anybody in my community, where there were two deaths within a week and we just couldn't get the people there. They were quite concerned, because the applicant said they needed to be there to be part of the qualification requirement. I just hope that the staff in the future has some indication as to how is the community doing or can you come in or is it okay. Also with these programs also to look at having someone who is well versed in the language in terms of translating this stuff into the language here. Sometimes we do this with all good intentions. However, maybe it is not the intended target that we want to get. I just want to say this here to the staff and to the Minister.

The other one is the public housing stock. I have some concerns in the amount of vacancies or boarded up homes in the community. We are just trying to have a good communication as to say why these houses are all boarded up. We are looking for, especially in my region where the Minister presented the 2009 NWT Community Housing

Survey in my region. My region isn't doing too well. I am scared about that. I'm not too sure which angle to go at in terms of how we look at the results. The numbers are there. How do we tackle that issue here?

With the housing stock, the land available and the replacement of public housing units, I wanted to look at some of that issue there. I know housing and the land available for housing is pretty critical. That needs to be thought out more in terms of how you go about making land available. Some people still have the idea that sometimes we don't have land for something. Housing takes it all up. That is part of their requirement. They want some security or land tenure in order to build a house. Sometimes we come to an impasse. Sometimes it is hard to work out some of the issues here. I think that is something that is good in terms of putting the needs of the community and the housing together to get more out of it there.

The energy assessment and retrofits of public housing is something that we looked at in my community in terms of the older units. Today I still go into some of the communities and I can't believe that some of these units are still like that. The doors are still two or three inches, the windows are fogging up, floors are cold. There are lots. The Minister has a real big load in terms of working with... This is not new. He knows well that this is not new. It is just a continuous issue. How do we work on this? There is, of course, not enough money to do what we want to do. You can see the numbers here. You can see the numbers of houses that the survey speaks to. That is something that I am still going to be pressing the Minister on.

I am really happy that the transfer is going back to the Housing Corporation. A little bit of reluctant caution here not to bring out the balloons and the fanfare, because I really haven't seen it yet. I haven't seen it in terms of whether it is a good thing. I know what people in my communities are going to say. It is a good thing. Local housing authorities, board members actually made a motion to meet a percent to this Legislative Assembly. I am glad this Minister is in and the other Minister I worked it out so that it goes back to the Housing Corporation. Chalk one up for the Housing Corporation and this government in terms of having this back to the Housing Corporation. It is what you do with it is going to be the key. Probably the Minister is going to work at that area.

Mr. Chairman, the other thing I wanted to say is that I hope that we work very hard on this recent survey here. Again, I found it very disturbing. I had a lot of time to read it -- I was flying back from Edmonton -- it is a good thing. We need to tackle square one.

So I'm going to look forward to the Minister's strategy as to how do we deal with this to bring the numbers down. What's the department's strategy?

How do we go and how do we collaborate with ourselves and the communities to bring these numbers down, especially in Colville Lake and other communities? So that's all I have, Mr. Chair, in terms of my comments to the department.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. We don't have anybody else on the list, so I'll allow the Minister to respond to the Member's general comments.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member raises a few points that are of concern to us. Federal funding is obviously the big one. That's something that this year alone I think we're in the neighbourhood of \$670,000 that we've lost. Since the start of this, I think it's up to \$5.8 million and that goes into the Member's next point of improving the rent collection. I think that would go a long way into alleviating some of the money that we could be losing from CMHC. It's a message that we're starting to get out there and I think folks out there are starting to realize that it's to their benefit, too, if they're kept current and up to date, entering into repayment plans and that would qualify them for a lot of programs.

The community liaison was a good program that was in place. Unfortunately when there was a budget reduction exercise a couple of years ago, they were the ones that got cut, but we're willing to take the advice of committee and work with the communities to see if there's an appetite to bring these positions back, especially when it comes to the homeownership initiative and just giving out advice in that they were well versed, they knew the communities very well. We have the tenant relations officers that deal with the public housing issues.

The translation, we try and have folks that speak the local language to some of our folks when they're in visiting or having people coming in to see them, just to make sure that interpretation is right and the clients understand the programs and what we're trying to do for them.

The public housing stock, we're making some improvements to the public housing stock. The Member spoke about the energy efficiency and that's a huge goal of ours through the major M and I program and the public housing stock and the CARE program. The money has gone up considerably for that and we're having more uptake. Even if it's a simple thing like replacing windows and doors goes a long way into that, and we've seen that the old windows that came with a lot of the old packages, I think you've seen them, they're very draughty.

The vacant units continue to be a concern. We have about 192 vacant units. There are about 150 of them that are being repaired. So we're hoping to get those back into the inventory and there's 42 that are available.

I appreciate the Member's comments and all the other Members' comments on the Public Housing Rental Subsidy. We're looking for a smooth transition. We were able to do this work with the folks that we had on the ground and we're looking at having the LHOs take over the responsibility of the assessments in June. So we'll have that done quite soon and we want to make sure that we do it right and that there's a very smooth transition. We have to work with our colleagues over at ECE, but as far as our capacity to take this back on, I think it's well known and we've heard from a lot of communities that they're ready.

The community needs survey, as I stated yesterday, would go a long way into determining our infrastructure acquisition plan for not this fiscal year because this is the budget we're dealing with now, but when we come forward to committee with next year's infrastructure, it should reflect the needs of the communities according to this survey. So we're looking forward to that.

I think I've touched on the Member's points and I'm sure the Member will have questions as we go through detail. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments? Detail. Okay, we can turn to page 5-41, financial summary. At this time I'd like to suggest we defer that page. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Okay if we can move to page 5-43, corporate summary, operations expenditure summary. Again this is an information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed. Okay, in regard to moving on to page 5-44, active positions by regions, again, information item. Are there any questions? Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On the increase of nine positions, could I get a little more detail on that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Housing.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Some of the positions are for implementing the Canada Economic Action Plan stimulus money. As we know, there's more and more projects getting out the door and these are technical folks that we have on the ground to assist with that. Their positions will be lapsing once we're through with the money, but at this point there was so much money being poured into the communities and into the regions we felt that we needed some extra help just to deal with this money.

The others are mortgage collection specialists. We've heard the discussion on arrears and we're looking for some folks to assist us with our

mortgage collections and I think I've covered them all. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. YAKELEYA: With the federal funding, the one the Minister made a reference to, is this going to be one year or is this ongoing? Is it going to increase sometime in terms of the ongoing positions for the corporation?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The money that we got from the federal government for the Canada Economic Action Plan, this coming fiscal year, '10-11, is the last year of that money. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, and now the mortgage collection specialists. Is this going to be part of their long-term O and M or is this going to be a program where they'll train or work with the local housing authorities to take more of a role into it and the mortgage collection specialists would ease their way out? So is this going to be a part of the ongoing O and M?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The Member is correct; these two, the mortgage collection specialists will be part of our operations from this point on.

MR. YAKELEYA: So it's going to be part of the operations in terms of these mortgage collection specialists. Now these mortgage collection specialists, are they going to be in the region or is that going to be coming out of the headquarters to take care of the regions and the communities?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: These positions will be in the Executive headquarters and they will be supporting the work of the regions. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Okay, we're on page 5-44, again, information item, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed. Moving on to executive, page 5-47, operations expenditure summary. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I noticed that the executive is responsible for coordinating housing issues across government departments and agencies. Strategic planning is a key element of the corporation, particularly long-term strategic planning and direction and there's research and other functions with the executive. I see an important opportunity for the Housing Corporation to address both some of our housing needs and some of our other broader government goals, including local economic development. We've heard how the massive amounts of work they are doing and the most recent stimulus funding and so on is providing jobs. These are things that are placed on the ground as opposed to really engaging a community-level partnership and I'm wondering what the planning is strategically for developing partnering programs with community governments and CMHC, which is a corporation that seems very open and with deep pockets when

it comes to innovative approaches and trying to do things a little bit differently.

The City of Yellowknife has shown a similar initiative to develop and construct locally appropriate housing where feasible, using local materials, local skills, those skills that are there perhaps enhanced with some capacity building, and strengthening of maintenance skills already there for locally appropriate housing, but again enhanced through some capacity building.

I believe my colleague Mr. Krutko has mentioned several times the niche for modest sized homes out on the land that could be used by people with that interest, as well as, of course, log homes in communities using local materials. I realize the costs are different, but partnerships and skill building are the important aspects there, and, of course, the potential for in a more fertile way spreading the energy efficiency knowledge that is getting well embedded in the Housing Corporation.

That's sort of a long description but I'm convinced that we need fully integrated approaches, things that go much more in-depth now than we have in the past. These are embedded challenges in this approach, I'm the first to admit. But on the other hand, the benefits are spread across many of our goals and priorities. I'm just wondering if there's any reflection of that sort of philosophy or if that could be developed so that it is reflected in the budget planning that the executive does in the Housing Corporation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Housing.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the Member's point, he talks about the local economic development and the Housing Corporation in partnership with the LHOs are some of the biggest employers in the community whether it's guys doing maintenance or during the summer you can have up to 16 or 17 people if you're doing a lot of the M and I work yourself. So we contribute quite a bit in that regard. The local materials, I think I made reference to yesterday, were possible. We'd love to use local materials for construction, however they do have to meet a standard and if those materials were to meet the building standard, then we'd be glad to use them.

Housing is always interested in partnerships. We have partnership with... And the Member and I discussed this yesterday in the Chamber on the good work that Yellowknife was doing, and I said then that we were at the table with them and continue to work with them. It is our intent to be part of the long-term plan on this Affordable Housing Initiative and the affordable housing organization when it rolls out.

So we want to be a part of that. We need to have discussion with committee on some of what they'd like to see in some of our longer term goals as far

as planning, because we're getting to a point now that unless we work out arrangements with the deep-pocketed CMHC, we're going to have to look at creative and innovative ways to continue to deliver with some declining funding. So we're always looking to develop partnerships with folks out there that have the same interests that we do of providing affordable housing to residents of the Northwest Territories. It's an ongoing process and I'm looking forward to some committee time to seek their input and incorporate that into a long-term vision.

MR. BROMLEY: I am cognizant of the references in the discussion we had yesterday and so on. I appreciate the Minister's comments. Again I'm trying to emphasize, too, the coordination role and integration with other government departments and agencies and wouldn't expect that the Housing Corporation would do all this. There are other departments that could assist with developing the local materials so that they did meet standards. The Housing Corporation could probably work to come up with some forms of appropriate housing that perhaps didn't have the same types of standards and meet the situation halfway. There are others involved in capacity building that could be brought into the equation and I'm sure are. But that's the sort of thing that I was looking for. Sort of the strategic planning sorts of things. I think we need to, as the Minister says, our resources are declining sooner or later, and more and more, almost regardless of what happens, we're going to be depending on local capacity for these things. I'm trying to seek ways, as I'm sure the Minister is, to help ensure that those skills are on the ground in all our communities so that when we do hit rock bottom or should we, the potential is there to pick up the slack.

I again appreciate the comments of the Minister and I would just ask him to make sure that is emphasized in the strategic planning for the Housing Corporation. Just a comment.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. McLeod, did you want to respond to the comment?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will take committee's advice and input when we're developing the strategy. We need to make sure that when the money is declining, we're able to meet the challenge. We do continue to support local development. I know from experience that there were times where the Housing Corporation would make a commitment to buy materials from local producers and distribute them to the LHOs, and unfortunately these products didn't quite measure up and there were issues with that. But we're always looking for ways that we can continue to support and we'll make it part of our strategy and work with, like I said, committee, because they know best what works in the

community and what people are saying. I commit to the Member that we will continue to do that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you very much, Mr. McLeod. Next on my list I have Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that the corporation realizes we can't do everything. I think it's critical that we do formulate partnerships, especially for communities that are trying to find unique ways to deal with the housing crises in our communities. Also trying to work with the clients to work around some of the situations. I think it's through those partnerships that we are going to have to develop a way.

A good example is the liaison positions that were put into communities. It was a \$20,000 investment and for that investment that was made, it really improved the communications between the community clients, the political organizations in the community, and the people at the regional level and headquarters. You had a means of communicating. You had people on the ground that were local and really realized the importance of housing programs and services to our communities. I think for that \$20,000 investment versus having somebody that's hired full time and having them in headquarters and having to put them up in government offices, that the savings were huge compared to the practice of today.

I think it's important that we sometimes have to take a look at where the highest needs are. I know you just put out your report and it looks like there's been some major increases in housing upwards of 10 percent from the previous survey. It would be interesting to see what the previous survey was compared to the one presented in the House here yesterday.

Again, I think it's critical that this government and the Housing Corporation build on those relationships, because I think, like you say, we do realize that we're going to have some challenges going forward. But, I think, if we can find unique ways to deliver services maybe a little cheaper, a little more unique ways of doing it, that we can save ourselves money in the long term.

The other issue that I'd like to reflect is in regard to the whole area of single housing. I mentioned earlier in regard to dealing with single dwellings to family units to aging populations by way of elder care and, more importantly, realizing that we do have to have different types of housing units to meet the different segments of our population. I think it's important to realize that we look at our programs by way of need. I know the frustration from a lot of community members that we have a lot of units in our communities and yet we still see the percentages going up by need in regard to core need, but yet the Housing Corporation has a couple hundred units on the ground, boarded up, not being used. I think if you got those units up and ready to

go or simply getting rid of them and giving them to individuals, that it will reduce the core needs in a lot of our communities. I think it's important that we do look at that.

I would just like to leave it at that and let the Minister respond to my questions. I may have a few more later. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the Member said it very well when he first started, when he said the Housing Corporation can't do everything. That's a very important comment, especially with the challenges we face right now. We do continue to work with the communities. We're trying to have community-based decisions. We work with communities with lease commitments. We have communities where we're leasing space from them. In some communities, a small community might be one building that we're leasing from them and being rented out. The housing for staff was another one where there was a good example of the Housing Corporation working in partnership with the communities, the dev corps, the community corps. There's been a great deal of interest in that. So we're working with them.

The single dwellings, that again it goes back to another challenge we're facing with declining funding. We'll have to have a look at how we do our infrastructure. If it's more economical to do multi-family type buildings then that's the direction we may have to go. We see some of our biggest need being single and one-bedroom units. I think that's some of our highest needs. The elders, we continue and we will work with Health and Social Services to come up with a plan. If we can form a partnership then we'd be able to put the infrastructure up. So it is a growing concern, especially with the changing demographics and more people getting, I don't want to say older, but getting more experienced.

Then the vacant units, I did quote some numbers before. We do have a number of vacant units across the Territories and we are trying to find solutions for some of the homeownership. The public housing ones are some of the numbers that I quoted where there is work being done to approximately 150 units. Once that work gets completed, and this year with the huge influx of money from the feds we're able to do a lot of major M and I's, and that could be one of the reasons we have so many vacant units. I can commit to this Assembly and to all Members that it will be our goal in the coming year, in the coming fiscal year, to try and knock all those vacant units off so when the Housing Corporation reports back to this Assembly this time next year, I'm hoping that our numbers are way down and there's not so many vacant units. As the Member said, it does affect our overall core

need, so if we can get these 150 units on the ground then that will go a long way into meeting the core need, and I think that's going to be a goal of ours. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. KRUTKO: One of the other areas that we do, as a corporation, have to look at is that we are going to be taking back the rent supp program from housing. I noted that that money is still in the ECE budget but again, it has to come over. So there is going to be a transitional period.

I know that we were looking at some alternatives in regard to challenges we're facing as the Housing Corporation such as land development. I know we have put land officers in place in different areas to assist in that area, but I think with the decline of the different programs, we may have to see where we can fit those positions moving forward or finding ways of...because we are looking at transitional process before we have some major construction by way of the 500 units under the Affordable Housing Initiative.

Now, most of the money that we're looking at coming forward is more dealing with retrofits. So I think because we're shifting our focus in regard to actually physically finding land for housing now, actually moving to bring our houses up to certain standards by retrofits, that we now have a different group of delivery agencies that we're going to have to look at in regard to those services. I'm just wondering where are we in regard to making the transition from actually physically building housing to renovating units.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We are working with MACA on a land development strategy, but we have made significant progress in the last little while. Communities where there was some land tied up are starting to make more and more land available to the Housing Corp, because they realize too that it's beneficial to them. We've seen a couple of good examples of that. If that partnership continues to flourish then I think we're going to see that we'll be able to have more and more access to land. As the Member knows, there's lots of band land in some of the communities. That's an ongoing process and it's one that we're quite pleased with. We're making some progress with that and the more we work with the communities and they realize that it would be good for them because it would allow more houses to get on the ground, and that's something we're working on.

I think the Member's second point was on the transition from public housing to private housing. With that, we continue to try and get our ownership programs out there. The renovation money for homeowners has gone up quite a bit. There's been a huge investment in major M and I's and the public housing stock. With the money that we receive from the feds and matched by this government, we're

hoping to make huge progress in the quality of the units in the communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we're on page 5-47, information item. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Just in regard to one of the items that you have on this page, this talks about research. I know that we had a pilot project a number of years ago called the log housing initiative program and I think that a lot of good work was done under that where you actually had people trained and you brought people in that were professionals on building logs houses. I'd just like to know exactly where is that program by way of moving forward. I think that a lot of communities are still requesting that we have such an initiative by way of log housing initiatives. We've built houses in communities. Basically, the individuals went out, got the logs, they brought the logs in, they worked on them, they brought a professional in to show them how to build a log house, constructed, people were trained. For me, I think that alone has the potential of generating jobs and putting money back into the economy and, more importantly, making communities more independent when it comes to constructing houses. So I'd just like to know, is this department looking at implementing such a program going forward in regard to research and development?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I mean, obviously, we're always interested in doing some research. I mean, you obviously have to try to get the best product on the ground. One of the drawbacks to this particular one was good that people were able to get trained. One of the big drawbacks is you have to make a business case for everything and if it's too expensive to build, then it is something that we have to take into consideration. If you can get more stick built units on the ground as opposed to log homes, then that is something you have to be aware of. We are always looking for ways to improve the quality of our products on the ground. It is communities' desire in some cases to go with log homes. If it was economically feasible, it met all the energy standards, then it is something that we would be quite willing to do, because we are always about supporting community development, community economic development. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. KRUTKO: I think one of the most accessible programs that we delivered in the Northwest Territories where we don't have LHOs or people basically still are pretty independent was the HAP housing program where people went out of their way. They cut their logs. They took the initiative on themselves. They got a lot. They basically went out, put sweat equity into this thing. They helped build the house. At the end of the day, they owned it. Yet, there was money there to deal with electrical

issues, deal with the mechanical stuff which was separate from the program. I think that, if anything, that is how we are going to have to meet those communities that don't have LHOs, that don't have a Housing presence. I think that a lot or most of those aboriginal communities are in the Deh Cho.

Looking at statistics, the Deh Cho is the most affected in regards to the latest survey that came out in regards to core needs and adequacy in regards to housing. I think that we have to look at programs that have worked in the past where people will actually put sweat equity into these units and make a go of it and, at the end of the day, make them successful. If you go back in the history of the Housing Corporation, that was probably the most successful program that was put in place where people actually... It was their home. They built it. They put time and effort into it. I think that, as a corporation, we have to look at the things that have worked. I think that a lot of the times government means well, but when you are telling somebody you have to go to the bank and get a mortgage for \$250,000 or \$300,000, a lot of people don't fit in that bracket.

A lot of people in our communities, all they want is a simple dwelling in regards to having a wood stove and maybe a fridge and basically have simple necessities of life to maintain a household. I think sometimes the simple stuff are the most practical things for a lot of people. I would just like to know in regards to going forward as a corporation that we look at some of these initiatives that have worked in communities where people are independent, where they are self-reliant and, more importantly, they are still people in the communities who are very proud of that program. I would just like to suggest that that be something that you look at. Because you look at the statistics in regards to the needs survey, you can see where the biggest needs still are and biggest needs from what you look at in some of the Sahtu and the Nahendeh riding. You can tell a lot of those communities you are talking about don't have LHOs. Look at Colville Lake at 95 percent. That is unacceptable.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I am very familiar with the SHAG program where people harvested their own logs. At that time, the package I think was only \$30,000 and that got you your windows, doors and everything else, but the bulk of the work and I know people that did all the work. The Member I think was also referring to the HAP program, which was a very successful program where materials were provided to individuals that qualified and then they supplied the labour. It started going to where everything was being supplied, but it was a very successful program.

One of the things that we are seeing today through the CARE homeowners home repair program is a lot of the people that had the HAP program are now

applying for the repair program because most of these units are older. These were programs that work in the communities. If someone wanted to build a log home and they qualified for one of the programs, then they can have up to \$125,000 to do this and then anything above and beyond that would obviously have to go to a mortgage or there would be a retainment plan. This is one of the things, and I have made the offer to sit with committee and seek their input as we try and develop a basic unit strategy.

One thing we have to be careful of when we get into that discussion -- and we will be able to have a discussion hopefully before the end of session -- is that there are some folks who still want the plumbing. I am not sure if we can not include that. This is a discussion that I think we need to have with committee. I have made that offer, because I would be very interested in getting committee's opinion on what they see as a basic housing design concept and then we can take it from there and see if it is something that will work. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Next on my list is Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had an opportunity today to brief the review, the 2009 Housing Needs Survey. As indicated in the Member's statement or indicated in my discussion making some remarks on the budget, one of those two places yesterday, I talked about the increase in the core need across the Territory. Now it is kind of an interesting situation, because we can't just look at the increase overall because the actual true reflection of what has happened in the small communities is actually greater than what the actual increase of the core needs in the needs survey is because of the decrease in Yellowknife, because Yellowknife has about half of the households. If Yellowknife has 60 percent of the households and Yellowknife decreases by a certain number, then you have to take the rest of the Territories, look at the overall increase plus the increase in that is the opposite effect of Yellowknife. It is like a seesaw. When the overall Territory increases by 3 percent but yet Yellowknife decreases by a certain amount of percentage and that is half of the households in the Territories, that means the increase in the small communities is greater than the average of 3 percent. That is what my point is.

It is very difficult to pinpoint exactly what the issue is. However, I think one of the issues is programs and policies that are being delivered by the Housing Corporation. I don't see a real logical reason for eliminating programs and reducing programs and rolling programs into other programs and consolidating programs if the effect is going to be a decrease in core needs. You have the NWT Housing Corporation who has various programs,

some targeted to seniors, some targeted to seniors and disabled, so on and so forth. Some actually is targeted to singles and the majority targeted to families. You have that type of regime and your core need in the Territories is going down. The Housing Corporation decides that they are going to change that. They consolidate all of the programs into essentially four programs and then the core need goes up. Is it not incumbent upon the Housing Corporation to work towards decreasing core needs?

This is going to be my first question. Why is it that when places like Norman Wells, Yellowknife and other communities, which had a core need below the territorial average, went down further when the core needs that were already above the territorial average, above 16 percent in 2004, went up? Could I get the Minister to maybe explain that first? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Housing.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I think I'm going to let you try to explain this. Mr. Chair, the Member is throwing a lot of numbers out there. So I think what I'm going to do, and I couldn't quite understand it and I'm not going to pretend that I did.

You know, my line is that we're trying to use the core needs survey to identify where we can put units on the ground in the '11-12 budget. Obviously the Member feels that there is some issue with the way the numbers are and we just looked in some of the communities... I mean, core need is also affordability and with the economic downturn obviously that has a huge effect on the core need, the suitability, the adequacy and then that's something that through the major M and I and the \$14 million that we're investing in that area we're trying to address that. So that should affect the core need when you're talking about adequacy and then affordability, you know, once the economy picks up again I'm quite confident it will, and I think that's going to affect the core need too. But the numbers that the Member was referring to, I might have to sit down, I think, with the Member and get an explanation and just have a discussion as to those numbers. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. BEAULIEU: Okay, I guess in simple terms, my question is the Housing Corporation has programs in play that are doing their job, right? It's taking the core need in the Northwest Territories and taking the core need down in all the appropriate communities where core need is highest, which in effect is bringing the overall core need down. So if we just divide the amount of units in the Territories in half, half is in Yellowknife, half is outside of Yellowknife. If the overall core need goes up, right? It's simple math. If the overall core need goes up but the core need in Yellowknife goes down, that means that the actual core need outside of Yellowknife has gone up greater than the

average core need. Okay, 3 percent, that's all I'm saying. But I don't even want to go there because I guess I'd have to have a white board to try and explain what I'm saying. It's just that I'm good at numbers and I know all these things in my head.

Now, what I am asking is if you have programs that are effective, going down, taking the core need going down in the appropriate places in the communities that have the highest core needs, there's no problem, no problem. All of a sudden the corporation comes in, takes all those programs and replaces them with four programs, essentially the story is that all the other 14 programs that were there are still rolled up into these four programs. Yet, after a few years of that application the overall core need has gone up. I know that M and I is protecting assets of the Housing Corporation, but it doesn't take people out of core need, okay? People in public housing are protected from being in core need except for the affordability aspect of it, and, in essence, a guy that's in public housing pays according to income, he's supposed to be allocated a suitable unit and the NWT Housing Corporation's LHOs' maintenance employees essentially ensure that they don't have an adequacy need. So that's okay and it's good that the Housing Corporation spends money on M and I and fixes up public housing units. It does help the overall stock and operating costs and everything, but I guess I'll just bring it down to a question.

I recognize that this is not the Minister that took these programs on also, but the consolidation of these programs hasn't worked. Is the Minister prepared to look at, like you just indicated, Mr. Chairman, a HAP program, look at other programs and address other ways of taking core need down? If we're doing the same thing over and over again and expecting it to work, I think that that's a definition of something. Now, that is something we shouldn't continue to do. Will the Minister look at reincorporating programs that used to work to address core need? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Good question. Minister of Housing.

---Laughter

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member raised a few points there. I think he's saying that because of these four programs it's his opinion that our core need went up based on...(inaudible)...and the four programs cover just about everything. Even the overall houses that need repair affect our core need. That's factored into our core need, public housing units. So that's factored in and I think we've talked about the number of units that are under repair. That would obviously affect our core need.

I think in response to Mr. Krutko's question before, or Mr. Bromley, we have 150 units that are under repair now that are vacant. That affects our core

need and this is the instruction that I've given to the Housing Corporation is exactly what the Member is referring to, is Members still feel like there's some gaps in some of the programs and as the Minister I've heard it and I've raised the issue on numerous occasions. Some of the homeownership issues, there's some gaps in there that have been brought to my attention and I'd like to work with the corporation to try and address some of these gaps if it means, you know, we're not stuck on four, if it means adding another one where it will address some of the gaps that are there, then, you know, we'd be willing to have that discussion. But I think before there was I think 14 and it did get quite confusing for some people. Which one do I fit under? I think the four that we have now basically covers a wide range of people, pretty well all people. But, like I said, we're not stuck on four and I'm looking forward to having a discussion with committee on some of the future direction that the Housing Corporation needs to go, but it is very important to me and to Members that we find a way to address some of the gaps, especially the homeownership gaps. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Before I move on I'd just like to recognize some people in the gallery and thank you for coming today as we take part in the procedures. Welcome to the House.

---Applause

We're on page 5-47, executive, operations expenditure summary. Any questions? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving on to page 5-49, financial and infrastructure services, operations expenditure summary. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I note land acquisition and planning is part of this division of responsibility and the budget they have to deliver this. I want to just mention this is an important issue to my constituents, especially in the communities of Ndilo and Dettah. They're particularly challenging issues because of where the land situation is right now and it's required to be resolved with respect to establishing a land tenure in order to get the needed housing in place. Really at this time I want to mention that the North Slave office of the Housing Corporation has made considerable progress in recent months and is working hard to catch up on that in both of these communities; some exciting opportunities developing for getting that much needed housing in place this summer. I want to give a little tip of the hat to the Minister and his staff for getting that done. I would just ask, you know, I don't know if this was a one-off or if we have semi-permanently resolved the land issues for now until they get resolved in a more permanent sense through some claims resolutions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Housing.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I appreciate the Member's tip of the hat. It was some good work done on North Slave's part to work with his communities to come to a resolution. It's not something we consider one-off. It's something that we'd like to do on a regular basis now and I think communities will realize that it's beneficial to them, too, to work with the corporation and identify land and maybe make land available for units. I think this is going to be an ongoing piece of collaboration between communities and the Housing Corporation. It will be beneficial to both because we want to put the product on the ground and the communities want the product on the ground. This will be beneficial and I think this is going to be a good partnership. It's something that we'd like to do on a permanent basis.

MR. BROMLEY: That's all I really had. I have had the opportunity to interact with some of the staff working on this. I learned a lot and I thank the Minister for that opportunity. I can't claim that I still understand it all because the land issue is so complex, but I appreciate learning about it and the efforts being taken to get that resolved. Just a comment.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Next on the list is Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a couple of questions here. I noted when we discussed the business plan in the fall that there was a deletion of the funding that was intended for housing for staff. I understand that it's been moved to another department. I wonder if I can get confirmation of that. Does Housing have any idea of what this other department is going to do with that funding?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Housing.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This particular figure is not with another department. It was one-time funding for the Housing Corporation. It's still in our department. We are working with communities, some of the development corporations and that, and I think we had that discussion during the briefing. The money was a one-time figure and it's declining now and not part of this budget.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for that. I guess it begs the question, what activities are ongoing to create housing for staff in small communities?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I was rushing there. Just a second here. We have had very good uptake from a lot of the communities, the development corporations, the community corporations, the folks out in the community that there was an incentive for them to provide housing for staff. I do have some figures and information that I would be more than willing to share with the Member.

We've got presently 16 signed agreements. We have 16 signed agreements. We still have some communities that we're working with. Some are in progress while some are just putting some plans together. We've held the money because they've asked us to hold the money as they would like to come up with a plan. But we do have 16 signed agreements and I think this is one that the communities are buying into because they would be able to provide the housing for staff and then they would see the revenue from it.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for that. That's really encouraging. That's an area that requires some activity and it's great to see that the communities are taking an interest and are taking over the responsibility for that kind of housing. My concern is what there is going to be ongoing. If this is going to be one-time funding and there's no funding in this next 2010-2011 budget for housing for staff, how does the Minister expect that this initiative will be kept alive and that we will be able to involve other communities beyond the 16 that are currently involved?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The 16 that I referred to are 16 signed agreements that we have in place right now. There are still a few more that are working on finalizing their plans and then we'll sign an agreement with them and that will be part of that \$1.5 million. This is the program that requires continued funding. We would have to add that into our budget for the coming year or make monies available, because there does seem to be a great interest in this particular initiative. I can commit to the Member that if the interest is out there and the communities are still involved, we're always willing to do what we can to be able to fund it, so it is on an ongoing basis.

MS. BISARO: So to put words in the Minister's mouth, there is going to be money available if people need it. I'm just kidding.

The other question I had related to arrears and debts and mortgage collections by housing authorities, we discussed this, as well, at business plan time. We were advised that things were improving at that point. The corporation is giving a certain amount of leeway to the local housing organizations and letting them collect as much as possible and then things get turned over to the corporation to kind of go a little further. I'm just wondering if I can get an update from the Minister on how things are going in terms of debt collection and mortgage collection and arrears and so on.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The Member raises a good point. It's always beneficial if we discuss the arrears and get the message out there, that there are a lot of people that have been coming to the LHOs and making arrangements to start working on their arrears. In most cases with the LHOs it could be as low... I mean, anything that they can pay a

month is usually welcome. We've seen cases where folks have started a repayment plan, they've honoured their commitment, they still are in some arrears but because they've honoured their commitment, they've been put back on the waiting list and a few of them have actually got back into public housing and are some of our best tenants now. I think there's been great improvement here in our arrears and people willing to make the commitment to start paying it off. It's still a challenge, obviously, but I think more and more we're seeing out there that folks are serious about trying to write off their arrears, because they realize that it does prevent them in some cases from accessing some programs or getting back into public housing. I think they've come to realize that this is a commitment that they need to make. It has improved and we're looking forward again to the coming year where we can see more of an improvement in the collection of arrears, rental arrears.

Mortgage arrears is still one we're trying to work with the clients especially, because that is a huge concern when you're \$10 million in mortgage arrears. So we want to work with the clients. The LHOs and Housing Corporation are usually very flexible when people start wanting to make repayment plans. As long as they honour their commitment, then things will usually start falling into place for them. But there has been a great improvement and we're looking forward to a bigger improvement in the coming year.

MS. BISARO: Just one last comment. I guess, then, that the Minister would say that this approach, this process is successful and he expects that it will be further successful in this coming year. Is that correct?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: That is correct. We're looking to make great improvement this year. As I mentioned before, we're hiring some mortgage collection people. That should help. We're having more and more people approaching us now to work out repayment plans and the message is getting out there that if you want to qualify for some of the programs, then it's to your best interest to address your arrears issue and you're usually able to qualify for some of the programs afterwards. So we are looking forward to a big improvement in the coming year and when the Housing Corporation is before this committee again next year I'm hoping that we have some real good solid numbers to report.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Next on my list I have Mr. Yakeleya.

AN HON. MEMBER: Tell him 'yes' would have done it.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The land requirements. Some of the issues that we have with land requirements in some of our communities and because it's quite complex and

sometimes we don't get the houses we want built for that year because of the issue with the municipal or, as in our case, with the Sahtu municipal lands there are certain agreements that need to be put in place before the Housing Corporation puts houses in the communities. Sometimes when these agreements don't come in time because of the schedule, sometimes we're told that if you don't get your land, it's too bad, you can't have a house in your community, and it goes to another community or doesn't happen.

I want to ask the Minister about the type of work that's been done with his corporation on the land acquisition issues in the communities, working closely with the Minister of MACA on how that issue is being handled in that we want houses built in our communities. However, we're not going to give land away for free to the Housing Corporation or anything like that. We've got to come to some kind of agreement to see where those houses can be built in our community. People don't want to give land away for free, but they also recognize the need to have houses in our communities. It's a double-edged sword. Is that something this Minister is aware of in the Sahtu region for getting houses?

I hear one of the complaints is that with Housing sometimes they don't have the land so they can't build houses in the communities. It doesn't go too well with our leaders in the community. I want to ask the Minister on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, I'll have a discussion with the MACA Minister. It is an area we've seen a great improvement and I was responding to Mr. Bromley before when I mentioned that there were some issues worked out between his communities and the Housing Corporation to making land available. We were having good discussions with one of the Member's communities where they're thinking about making land available. As I said before, putting houses on the ground is something that we do. Land tenure is something we continue to work on. Communities are starting to realize now that it is to their benefit to have land available. We're not unreasonable. We don't expect anything for free. Housing never gets anything for free, but we're willing to work with the communities and try to identify lands so that if they're allocated houses, there will be no saying that we don't have the land, we can't build the house. We never want to get into that situation. So it's beneficial to both parties to make sure the land is available and we're making good progress in our dealings with some of the communities that have band lands and other lands of those type.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chair, could I then dare say that if these issues are not resolved in terms of the land tenure issues for housing that's allocated for a

community and they're still working on a land issue here, that this community, any communities, you know, would they lose their unit? Would it go to another community outside the region, within the region because the units are there? I think sometimes that's under the impression of the leadership, that if we don't get this unit, and because we know the urgency and the need for housing, that would make a, what do they call it, a time compressor, compressing time to be a quick decision. Sometimes it's not good. That's what I want to clear up.

The other one is that there are long outstanding issues with the community in terms of when the community is just coming to a settlement, and this goes back to some days when they just built houses wherever they were going to build houses. They put their houses up and then later, in the '70s, Housing comes in and starts acquiring land and start building public housing units, and some of these verbal agreements that Housing didn't go back to. So it's still in some people's memory in terms of land that Housing took. It's not theirs but they took it. It's just the way things were at. That's why it's hard for some of the old-timers to really understand what the program is like. Some of the old-timers say, well, we had our old house here and it got ripped down and they put us into a new public housing and we don't have our land back here. So a lot of issues and that underlying stuff like this here.

Those are some of the things that are being looked at in our communities. I guess the one question I have is for the Minister in terms of units when they're designated or allocated to a community. I have some information that some of the houses are not there because the land is unavailable and they're still working out the agreements. So are they still scheduled for that community?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We still want to put the units in the community. Land tenure is a very important issue and we can't, as the Member actually pointed out as he was speaking, we can't go to what he said, the day was where Housing...and I don't think Housing just took anything, but maybe they worked out some agreements with people staying on those particular lands and I think we're seeing more and more of that today where maybe there was some misinformation or misinterpretation or misunderstanding, but those things can be worked out.

The land tenure is the most important part, because we need to make sure we have proper land tenure so there's not a dispute down the road saying, you know, we didn't make an agreement for this land. We thought we had an agreement so we put a house up, and we don't want to get into a situation where they're saying put it on skids and pull it away

to another place. It's in our best interest to make sure that the proper land tenure is there. It's in the community's best interest too. We're starting to see a bit of an improvement in identifying lands for housing, so it's something we'll continue to work on. As far as saying that if land is not available you can't put your unit there, that only makes sense because you can't just put it up anywhere. We need to have those issues resolved, but we'll do what we can to make sure they're resolved before, as a last resort, maybe doing what the Member has alluded to. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you. I think the Minister and I are somewhat agreeing and on the same page in terms of the issue of land tenure and that whole accountability issue with the Housing Corporation. But we also have accountability to our own people, so I think we're on the same page. I talk about the experience because of my own grandfather's house and my mother that lived in the house, that Housing told her when they moved into a public housing unit and that house now that my grandfather has, there's a public housing unit sitting on there right now. So why is that public housing on my grandfather's lot? How did they get the house? My mom said...(inaudible)...leave it alone, don't bother with it. It bothers my family when we drive by it every day in Tulita. That lot that was my grandfather's lot, how did Housing get that? Because they told my mom a different story. So things like that in our communities in regard to housing. Those things are still in people's memory with the Housing Corporation. Mr. Chair, I just want to, again, I'm still here, God willing, that this is an issue I'm still going to bring to the Housing Corporation to remind them that we know how things were done in those days. You can't let them off that easy.

Mr. Chair, the other one is that I have some issues with the packaging of freight for housing. A lot of packaged supplies come into our communities with missing material and supplies. I have an issue here but I haven't yet really talked to the Minister so it's not fair to put this on him, but it's a real issue in my region about missing supplies in packages. They put a long delay in construction of homes in our communities. I'll leave that for another time, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. No question there. Moving on. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, one of the areas you hear a lot of concerns about from the local contractors is that they're building to take advantage of Housing Corporation contracts because the way that they design those contracts in which they don't have the capacity to either bid or bond some of these contracts, especially the contracts which are basically supply, ship and

erect. I think that a lot of them feel more comfortable dealing with the labour only aspect of contracts where the Housing Corporation provides the material, brings it into our communities and they construct them. That makes more economic sense and also it's an easier fix for a lot of the smaller contractors who are just starting out and they can't compete against the big boys. A lot of the other bigger contracts who do have a side business in regard to hardware supplies and whatnot, they have an advantage over these smaller contractors because they have the business. I think that the way these contracts are being struck, it very much undermines the capacity building of ourselves as government and what they're trying to do to provide economic opportunities for our communities and develop that capacity in our communities so that they can stay there.

I think it's also important that at one time you were able to go to the local housing authority and they have their housing materials warehouse and, basically, there was the ability for you to go there. Because if you don't have a hardware store in the community you either have to go to the regional centres or, in most cases, Yellowknife or Whitehorse. I think that used to be the practice. I'm not too sure on the status of it these days in regard to individuals who may have a furnace problem, in regard to requiring a part that may be at the local housing authority and because it's an emergency, it's the middle of winter, you want to be able to get the problem solved as soon as you can. It is an emergency, but if the Housing Corporation can assist by having the part on hand, in the local warehouse for the housing authority, that they're able to solve the problem and then the person pays back or replaces that item in regard to some sort of a billing process.

I'd just like to know on those two matters exactly where is the government on those two issues and what are we doing to ensure procurement for communities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, a couple years ago we had an issue where we were looking for material supply, and it was a tender that was for the whole Northwest Territories. So we had some concerns from some of the district providers, so that was changed and they broke it out into districts so the districts would be able to provide quotes on it.

The supply, ship and erect, it is a concern to some of the smaller operators. The ones I know have the capacity to deal with it, but there are some that are just comfortable doing the labour part of it only because they don't want to have the responsibility of ordering the material and having the material

brought in, because that is a lengthy process and it's quite long.

We don't have an issue or a problem in breaking it down to labour only, if it is the wish of the Member and it makes good sense, especially if it is a lot of the smaller communities where they are able to do the labour. It is not really a big issue. We are more than willing to look at that and see if we can do that.

The Member's second point about the LHOs helping people in the community that have furnace issues, I worked as maintenance supervisor in Aklavik for so many years. I must have cost the Housing Corporation an awful lot of money because -- I'm confessing now --

--Laughter

people would come and borrow things. A lot of times it was an emergency. We had maybe 25 percent of the people return the stuff, but we still had some problems. That would be a decision that would be made at the local level. They know the community. They know who will give back. I know for a fact that most LHOs will not leave people in a bind. If they need a piece if their furnace is out, if they are able to, they will go and fire up their furnace or give them the parts to fire up their furnace. That is something that the housing community does. If we have more and more people returning -- and it was a problem with contractors too. Contractors would come and borrow a bit of material here and a bit of material there, saying that they would bring it back. Some of it you got back and some of it you didn't. It is usually up to the discretion of the LHOs, but they are pretty good at making sure that they don't leave people in a bind and wanting to help out where they can. As a corporation, I wouldn't want to overstep their authority and say you have to do it or you have to bill it because, if you start... Well, we're not into the material sale business. Usually it is a trust thing. We will give you the part if you bring it back. It works in some communities and it doesn't work in some.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chairman, I would like to move a motion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Go ahead with your motion.

COMMITTEE MOTION 27-16(4):
SEPARATION OF LABOUR AND
MATERIAL COMPONENTS OF
CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS,
CARRIED

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chairman, I move that the committee strongly recommends that the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation amend its procurement practices by separating the labour and material components of the corporation construction contracts to ensure small community contractors have a better ability to submit bids on

projects occurring in small communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The motion is being distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Question has been called.

---Carried

Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also think this government has to do a better job of trying to work with local contractors to be able to deal with the repair aspect of housing. One of the problems we seem to have a problem with is the area of seniors' homes. I am trying to work them into my statement here. I have three minutes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, committee. We will just put a pause for a second here. Thank you, committee. We will now continue. Mr. Krutko was speaking. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Do I get my three minutes back?

---Laughter

I was just stalling for time, but the issue I was talking about was in the area of elders programs in our communities, especially a lot of the elders need some maintenance of their dwellings. We talk about trying to keep elders in their homes. Especially it seems like a lot of times there are challenges to get people to do the work in the communities. I think that we as a government have to find a way that we can provide the service but also do it in a way that it is... If we can't do one community, maybe look at bundling these programs.

I know the Housing Corporation does annual maintenance on their housing units. A lot of times they hire summer students to help them clean out water tanks and things like that. If possible, I think that we have to look at some way of ensuring that the elders programs are being delivered, especially on the maintenance side of maintaining the elders service and maintaining their homes. In most cases we do put out tenders on them, but a lot of the times we don't get a response. Is there a possibility of working this somehow into the responsibility of the local housing authorities?

The idea in the past was give the money to the housing authorities. Let them hire a couple extra people with the money we gave them and then add the seniors in the communities to that list of maintenance that have to be done on public housing and include the elders on that so we benefit both the Housing Corporation and we provide the service to the elders in the communities. I think that idea is still a good idea. I

think that we should be seriously considering it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, that is something that we would be willing to look at if the LHOs were willing and able to take on the preventative maintenance part of it. I think that is something that does make sense right now. We do preventative maintenance on the seniors units plus seniors can still qualify for CARE, and many of them have had repairs done through the CARE program. Preventative Maintenance Program is a big one that we have heard some concerns where people coming from out of town have been doing some of the work. This is something that we can discuss with the LHOs and see if they are able to add it as part of their Preventative Maintenance Program and that is something we would be willing to do. The money that we spend, we can just forward it to the LHOs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Committee, we are on page 5-49, information item, finance and infrastructure services, operations expenditure summary. Are there any questions? Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Just on the one there, I just left off and I haven't yet talked to the Minister about this in terms of when they have packages for home units in the communities. I wanted to ask the Minister, has he checked into this issue? I don't know if it has come to his office yet in terms of some of the units that have missing supplies. It takes them a bit to get the supplies flown into my region where everything is flown in this time of year. Now the winter road is open so they will probably be driving. However, when the packages are there, they are going to build a unit and sometimes they open the crates and sometimes some parts are not there and they have to order it. It goes through the whole bureaucracy of administration. About two or three months later the parts come in. Is that something that is an issue? I know before it used to be different. All the parts used to be there sort of thing. Now it seems like an issue, especially in the one community that I represent, also in the other communities I should say. Is that something that the Minister is aware of?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister of House, Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, we are aware of that. There have been some concerns with that. We have taken some steps to address that. Some of it is we send the list out there. We know everything that is needed for a particular project. Sometimes some of it doesn't make it to the community. The folks that are responsible for that project will usually do a check. If there are pieces that are missing, they will then advise the supplier

and they would have to make sure that the piece is there. It is something that I have heard about. It is not a huge issue as much as it used to be. Still, we were supposed to be providing packages to the communities and sometimes if pieces are missing, that can cause delays and if you miss shipping and things like that it can cause delays. It's something that we're well aware of and we're taking steps to address and trying to not have this go on too much because it does affect the communities.

MR. YAKELEYA: The Minister is correct in that it does have an effect on the contractors in terms of their reputation as builders and suppliers. Paying off the suppliers for the materials or whatever. It has an effect on their business and has an effect on the regional operations in terms of getting the materials in there. I'm glad the Minister said they're looking at it and hopefully next year we won't see this as a major issue for us in the communities.

I know there's a real ambitious plan here to put all units into the communities. It's a lot of stress on everybody, especially when you have materials coming in and people want to get into these units. I'm glad the Minister said he has an eye on it. I believe the staff will keep him appraised on this. This is something that needs to be cut off and said this is it. Give a clear message to the people who are putting these packages together that this is unacceptable. Especially for the Housing Corporation. You guys pay millions and millions of dollars for supplies for the company. We can't put up with this kind of shabby business here. You're the Housing Corporation. You have to let them know that it's important to our community. When you don't have all-season roads, you can't get materials all the time. It's key for us in our communities. I want to support the Minister in saying that this is a corporation that should stand by and go for it. You can't have these guys do this to us. Especially in the communities where they're not involved in discussions at a higher level. They're just there to build the houses, get the contract, and do a job for the community.

I just wanted to say that. I'm glad the Minister is looking at it. For me it's something that he knows I'm interested in and would like to see it handled in a way that I don't have contractors or people coming to me asking what's going on. I'll just leave it at that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Committee, we're on page 5-49, information item, finance and infrastructure services, operations expenditure summary. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 5-50, information item, finance and infrastructure services, grants and contributions. Any questions? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A question on housing for staff, \$1.5 million has been reduced to zero. I'm wondering if the government -- I know this is not a solely Housing Corporation initiative -- has abandoned the housing for staff initiative.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated before, this was one-time funding but we have not closed the door on this. This is money of which there's been an uptake of right now. We're more than willing in the future if the program continues to be a success and we find that we do need more funding, then we'll come back to this forum to request the funding.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Is that it? Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Committee, page 5-50, information item, finance and infrastructure services, grants and contributions. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 5-53, information item, debt repayment, operations expenditure summary. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 5-55, information item, programs and district operations, operations expenditure summary. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 5-56, information item, programs and district operations, grants and contributions. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 5-59, information item, local housing organizations, operations expenditure summary. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 5-60, information item, local housing organizations, grants and contributions. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to ask a question here. A while ago we were given some information with regard to, well, actually it's a tabled document; Public Housing Vacancy Status. I noted in Yellowknife we have a wait list of, actually, this is February 15, 2009, there are 141 people or families waiting for a unit within a total complement of 293 public housing units. That's 150 percent units are required or 50 percent of the possible units are on a wait list. I just wondered from a corporation perspective what they can do to assist the Yellowknife Housing Authority to try and accommodate some of these people who are on this huge wait list.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The waiting list now, I think the Member quoted 149, it's down to 109 currently. It's down to 109. So some people have been accommodated. We do have a lot of lease commitments in the city. The public housing units, this is basically what we have now. Other than putting new houses on the ground or finding some new lease commitments this is going to be an issue. There's a waiting list for pretty well all of the communities. This is one that we need to address and if it means... I think the city has new public housing units coming this year, so there will be some new public housing units being put on stream this year.

MS. BISARO: Thanks for the updated number, but that's still one-third more units required than what we have space for. I'm sure that's not what we're building. I appreciate that things can't be done totally, but from a corporation perspective is there any reason why we have so many people on the waiting list? Is it just that, do all of these people qualify? I presume they do. Do we have that many people requiring housing in Yellowknife? Even out of the total units in the Territory, it's like some 2,300 units and 110 of them or so are here in Yellowknife. That's still a pretty huge number. Is there any hope that the corporation can do something to try and reduce this waiting list further?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Okay. I got lost here. In the Northwest Territories there are almost 500 on the waiting list across the Territories. So we have a huge job ahead of us. We're taking little steps here in the city to try and alleviate some of the problem. I couldn't answer the Member's question as to why there's such a huge waiting list. There could be a migration of people into the city. There could be many other reasons. And the economy could have a part in it. But we're doing what we can. I can assure the Member that we'll continue to work with the City of Yellowknife and the CMHC on this affordable housing organization that they're hoping to set up and then see what we can do there to alleviate some of the housing issues in the city. If things go along as they're going, we're going to need more houses on the ground not only in Yellowknife but across the Territory, especially in some of the larger centres. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. The document that I'm looking at showed only 300 vacancies in the Territory. So if it's gone up to 500 across the Territory, that's not good. Yellowknife has gone a bit, but the whole Territory has gone up a lot. So that's not progress, in my mind.

I had one other question. The corporation was working with local housing organizations to provide them with some training and to provide them with some assistance in terms of operating more

efficiently and collecting more of their arrears and they're working on rent collections and so on and I just wondered, you know, as to that program of sort of advancing the local housing organizations to reach a higher level of skills and quality of service and so on. How has that been going? Do you feel that there has been some success and that the organizations are progressing? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: There's always been within the LHOs a high degree of skills. The LHO managers are very well qualified. We have tenant relations officers that have been with the LHO for years and so the capacity at the local level, which has always been very good, continues to get better. We continue to work with the LHOs to provide training for them and just assisting them in any way possible so that they're able to do their job much better, but the LHOs are usually a long serving group and they're usually within the organization for years. So they have good understanding of how the system works and they're progressing quite well, and as we get into more arrears collections and rent collections and new technology, then they're constantly being updated. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Committee, once again, we're on page 5-60, information item. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chair, I seek unanimous consent to go back to 5-55.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The Member for Sahtu requests committee to go back to page 5-55.

---Unanimous consent granted.

Go ahead, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, colleagues. Mr. Chair, I have a motion, a committee motion here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Very good, Mr. Yakeleya. Go ahead.

COMMITTEE MOTION 28-16(4):
REINSTATEMENT OF
COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER,
CARRIED

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee strongly recommends that the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation identifies the necessary funds to reinstate the community liaison positions during the 2010-2011 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The motion is being distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Question is being called.

---Carried

Committee, we're on page 5-55. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Questions? Thank you. Returning to page 5-60, information item, local housing organizations, grants and contributions. Questions? Sorry, Mr. Yakeleya, are you on page 5-60? Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In terms of the LHOs' ongoing operations, I made comments in the opening of this committee here with the transfer of the new program, the old new, whatever you call it from...(inaudible)... Is there somewhere in here that that's going to be the transfer? So is housing now going to be assuming the control or the responsibility of the...(inaudible)...program?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, Mr. Chair, the numbers aren't reflected in here. This was a decision that was made. This was already done before we made the decision. So that particular thing may come forward in the form of a supp. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, information item, local housing organizations, grants and contributions, page 5-60. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chair, there used to be an LHO in Tsiigehtchic, but for some reason they did away with the local housing organization. I'd just like to know what's the chance of reinstating the local housing authority in Tsiigehtchic. They had it before and for some reason that got taken away. So I'd just like to know and also for other communities that do have housing organizations, I know that there have been issues raised about other communities. So especially in regard to Tsiigehtchic, what is it going to take to reinstate the local housing authority?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I may have to have a discussion with the Member, but my understanding is there is still an LHO in Tsiigehtchic with a manager and a maintenance foreman and an apprentice, I believe. So my understanding is there's still an LHO in Tsiigehtchic, but I'd have to confirm that and I will follow it up with the Member. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Yes, I think the question is a board, a local housing authority board, there is no board in Tsiigehtchic and I believe Paulatuk is in the same boat. So I'm just wondering what would it take to reinstate a local housing authority board, because we do have that throughout the Territories, but for some reason the board was taken away. So I'd just

like to know what's the chance of reinstating that in other communities that may have lost their boards, because we do have more units on the ground than we had before. I think, if anything, that that was the argument before. I think we do supply most communities where we do provide social housing. I think it's important that we do have a board so that they are involved in the decision-making process, but, more importantly, dealing with the local disputes in regard to evictions and also dealing with allocation of units and stuff like that so that they have a say in how housing is run in the community. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I'll commit to the Member that we'll have some discussions with the community and see if there's a desire to have a board and if there is, there's no reason why they shouldn't have a board. So I'll follow up in discussions with the Member and with the community and see where the interest is. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: One of the problems we run into, especially with a lot of our local authorities, is having the ability to evict people if you know that they are carrying out illegal activities such as bootlegging, selling drugs out of public housing units. I think for a lot of our residents in our community they get frustrated saying that you know this is going on, you're not doing anything about it, and I know we've been looking at changing the rules. I believe the way it reads right now, you are not allowed to carry out any illegal activities in public housing, but I think it's a question of how far can you go in regard to removing people. I think it's a frustrating situation where the community is trying to combat alcoholism and drug abuse in our communities, but when they see a government providing subsidized housing for these people to carry out that activity, I think it totally flows against the whole idea of controlling these problems we have in the community. So the Housing Corporation is seen as an agent that's helping these people carry out that activity. So I'd just like to know what are we doing to either give more powers to the local housing authority or enhancing the agreements that we sign with tenants so that they are aware that you are accountable for your actions and we won't tolerate it. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The Member raises a good point and it's a concern that's shared across the Northwest Territories, especially in some of the smaller communities. A lot of the LHOs have zero tolerance, where if they know that you're carrying out illegal activities, then it's within their power to do something about it. But part of the problem is getting people to come forward and identifying them, because there's a process that you have to go through. I think that's the toughest part, because you get calls and you know who's doing illegal activities. Some of it could get tied up in the law's

hands, and if you make assumptions then you have to make sure -- the way things work today -- you've got solid evidence to back it up. I think the LHOs are aware of a lot of the folks in the community that take part in illegal activities and they monitor them and if there's an opportunity for them to terminate them, then I know a few of them that have done that. But getting people to come forward is one of the big things. There's a bit of a fear factor there...(inaudible)...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): ...(inaudible)...item local housing organizations, grants and contributions. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 5-61, information item, lease commitments, infrastructure.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 5-62, information item, infrastructure investment summary.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 5-62, information item, infrastructure investment summary.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 5-63, information item, infrastructure acquisition plan. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chair, in light of what we've just been reading now, the survey of the NWT community housing components and the old 2004 survey with the acquisition for the infrastructure, I'm going to have to look at it. I'm just asking the Minister, does that match with our needs in the Nahendeh, the Sahtu and the Beaufort-Delta in terms of the dollars that we're spending to bring down the core needs, the percentages? I haven't done my own analysis so I want to ask the Minister that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, our plan is to proceed with this year's infrastructure acquisition plan, and then when we do the budget for next year, the community needs survey is going to go a long way in determining how we allocate the money. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister. Next on my list is Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, in regard to the infrastructure acquisition plan, these units are allocated or were approved in the budget on the basis of these units being approved. Because something that frustrates me is when you have regional staff telling people in the communities

you may not be getting those units. I don't think it's up to those people at the regional level to make that decision. The decision is made here in this Legislature. We're the ones that are approving this budget. I think it's frustrating for myself to get phone calls from local people saying, sorry, those contracts might not be let in your communities where they may reallocate. There's a process for that. It's called the Financial Administration Act. If you're going to move any money around in any person's riding, you have to inform them ahead of time. Not have some bureaucrat at the regional office trying to dictate something that the budget hasn't even approved yet. I think that, for myself, that frustrates me that I have to deal with those types of phone calls from someone that basically does not have the final authority on making that decision and yet they're going ahead and making those comments. So I'd just like to know from the Minister, is this department going to be moving units around out of this budget to other locations before we approve this budget item or has that decision already been made?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, for the 2010-11 infrastructure budget there has been no decision as to... The Member is right; this is a budget that's approved here in the Legislative Assembly. So there's been no decision as to moving any of the projects around. If there is, once the budget is approved, if we have issues where there might be some projects moved around, then, obviously, the Member is correct, we'd let the Members know.

We'll have to follow up on the Member's concern about people in the communities getting phone calls. If the Member will allow us to follow up with that and see what we could find out and then we'll get back to the Member or I'll get back to the Member personally and let him know what I found out. So without knowing the details of that, I can't really comment on it, but we will follow up on it very rigorously. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Another question I have in regard to this page is the majority of the projects are in regard to retrofits. I know that the local housing authorities, in most cases, do most of the retrofits on their own. I'm just wondering, is there extra money available for a community housing authority to take on more capacity by hiring more people when they have to basically do these major retrofits. So I think that, if anything, this is a perfect opportunity, especially for our communities who are struggling economically.

There's not much happening, especially in the Beaufort-Delta region and people are looking for work. This is probably something that they can look forward to. I'd just like to ask the Minister, is there

going to be any resources given to either local housing authorities or those community organizations to take on this work and they can do it in house, do it in their home communities and build the capacity there to do a lot of this work in our communities than having to tender it outside of our of communities. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, there's always an opportunity there for LHOs that want to take this work on themselves. You'll find in most communities this is a source of summer employment for a lot of people. There are people that have been working on M and I projects for the last 16, 17 years and it's basically their employment for the year. What they would do, as far as extra money goes, the budget that's budgeted here, I mean, they'd fit that into their budget. Their money would probably go a lot further than if they were to bring a contractor in, and I think some of the LHOs are recognizing that. So taking on some of the M and I projects themselves. There's always going to be projects out there that are going to need a little more specialized trade and those ones they'll bring in, but communities are very good at identifying what work that they're able to do and what their capacity is. I know communities that have 16, 17 guys working for the summer doing these M and I projects. So the opportunity is always there for the communities to take this work on themselves. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we're on page 5-63, information item, NWT Housing Corporation, infrastructure acquisition plan. Questions? Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chair, just more of a comment here in terms of the programs that are under this budget here in terms of the homeownership entry level program. I just like to give a comment to the Housing here in terms of these programs. The STEP program, the HELP program and the other programs, they offer the PATH program, the CARE program. I think that's probably one of the best written up programs I've read. I had the opportunity to read the STEP program. It's dynamite stuff that's there that should be going to the communities. Hopefully, it will be somehow, when we have aboriginal peoples taking these programs, there's translators and that there that provides that. I think the Minister made a comment to that before, so I'll take up on his comments here and I'll review it. So I just wanted to give kudos to the department for some good work being done there. Too bad that the STEP program - and I might be off topic, Mr. Chair -- but the STEP program is to offered in the communities. Even people who have housing from the HAP units or the SHAG units that could take this program without... Because I understand there's a requirement to take some of these programs that some people may not

qualify for. So more of a comment to them. That's it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you. We appreciate those comments. I just wanted to respond saying that we are looking at that right now, is having folks that are looking after their own houses as part of this program. Also, I think that there was a concern with elders and people that didn't understand that were applying for a program, but there's an opportunity there for somebody to attend the program on their behalf.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, page 5-63, information item, NWT Housing Corporation, infrastructure acquisition plan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 5-64, information item, infrastructure acquisition plan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Page 5-65, information item, infrastructure acquisition plan. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): No questions. Committee, I'll have you turn to page 5-41. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I note that there's the Education, Culture and Employment public housing rent supp. I'm just wondering if that would be changed to simply refer to the public housing rent supp and remove the wording "Education, Culture and Employment" and how soon are we going to see that change.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Krutko, just for confirmation, are you on page 5-41?

MR. KRUTKO: Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you. On page 5-41. Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, that number is going to stay the same. What we're hoping to do with the transfer is the money is still with ECE. We're hoping or our intent is to come through with a supp request in the May session.

MR. KRUTKO: My question was how soon we can see this change take place and delete that line item or remove the reference to ECE so it is referred to as it was before as public housing rental supp. How soon can we see that change take place regarding your budget line item?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. McLeod, how fast can it get done?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: What's that? I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman. I'm not paying attention. First of all, our intent is to have the assessments transferred in June. Then this is already here, so in the next budget there will be no line item to that effect.

MR. KRUTKO: Just in regard to the latest report on the needs surveys, how soon is the department going to get back to us on how they're going to deal with some of these statistics indicating core need, adequate housing, and stuff like that? I know that we've just concluded the allocation of units, because I was pointing out to Mr. Beaulieu that Colville Lake is getting \$375,000 yet they're at 95 percent core need. For that amount of money I don't think we can really solve the problem. Hopefully this department will be able to identify those areas of intention, especially now that we have a needs survey that we can identify where those areas are going forward with the budget. Hopefully next year we can identify some of those unique areas of challenge that we have in different communities, whether it's the Deh Cho, Sahtu, or Behchoko or other communities, so that we resolve this issue of core need and adequacy of housing. I look forward to seeing that coming forward. I'd like to ask the Minister how soon we can see that change take place.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We're looking to sit down with committee as soon as possible. I think the offer has been made to discuss some of the community needs survey numbers. I've also offered to sit with committee and get their feedback on some of what they'd like to see for the Housing Corporation. We're hoping, our intent is, this infrastructure budget, this is one that we're passing today, the budget that we bring forward next year I think will reflect the community needs survey and where we need to put what units. Obviously we'll be seeking input from committee on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Committee, we're on page 5-41, information item, Housing Corporation, financial summary information. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that this concludes the NWT Housing Corporation?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, committee. I'd like to thank the witnesses and ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses from the House.

Committee, I believe we are going until 3:00 today. Does committee agree we are going until 3:00 today? I hadn't called anybody yet and I thought there was an understanding to meet until 3:00, but, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: I move that we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): I will now rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Bromley?

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 62-16(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2010-2011, and would like to report progress, with two motions being adopted. I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

---Carried

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

Orders of the Day

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte): Mr. Speaker, orders of the day for Monday, February 15, 2010, 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
 - Motion 13, Community Long-Term Care Facilities
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Bill 2, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2009-2010
- Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act
- Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act
- Tabled Document 62-16(4), Northwest Territories Main Estimates, 2010-2011
- Minister's Statement 47-16(4), Transfer of the Public Housing Rental Subsidy
- Committee Report 5-16(4), Report on the Review of the 2008-2009 Human Rights Commission Report

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Monday, February 15th, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 2:49 p.m.