



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

5th Session

Day 15

16th Assembly

HANSARD

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Pages 4991 - 5034

The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker
Hon. Paul Delorey
(Hay River North)

Mr. Glen Abernethy
(Great Slave)

Mr. Tom Beaulieu
(Tu Nedhe)

Ms. Wendy Bisaro
(Frame Lake)

Mr. Bob Bromley
(Weledeh)

Mrs. Jane Groenewegen
(Hay River South)

Mr. Robert Hawkins
(Yellowknife Centre)

Mr. Jackie Jacobson
(Nunakput)

Mr. David Krutko
(Mackenzie Delta)

Hon. Jackson Lafferty
(Monfwi)
Minister of Justice
Minister of Education, Culture and Employment

Hon. Sandy Lee
(Range Lake)
Minister of Health and Social Services
Minister responsible for the Status of Women
Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities
Minister responsible for Seniors

Hon. Bob McLeod
(Yellowknife South)
Minister of Human Resources
Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment
Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board
Minister responsible for Energy Initiatives

Hon. Michael McLeod
(Deh Cho)
Minister of Transportation
Minister of Public Works and Services

Hon. Robert C. McLeod
(Inuvik Twin Lakes)
Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs
Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation
Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission
Minister responsible for Youth

Mr. Kevin Menicoche
(Nahendeh)

Hon. Michael Miltenberger
(Thebacha)
Deputy Premier
Government House Leader
Minister of Finance
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources

Mr. Dave Ramsay
(Kam Lake)

Hon. Floyd Roland
(Inuvik Boot Lake)
Premier
Minister of Executive
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations
Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation

Mr. Norman Yakeleya
(Sahtu)

Officers

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Mr. Tim Mercer

Deputy Clerk
Mr. Doug Schauerte

Principal Clerk of Committees
Ms. Jennifer Knowlan

Principal Clerk, Operations
Ms. Gail Bennett

Law Clerks
Ms. Sheila MacPherson
Ms. Sarah Kay

Box 1320
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784
<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	4991
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	4991
41-16(5) – Honouring Former Commissioner Whitford (Roland)	4991
42-16(5) – Deh Cho Bridge Project (M. McLeod).....	4992
43-16(5) – Northwest Territories Water Stewardship Strategy (Miltenberger)	4992
44-16(5) – Implementation Update – Transfer of Public Housing Rental Subsidy (R. McLeod).....	4994
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	4994
The Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act and Land Claims Agreements (Krutko).....	4994
Utility Rates in the NWT (Yakeleya).....	4995
Promoting Bicycle Corridors (Bromley)	4996
Distracted Driving Policy (Bisaro)	4996
Stem Cell Challenge Clinic in Yellowknife (Abernethy).....	4997
Recognition of Devalin Pokiak's Courage in Rescuing Her Father (Jacobson).....	4997
Transportation Issues in Nahendeh (Menicoche)	4998
Stem Cell Challenge Clinic in Yellowknife (Hawkins).....	4998
Deh Cho Bridge Project (Ramsay).....	4999
Delivery of Seniors Home Repair Program (Beaulieu).....	4999
Process for Lodging Complaints under the Medical Profession Act (Groenewegen).....	5000
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	5000
ORAL QUESTIONS	5001
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	5011
NOTICES OF MOTION	5012
11-16(5) – Extended Adjournment of the House to October 14, 2010 (Bisaro).....	5012
12-16(5) – Expression of Gratitude to Former Commissioner Anthony W.J. (Tony) Whitford for Dedicated and Exemplary Service (Roland)	5012
13-16(5) – Referral of Tabled Document 62-16(5), Northwest Territories Water Stewardship Strategy to Committee of the Whole (Krutko)	5012
MOTIONS	5012
11-16(5) – Extended Adjournment of the House to October 14, 2010 (Bisaro).....	5012
10-16(5) – Reinstatement of Federal Funding for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (Krutko).....	5012
12-16(5) – Expression of Gratitude to Former Commissioner	

Anthony W.J. (Tony) Whitford for Dedicated and Exemplary Service (Roland)	5015
13-16(5) – Referral of Tabled Document 62-16(5), Northwest Territories Water Stewardship Strategy to Committee of the Whole (Krutko).....	5023
FIRST READING OF BILLS	5024
Bill 10 – Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2010-2011	5024
Bill 11 – Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011	5024
SECOND READING OF BILLS	5024
Bill 9 – An Act to Amend the Tourism Act	5024
Bill 10 – Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2010-2011	5024
Bill 11 – Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011	5024
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	5025
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	5032
THIRD READING OF BILLS	5032
Bill 5 – Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification Act	5032
Bill 7 – An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act.....	5032
Bill 10 – Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2010-2011	5032
Bill 11 – Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011	5032
ORDERS OF THE DAY	5033

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, May 20, 2010****Members Present**

Mr. Abernethy, 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, Hon. Floyd Roland, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:38 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Before we begin the business of the day, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge a special day for one of our Members. It happens to be the birthday of the Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Robert Hawkins.

---Applause

Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 41-16(5):
HONOURING FORMER
COMMISSIONER WHITFORD

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take the opportunity today to say thank you, on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories and all the people of the Northwest Territories, to Mr. Tony Whitford who has successfully completed...

---Applause

...his term as Commissioner of the Northwest Territories.

The way the Territory is governed has evolved considerably during Mr. Whitford's lifetime and he has been present to witness much of it. When Mr. Whitford was born in Fort Smith, the NWT was still being governed out of Ottawa by federal bureaucrats. That began to change with the relocation of the Commissioner to Yellowknife in 1967. Mr. Whitford served as executive assistant to John Parker, the second Commissioner to call the NWT home and the one who was to preside over the establishment of fully responsible government in the NWT. As Speaker of the 14th Legislative Assembly, Mr. Whitford guided the first post-division Assembly of the Northwest Territories helping to adapt old rules, traditions and conventions to a new Assembly and new situation.

In between, Mr. Whitford served as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, participating in the debates and decisions that shaped how the NWT was governed during the 11th and 12th Assemblies. As a Member of the Executive Council, Mr. Whitford also served as Minister of Health and Social Services, Safety and Public Services and Transportation. While not a Member of the 13th Assembly, Mr. Whitford continued his long association with this House as Sergeant-at-Arms.

Mr. Whitford was appointed as Deputy Commissioner in 2004 and became Commissioner of the NWT in April 2005. During his time as Commissioner, he has worked hard to be the people's Commissioner. He made it a priority to travel to every NWT community to meet and hear from the people he represented. As a tireless promoter of education, spring would usually find him speaking at graduation ceremonies across the NWT. Throughout his time as Commissioner, Mr. Whitford never hesitated to represent the government and the people of the Northwest Territories at countless official ceremonies and public functions.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Whitford's time as Commissioner was a culmination of a lifetime of public service and as an example to where hard work and dedication can take a person. Northern born and raised, Mr. Whitford has risen to the highest office in the Northwest Territories through his commitment to his fellow Northerners and his community. Whether it was performing weddings, serving as a Justice of the Peace, sitting as an MLA, presiding over the Rotary Bike Auction or presiding over this House, the one constant has been Mr. Whitford's dedication to public service. As we say thank you to him for his service to us as Commissioner, I am sure that this time will not be the last we will hear of Mr. Whitford. While the office he holds may change from time to time, the one thing not likely to change is his desire to contribute to his community and to the Territory. I'm sure he's already thinking of what's next -- as he likes to say, "Have gavel will travel." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 42-16(5):
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to provide Members and the public with an update on the Deh Cho Bridge Project. I want to say that I am very much looking forward to the day that the bridge opens to traffic in a year and a half.

Mr. Speaker, in just 18 months we will be able to drive across the Mackenzie River 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. No longer will the residents of the North Slave be cut off during spring breakup. No longer will commercial vehicles sit and idle, waiting for passage on the ferry. No longer will low water and ice in the river disrupt service. No longer will businesses have to warehouse large volumes of goods. No longer will the Merv Hardie burn half a million litres of diesel and release tonnes of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. No longer will we have to concern ourselves with future impacts of climate change on the ice bridge. All the anxieties and frustrations that we associate with the current operation will finally be a thing of the past.

Mr. Speaker, we are about to enter a critical stage in the construction of the bridge. We have set an ambitious but achievable schedule that will require the cooperation of everyone involved in the project. To meet the schedule, we have assembled a team of skilled professionals under the direction of the Department of Transportation. This team is committed to completing the bridge by November 2011.

Work has commenced this spring and by next March the bridge will have taken shape. Steel fabrication is underway. The contractor, Ruskin Construction, will spend the summer completing the earthworks approaches and installing the two concrete abutments. This will be followed by the launching of the steel trusses or girders in September. Steel members will be bolted together on both banks and pushed out inch by inch over the river to span the piers. Once the trusses are in place, Ruskin will erect the two towers and string the massive cables that will support the centre span. The centre span will be hoisted into place from the work bridges below using huge winches. Then it will be a matter of completing the bridge deck, the approaches and other minor works.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories has taken over the project but the community of Fort Providence still remains committed and involved with the project. We are entering into a new relationship with our community partners: the Deh Gah Gof'ie First Nation, the Fort Providence Metis Council, and the Hamlet of Fort Providence. I am looking forward to attending the community feast in Fort Providence to celebrate the signing of the new agreements that will replace the concession agreement.

Mr. Speaker, I am certain that in the future the news surrounding the bridge will be more favourable, particularly as we approach the completion of construction. The Department of Transportation is developing a communication plan under the banner of "Bridging Our Future" that will include new signage, a newsletter, a stand-alone website and a real-time video feed. Our intent is to highlight all the positive accomplishments associated with the bridge.

Mr. Speaker, the Deh Cho Bridge, by virtue of its innovative design, its remote location and its sheer size, will be a unique structure that we can all be proud of. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 43-16(5):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES WATER
STEWARDSHIP STRATEGY

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, for many years, going back to the last century, Northerners have increasingly voiced their concerns about water and all the things affecting water. The message to us has been clear: we must take the steps necessary to protect our water.

The 15th Assembly heard the people and shared their concern. In 2007, the 15th Legislative Assembly declared in part that all people have a fundamental right to water.

The 16th Legislative Assembly built on that motion and directed that a made-in-the-NWT water strategy was a priority and needed to be developed. For the past 28 months, we along with our many partners have worked long and hard to carry out that direction. Today I stand before you to report that our made-in-the-North strategy, Northern Voices, Northern Waters, is ready and I will be tabling it later today.

Our concern about water is greater than ever as we deal with climate change, transboundary issues and the many pressures within our borders. This strategy is a critical policy document that allows us to move forward immediately. There will be no resting on our laurels. There is no time as events affecting our water are moving too fast.

Northern Voices, Northern Waters provides our policy base and roadmap as we move forward with transboundary discussions under the Mackenzie River Basin Board Transboundary Master Agreement. We also have much work to do within our own boundaries.

This strategy is a collaborative approach to responsible water stewardship. It was developed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada,

designated representatives of aboriginal governments and active input from NWT residents.

The GNWT greatly appreciates the contributions of the Aboriginal Steering Committee for their guidance in the development of the strategy. The steering committee will continue to offer its advice as the strategy is implemented. NWT residents will continue to have opportunities to engage on this living strategy.

The strategy promotes an ecosystem-based approach within watersheds to improve water management to reflect the deep and fundamental relationship between residents and the waters of the Northwest Territories.

As one of our most valuable resources, we recognize the importance of clean waters and healthy aquatic ecosystems. The strategy sets a common path forward for water partners to ensure the continued sustainable use of this resource. It will improve decision-making processes, information sharing and communications among all water partners actively involved in water stewardship in the Northwest Territories.

The goals of the strategy are:

- to ensure that the waters that flow into, within or through the NWT are not substantially altered in quality, quantity and rates of flow;
- that residents have access to safe, clean and plentiful drinking water at all times;
- that aquatic ecosystems are healthy and diverse;
- that residents can rely on their water to sustain their communities and economies;
- that residents are involved in and knowledgeable about water stewardship; and finally,
- that all those making water stewardship decisions work together to communicate and share information.

Mr. Speaker, the time to act on water stewardship is now. As aboriginal governments raise awareness through the annual water gatherings, pressures on waters throughout the NWT and in neighbouring jurisdictions continue to increase.

NWT residents have expressed concern about water levels, water quality and the health of our aquatic ecosystems. Many have witnessed differences in river flow and levels, and worry about the future of our wetlands, deltas, rivers and lakes.

Upstream development in the Mackenzie River Basin, including hydro, nuclear and oil sands development have or may have an impact on our aquatic ecosystems. In north-eastern British Columbia, the Bennett Dam has already altered river flows. B.C. Hydro has recently proposed a 900

megawatt project to develop Site C, the third dam on the Peace River, which may continue to modify flows. Downstream aboriginal governments have indicated concern over even slight additional alterations.

In Alberta, TransAlta continues to gather information to develop a hydroelectric project for a 100 megawatt facility and a four-reactor 4,000 megawatt nuclear plant on the Peace River. In the Great Slave sub-basin of the Mackenzie River Basin, a proposal for a Slave River hydro development near the NWT border is being investigated. Oil sands development continues in the Athabasca sub-basin of the Mackenzie River Basin.

The strategy will help us prepare for negotiations with other governments within the Mackenzie River Basin to ensure its aquatic and plant life continue to thrive.

As partners, we must show strong leadership in water stewardship to ensure the sustainable use of this valuable resource throughout the NWT. We must set high standards and hold ourselves and others responsible and accountable. We cannot sit back and watch as our water resources deplete or become contaminated. We must properly manage our waters so future generations can enjoy what we currently enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, our strategy relies on the principles of an ecosystem-based approach within watersheds. When water flows downstream, the land mass where that water flows becomes increasingly larger. Decisions on how the waters within these watersheds are used have the potential to affect many ecosystems.

These decisions cannot be made in isolation. Decisions and subsequent actions must be made after considering the entire watershed, its land and water, and all the values within it.

This ecosystem-based approach allows for the protection of the water environment while addressing critical issues such as the current and future impacts of development and climate change.

Together with our water partners, we have already accomplished a significant amount of work in the area of environmental monitoring, research and planning at all levels in the Northwest Territories.

As we actively plan for the future of water management in the NWT, we will build on the work to date. Water partners continue to examine available information and use it to make sound decisions that will provide a healthy water legacy for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, we have an opportunity to lead by example. By using our collective voice on water issues, partnering with aboriginal governments and setting high standards, we hold ourselves and

others accountable for the establishment of sound and effective water management policies. The next step in this process is to develop a detailed action plan for fall 2010.

This plan will be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure all concerns and important details are included.

Our water resources are precious and this strategy is our guide to engagement in the development of current and future water projects, including the Site C and the Slave River Hydro Dams and ensures we can keep our waters clean, abundant and productive for all time. Mahsi.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 44-16(5):
IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE – TRANSFER OF
PUBLIC HOUSING RENTAL SUBSIDY

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to provide an update to Members and the general public on our decision to return responsibility for public housing rent assessments to the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, my first priority after I was appointed Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation was to examine the issue of the public housing rental subsidy and explore ways to find resolution to the challenges that the program's administration was causing for public housing tenants and front-line staff.

On January 28, 2010, following a review of the issues and examination of the possible solutions, Minister Miltenberger announced in the budget address that the responsibility for assessing public housing rent would be returning to the local housing organizations during the coming fiscal year. This decision was made with a view towards providing quality client service in a fair and equitable manner for all tenants, while also improving the financial stability of LHOs. Client service is a primary concern for myself and the Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that we are well underway with the implementation of this change. As of June 1st, Mr. Speaker, local housing organizations will take over responsibility for assessing public housing rent. As of that date, residents will only have to visit their local housing organization in order to be assessed and to make their rent payments. Local housing organizations are being asked to ensure that all rent assessments are completed within the first week of every month. So it is important that tenants visit within that first week to be properly assessed and to avoid falling into arrears.

In preparation for June 1st, we have undertaken communications and implementation plans to support the smooth transition for tenants and staff alike. In April, both the NWT Housing Corp and ECE began implementing communication activities to inform residents of the coming changes. We have informed tenants, LHO board chairs, staff and standing committee directly. An advertising campaign to remind tenants of the changes coming in June is also underway and will be enhanced later this month. In order to prepare LHO and ECE staff to deal with tenants during the transition, we have provided training and information to front-line staff at both the LHOs and the Housing Corporation that will help them answer tenant questions, and ensure they provide a high level of customer service and have full awareness of how the subsidy process works.

NWT Housing Corp and ECE are also collaborating through an implementation plan covering the period from now until April 1st, 2011. This plan will guide activities related both to the change in responsibilities for assessment as well as other improvements being made in the Public Housing Program in 2010-11. These improvements will include a review of the LHO operating budgets, revisions to the Public Housing Policy and Procedures Manual, as well as Information Management System development. We will also complete the review of existing rent scales, which will involve public consultation.

Mr. Speaker, our Public Housing Program is a key component of our government's effort to deal with the high cost of living in our communities. I feel strongly that the return of assessments to the LHOs, along with the other improvements we will make this fiscal year, will help to contribute to our overall goal to improve client service and provide a Public Housing Program that meets the needs of those that it serves. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
THE MACKENZIE VALLEY RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT ACT AND
LAND CLAIMS AGREEMENTS

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's talk of changes to the Mackenzie Valley Resources Management Act, and blowing up the boards, and making changes to the act and guidelines. By doing so, they're stating it would not affect the land claims agreements. Mr. Speaker, I totally disagree. This is far from the truth, Mr. Speaker.

The land claims agreements were negotiated in such a way that the lands resources management act that is in place flowed from the land claims agreement in which it was enacted by the land claims organizations, the federal government, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the people throughout the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, the people of the Northwest Territories, especially the people in the Mackenzie Valley, through the Dene Metis land claims process, made it clear that they were tired of developers coming into their regions, coming into their territories and not consulting and not including them in any process. Mr. Speaker, the fundamental element of the land, water, and regimes in the land claim agreements were clear that the aboriginal groups, the Dene Metis, made it specifically clear that they had to be not only included, but they had to have some guarantees by way of percentages that 50 percent of all the boards would include appointments for nominees from the aboriginal organizations so that they were included in the regulatory process not only through consulting, but being full, active members of the regulatory process established in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, no longer will the aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories be bystanders to developers who have no place or ability to say aboriginal people have rights here. We have rights, we have land claims, we have the legal protection under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution, but, Mr. Speaker, again, the federal government is finding a way to undermine the land claims agreements, and more importantly, doing it in such a way that they are saying that by simply making minor changes to the regulations and guidelines that they will not be affecting the agreements. I disagree.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to realize that the land claim organizations were involved in the drafting and the implementation of the Mackenzie Valley Resources Act, in which they had people at the table negotiating those agreements so that they can find and ensure...

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

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, again, the aboriginal organizations want to ensure that they're protecting the rights and their abilities that are recognized through the land claims agreements.

Mr. Speaker, Section 35 of the Canadian Constitutional specifically...(inaudible)...states that basically nothing by way of legislation changes can affect the land claim agreements. The rights are entrenched in those agreements and must be

protected, upheld, and also the federal government has a fiduciary obligation to protect aboriginal rights and land claims agreements in regard to Section 35.

Mr. Speaker, I will be asking some questions to the Minister of Environment on this, realizing he did have a meeting with the federal appointee a number of days ago. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON UTILITY RATES IN THE NWT

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my seven years as the MLA for the Sahtu, I made some shocking discoveries about the electrical rates in the Northwest Territories, and now, finally, the lights are coming on. Mr. Speaker, communities are not being treated equally; plain and simple. However, with the new power rates offered by the lead Minister for the Ministerial Energy Coordinating Committee last week, there is hope, there is some light at the end of the tunnel. It took all of us to turn the heat up on this government to do something about the power rates.

I understand that the new structure will result in a decrease in many of the Sahtu communities and communities in the Northwest Territories. It will be very beneficial to my communities and elsewhere. I want to thank the Minister for that. I want to thank the government for that.

Mr. Speaker, in continuing with the utilities and the cost of the utilities, I want to address the issue of natural gas price increases in Norman Wells. For example, now, how this new structure rate will help the good residents of Norman Wells, because at the beginning of February the rate of gas in Norman Wells was 30 percent higher than in December. Imperial Oil plans to raise the price by 30 percent every year for the next two years. Imagine the impact on residents and small business owners in the town of Norman Wells.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, the federal government walks away every year with \$125 million in their pockets from the resource royalties and the profits of being an owner in the Norman Wells oilfield. Let me repeat that, Mr. Speaker, the feds are getting \$125 million each year from Norman Wells. I guess it's good to be boss, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, now that we have shown leadership, we have taken control, we have given power back to the people, let's get together and let's sit down with the federal government and let them start paying their power bills to the Northwest Territories, the rightful owner. The power belongs to the people of the Northwest Territories and let's keep it at that. Period.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
PROMOTING BICYCLE CORRIDORS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to salute and support the creation of Yellowknife's superb system of bicycle paths and recognize government's role in assuring safety.

Riding a bike is an individual route to greenhouse gas reductions that add up big. The ability to bike is one of the things that make cities the places of people, not cars. Because we live amid the world's greatest wilderness, bikeways are also an avenue to fabulous backcountry recreation for residents and tourists.

The City of Yellowknife continues to develop the bike path system that contributes to its ranking as the most sustainable small city in Canada for the third year in a row. Bike path work is underway right now in the greenway alongside the Deh Cho Boulevard extension, linking Kam Lake to Highway No. 3, and discussions are underway on the Old Airport Road and rounding the Jackfish Lake loop sections.

The realignment of the Ingraham Trail and Giant Mine Remediation Project give us the opportunity to embark on a major addition to our recreation, tourism and sustainable transportation system. Installation of a dedicated bikeway out from the Explorer Hotel will require territorial dollars, given it's a territorial highway, and possibly could be cost-shared with the City. We can work with the City to ensure a bikeway, not just a wide shoulder, but a bicycle and pedestrian thoroughfare looping through the bush is included in the design. There is a prospect of federal dollars out there under the Giant Mine Remediation Project.

We shouldn't be thinking just about the Giant Mine Remediation Project. The Dettah Road project is underway and the road to Prelude Lake lies beyond. Imagine the allure of a bicycle greenway paralleling the Ingraham Trail, not just a wide shoulder again, but a bicycle and pedestrian thoroughfare looping through the bush.

To begin, there's the prospect of federal dollars. Because a wilderness bikeway isn't primarily a route between two points, we can build sections that complement and supplement the Ingraham Trail and add to this recreational legacy as we go along, ultimately targeting Prelude Lake and all points before as a premiere recreational and tourism experience available to anyone.

I've raised this in the Assembly before and I will continue to be pedalling this issue every chance I get. Let's follow the Yellowknife example close to home and build a pathway of green transportation and enjoyment for our generations ahead. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
DISTRACTED DRIVING POLICY

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've been speaking about distracted driving for some time now and I'm not about to stop. Consider me the never-stopping Energizer bunny, if you will.

Mr. Speaker, the data continues to show that people using hand-held devices, texting, checking messages, talking, playing games, et cetera, while driving, are detrimental to the driver's health and, more importantly, to bystanders and other drivers, people who have no control over the actions of the offending driver.

Two recent news items, for instance: a skateboarder in Lethbridge caused a collision between himself and a car because he was looking at his cell phone as he crossed the street outside a crosswalk, no less. And the United Nations General Secretary Ban Ki-Moon yesterday called for a culture in which driving while distracted is unacceptable, unacceptable in the eyes of the law and the public. The Secretary General also said I want every driver in the world to get the message: texting while driving kills. Ban then announced that the UN is prohibiting its employees from texting while driving in UN vehicles.

I've mentioned before that there are more and more companies and organizations which prohibit employees from driving while using a cell phone. Finning Canada is one, NTCL Company Ltd. is another, and who knew GNWT is a third. We have a policy number 6003.08.10, titled Mobile Hand-Held Devices, and it has a section 5.2 titled Compliance. The introduction reads: Users must comply with other GNWT legislation, policies, procedures, standards and guidelines related to mobile hand-held device use. It further states specific considerations include and in 5.2(d) it says, do not use a GNWT mobile hand-held device while driving unless a hands-free kit is used. That means while driving any vehicle, either a GNWT vehicle or one's own vehicle, one shouldn't be using a GNWT cell phone.

Mr. Speaker, I'll go out on a sturdy tree limb and say that everyone in this room uses a government-owned cell phone or Smart phone, and I think my sturdy limb will support the conjecture that 99 percent of GNWT employees using cell phones are using GNWT-owned cell phones. How many of them and how many of us know of the policy? How many of them and how many of us are in compliance with that policy? I suspect not very many. The policy is laudable, but without wide publicity as well as enforcement, it's not much good, Mr. Speaker.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. BISARO: I really need support on this issue, obviously. Without wide publicity as well as enforcement, the policy isn't much good.

Mr. Speaker, some months ago the Minister of Transportation advised the House that the department was reviewing and analyzing the issue of distracted driving and possible changes to the Motor Vehicle Act. I am hopeful that that report will recommend changes that bring us closer to roads which are safe from drivers using hand-held devices. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
STEM CELL CHALLENGE CLINIC
IN YELLOWKNIFE

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was pleased to see a press release that indicated that stem cell challenge clinics have been organized in the Northwest Territories by the Yellowknife Fire Department and Medic North in support of the first annual National EMS Stem Cell Challenge. I'd like to take this opportunity to applaud both the Yellowknife Fire Department and Medic North for facilitating this important challenge.

The press release went further to indicate that the nationwide challenge is aimed at registering healthy, committed Canadians, aged 17 to 50, on the National Stem Cell Challenge and Marrow Network maintained by the Canadian Blood Services. The network serves a vital role across Canada in matching potential donors with compatible recipients who need stem cell or marrow transplants. Apparently, there are less than 30 percent of patients who need these transplants that actually find compatible matches within their own families. As such, there is an incredible need to add the database to ensure that all patients are able to find compatible donors.

In Yellowknife, the challenge is being held in two locations on two days: today from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Centre Square Mall and tomorrow, the 21st, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Yellowknife Co-op. I have been talking about this issue with my wife a lot over the last couple of months. We have decided to take this challenge and add to the network.

---Applause

As a Member of the 16th Assembly which has a vision and a goal of healthy, educated people, I would like to challenge all of the Members of this

House between the ages of 17 and 50 to join me in the challenge tomorrow at 5:30 at Yellowknife Co-op to donate and add to the network. I think this is an important initiative. It is an important cause, so all of you between 17 and 50, I will see you at the Yellowknife Co-op tomorrow at 5:30. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
RECOGNITION OF DEVALIN POKIAK'S
COURAGE IN RESCUING HER FATHER

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to pay tribute to a young lady in Tuktoyaktuk, Ms. Devalin Pokiak, who demonstrated not only bravery but the ability to use her skills that her father taught her to ensure his rescue, Mr. Speaker.

On May 15th, CBC states: a hunter from Tuktoyaktuk is recovering from a long ordeal in the Beaufort Sea late last week when he became stranded on a drifting piece of ice for more than 14 hours. The hunter from Tuktoyaktuk is recovering well. Randall Boogey Pokiak and his daughter were driving the snowmobile north of Tuk on Friday when a piece of sea ice suddenly broke off and Mr. Pokiak started drifting out. He was up hunting and the ice just broke loose from the main shoreline. Tuktoyaktuk sergeant Calvin Roberts told CBC on Tuesday, his 15-year-old daughter had to take their second snowmobile and travel by herself in a snowstorm 50 kilometres south to a location nearest camp. Neither Pokiak nor his daughter drove to the camp which had a cell phone. Mr. Eddie Dillon and his daughter carried a satellite phone another 10 kilometres to get satellite service. The girl drove to the cabin and she grabbed a cell phone and then she called for help. The RCMP initially planned to send out a plane but Mr. Roberts said there was freezing rain in the area and police dispatched a helicopter from nearby Inuvik. Searches later found Mr. Pokiak on an ice pan, which Roberts said was about 15 by nine metres in size. Police say Mr. Pokiak was not injured in the 14-hour ordeal.

Mr. Speaker, I would really like to thank Devalin. That demonstrated courage to do this to save her father's life. I also would like to thank...

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. JACOBSON: I also would like to thank Ms. Alana Mero from Inuvik Search and Rescue and Frank Pokiak that was in the helicopter and also Jack Kruger. Jack has been part of Search and Rescue in the Northwest Territories for years, out of Hay River, and Jack told me that if it wasn't for

Devalin keeping her wits traveling 50 kilometres by snow machine to Mr. Dillon's camp during the snowstorm putting the search in motion, the outcome could have been tragic. Mr. Speaker, I really want to thank Devalin for her courage and give her a big round of applause. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TRANSPORTATION ISSUES IN NAHENDEH

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I would be remiss if I didn't raise the subject of roads in this city in the Legislative Assembly. My colleague Mr. Krutko indicated that in his visit to Fort Liard, he heard that the solution was housing, housing, housing. But for the whole of my constituency as I travel, the issue is roads, roads, roads, Mr. Speaker.

The highways are an important link to the people in Nahendeh and throughout the North. Roads are the lifeline of our communities and so we are always concerned about them. I am pleased about the work that is going to take place in the summer: the chipseal work on Highway No. 1 and the engineering and reconstructing of the Liard Highway, improvements to the access roads in Jean Marie River and Nahanni Butte. The transportation link from Fort Simpson to Wrigley is also a concern. I hope that consistent and regular meetings occur in these sections as well as remediation of several narrow sections. I urge the Department of Transportation to ensure that these get completed this year so that we can look forward to developing more projects next year.

The benefits of these projects are many, beginning with local contracts, local employment in the region and extended to our tourists and tourism industry. Northerners travel back and forth on these roads for shopping, medical appointments, to attend sports and cultural events and to visit extended families. Our visiting tourists with their fifth wheelers and motor homes, sometimes even towing small cars behind, are the link to encouraging even more tourists. I wish for them all a beautiful and enjoyable summer as they travel our great country. Our road construction projects will show them we are serious about having them and keeping them in the North.

Having to begin the project description report for the construction of the Mackenzie Valley Highway is also very good news. I look forward to that work and I suggest that if there is a way to have a communication plan, that will only help sell our spectacular Territory. In the future we hope to have a Mackenzie Valley Highway.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I trust the Department of Transportation will have all the Nahendeh projects scheduled by now and work will be completed

without a hitch. We all look forward to an improved and well maintained highway system. Mahsi cho.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON STEM CELL CHALLENGE CLINIC IN YELLOWKNIFE

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like my colleague Mr. Abernethy, Member for Great Slave, I, too, wish to speak to the issue of stem cell challenge clinics here in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, over the lunch hour, I actually went down with a group of friends to meet this challenge head on. Several of us wanted to ensure that we participated, because many of us believe that this is an important program that does save lives. Mr. Speaker, sadly, as we know very well, more people die waiting for a donor than receive them and we certainly wish that wasn't the case.

Mr. Speaker, the process really takes about 10 minutes. It is a painless process. When I was down there with a bunch of my friends, you could see a lot of enthusiastic people knowing that their small contribution is going a long way to help other people. Mr. Speaker, an opportunity like this presents hope for many families who are out there hoping for a donor or a match. Mr. Speaker, it is equally comparable to the Live Donor Program which we need here in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, sadly, more people are waiting for a donor of some type but they don't make it through that fight while they sit and wait.

Mr. Speaker, I can speak from personal experience of a recent sad case where someone that we call our Little Spike didn't meet that challenge because a donor was not available. Mr. Speaker, as hard as we prayed, it just didn't happen. Mr. Speaker, I would encourage everyone to dig deep down inside to see if they could make themselves available in this case to provide themselves for the Stem Cell Challenge or even consider filling out a donor card because their life could go on and save someone else's.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage everyone in this House, like Mr. Abernethy as well as anyone else out there who is listening, to take this opportunity to meet this challenge head on. It is an important value and I sincerely hope that many people do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had thought I would make it through this sitting in the House without having to speak about the Deh Cho Bridge Project, but, Mr. Speaker, after listening to the Minister of Transportation's Minister's statement I am left with little choice but to address that statement.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Minister that we have to extol the benefits that this bridge will bring our residents. However, I also believe that we have an obligation to our residents to give them the straight goods on how we are going to pay for it, what our relationship will be with the community of Fort Providence, and any issues coming out of the construction of it.

Mr. Speaker, this bridge project continues to cost this government money. I have been very critical of the decisions made to get this bridge constructed; I never did and never will agree with how the last government proceeded to approve this project. Yes, they put us on that path, but, Mr. Speaker, since then this government has been responsible for making decisions and calling the shots. Decisions like sole sourcing the rest of the work to Ruskin, and the decision to continually turn a blind eye to the mismanagement of the project, whether it was claims, poor concrete, scour rock that by all accounts was not up to spec, lawsuits, contractors not being paid, the general contractor being fired, design issues, and eventually the lockdown of the construction account. Let's just say, Mr. Speaker, the alarm bells should have been ringing for the Minister and Cabinet a long time ago.

It was their call not to act; it was their call not to pull out the default clause in the concession agreement on the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation. That, Mr. Speaker, is on this government. The accountability and responsibility falls squarely at the feet of this government.

Mr. Speaker, it was very welcome news when Sheila Fraser, the Auditor General of Canada, confirmed that her office will come to the Northwest Territories to conduct a much needed audit of this project. Mr. Speaker, I do look forward to her findings and her recommendations. How do governments continue to get away with shirking responsibility?

I've said this before and I'll say it again, I'm looking for accountability and I'm looking for governments and individuals being held responsible for the decisions that they make. If they're not, then no lessons are learned and a vicious cycle will continue to the great detriment of the taxpayers of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
DELIVERY OF SENIORS
HOME REPAIR PROGRAM

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, I have always spoken in the House about the government putting as much support as possible for our youth. They are our future. Also, Mr. Speaker, I advocate that this government, in delivering programs to seniors, must do it in a respectful and timely manner.

Mr. Speaker, I feel this government must pay more attention to our seniors when delivering their programs. One of the programs that I speak of is the delivery of housing repair programs. Right now across the NWT, our seniors are going through a lot of hardship, including trying to support their extended families while their families sit on income support due to a lack of employment.

I have in the past spoken of low employment rates in the small communities and how that adversely affects everything, Mr. Speaker. One of the key effects of that is the land and tax arrears issue. Mr. Speaker, seniors that desperately need their units repaired cannot get those repairs because of land and lease arrears issues on the land on which their houses sit.

Mr. Speaker, the NWT Housing Corporation must find a way to get around that policy. The NWT must understand that land and tax issues may go on for years and the houses will be way beyond economic repair by the time that issue is concluded. The Housing Corporation must realize that the alternative of housing seniors in a home or building a new house once their unit is beyond economic repair will be extremely costly to government. The NWT Housing Corporation must find a way to set the tax and lease arrears issues aside and repair the seniors' homes and extend the life of those homes.

Mr. Speaker, seniors do not pay a mortgage for NWT Housing Corporation programs, therefore, credit issues pertaining to lease and tax arrears should not be a deterrent for them receiving housing programs.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, while the issue of land tax arrears has been affected by many things in the past, including negotiations where small communities have been told this is Dene land, you don't have to pay taxes and leases, as you can see, Mr. Speaker, this issue is very complex and the NWT Housing Corporation should not wait until it's concluded before delivering programs to seniors that need programs so badly.

Mr. Speaker, during the appropriate time I'll have questions for the Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
PROCESS FOR LODGING COMPLAINTS UNDER
THE MEDICAL PROFESSION ACT**

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I started off this sitting of the Legislative Assembly raising a concern about a medical professional practising in the Northwest Territories who I had serious concerns about.

As a result of some follow-up with the Department of Health, Mr. Speaker, I was able to determine that a new Medical Profession Act was passed and came into force on April 6th -- so just over a month ago -- so complaints after the date of April 6th are now managed under the new act.

The new act gives a disciplinary board and the investigator better and up-to-date tools, temporary suspension, a wider variety of ways to deal with the terms and conditions of a licence, mediation and dispute resolution techniques for a complaint, and better ways of dealing with difficult physicians who may not wish to cooperate and who may leave the NWT or let their licence lapse in order to avoid a complaint process.

Mr. Speaker, here are a few of the improvements. If there is improper conduct that is deemed to be a criminal offense, this allows the GNWT to revoke the licence upon conviction of that individual, it allows for sanctions if a practitioner fails or refuses to comply with the settlement agreement approved through proposed alternative dispute mechanisms.

Mr. Speaker, it allows for the investigation of a complaint for up to two years after a physician is no longer registered in the Northwest Territories. The accused practitioner can be compelled to testify in an inquiry. The board of inquiry can proceed upon proof that the complaint has been served to the accused. The complainant can have a very limited role in the inquiry. The written decisions of the board of inquiry must be provided. An appeal of a decision by the board of inquiry to the Supreme Court does not set aside the judgement. Also, the new act allows for the recovery of costs from a physician, but not exceeding \$20,000.

Mr. Speaker, I was very, very pleased to learn of these changes to the process and I would encourage people who feel that the previous process did not serve their complaint, or did not give them the satisfaction of feeling like the physician complained of was dealt with in a proper way, to look at this process and consider whether it might be appropriate to file their complaint again to

have it dealt with. I do say I'm very pleased with these changes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Many people had a hand in the developing of our Water Strategy, Northern Voices, Northern Waters. We have some of these fine folks in the gallery today and from INAC I'd like to recognize Teresa Joudrie, director of Renewable Resources and Environment; Sevn Bohnet, technical coordinator; Tricia Melander-Forde, senior communications officer; Carole Mills, former manager, water resources division, now working for the Government of the Northwest Territories; and with the GNWT we have our stalwart deputy, Mr. Gary Bohnet; Mark Warren, assistant deputy minister of ENR; Megan Leverage and her soon-to-be baby,...

---Laughter

...and Loretta Ransom. Thank you all for your help.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize my old boss Gary Bohnet, who used to be the president of the NWT Metis Association. I was his vice-president. So it's good to see the boss up there in his position. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a couple of Pages from Fort Smith this week. A Page named Paige McKay, and Julia de Pelham. I recognize the chaperone, Ms. Megan Okrainec. Welcome and I hope you enjoyed your week and had a great experience. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to thank two Pages from Hay River South for their work and their help in the Legislative Assembly this week, two Grade 8 students from Diamond Jenness Secondary School, Mr. Bryce Maher and Mr. Zachary Martin. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, have a Page that I'd like to recognize for his hard work: Branden Horn from Range Lake School here in Yellowknife. Thank you.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize all the folks who worked on the NWT Water Strategy, fantastic work. I figure there must be residents of Weledeh in such a good group, so...

---Laughter

...there we go, thank you very much. And as well, of course, I wanted to...

---Interjections

---Laughter

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Speaker, order. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to mention Gary's son, Sevn Bohnet, just to conclude the family circle there.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Mr. Chris Hunt, entrepreneur around town. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. If we've missed anyone in the gallery today, welcome to the Chamber. I hope you are enjoying the proceedings. It's always nice to have an audience in here.

Item 7, acknowledgements. Item 8, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 179-16(5): SENIORS HOME REPAIR PROGRAM

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement I spoke of the NWT Housing Corporation delivering programs to seniors and the tax and lease arrears being a deterrent to that delivery. I would like to ask the Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation some questions. Can the Minister change the policy of the repair programs so that land and tax arrears will not adversely affect the approval of seniors from obtaining repair programs for their units? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NWT Housing Corporation goes a long way in trying to assist seniors in home repairs and getting work done on their units and getting into homeownership. There are many things we do for them. If this is something that is a concern, I'd have to explore that with officials from the Housing Corporation to see if there is something that we might be able to do to address this concern. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: I guess I'm asking for a change of policy, which would be long term. But at this point in the year and the importance of the construction season, can the Minister direct his delivery staff in the regions to set aside issues pertaining to land arrears as far as tax and leases go for the delivery to our seniors' households? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: All those that wish to enter the program through the Housing Corporation are encouraged to apply. There is a process that we have to go through as far as addressing policy changes. So I would encourage those that may know that they're in arrears, to apply and then the district offices will follow the process as it's laid out. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: For the Housing Corporation to be able to address the size of the problem with coordinating issues pertaining to senior households, can the Minister separate the seniors' core need issues from the rest of the households like families and single peoples' core need issues and do that as a top priority? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Providing programs to seniors is one of our priorities. We do have some programs that are designed specifically for seniors through the Housing Corp and through MACA. We have preventative maintenance programs. So we do have some programs geared towards seniors, but as I was mentioning before, we will look at all ways that we can improve our service and delivery to seniors. We could look at possibly identifying a lot of the seniors out there. The Member has actually been very helpful in identifying a lot of seniors in his constituency that might qualify for some programs. So we continue to take that work on and applying for the Preventative Maintenance Program. Once the seniors are in the system, then they continue to receive that benefit every year. So that's one of the ways that we track the amount of seniors that are in there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that's good. I would like to thank the Minister for that response. Can the Minister develop a delivery strategy that's focused on seniors so that when we go back to the seniors' households and discuss housing issues with them, that we are able to tell them that there is some certain specific

attention being paid to those households? Can the Minister develop a delivery strategy for seniors' households? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: This is a concern that we've heard from some of the Members on how we deliver programs to the seniors and I had committed earlier to the Member for Tu Nedhe that we do have district staff going into the community. If there were seniors that needed our staff to go see them and help them fill out the applications and also with translation, they'd be willing to do that. So we continue to refine how we deliver our programs for seniors because we do want our seniors to have a nice, comfortable lifestyle and if there is anything we can do to assist with that, that's something we are constantly looking at doing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 180-16(5):
CHANGES TO THE MACKENZIE VALLEY
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT AND
LAND CLAIMS AGREEMENTS

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in regards to my Member's statement, I talked about the regulatory process and the affect it has on land claims agreements. So my questions are probably better directed to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, under the McCrank report, page 14, which talks about any fundamental restructuring in regards to the agreement, all the parties to comprehensive land claims agreements, comprehensive land claims agreements are constitutionally protected and any amendments without the effective parties being in the agreement cannot be amended. Then it talks about Section 35 of the Constitution, existing aboriginal treaty rights, aboriginal people are hereby recognized and affirmed, and also Section 50 of the Canadian Constitution which basically says the Constitution of Canada is supreme law of the land and any laws in respect of the provision of the Constitution basically has paramount with other laws. So I would like to ask the Premier, who is responsible for Aboriginal Affairs and, more importantly, responsible for this government, I believe you had a meeting with regard to Mr. Pollard with regard to where he's going. What got me is Mr. Pollard's comments in the paper that this is not going to have any effect on the land claim agreements and they are going to go ahead and make these changes. But in the recommendations put forward by Mr. McCrank, it was basically totally going in the opposite direction. So what's the government's position on these process changes and also what affects these changes. But in the recommendations put forward

by Mr. McCrank, it's basically totally going the opposite direction. So I'd like to ask the Premier what is the government's position on these process changes and also what affects it could have in regard to aboriginal land claim agreements and treaty rights. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member raises a valid point on the interaction of the land claims in the Northwest Territories, how they're protected, and any changes to any regimes that are in place need to be paid attention to.

As the Government of the Northwest Territories, we've developed a consultation strategy and a consultation framework with First Nations and aboriginal governments here in the Northwest Territories to look at any program that might impact on those types of agreements. The federal government has just initiated its work to look at doing some work around the regulatory environment that we're faced with, and the initial meeting we had was very preliminary, more or less a chance to meet firsthand Mr. Pollard, who will be doing the work for the Minister of DIAND, and we'll see what the work presents. Right now, we don't know what that final work will do. We're going to stay in touch with the work as it develops to ensure that, in fact, the processes are in place, that the respect for them are being paid and that we continue to build a positive environment with our aboriginal governments in the Northwest Territories.

So we're going to stay in touch in that manner. As well, from a Government of the Northwest Territories perspective itself as well as just to the type of work that's going to be done, I think, in fact, that the work that we all think about when the McCrank report came out is going to be somewhat less than that. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, again, in regard to my Member's statement and also the quote I just read where basically it says that there has to be a fundamental agreement on any changes, my fear is that the government seems to have its mind already made up that they're going to go ahead full speed and make these changes without full consultation with the affected land claims and, more importantly, the affected treaty rights.

So I'd like to ask the Premier, what is the government's position on inclusion of the aboriginal groups who are going to be affected by this change to ensure that they're full participants on any redrafting or changes to the Mackenzie Valley Resources Management Act?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, the chief negotiator on the regulatory reform file is in the very

early stages of his consultation with all governments in the Northwest Territories. We're going to track that involvement and the work that starts to flow out of it and see where things go from that point of view.

So it's very early. Again, the meeting that we had was very preliminary and some of the basic sort of steps that are being looked at. We know that all the First Nations and aboriginal groups and governments out there will be paid a visit and we'll see how they react. In fact, I think this may be a subject matter that regional leaders would like to have a discussion on as well. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, that's the fear I have, is that they're simply going to pay a visit. For me, that's not consultation. I think there have been court cases in Canada, especially the Delgamuukw decision, there was also a court case here in the Northwest Territories in regard to the Mackenzie Valley Resources Act in regard to the people of Kakisa who took the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Review Board to court on the basis that they basically weren't fully consulted. I think that we have to ensure that we do everything to protect the rights of those people, not only with land claims but also without, to any regulatory changes that are going to take place. It has to include the fundamental principle of full involvement by way of participation, not only by consultation but involvement under regulatory boards and systems we set up. So what type of guarantees can we get from the government to ensure that those full consultations take place and not simply them paying us a visit?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, the chief negotiator is an experienced Northerner and a past representative of the Legislative Assembly in his own time. I think that's one of the reasons why, with his experience in the North, that may help in the deliberations that are to follow. We're going to stay in close contact with him. We have our consultation framework that's in place and we'd be prepared to share that with the chief negotiator on the file and see what work comes from that. Again, we'll stay in touch with the regional leaders, as well, with this issue as it develops. Thank you.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Premier allow us to be included in whatever processes going forward and making sure that all Members of the House are informed and consulted fully in regard to where this government is going and, more importantly, where this issue is proceeding to? So can we be fully informed and consulted by the Premier? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, we will encourage the chief negotiator to set up a meeting with committee as well as the work that we do in

preparation. As our practice is, we will set up some time to sit down with Members to see what positions are being developed and how we should respond to some of those. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 181-16(5):
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've got questions today for the Minister of Transportation getting back to my Member's statement and also in reference to the Minister's statement that he made earlier today.

I'd like to ask, given the fact that the Deh Cho Bridge Project was a partnership originally with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation, much of the information for the public and for Members of the House was shrouded in a great deal of secrecy. That's not the case anymore, Mr. Speaker, as the government has taken on full control of that project. I'd like to ask the Minister how the government is going to get all the information about the project so that the public can see all the relative information on the project. Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my position on the Department of Transportation's project, and that includes the Deh Cho Bridge, is one of transparency. We've taken all avenues to provide information to the Members of this House. We continue to look for ways to communicate with the general public. We plan to incorporate a newsletter into our communications on the bridge, we're also working towards developing a website that will have all information around this project, and we want to have an on-site camera where people can patch into the site and be able to view construction as it proceeds and moves forward. So those are some of the things that we want to be able to do for the general public. We also want to commit to the Members, which I have already, to provide regular updates either through e-mails or face-to-face committee meetings. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: In the Minister's statement he says the intent is to highlight all the positive accomplishments associated with the bridge. I'm wondering will those positive accomplishments include updated status of the construction audit, updated revenue forecasts, updated financial information on that bridge project? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: We plan to update all the positive aspects. The Member's been doing a good job highlighting some of the negative ones, but we also have to flag those. There are a number

of audits that are going on. There is a technical audit that we have embarked on and we have committed to the Members that we would share that information. We're about halfway through that. We have a lot of documents. We have a lot of information to be able to sift through and see where things are at and we hope to conclude that in another three to four weeks. Of course, we have the Auditor General that has been invited by motion in this House to do an audit and discussions have been taking place. Mr. Speaker, we commit to providing all the information when it's timely, possibly to the Members of this House and to the general public, good or bad. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, the Minister says these things are negative. Mr. Speaker, I disagree with him. It's reality. He might call them negative. I think it's reality. And the reality is, Mr. Speaker, this government and every government for the next 35 years is going to have to figure out a way to pay for this Deh Cho Bridge Project. That's the reality; stark reality, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister, when the Government of the Northwest Territories makes the decision to remove itself from the concession agreement, what exactly does that entail and at what cost to the government? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, some of these challenges have been very negative and some of them have been challenges that were translated as being negative, so I am just reaffirming that. We are at work right now to conclude a lot of different issues that have been out there. There is a lot of review that is taking place. We have stepped in as the project developer. We have stepped in as the delivery agent of this project. We are working to conclude a number of things that are still on the drawing board. That includes some of the outstanding claims and other issues such as dealing with the concession agreement.

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

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister if he has an estimate on what it is going to cost the Government of the Northwest Territories and the taxpayers here to get out of that concession agreement. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, it is going to cost us a lot less than what it would cost us to stay in the concession agreement. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 182-16(5):

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION IN NAHENDEH

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to follow up on my Member's statement and

ask the Minister of Transportation some questions on some of the construction projects on Highway No. 1 and Highway No. 7 just with respect to the reconstruction on Highway No. 7. I think it was kilometre 166, the section that failed last spring. What work is planned for those areas and how much reconstruction will be done between the B.C. border and Fort Liard? Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The highway that the Member has referred to, Highway No. 7, has been posing a lot of challenges, as the Member has raised in this House. There have been sections of the road that have failed as a result of spring runoff and rain. It is a road that is at a point in its lifecycle that it needs to be reconstructed. We certainly heard lots from the Member and communities from the Member's riding.

We have committed to do roughly \$4 million worth of work. It is going to require a lot more. It is going to be a requirement of investment ongoing each year, so we have committed \$4 million for this year and targeting another \$4 million next year, Mr. Speaker. There is, of course, a requirement to deal with some of the more pressure areas that are forcing us to put load limits on the road. There is a real strategy that is going to be redone, because our plans had been focused on another portion of the road that was giving us problems last year. I will provide that information as soon as we have it finalized for the Member. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Speaker, I am just looking for assurances that the work will get done this year. I know that we ran into weather issues last year and weren't able to complete much of the reconstruction and very little of it, actually. I am looking for reassurances by the Minister that this work will be done early in the year and we don't end up late into the fall season when there are weather issues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, once again I have to say that I can reassure the Member that our goal is to do all the work. We have \$4 million for Highway No. 7. We have, I think, 64 kilometres to chipseal on Highway No. 1 that leads towards the Member's riding. We have a new airport to relocate in Trout Lake. We have a road in Jean Marie River and we also have a commitment to do more work on the Nahanni Butte access road. There is a lot of work that has been committed to. We have a plan for this year. Weather permitting, we will get it all done and contracts are out. We are focused on getting it completed. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the Minister was able to list some of the other projects in the riding. I am really pleased, certainly, that

these projects are moving forward. I just want to get reassurance that it will continue to be moving forward. Mr. Minister mentioned about chipsealing Highway No. 1 and residents of Nahendeh are looking forward to that. I think it was 70 kilometres. Just with that, are there plans also to work on replacing culverts on a further 70 kilometres of Highway No. 1 towards Fort Simpson? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, there is a fairly large amount of investment that is going to be done in the Member's riding of Nahendeh. We can give him a complete plan of work that we anticipate will happen this year along with the negotiations that have to happen as we move forward with our PDR discussions. This presentation was made to Deh Cho First Nations. They have recommended that we work with the community. That is also another area that we have to focus on. We will compile the work. We have it all listed out in different kilometres and different culverts that need to be replaced and I will provide that to the Member. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. That is the kind of working with the communities that I like to see and continue on. When will the Minister or his department begin those consultations or community meetings with the different communities in my riding? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, most of the communities have been contacted. Most of the communities are aware of the work in the immediate proximity. We expect a list of information will be out to the communities before I do my tour of the Member's riding, which is going to be in a couple of weeks. I am sure there will be more issues being brought up and a lot more investment that is going to be pointed to as they feel required. That information we intend to get out to the people of Nahendeh and will also show that information as we go to the communities as well.

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

QUESTION 183-16(5):
ELECTRICITY AND FUEL RATES
IN NORMAN WELLS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister of MACA, Mr. Bob McLeod, in terms of the new electrical rate review recommendations to this Assembly. I understand that with the town of Norman Wells, they were going to see an increase of 30 percent for the next two years by Imperial Oil. I think this announcement was a saving grace for the town of Norman Wells. I want to ask him in terms of future protection under the Public Utilities Board, can the town of Norman

Wells turn to the Public Utilities Board for some protection in terms of the Norman Wells oilfield? Imperial Oil is increasing the rates in Norman Wells.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable lead Minister for the Energy Coordinating Committee, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In Norman Wells, as the Member knows, the Town of Norman Wells purchases natural gas from Imperial Oil and NTPC purchases natural gas from the Town for electricity generation and it does fall under the purview of the Public Utilities Board. The Public Utilities Board deals with natural gas on a complaints-only basis on the generation of power. The Public Utilities Board makes sure that the rates charged for power or natural gas that generates power is less than the cost of heating fuel. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister look into the possibility of directing the Public Utilities Board to regulate the price of gas in Norman Wells to make it closer to the cost of production?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the agreements that are in place require us to monitor it. It is tied to the price of heating oil. We monitor it on that basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: Would the Minister consider going beyond the monitoring of heating oil to regulate the Public Utilities Board to regulate the price of gas in Norman Wells to make it closer to the cost of production?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. I think we have an opportunity now that we are looking to implement changes to the electricity rate structure and we will certainly be involving the Public Utilities Board as we go through that process. So we would endeavour to review that in light of the fact that Norman Wells natural gas supply is depleting very rapidly. Thank you.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll ask the Minister if he would pursue better pricing with the federal government so that we can improve the cost of living in Norman Wells.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. We do have the opportunity, as well, to look at the thermal rates, whether Norman Wells could be included as part of the thermal rate communities, that's another option. But as far as the federal government and their one-third ownership of the Norman Wells production, that's something that we'll take under advisement. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 184-16(5):
WITHDRAWAL OF CARIBOU MANAGEMENT
QUESTION FROM THE COURTS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask questions of the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources about caribou management of the Bathurst herd. I'd like to start with the withdrawal of a question from the Supreme Court on the ability of GNWT to fully restrict the caribou hunting by aboriginal people in certain areas.

Obviously, I think it's clear to the Minister the biggest issue is with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, and they clearly did not want this question withdrawn from the courts. So I'm wondering why indeed Cabinet decided to withdraw this question from the courts. Thank you.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question that was put forward to the courts and subsequently, as Members are aware, that we've withdrawn that question. It was after a meeting with aboriginal leadership across the Territories that we took that into consideration and the work that we do with the regional leadership. In the discussions with the leadership across the Northwest Territories it was felt that the better avenue was to sit down together and work through this arrangement, and that's what we've done. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. Once again, I appreciate those remarks from the Premier. I hope that there was some communication with the Yellowknives Dene on this and some agreement before that decision was made, but it does beg the question: what is the government doing now to work with the Yellowknives Dene on the caribou management issue to ensure that a quality, fully supported caribou management plan is in place by this fall? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you. Since that information is detailed ongoing discussions with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, I'll have that redirected to Minister Miltenberger.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are currently fully engaged, of course, in the Wek'eezhii process. At the same time, we recognize the need to have a parallel process with the Akaitcho and the Yellowknives. There have been meetings this week and every week preceding this week as well with our very senior ADM, with the chief or a dozen elders. Today is basically their elders' summit to talk about the steps ahead to come up with an arrangement that we can have in place for this coming hunting season, as well as

map out the plan forward for a longer term as we plan for the Bathurst herd and it will be linked and integrated into the Wek'eezhii process so that we have an overall coordinated caribou plan for the Bathurst herd. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. That's easy to say, but obviously it wasn't easy, it was impossible to deliver in the past, it wasn't delivered. What exceptional effort is the department putting in to getting this done in a way that will actually achieve the goals the Minister just mentioned? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. We have, firstly, there's been an enormous amount of work put into this whole issue. There is a significant incentive, the ban is in place and will stay in place until we have something to replace it with. So the plan is -- and the parties are all aware of this -- that we want to apply ourselves to come up with an agreement. There have been very strong signals, not only signals, but so far the cooperation of the Yellowknives and we intend to keep working with them along with the Wek'eezhii and the Northwest Territories Metis to come up with a plan. While it may be an interim arrangement because a long-term plan is going to take some time, I'm convinced and I'm committed to getting an interim arrangement for the Bathurst herd for this coming hunting season. Thank you.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I appreciate the comments from the Minister. I hope that he is successful in that commitment. It is a big challenge and we do not want... Obviously, nobody wants to end up where we were here recently. Caribou don't benefit and neither does anybody else. Will the plan that's being developed here take into consideration both the numbers we know and the poor condition and low survival of calves that seems to be indicated with the most recent information as a result of looking at the hunted animals in that range? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. Yes, we're going to take all those factors into consideration as there will be more work done this summer on the Bluenose East, we're going to try to do some work on the Ahiak, we're going to do as well some work on the Bathurst. So we intend that all that information has to be added to the mix. We're going to build in the traditional knowledge that has been part of this process so far, work with the communities as well to come up with the best information, and, once again, the indications are that there is strong commitment by all the parties to come up with a plan so that we're ready for this coming hunting season and that the ban can be replaced by a management plan that has been signed off by the aboriginal governments. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 185-16(5):
REPORT ON DISTRACTED DRIVING

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions for the Minister of Transportation as a follow-up to my statement earlier today. I mentioned a report that the department was working on and I understand that the department's report has been finished and I think it has also gone to committee. I'd like to know from the Minister whether or not that's accurate and if that's the case, will this report be made available to the public and how soon. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I missed the Minister you were directing your question to, Ms. Bisaro. Can you clarify that?

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Minister of Transportation, please.

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

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is an issue that's been raised by a number of Members in this House. We have committed to do some work in the area of what other jurisdictions are doing, what are some of the situations that we are facing here in the NWT. We've compiled some information and we have provided it to committee and we've written a letter to committee that requests to have some time to discuss this and get their comments and feedback. This will be a very public issue that will have a lot of discussion and we anticipate as we go forward all this information will be made public. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for that information, and I guess I'll just have to wait for it to come in the fullness of time, as another Minister would say. I appreciate the fact that there's going to be input from the public. I think that's a good thing, but recently the NWT Association of Communities passed a resolution at their meeting in Hay River in which they said they urge the Members of the NWT Legislative Assembly to move forward with legislation prohibiting the use of cell phones and hand-held communication devices, excluding two-way radios, while operating a motor vehicle. I guess I'd like to know from the Minister whether or not the sort of input he is looking for is this kind of input from an organization that represents 27 of our 33 communities. Will he take this sort of information from our communities into advisement as well? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I was at the NWT Association of Communities meeting. I didn't vote on this issue. Mr. Speaker, I think we have compiled quite a bit of information. It's fairly

comprehensive. We want to have the ability to have that discussion with the EDI committee and we're hoping we'll have some time. In fact, maybe even during this session we'd be able to do that or in the next little while. If we're going to do anything major, we'd need to have it at least into the House for discussion by next sitting. That's something that we have been looking at. However, before I make that decision, before I make that commitment, I need to be able to have some feedback from committee and have that face-to-face discussion.

MS. BISARO: I don't think I heard an answer to the questions, but that's alright.

I did mention in my statement, I quoted a GNWT policy. I have a question for the Minister. I'd like to know whether or not he's aware of this policy. The department has a public education campaign on distracted driving, I believe. I'd like to know if the Minister will be publicizing and promoting this GNWT policy as part of the department's distracted driving public education campaign. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I believe I was the one that informed the Member of this clause that's in our policies. It is public information already. I'm not sure how much more public she would like to make it, but if that's not what she's asking, I'd sure like to sit down with her and seek clarity on her quest.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you. I'm not sure if I got it from the Minister or from my assistant, but I got the information. I guess, having had difficulty getting another policy from the government recently, I'm a little sceptical about the public availability of our GNWT policies. Basically, what I'm looking for from the Minister is that we ensure that our employees are aware of this policy and that they adhere to the policy. So my last question to the Minister is whether he can tell me of efforts on the part of either the Department of Transportation, any other department within government or the government as a whole, what efforts are there to enforce this policy amongst our employees? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, if the Members or our staff were not aware of this policy, we certainly would not be able to enforce it. Our supervisors and each department are responsible for providing that information and they're also responsible for providing discipline in this area. That is public information that the Member's referring to. It's on the website, I believe. It's a policy that is government-wide and it's public. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

QUESTION 186-16(5):

HIGH COST OF LIVING IN NUNAKPUT

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of ECE regarding the food basket. Mr. Speaker, it adds to our frustration the government's formula for calculating social assistance. It's simply inadequate to compare food prices between Yellowknife and Sachs Harbour. It's just not realistic.

Mr. Speaker, the people don't get enough money for food and our people are going hungry. People are living in poverty. No wonder; the cost of living in Nunakput is 81 percent and in some areas higher, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is not right in a rich land like ours.

So I ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment: will this government change the way the food basket is calculated for us to get assistance to the people of Nunakput who can't afford good food? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are currently, through income security and a variety of support to the communities to deal with basic food, shelter and clothing allowances. We also have other subsidies such as seniors' home fuel subsidy, public housing rental subsidy, which will be transferred to the Housing Corporation soon, and a variety of supports that are available such as NWT child benefits, child care user subsidy, and senior citizen supplementary benefits, along with other benefits that we do provide. We've made some changes to our income security in 2007 to increase our funding as well. At the same time, we just highlighted \$400,000 towards a new initiative on promoting healthy foods in the Northwest Territories. The \$400,000 will go directly to the children in need in the Northwest Territories, to the schools. Mahsi.

MR. JACOBSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the Minister. He's referring to the breakfast program for the schools in the Northwest Territories and I am thankful for that. Mr. Speaker, there are many federal government programs that this government can tap into to provide the communities with affordable healthy foods. I wonder if this government is taking full advantage of these programs. I see, with the federal government changing the Food Mail Program, the subsidy will go directly to the stores in the communities. I wonder if the government had anything to say about the change. Would the prices really go down, Mr. Speaker? I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, if the federal programs this government is using to complement the assistance our government provides to our people without enough food. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, we continue to deliver a subsidy program to the communities. It's also adjusted by the region. So the higher the costs of the community, the rate changes in that area as well.

With the federal subsidy that was delivered through Canada Post previous years back. There have been some changes in that area. I believe they're focusing on three main companies that will be delivering that for the food delivery. This will not complement what we do. We will continue to deliver the subsidy program to those communities that are in need, the 33 communities that we service. Mr. Speaker, that federal delivery program is with another department at this time, but with the Income Security we continue to deliver that subsidy program. Mahsi.

MR. JACOBSON: Mr. Speaker, I brought it up more than once, you know. When you go visiting elders in the communities they always try to feed you, give you tea and whatever they can feed you to give you a meal. Mr. Speaker, the cost of living in the communities is a lot higher than Yellowknife or anywhere in the South Slave. Mr. Speaker, it's wrong for the people to suffer. People are suffering in the communities. Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister: will the government find a way to increase social assistance so it meets the most basic needs of people even in the communities where prices are high? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, we did increase in 2007 for basic food, clothing and other expenses. We have a program that's always changing the Income Security Framework. Definitely, those are areas that we continue to look at and we continue to make changes.

Mr. Speaker, the Member is alluding to the high cost of living. We include that into our programming as well. So we're fully aware of the high cost of living in the communities and continuously we change our programming. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Your final supplementary, Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the program is not enough. The funding that the people are getting for social assistance is not enough to provide proper clothing for the kids, not enough to buy food for the month -- it's lasting three weeks. I get calls every third week of every month in my hometown. People need help. We're not helping, Mr. Speaker, and I'm going to hold them accountable in regard to that. Will the Minister commit to me to come to the communities and walk through the stores once this food implementation program gets kicked off, to see if there's any change in prices of food and it's being passed along to the people? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, with the recent announcement of the power rate reduction, I'm sure that will support and also benefit the community. With regard to the Income Security Framework, we continue to provide that service, Mr. Speaker. Again, we are aware of the high cost of living in small communities. We did visit the Member's riding. I did visit the Member's riding when I was a Regular MLA and toured the store as well. We know the high cost. That is why we want to increase our programming as it comes out to funding as well. We did increase the funding in 2007. We will definitely look at it again. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 187-16(5):
IMPLEMENTATION OF LIVING DONOR

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today I gave praise to those who were participating in the Stem Cell Challenge there and the swab program. I certainly think that more people, as I mentioned in my Member's statement, should consider the Living Donor Program. I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services what work has been done to date to bring forward a program for living donors. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I appreciated the Member's statement on Stem Cell Challenge as well as the one from Mr. Abernethy. I would like to join them in encouraging everybody in Yellowknife to take the opportunity of this challenge and register and take steps into becoming a donor.

Second, the answer to the Member's question, Mr. Speaker, the GNWT is part of the National Donor Registry System. We do participate in helping and assisting in that way. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, what type of public campaign or information awareness campaign does the GNWT provide for the citizens of the Northwest Territories here so they know they could consider this option? How are they approached on the particular subject? I have been made aware that most people don't know anything about it. I would like to find out what the government is doing to make sure that it is available, whether people want to register for kidney donation or other types of matters, that they know where to go and what to do and how our government supports that. What does the government actually do to promote these things? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, as the Member is aware, we are a small jurisdiction and our health care facility or system doesn't do actual organ transplants or anything like that. This is the reason we work with a national body. We are part of the National Registry System. I believe we have a mechanism in place with personal directives as well as driver's licence, but I need to confirm that, but I believe we are part of that process. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I am a realistic type of person, so by no means I was trying to assume that we were going to perform organ transplants here in the Northwest Territories or run the system by ourselves. It is more about making sure that it is available and available here in the North. We have had advocates return to the North, long-term Northerners who have come here and actually met with the Minister, that I am aware of, and certainly spoken to me about how important this is. One of the things that they keep highlighting is that it seems to be elsewhere but not here. The promotion of this opportunity is either non-existent or it is extremely low. That is kind of the point I am trying to raise here today. I would like to know what the Minister of Health and Social Services can do to help raise the awareness and sort of accessibility of these types of programs for individual citizens so they can take part in it. Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, the gentleman in question no longer lives here but he is an advocate for government's action to encourage and promote and raise awareness on organ transplant and organ donation. In fact, he was quite surprised at how advanced our personal directive legislation was. He asked for a copy of that because that legislation goes further than other jurisdictions in terms of making options available through living will and personal directives so that people can make choices about whether or not they want to donate organs while they are able to make those decisions, and is not done in the traditional way which is done by way of a will. I think the gentleman was quite pleasantly surprised at the advanced stage we are in in the Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With all due respect, those are fantastic things. I don't mean that they aren't, but the fact is those tend to be the end of the road decisions that people are making. The fact is they tend to be the last minute when people don't know what to do. I guess that is sort of the whole purpose of my set of questions today here, is the fact that the awareness of these types of things seems to continue to be significantly low and how important they are cannot be magnified enough, these gifts of life that we can provide other people, whether it is blood, a kidney, a lung and those types of things.

I am well aware of many cases where people have received organ transplants through the different donor programs. That is the whole issue that I am trying to raise here today. Will the Minister take the step by trying to raise the awareness of this initiative, what our government can do and certainly the network our government works with to make sure that people are registered and certainly a way or a direction so people can get more information on these types of initiatives? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, I do agree with the Member that this and other initiatives or services or ideas that the government supports has to be made aware on an ongoing basis. When this personal directive, for example, first came out, there was lots of awareness raising, but I do take the Member's point that it has to be continuous. The department is lending support to the Stem Cell Challenge for example. We will continue to do that. I take the Member's point that we have to do that on an ongoing basis. I will get back to the Member on how we do that and how we could do this better. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 188-16(5):
POLICY SUPPORTING SECONDARY
DIAMOND INDUSTRY IN THE NWT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have spoken in this House numerous times about the secondary diamond industry in the Northwest Territories and the fact that it is floundering right now. It is dormant. There is not much happening in the cut and polish industry here. I think a lot of that stems from the government's inability to deliver a policy so that people know what the rules of engagement are, if they are going to invest in the Northwest Territories and if this government is going to back this industry up. I think it can work, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister, I know we had gotten together last September, there has been a framework developed, but where exactly is the Diamond Policy that is being developed by this government? When are we going to get that out the door so that people know what the rules are and how things are going to work here in the NWT? Thank you.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are very pleased to be able to work closely with committee on developing this Diamond Policy. We have been working with them every step of the way. We met with them in November. We fully briefed them on the old Diamond Policy and what areas needed to be changed. We certainly appreciated

the direction we received from committee. We have gone out to consultation. We want to make sure we do this properly, make sure that due process is followed and we have consulted internally first. There are a number of other government departments that play a very important role in promoting and delivering on the secondary diamond industry in the Northwest Territories. We have also consulted externally. We have had to consult with stakeholders such as the producing diamond mines, manufacturers and now we are in the process of analyzing what we have heard. We fully expect that we will finalize our policy within the next two to three months. We do continue to have well-functioning secondary diamond industry. We continue to have people working and cutting and polishing diamonds. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, my fear is the investment that should come as a result of the new policy, the jobs that should be here, my belief is we might be losing these cut and polish folks who have moved to Yellowknife if we don't bring in the new policy sooner rather than later.

I'd like to ask the Minister if there's anything the department can do to try to evaluate if we may lose people, and I'm talking about the cut and polishers that have shown up here in Yellowknife and live and work, or they're not working now, but live in Yellowknife. Has the department done any kind of study to see if these folks are going to be around three months from now when the policy is finally done and people know what's going to happen? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. It has been a challenge in trying to change, to review our Diamond Policy for a number of reasons. One is we're working with the express direction that we should no longer provide loan guarantees. So our whole objective with the review of our Diamond Policy is to make a system in place that makes it more feasible for manufacturers to operate so they have a better opportunity to have a sustainable business.

As well, making these changes, we want to find a way to keep the existing cutters and polishers that are in town to continue to be able to find full and meaningful employment. As well, we need to find ways so that we can access more rough that we are entitled to through our agreements with the various producers. So that's what we are working on. We have a number of proposals that are in the works and we are expecting to be able to come up with something meaningful in the next two to three months. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you and I know the Minister is committed to seeing this industry survive and committed to seeing it flourish. It is, I believe, a bit of a shame that we're taking as long as we are. In the real world, in the business world, things move a

lot more quickly than they do at a government pace and that's unfortunate. I'd like to ask the Minister if, and I know he said two or three months, but the only time that I think Members are going to be back here, there's a bit of a timeslot mid-June and also at the end of June. Can we get maybe a commitment from the Minister to try to get that finalized product to committee the last week of June before everybody heads back to their constituencies for their summer recess? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. I think that would be an ideal time, now that we've committed to having committees meet in June. I think that would be an ideal objective for us to work towards and I'll certainly commit to the Member that we will finalize or have in place our draft policy in final form to be reviewed by committee in June. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The time for question period has expired. Item 9, written questions. Item 10, returns to written questions. Item 11, replies to opening address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 60-16(5):
LIST OF INTERACTIVITY TRANSFERS
EXCEEDING \$250,000 FOR THE PERIOD
APRIL 1, 2009 TO MARCH 31, 2010

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled List of Interactivity Transfers Exceeding \$250,000 for the Period April 1st, 2009 to March 31st, 2010.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 61-16(5):
MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION'S REPORT
TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR 2009 ON THE TRANSPORTATION OF
DANGEROUS GOODS ACT (1990)

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled Minister of Transportation's Report to the Legislative Assembly for 2009 on the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act (1990). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

TABLED DOCUMENT 62-16(5):
NORTHERN VOICES, NORTHERN WATERS –
NWT WATER STEWARDSHIP STRATEGY

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled Northern Voices, Northern Waters – NWT Water Stewardship Strategy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Robert McLeod.

TABLED DOCUMENT 63-16(5):
HOUSING SOLUTIONS DEVELOPING
COMMUNITIES – NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
HOUSING CORPORATION
ANNUAL REPORT, 2007-2008

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled Housing Solutions Developing Communities – Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Annual Report, 2007-2008. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 64-16(5):
LETTER FROM CONSTITUENT JOHN MURRAY
REGARDING PROPOSED CHANGES TO
SUPPLEMENTARY HEALTH
BENEFITS PROGRAM

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a letter written to me dated May 16th, 2010, by a constituent. The constituent's name is Mr. John Murray. It's a well-written letter regarding his concerns on perhaps the history of the supplementary health benefits changes, and I'd like to table it before the House today. I'm certainly hoping the working group will have a chance to look at it.

TABLED DOCUMENT 65-16(5):
ANNUAL REPORT RESPECTING MEMBERS'
INDEMNITIES AND ALLOWANCES
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED
MARCH 31, 2010

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Pursuant to Section 35(a)(b)(c) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I wish to table the Annual Report Respecting Members' Indemnities and Allowances for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31st, 2010.

Item 15, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 11-16(5):
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE
TO OCTOBER 14, 2010

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Tuesday, May 25th I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on Thursday, May 20, 2010, it shall be adjourned until Thursday, October 14, 2010; and further, that any time prior to October 14, 2010, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and the Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with this motion today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

MOTION 12-16(5):
EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE TO FORMER
COMMISSIONER ANTHONY W.J. (TONY)
WHITFORD FOR DEDICATED
AND EXEMPLARY SERVICE

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Tuesday, May 25th, 2010, I will move the following motion: now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that the Legislative Assembly expresses its sincere gratitude to Mr. Anthony W.J. (Tony) Whitford for his dedicated and exemplary service to this House; and further, that the Legislative Assembly designate Anthony W.J. (Tony) Whitford as an honorary officer of this Legislative Assembly with permission to enter the Chamber and sit at the Table.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with this motion today.

---Applause

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

MOTION 13-16(5):
REFERRAL OF TABLED DOCUMENT 62-16(5),
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES WATER
STEWARDSHIP STRATEGY
TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Tuesday, May 25th, 2010, I will move the following motion: now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that Tabled Document 62-16(5), Northwest Territories Water Stewardship Strategy, be referred to Committee of the Whole for consideration.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with this motion today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion I gave notice of earlier today.

---Unanimous consent granted

Motions

MOTION 11-16(5):
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE
TO OCTOBER 14, 2010,
CARRIED

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on Thursday, May 20, 2010, it shall be adjourned until Thursday, October 14, 2010;

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to October 14, 2010, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and the Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called.

---Carried

The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion that I gave notice of earlier today.

---Unanimous consent granted

MOTION 11-16(5):
REINSTATEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING FOR
THE ABORIGINAL HEALING FOUNDATION,
CARRIED

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the Government of Canada has eliminated funding to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation as of March 31, 2010;

AND WHEREAS the Aboriginal Healing Foundation was established in 1998 with a \$350 million grant from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to help former students who were physically or sexually abused in the residential school system;

AND WHEREAS the Aboriginal Healing Foundation provided funds to more than 130 groups and initiatives across the country to provide cultural healing services to indigenous people;

AND WHEREAS the funding supports critically needed community-driven healing and wellness programs that support communities, families and individuals who have begun their healing journeys;

AND WHEREAS the 16th Legislative Assembly has identified a vision for the Northwest Territories that speaks to "strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits and responsibilities" of a unified and prosperous Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS the loss of these programs would represent a significant setback for community-driven wellness and healing and would threaten the viability of community support programs that have been developed over the past decade;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories calls on the Government of Canada to fully reinstate the funding previously provided to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation;

AND FURTHER, that the Speaker formally transmit this motion and the content of our proceedings today to the federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs for his consideration and action.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think that every jurisdiction across the country was totally shocked and appalled with what happened with regard to the federal government's decision to totally do away with the program, especially the critical needs of aboriginal people in Canada in light of the commission that has been established to look at residential school effects

across the country. More importantly, Mr. Speaker, it is one of the societies of our country who is suffering the most, whether it's through alcoholism, drug abuse or impacts of residential school, were aboriginal children and also their families.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's fundamental that this Legislature sends a strong message to the federal government. I ask my colleagues on both sides of the House to support this motion, because the motion clearly states that we are asking the Speaker to transmit this motion to the federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs and send a strong message to the federal government that we do not support the decision that was made and to help those people. At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I will seek a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. To the motion. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to say briefly that I want to thank Mr. Krutko for bringing this motion forward. I realize the impact that it will have in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, when we had a discussion earlier, I understood in the whole of Canada, the Northwest Territories had the highest number of residential school survivors in all of Canada. The Northwest Territories has a high percentage in terms of former survivors. Actually, right now, Mr. Speaker, there is about 80,000 survivors in Canada right now and the federal government needs to recognize the significance of the impact it had on our people in our communities and from the early policy of genocide, in terms of assimilation policy is still well and alive today and by saying that it's a done deal, we're going to now cut the funding back to community wellness and programs, it's no longer an issue. Well, I'd like to remind them that I'm still alive. There are a lot of people still alive that have been impacted by residential schools that will not let them forget in terms of a policy that was so ill-conceived and implemented by this federal government that they think they can wipe it off by making payments to the people and forget about it. They should really reconsider this policy, re-implement, reinstate the funding back to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, continue on its work. It should go on for another 100 years, this program here.

So I want to thank Mr. Krutko saying we should not let the federal government get off this easy. We did that for so many years. We were told not to say anything; actually, to be quiet. No longer do they have the rule over us or the strap in front of us and tell us to be quiet and do as they say. We are today a people standing up through the healing process saying what you did was not right and you must be reminded from time to time. By cutting off the funding, it goes to re-victimizing a lot of people in the

Northwest Territories, especially the residential school survivors.

So I really urge the Government of Canada to reconsider, look at the policy the federal government made and see if it really means anything to them or if it was just good words for that year or that month and say yes, we got the aboriginal people on our sides, we can get their vote and keep us in power. They should really consider what they're saying and really walk their walk in terms of this program that they offered us.

I thought maybe we did have a chance at reconciliation with the federal government and the number of churches we had to deal with, Mr. Speaker. It's about nation building. Right now with this implementation of cutting out the funding, we're really going a step back in terms of the good old days and begging for programs that are rightly ours.

So, Mr. Speaker, I also encourage Members to vote for this motion and thank Mr. Krutko for bringing the motion to the floor.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. To the motion. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to support the motion. I think that the federal government was premature in cutting off the funding. Healing had just begun, people were just getting comfortable speaking out and having an opportunity to do so along with all the other people that they grew up with in the residential school system and their families. The second generation, the younger children, are just as impacted as well, Mr. Speaker.

In my own riding alone, I spoke in the House about taking down the Deh Cho Hall. It was formally known as Lapointe Hall. It was part of the residential school system. They are actually demolishing it this summer and it's about taking down walls, Mr. Speaker. Finally, we're taking down the walls, but they still need time to reconcile it, to forgive the past and to continue with their healing journey and to get closure on it, Mr. Speaker.

I support the motion and it is really premature by the federal government and I hope they give serious consideration. I hope it's debated in their House that healing does not happen in three to five years, Mr. Speaker. It does take time. It does take awhile for people to even have the courage to get up and say, yes, I need help. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the motion. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am in full support of the motion. I am a third generation residential school survivor. When my granddad went to school, I heard a lot of stories by my mother. This

is like a slap in the face from the federal government, trying to pull the funding, trying to give us a quick injection of money. I think this is a really good step to force the hand of the federal government to reinstate the funding that is needed in our communities that still don't have a full complement of social services in regard to seeing the doctors that are required.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm in full support of this motion and I just wish to remind all our Members that once it's a recorded vote, to all stand up and be counted. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the mover and seconder for putting this motion on the floor. I think it's an important issue that has plagued a lot of our residents of our different communities. I come from Fort Providence where we had a residential school for many years and there are still a lot of issues surrounding the facility and many people have returned there seeking closure to issues. I have witnessed firsthand the benefits of programs such as these that are spoken about in the motion, and I've seen how it affects people and how people are in real need of a methodology to deal with some of the challenges as a result of residential school. They also need the benefits of having counselling so that they can work through the issues and some of the traumas that they are facing. There also is a mechanism through the funding that was available previously to bring people together so they can share their experiences to talk and to laugh, and sometimes it doesn't require professionals but it just brings a lot of people that can find comfort in each other's company.

So, Mr. Speaker, I certainly will support this motion. I think it's a good one. Thank you.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this subject has been raised in this Assembly a number of times by Members in this area that has been brought up today. I know Members were very concerned when the news came forward that, in fact, this program had been sunsetted and there wasn't going to be a renewal of it. So we're supportive as myself, as an individual from Inuvik Boot Lake, having two residential schools in our community and seeing both the negative and some of the positive impacts of that. I know that there's a journey that needs to be completed. So I'm, in principle, supporting this.

I also say to those that are out there who have taken the steps to bring healing to themselves and their families, that even though this may not be in place, I would encourage them to continue on with

their journey as individuals, because as we've done in the past, traditionally we've sought the support of our own people and the counsel of our elders. So I think that exists today and I would encourage them to continue on with that journey. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. I will allow the mover of the motion his closing comments. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Members who have spoken to the motion to get the message to the federal government, because I think they have to hear where we stand on this issue. I think what we would like them to do is at least make an attempt to make an effort to find a system that will work for the people across Canada and in the Northwest Territories who are coping with the challenges we face day to day, but more importantly, the effects that some policy decisions have made and affecting the lives of people throughout the Northwest Territories and Canada.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask for a recorded vote. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Clerk, the Member is asking for a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

RECORDED VOTE

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Krutko; Mr. Bromley; Mr. Abernethy; Mr. Menicoche; Mr. Ramsay; Mrs. Groenewegen; Mr. Hawkins; Mr. Jacobson; Ms. Bisaro; Mr. Yakeleya; Mr. Lafferty; Ms. Lee; Mr. Miltenberger; Mr. Roland; Mr. McLeod, Deh Cho; Mr. McLeod, Inuvik Twin Lakes; Mr. McLeod, Yellowknife South.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed to the motion, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand. Results of the vote: 17 in favour, none against, none abstaining. The motion is carried.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion I gave notice of earlier today.

---Unanimous consent granted

MOTION 12-16(5):
EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE TO FORMER
COMMISSIONER ANTHONY W.J. (TONY)
WHITFORD FOR DEDICATED
AND EXEMPLARY SERVICE,
CARRIED

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues.

WHEREAS Anthony W.J. (Tony) Whitford was appointed Commissioner of the Northwest Territories on April 29, 2005;

AND WHEREAS Mr. Whitford served as Deputy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories from October 2004 until April 2005;

AND WHEREAS Mr. Whitford was elected by his fellow Members in 1999 to serve as Speaker of the 14th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS Mr. Whitford was first elected as a Member of the Legislative Assembly in 1988 and has served as Minister of Health and Social Services, Safety and Public Services, and Transportation;

AND WHEREAS Mr. Whitford has also served as Executive Assistant to the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories and Sergeant-at-Arms during the 13th Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS Mr. Whitford has provided devoted and exemplary service to the Legislative Assembly and to the people of the Northwest Territories for more than 20 years;

AND WHEREAS Mr. Whitford's terms as Commissioner expired on April 28, 2010;

AND WHEREAS it is customary for Legislative Assemblies to recognize and express their gratitude for such long and distinguished service;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that the Legislative Assembly expresses its sincere gratitude to Mr. Anthony W.J. (Tony) Whitford for his dedicated and exemplary service to this House;

AND FURTHER, that the Legislative Assembly designate Anthony W.J. "Tony" Whitford as an honorary officer of this Legislative Assembly with permission to enter the Chamber and sit at the Table.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I know earlier in my Minister's statement I went on to recognize much of the work of Mr. Whitford and his accomplishments and service to the people of the Northwest Territories. I can say from my own experience, being elected first in 1995, I did have the pleasure of serving with Mr. Whitford in the 14th Legislative Assembly as well as watching him do his work diligently in this Assembly as the Sergeant-at-Arms. More importantly, Mr. Speaker, the opportunity to work with Mr. Whitford has allowed me to build a friendship with someone who has such experience

in the Northwest Territories, and his wise counsel, at times, has proved very worthy as one considers the activities a Member finds himself doing in this Assembly.

I think that, well, we know that Mr. Whitford will continue to be very busy in his private life and I'm sure he will take the opportunity to come and visit us here in the Legislative Assembly. I think it would be strange, indeed, to not have him come by and visit and stop by for a coffee. I know we will not forget him in our personal lives and our lives as Members of the Legislative Assembly. So I want to say that with this motion that we, indeed, will invite him back to this Assembly and have him visit with us in this Chamber and, hopefully, he will take the opportunity from time to time to come to the table.

So, again, I know that Members of this Assembly will support this motion as we recognize the service that Mr. Whitford has served the people of the Northwest Territories, this Assembly and the Members of this Assembly as well. So I look forward to continued wise counsel from Mr. Whitford. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. I'll go to the seconder of the motion, the Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my political experience with Mr. Whitford does not go back as far as the Premier's, but I feel that Mr. Whitford is a lifelong Northerner, born in Fort Smith and spent a lot of years here in Yellowknife, and I think of him as a product of a young and developing NWT. He's a product of our education system and it's proof to me that we have one of the best education systems around.

I think his commitment to the NWT and to the people of the NWT is unparalleled. I don't think that there are many people who have shown the kind of commitment that he has shown to us and to our people.

It has been said that he is the best possible advertisement for NWT tourism. I think anybody who visits our Territory who is not an NWT resident and runs across our Commissioner, or our ex-Commissioner unfortunately now, I think they have been exposed to a part of the NWT that they wouldn't get if they hadn't run across our Tony. He is to be commended for that.

Mr. Whitford's all-around character is very well suited to both politics that he was involved in for so many years and his most recent post as Commissioner. He is very outgoing. He is a very happy person. He certainly makes people feel at ease. I know that he has done that for me a number of times. Certainly I and I expect all Members are going to miss his smiling face and his upbeat

attitude, because I don't think I've ever seen the Commissioner down.

I would like to say thank you, Tony, for your years of service. I look forward to occasionally seeing you at the Clerk's table. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Many good things come out of Fort Smith and one of those good things has joined us in the gallery today: Mr. Whitford.

---Applause

I haven't done a full count, but it is my bet that there is no other Northerner that has had as many jobs tied into this Legislature as Mr. Whitford, as an MLA, as a Minister, as a Speaker, as the Sergeant-at-Arms and as our Commissioner all tied into this Legislature and the place that he has devoted a lot of time that he has upheld the honour of and that he truly loves dearly.

I, as well, over the years, since I came here in 1995 have taken to eating regularly with Mr. Whitford. Now that he is a struggling pensioner, he has asked me not to forget him. I want to commit publicly in this House that we will still continue to break bread, but I will try to time some of the meals for when the pension cheques come in because he still will have to pay his way. As he is fond of saying, there is no free lunch.

But it has been, over the years, an honour and a pleasure to serve with Mr. Whitford. While I say he is from Fort Smith, he truly is a Northerner for all of us. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a privilege and an honour to stand in the Assembly today and pay tribute to Mr. Whitford. I knew Mr. Whitford before I came here as an MLA 15 years ago when I used to come here on various causes and crusades to lobby the government about things. That was back when he was an MLA. He probably remembers me from those days too.

As Mr. Miltenberger has said, MLA, Minister, Speaker, Sergeant-at-Arms, Deputy Commissioner, Commissioner, now honorary officer of this Legislative Assembly, very much deserved. He is the type of person that can be many things to many people. He can be the person officiating over a marriage ceremony. He has married many people in the Northwest Territories. I believe he is even known to some as Santa Claus, I think, in Santa

Claus parades. I believe that is correct. People have known him as Santa Claus.

Maybe you had to be here to understand this story, but one really funny thing happened one time when Mr. Whitford was in the Speaker's chair and, for some strange reason, Member MLA Brendan Bell decided to go up and speak to him while he was sitting in the Speaker's chair. I have never seen that happen ever before, that he went right to the top of stairs and stood there right beside Mr. Whitford. Mr. Whitford was conducting the business of the House so he had to wait for a few moments. He was just standing there beside Mr. Whitford sitting in that chair. One of my colleagues leaned over to me and said, oh my gosh, Jane, Brendan thinks that Tony really is Santa Claus...

---Laughter

...because of the chair, the way he was sitting in the little line-up. Oh my gosh. We laughed very hard. Maybe, like I said, you had to be there.

It has been a privilege. They say you can tell a lot about a person by how children view them. I have to say that my daughter Gillian has always been a fan of Mr. Whitford. She has loved him. Every time we get to a social function, she wants to have her picture taken with him, so we have quite a succession of pictures. I think that speaks very well of the character of the man that we are honouring today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also had the honour and privilege of serving with Tony in the 14th Assembly and, more importantly, also as his Deputy Speaker, but I think also as part of the arrangement with Tony is that one thing Tony always did and made sure of is when he travelled, he made efforts to go meet with our elders in the elders' homes, go into the schools and meet with the students and talk to the people in the community. He was very approachable in all cases. He always made an attempt to partake in community events, but more importantly, everybody throughout the Territories didn't call him sir or Commissioner. They called him Tony.

Tony is basically known throughout the Northwest Territories and elsewhere. I think that simply the efforts that he has done and the lives he has touched also can extol ourselves here as legislators but extol it over the House and the offices that he has held.

With that, Tony, thank you for everything. I look forward to seeing you serve in the House again, as you said, as a table officer. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have had the good fortune of knowing Tony Whitford for many years from back in the '60s in Fort Smith. I have a number of stories but I was going to save most of them for tonight at the dinner.

I guess some of the most memorable moments with Tony was when he first got elected as Minister. He came and stole my secretary at that time. During the height of the anti-trapping campaign by the European Union, the Legislative Assembly assembled a team of MLAs to go to the European Union to counter this proposed boycott and I had the good fortune to travel with Tony Whitford, Silas Arngn'naaq and a couple of other MLAs. We got to go to a northern European Union country. The first country we landed in was Denmark. We got in in the afternoon and we were going to go and have dinner. We all started walking. Tony took off. He was way ahead of us and it looked like he was laboured in walking and having problems walking. We all said, what is the matter with Tony? What is wrong with him? We went up to him and he was in a courtyard and he had a picture in his hand and he was looking at the skyline and he said, "My brother was here at the end of the war in 1945 and he got his picture taken here. I just want to see if this is the same spot," and he had the picture. We looked at it and we saw the skyline and he said, "Now I have to find a blonde lady to get my picture taken with her."

---Laughter

Sure enough, this one lady walked by. We stopped her. He said, "Can I get my picture taken with you?" She looked at him and said, "Sure." So he had a picture to match his brother's.

I think that Tony Whitford is perfect as Commissioner. His whole career was built towards fulfilling that job. I am very pleased to recognize him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a great honour and a privilege to stand up in the House today and extol what it means to be a friend of Tony Whitford.

I first met Tony when I grew up with his sons, Blair, Ian and Warren. I played hockey with Blair for a number of years and went to school with Blair. I first knew Tony as a dedicated hockey dad. He was there watching many of our games at the time. It goes back a number of years now. It is hard to believe that time has gone by so fast.

I guess I owe a great deal to Mr. Whitford. If it wasn't for his retirement in 2003 which provided me

the opportunity to become a Member of this House and represent the great riding of Kam Lake, I wouldn't be standing here today perhaps. I owe that to Tony. Thanks for retiring, Tony, in 2003.

---Laughter

I do want to wish you all the best in all of your pursuits. I think many people have learned a great deal from Tony, myself included. I used to work at the Legislative Assembly when Tony was a Member. Tony is just a likeable, jovial guy. People want to be around him. He has a contagious type of character. He makes people, as other Members have said, feel at ease. He has a way about him that just makes people feel good about being in his presence.

It certainly is an honour to be here today to say these words about a great man. He was a great Commissioner, a great politician and I hope to see him around the House. I'm very supportive of Tony becoming an honorary table officer of this House. That's a great honour for a great man. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's not very often in this House we get so many MLAs say nice things about one person.

---Laughter

Mr. Speaker, I have also had the honour and the privilege of serving with Tony and working in this House in his position at Sergeant-at-Arms, and then when he became an MLA, and then a Speaker.

For me it was always interesting to talk to Tony because he's actually a walking history book. I wanted to talk about issues about Highway No. 3 when we were in the Members' Lounge and then he started talking about when he was building it and driving a Cat and pushing down trees when they were building the road. So he had a lot of information. He was interesting to listen to on every occasion.

He's probably spoken more French in this House than anybody else in recent history, not always the best French, but...

---Laughter

We tried a lot of times to try to speak the Newfie French and I think my speaking was more peppered with ums and ahs than actual French words, but he always took the time to respond to me accordingly.

I think some of the things that I'll treasure the most is being able to have Tony give advice and a lot of times just to listen to some of the issues. It's not an easy place to work and to have a Speaker that's willing to talk to you and listen to what you're going

through. In return we have to listen to his corny jokes, but it was all in fun, and I want to wish him all the best. I want to wish him all the best of luck in his future endeavours. I'm sure there are many things he still has out there as goals and I also want to thank him for the time that he spent in this House and with us. Thank you.

---Applause

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise also to commend Tony for his outstanding work as our Commissioner for the past five years. I'd like to acknowledge his commitment and his charismatic nature. I think when he first became Commissioner he actually came up to me and said there's one place I haven't been to yet and it was Trout Lake. He did make it to Trout Lake and he did get to see Joe Punch in that community and I'd like to thank you for that.

I like Tony's story. It's about a dream that not only youth have, but any youth listening, I can say that dreams still come true. Tony told me this story about when I think he was working with Stu Hodgson, he said he liked the job he'd done and I think he said I can do that job, I want to do that job and, Mr. Speaker, eventually he did do that job. I'd like to say without a second thought that he did an outstanding job and in his gentlemanly way. So with that I commend him very much and wish him every success in all his future endeavours. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Before I go to the next Member on my list, I'd like to recognize the presence of Deputy Commissioner Margaret Thom who just joined us in the gallery.

---Applause

To the motion. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: You almost forgot me there. [English translation not provided]

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say thank you to Mr. Whitford for being an ambassador of the Northwest Territories. You know, you can't really say no to an elder when an elder asks you to include him in a journey we have with our portfolios. When I first became Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, visiting the schools and graduation dates and so forth, when I first met Tony and we sat down, of course he told so many stories at that time too, but he asked me if I could include him in my journey and I couldn't say no to an elder, so I said okay, Tony, I will certainly include you in all the journeys that I will be taking, and I did. He graciously accepted almost every trip that we've taken to the communities.

Mr. Speaker, some of the great examples is the welcoming. When Mr. Whitford goes into a community, you can feel the love in the community, the attraction and the respect, lots of respect in the community, whether it be the young, the community members, the elders and just conversing back and forth with an elder. I sit and watch because he's my elder and I like to look up to my elders. So I watch and observe and I've learned a lot of things from Mr. Whitford. He goes into one of my communities and converses back and forth with a 90-year-old elder and I just watch in curiosity of do they know what they're talking about? You know, they are conversing back and forth in Tlicho and English.

---Laughter

But they are, they've been conversing for almost an hour. Later, I usually go see Tony; what are you guys talking about? You know, great things we talk about, the previous history, where we've been, bush camps and whatnot. I asked the lady, the elderly lady, same thing. There was communication happening. That's how magical his touch was. He just opened doors to the whole Northwest Territories. He was a great ambassador. He still is. He still will be for the Northwest Territories. I mentioned in my Tlicho language whenever you are somebody special, somebody big, such as the Commissioner, yes, your term is up, but at the same time when you go into communities people will still remember you as Commissioner or grand chief or Premier. It's always been the case in our traditional history of the Dene people.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to close off by saying it has been a great pleasure, Tony, working with you and we will continue to work with you in a different format. But at the same time, as human beings, we continue to love each other, work with each other. I wish you all the luck on the next journey that you will walk on. So, mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, quite simply, I can't say I have known a better man. Mr. Whitford is truly an honour to know and a blessing to get to know. I've had the good fortune, like many Members, colleagues and friends of this House, to know Mr. Whitford and I look forward to knowing more about him as the years go on.

I've known him for awhile and one thing seems to be clear everywhere I go is the fact that he's certainly a man of the people. And if not one more step I could take and say he truly is a man of the people and the people love him. Anywhere I go I see him as such a natural. He could be anywhere. He could be talking to students. He could be talking to elders, like it was mentioned before. He could be talking to somebody at the hospital. He could be

talking to somebody who just stops him on the street. I've heard stories about how he bumps into somebody who's just moved to Yellowknife and he walks over and he says, "Hey, how ya doin'? My name's Tony Whitford." And sure enough, they get talking about something and he goes, oh, I know a story about that. And that's who he is. Not many people can do that. He's one of those special characters that is such a gentle character. You know, he can talk to anybody and they always feel warm and special that after they're done that conversation that he took the time and you can always feel the heart-to-heart connection this man has for people.

I've had the awful occasion of following this man on speeches, because he throws such a great speech and he gets the crowd roaring and excited. He's a tough man to follow, I'll tell ya. But I've also had the pleasure of following his bad jokes with my bad jokes in Rotary. He used to be known as the king of bad jokes in Rotary until I came along and joined Rotary years and years ago. But his gentle character always came up to me when I'd tell a bad joke and I'd be fined in Rotary. He wouldn't let me share that crown alone and I'm very thankful for that.

Again, his character is always reaching out to people and that's something that really touches both me and I can tell you it's also very important to my wife, because she thinks extremely highly of him as well.

Mr. Speaker, the last number of years Mr. Whitford has lived across from my house on Matonabee Street. We all know Mr. Whitford likes to walk around, walks all throughout the city and stuff, and I always liked it when he'd walk by and go, "Good morning, Hawk. How ya doin today?" And he'd always wanted to know what's happening and he genuinely would stop and reach out and ask what's happening in the government, what are people saying. Then my usual assumption was right: he was either walking to work or he was walking to Tim Horton's, and that's probably where we'll see him quite often after this.

Mr. Speaker, in the summertime at my house I hold a community pig roast. Again, the unusual character that we just don't see often enough is he'd come to my house while we were having a community pig roast, he'd roll up his sleeves and he'd get right in there and he goes, "Can I cut the pig with ya?" And he'd take over and he'd push me out of the way and he'd be hacking away and be feeding the kids the little pieces of pig and all excited and people would be coming around. It was such a great thing. I want to make clear that you're certainly always welcome at my house, always.

Mr. Speaker, he's certainly a man of great distinction and I can't say it clearer than that. His character is a raw commodity that I wish we saw

more often. I know this motion states that he will be our honorary table officer and the funny thing is he's probably the only guy that I know who will take the Assembly up on that offer. So I would encourage the Clerk's office and certainly the Speaker's office to start thinking about getting him ready for a robe and, who knows, before long we'll be hearing orders of the day and hearing Mr. Whitford's voice calling out the orders of the following day.

So, Mr. Speaker, in closing, again, he's a great friend. He will always be the Commish to me and my family, especially myself. I have been truly blessed by knowing this man and I consider it an honour. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, let's not forget Mr. Anthony W.J. "Tony" Whitford, the environmentalist.

---Applause

And I mean that as the best kind of environmentalist. This is a person who simply personifies environmental responsibility. He's not out there harping and hollering like we real greenies; he's out there doing. We see him with his walking shoes on just about all the time, making his way from point A to point B and on the way picking up the bottles and turning them in and donating to a cause, and picking up garbage and so on. He's been telling me about his 12-inch insulated walls on his new house. So I just want to make sure that we recognize that.

There's another aspect of that and I know that he likes to eat local foods. My one regret as a politician is that I wasn't here earlier, because I keep hearing these stories of wafting odours of an entire side of buffalo floating down the hallways of the Assembly. I seem to have missed that tradition.

I think with just a split second's consideration, all of us will recall and know and feel how important family is to Tony, and the very human aspect of this person in his recognition of how important family is to every one of us. We all make sacrifices and I know he has had to make a lot to serve the public as he has and I want to recognize that.

And last and not the least important is I want to welcome Tony to Weledeh by saying, on behalf of all my Weledeh constituents, that we thank him from the bottom of our hearts for all the services he's done for the people and the land of the Northwest Territories. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, similar to my colleague Mr. Ramsay, I grew up with Mr. Whitford's sons, and even as a young man it was clear and obvious that Tony is a great Northerner and that he is an inspiration to us all. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank him for his honesty, for his compassion, for his decision, for his long service, and most important, for his wonderful stories. Tony has been, is, and always will be, an important part of this Legislature and the Northwest Territories as a whole. Thank you.

---Applause

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to say in my language... [English translation not provided]

I want to say in my language that, really, this person that we're talking about is really good, Mr. Speaker. In my language that means a lot, that Mr. Whitford, Tony, when I became the MLA and I remember him telling me I'm going to visit each of the communities of the Northwest Territories. And I sat here and said, yeah, right. You know? Throughout the years Tony talked about different communities and when he's going to come into the Sahtu. Then, lo and behold, one time last year, or I think it was the year before, he showed up in Tulita. "Hey, Commish," I said. And he said, "Yeah, I was just driving in from Deline. I was in Colville Lake." And he's all excited. He'd just come out of Chief Albert Wright School. And I said, "Doggone it, that guy said he was doing what he was going to do. Now that's the Commissioner," I said.

He is truly the people's Commissioner. The people were excited when I went to different communities, they talked about our Commissioner. And he always digs in his pocket and he hands out pins, and he gives you pins. So I want to say how much the people in the Sahtu appreciate our Commissioner coming into our schools. Certainly, to our elders, he would sit down and talk with them. That's a real Commissioner to me. The new Commissioner is going to have a hard act to follow.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Commissioner then left Tulita driving his red truck, then he went out and I said, "Gee, it was too bad we didn't have time, you know, if I knew you were in town, to have some tea with me." So I drove back to my house and not even about 15 minutes later there was a knock on my door and it was the Commissioner there. He said, "I can't leave, it's too beautiful." So I put some tea on and fried up one of the best Sahtu moose meat and we ate. We had a good meal there in Tulita and talked and had some bannock. He talked about my mother and how he knew my mother. That was something that's very special to me. It stuck with me for a long, long time. I wanted to say that even though the Commissioner has made a lot of trips

and he sacrificed, I know one of his boys, you know, and he exemplifies the type of parents he came from. It says a lot about your children.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also say one thing on a personal note. Some 19 years ago, Mr. Whitford said something to me when I was 19 years old that a lot of 19 year olds like myself did not want to hear. He really helped me in my life and I actually owe my life to him because of what he said, which I didn't want to hear at that time. Now I want to say thank you very much, Mr. Whitford, for telling me and being brave enough and honest enough to tell me what I needed to hear at that time, even though I didn't want to hear it. Here I stand today thanking my friend, Mr. Whitford. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am happy to rise up as a Member of the Legislative Assembly and thank Mr. Whitford for all the commitments he has done for the people of Nunakput and all the youth in the schools, because I was home after session and my daughter came running up to me. Hey dad, where is this guy? She pulled out the pin. It was Tony's pin. She forgot your name, Tony, but I don't think she will after I told her a story and pulled a book out. She will ever be in debt to you and she will always remember you -- all the youth in Nunakput -- and you coming and visiting and taking the time and being a big supporter of the Junior Ranger Program. Thank you.

This winter, you know we are renaming our good friend Roy Ipana's arena. I often walk in. I spoke on behalf of the Premier for a good friend, Roy Ipana. Tony was there. It made it more special for us to see the renaming of the arena in Inuvik on behalf of a good friend.

I know the youth will miss you, Tony. Over the last two and a half years, myself being a Member, anytime I had questions in regards to anything, thank you very much. Quanami.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to acknowledge Tony Whitford and recognize him for all of his tireless work working for the people of the North, working for the Assembly and I think that Tony did truly work for the people of the North. It seemed like everywhere I travelled -- I have been to all of the communities in the North also -- everywhere I have travelled, it seems like people know Tony.

I don't even know how I got to meet Tony, actually. One day I just knew him. Maybe that is a way in which Tony presents himself to people. It seems

like when you meet Tony, you actually already have known him.

I believe that Tony is a wonderful man. He is a real good person to speak to, sit down and talk to him on almost any topic. I think that is a reason there has been so many things bestowed upon him like the work that he has done, like the work that he is doing with the Commissioner or what we are doing today. I think it is a fitting expression of gratitude from the Legislative Assembly to name him honorary officer of the Legislative Assembly. I would like to thank Tony for all of his work in the past. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Listening to all of the Members speak, I don't think there is really much more I can add. What I am quite surprised about is, is there anything you haven't done? I hear Michael talking about you driving a Cat. I think when we were in Inuvik for an elder's speech one time, you actually worked on the utilidor in Inuvik. That is why I was thinking there is nothing this man hasn't done.

I just met Tony recently. I haven't had an opportunity to know him that long, but you meet him the first time and he just makes you feel like you have been friends forever. I appreciate Tony. He conducted himself in a way that I think we should all strive to do. I think people in the Northwest Territories are going to miss you as Commissioner. I think you will always be Commissioner. If we had our way, we would name you Commissioner for life.

I thank you for the service you have provided. I look forward to seeing you come into the House and all the other things that we will probably get to see you do, pass you on the street and pass you at Tim Horton's. Best of luck to you and thank you so much.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to join my colleagues of the Assembly today to recognize and honour the Honourable Anthony W.J. Whitford as he moves into the next chapter of what has been one extraordinary life. I know he will embark on his next chapter with as much joy, enthusiasm, love of life, love of people and a strong sense of public service.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think we could measure how much it means to him to be designated as an honorary table officer of this Legislature, as no one loves and can love this Assembly as much as he does and he has done over the years. One only

has to see the smile and the twinkle in his eyes from the moment he walks into the House to the minute he leaves, whether it is as a Sergeant-at-Arms, a Member, a Minister, a Speaker, or the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories.

It has been a singular honour for me to have worked for and worked with Anthony W.J. Whitford and to be able to witness the twinkles firsthand. I have also witnessed him at his most angry and distressed firsthand within this Legislature. In those moments, he also speaks with his eyes and his twinkle. To know Tony Whitford is to know the different languages the twinkle in his eyes speak.

Mr. Speaker, I don't remember the first time exactly when I met Mr. Whitford, but every encounter, every hug, every phone call, every lunch, every meeting and every trip I have had with him over the years have enriched my life personally and professionally. I worked for him and other MLAs as a researcher at the Legislature back in 1989 to 1991. I still remember when he offered me the job of being his EA when he became the Minister of Health and Social Services. I was so excited and scared when he offered me the job, when I was 27 at a celebrity auction at the basement of Yellowknife Inn I spent \$3,500 that night, the money I didn't have. He was the first Minister of Health from Yellowknife. I am honoured to share in his company as another Minister of Health from Yellowknife. Health and Social Services portfolio back then was as hot as it is now. Eleven months as an EA to the Minister of Health then I am sure has prepared me for my current job.

I was also his EA when he served as the Minister of Transportation. I don't know if it is the same now. I must ask Minister McLeod, because when he changed the portfolio to Transportation, everything got more richer and lucrative.

I still remember the occasion when we got to go to the communities of Chesterfield Inlet, Repulse Bay and Coral Harbour to open their community airports. On the way to the airports, the deputy minister of Transportation handed him three big cheques that he was going to hand out in each community. We opened the community airports at every stop and there was a huge feast and celebration. I don't remember doing much of that as the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, there were some dark moments too. I remember when he was the Minister responsible for mine safety, when I had to relay the message that there was a major blast under the ground of Giant Mine on that dreadful day on September 18th.

I don't know if Mr. Whitford is responsible for me going into a political life. I won't saddle him with that, but, Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that he taught me well.

Mr. Speaker, I had the joy of serving as his colleague when I became an MLA in 1999. Everyone knows and everyone said that he is a great storyteller. I am not, but I am a great rememberer of stories told by other great storytellers. So every story he has told me over the years, I have remembered them. I have retold them. Thanks to his great stories, I almost sound wise and interesting to some very innocent people.

It is true, Mr. Speaker, he has done everything good and worthy in the Territories; the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes is right. I have been to the smallest community in the Northwest Territories, across the country, even to meet the Queen with Mr. Whitford.

Mr. Speaker, he's been a carpenter, a social worker, he worked for NTCL, he worked as a coroner, he's a mayor, he's Commissioner, he's built the Highway No. 3, he built the utilidors in Inuvik. I think the man has had at least nine lives and there's nothing good that he hasn't done and no one I think he has not met in the Territories. All across the NWT, throughout Canada and around the world, anybody who has ever met him loves him and remembers him and talks of him.

I know it's been said that he loves everyone and loves politics, but I think there's a caveat to that. I know he doesn't love everything about politics. He entered and left politics always being positive, even when I thought, as his EA, he could get more into the attack mode, but he wanted to do things differently. I know that people think that he loves everybody, but I think there is a caveat to that. Yes, he loves almost everyone, but he doesn't like chronic complainers or people who are negative, because I have seen him say it like it is when he's at Tim Horton's. So we know Mr. Whitford as a man of integrity, a man who loves this Legislature. He loves people of the North, and I know that he's going to open a very exciting chapter as he moves on.

I am grateful for all of the experiences I have had, and that I will continue to have, and I join the Members of this Legislature in congratulating him on his extraordinary life and all the work that he has done for this Legislature, and we wish him well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Before I go to the mover of the motion, colleagues, I'm going to break with tradition just a bit. As Speaker, I have never spoken to a motion before the House or stated my support for one. I hope Members will forgive me for saying that this motion has my full support.

---Applause

With your indulgence, colleagues, I would like to read into the record a message from Her Excellency Governor General Michaëlle Jean.

It reads:

Dear Mr. Whitford: I was very pleased that we were able to meet at a recent Conference of Lieutenant Governors and Commissioners in Vancouver, which took place just prior to your retirement. Your trademark Metis vest has been a reminder over the years of your welcome presence at these meetings!

Your tenure as Commissioner of the Northwest Territories was certainly the crowning point of a career marked by public service and testifies to your strong sense of dedication to Canada and to the North. Whether as a Cabinet Minister, as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly or as a Marriage Commissioner, you always undertook your responsibilities with great commitment and enthusiasm. Your warm camaraderie and passionate devotion to encouraging community development will long be remembered by all those whom you served in various capacities over the years.

I know that my colleagues at Rideau Hall join me in wishing you every happiness and success in the future. Yours sincerely,
Michaëlle Jean.

---Applause

With that, I will go to the mover of the motion for some closing remarks. Mr. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we have heard from all Members of this Legislative Assembly, including yourself, many stories and the history of Mr. Whitford throughout the Northwest Territories. Indeed on the trips I have been at and he has been a part of, he seems to always know someone in the crowd. That has always impressed me with that ability to speak to people and touch their lives.

There are so many stories. Mr. Miltenberger leaned over to me as we listened. He said, "For all of the stories we have heard and as many of us have heard around this table, he really must be 150 years old or something like that to have done and achieved all that he has done in the Northwest Territories." But we know he is much younger than that. In fact, his many walks, at times he would be walking out to the airport terminal and back just to stay fit and trim so that as he came into this Assembly to assent to bills, he would do so looking fit and trim as our Commissioner.

There is so much more, I think, one can say. There are so many more people in the Northwest Territories I am sure that would express their gratitude to Mr. Whitford. I would like to thank all of the Members of this Assembly for saying all the

things that they have and put them on record for the history of the Northwest Territories. This is one of the, as we have heard from a Member, rare times that all Members of the Legislative Assembly have talked so positively about one individual. I would like to thank the Members for that.

To further mark the record of the history of the Northwest Territories and the history that Mr. Whitford has played in this, I request a recorded vote.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Clerk, the Member has requested a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

RECORDED VOTE

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Roland; Mr. McLeod, Deh Cho; Mr. McLeod, Inuvik Twin Lakes; Mr. McLeod, Yellowknife South; Mr. Krutko; Mr. Bromley; Mr. Abernethy; Mr. Menicoche; Mr. Ramsay; Mrs. Groenewegen; Mr. Beaulieu; Mr. Hawkins; Mr. Jacobson; Ms. Bisaro; Mr. Yakeleya; Mr. Lafferty; Ms. Lee; Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed to the motion, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand. Okay. Results of the recorded vote are: all those in favour is 18; opposed, none; and abstaining, none. The motion is carried unanimously.

---Carried

---Applause

The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion I gave notice of earlier today.

---Unanimous consent granted

MOTION 13-16(5): REFERRAL OF TABLED DOCUMENT 62-16(5): NORTHWEST TERRITORIES WATER STEWARDSHIP STRATEGY TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, CARRIED

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS Tabled Document 62-16(5) has been tabled in this House;

AND WHEREAS Tabled Document 62-16(5), Northwest Territories Water Stewardship Strategy, requires detailed consideration;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that Tabled Document 62-16(5), Northwest Territories Water Stewardship Strategy, be referred to Committee of the Whole for consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Tabled Document 62-16(5) will be referred to Committee of the Whole for consideration. Item 18, first reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 10:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),
NO. 1, 2010-2011

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Bill 10, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2010-2011, be read for the first time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 10 has had first reading.

---Carried

The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 11:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES),
NO. 3, 2010-2011

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011, be read for the first time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 11 has had first reading.

---Carried

Item 19, second reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 9:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE TOURISM ACT

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 9, An Act to Amend the Tourism Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Tourism Act by repealing the provisions regarding the Tourist Deposit Assurance Program. A transitional

provision allows the Minister to review those applications for reimbursement of a deposit made in respect of a tourism activity before November 15, 2010, and render a decision on those claims. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 9 has had second reading.

---Carried

The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 10:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),
NO. 1, 2010-2011

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Bill 10, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2010-2011, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, the bill makes supplementary appropriations for operations expenditures for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2010-2011 fiscal year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 10 has had second reading.

--Carried

The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 11:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES),
NO. 3, 2010-2011

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for infrastructure expenditures for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2010-2011 fiscal year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 11 has had second reading.

---Carried

Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project; Tabled Document 30-16(5), 2010 Review of Members' Compensation and Benefits; Tabled Document 38-16(5), Supplementary Health Benefits – What We Heard; Committee Report 1-16(5), Report on On-Line Petitions; and Committee Report 2-16(5), Report on the Use of Computers and

Hand-Held Electronic Devices in the Legislative Assembly, with Mr. Krutko in the Chair.

Consideration in Committee the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. I call Committee of the Whole to order. We have several things to deal with: Tabled Document 4-16(5), Tabled Document 30-16(5), Tabled Document 38-16(5), Committee Report 1-16(5), Committee Report 2-16(5), and Tabled Document 62-16(5). Mrs. Groenewegen, what is the wish of committee?

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee wishes to deal with Committee Report 1-16(5), Committee Report 2-16(5) and Tabled Document 4-16(5). Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Okay, with that, we'll deal with Committee Report 1-16(5). Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, Committee Report 1-16(5), Report on On-Line Petitions was read into the record yesterday, May 19, 2010, and subsequently moved into Committee of the Whole for further discussion. Mr. Chairman, I am now prepared to make two motions as recommended by Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures in their report. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Are you making a motion, Mr. Hawkins?

COMMITTEE MOTION 7-16(5): IMPLEMENTATION OF ON-LINE PETITIONS PILOT PROGRAM, CARRIED

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that this committee recommends that the Legislative Assembly approve the implementation of an On-line Petition Pilot Program to allow for the presentation of petitions from on-line petitions websites associated with the Legislative Assembly website to be operational from the period of October 1, 2010, to June 30, 2011. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I just want to say one brief thing, which is this is a significant move forward, I believe, in democracy. I believe strongly that this will provide a new dimension to bringing the voice of the people of the North to this Assembly. We will be able to reach one corner to another on a particular issue to ensure that it will be heard on the floor of this House. An example of the rest of Canada and

North America should take hold of and watch as we proceed forward to see how it works. This could be a scary adventure for some, but I believe this is an opportunity to hear the voices, the passion of the people in this respective Assembly and certainly I hope it lends itself as a model for future Assemblies to consider. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): To the motion. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am sure that all the details of this particular undertaking will be ironed out, but I think it's very important to make sure that there are ways of ensuring that people who want to sign on-line petitions identify themselves and their identity can be confirmed. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): To the motion. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I guess this is the one time I get to speak in Committee of the Whole to a motion. That reflects more on the Assembly as a whole and as Mrs. Groenewegen has stated, the verification of individuals who would sign on the website is going to be absolutely critical. The one thing I've seen, and I'm sure all of us have seen in this new world and this new technology that is ever changing, is there are so many opportunities and things happen so fast and there is a certain anonymity to the Internet world, as they say, that would be somewhat difficult to prove. Whereas in today's environment, although cumbersome, the individual that signs is in the community and signs in front of someone, in a sense a witness. Whereas, the on-line world, you don't know who truly is on the other side unless you can verify that in some substantive way.

So although Mr. Hawkins has talked about the rest of the world or North America paying attention to this, I think we'd better make sure we get our ducks lined up and make sure the appropriate measures are put in place so that someone doesn't just go to a phone book in the NWT and pick a name and send it in on a website. Who's to verify that signature is the accurate one? So it could be somewhat cumbersome as we go forward. So that's a caution, I guess, that I would put to this. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

The motion is carried. Mr. Hawkins.

COMMITTEE MOTION 8-16(5):
EVALUATION OF ON-LINE PETITIONS
PILOT PROGRAM,
CARRIED

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Chairman, I move that this committee recommends that the Clerk's office undertake an evaluation of an On-line Petition Pilot Program after June 30, 2011; and further, that the evaluation be provided to the Members of the 17th Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Does committee agree that we've concluded Committee Report 1-16(5)?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed. Next on the list we've agreed to deal with is Committee Report 2-16(5). Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, Committee Report 2-16(5), Report on the Use of Laptop Computers and Hand-Held Electronic Devices in the Legislative Assembly, was read into the record yesterday, May 19, 2010, and subsequently moved into Committee of the Whole for further discussion.

Mr. Chairman, I am now prepared to introduce four motions and recommendations by the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures in their report. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The motion is being circulated. Mr. Hawkins, are you making a motion?

COMMITTEE MOTION 9-16(5):
USE OF LAPTOP COMPUTERS DURING
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,
CARRIED

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I move that this committee recommends that the Members be permitted to use laptop computers and other hand-held electronic devices only during Committee of the Whole proceedings; and further, that laptop computers and other hand-held electronic communication devices are not to be used by a Member who has the floor; and further, that a Member who has the floor must have his or her laptop computer closed and/or his or her hand-held electronic device turned off.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Mr. Hawkins.

COMMITTEE MOTION 10-16(5):
ELECTRONIC DEVICES USED IN
THE CHAMBER,
CARRIED

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I move that this committee recommends that any electronic device used in the Chamber must be on silent mode at all times.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Mr. Hawkins.

COMMITTEE MOTION 11-16(5):
SOLE DISCRETION OF SPEAKER AND CHAIR
OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REGARDING
USE OF LAPTOP COMPUTERS AND
ELECTRONIC DEVICES,
CARRIED

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I move that this committee recommends that the use of laptop computers and hand-held electronic devices continue to be administered through the sole discretion of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly or the chair of Committee of the Whole, and if the user of any electronic device is deemed to impinge on the decorum or dignity of the House, the offending Member may be ordered to discontinue use.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Mr. Hawkins.

COMMITTEE MOTION 12-16(5):
GUIDELINES FOR USE OF LAPTOP
COMPUTERS AND HAND-HELD DEVICES,
CARRIED

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I move that this committee recommends that the guidelines governing the use of laptop computers and hand-held electronic devices be set out in a document entitled Direction Regarding the Use of Electronic Communication Devices in

Committee of the Whole and that the document be attached as an appendix to the rules of the Legislative Assembly.

That's the final motion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Does committee agree that we have concluded Committee Report 2-16(5)?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): What is the wish of the committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that we report progress.

---Defeated

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mrs. Groenewegen, what is the wish of the committee?

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry. We had indicated we would like to deal with Committee Report 1-16(5) and 2-16(5) and also Tabled Document 4-16(5).

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Okay. We'll continue with Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a number of comments on this document. It's a very complicated process that has been undertaken and I understand that the Minister of ENR, who is our responsible Minister as described in this process, is in a difficult position. He's bound by several acts and the very contradictory provisions in them in regard to the whole Joint Review Panel process.

The Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act certainly does not consider the animal that we call consensus government and that's made it very difficult, I think, and it hampers the Minister's, our NWT Minister's potential to receive input. And it can't be easy having to work with another party -- in this case the federal government -- to prepare a joint response. I would say that it's difficult to work with another party at any time, but I don't envy the Minister having to work with the federal government. They're not my favourite partner. I imagine that it probably would be much easier to write a response by one's self rather than having to find common ground for responses. It's kind of like consensus government, I think. But it makes it all more important for our responsible Minister, the Minister of ENR, to fight for the best result on our behalf.

I don't have the depth of understanding of the proceedings and of the recommendations that my colleague Mr. Bromley does, and I don't believe I can articulate as detailed and considered analysis, but I believe that my comments have merit nonetheless.

At the outset, for me, it's important to note that the exhaustive and, in my view, comprehensive Joint Review Panel report states that for the Mackenzie Gas Project to proceed and be successful, all 176 of the JRP recommendations must be accepted. I agree with that assessment. But the interim response that was posted on Environment Canada's website on Monday, the overview of that response says, and I will quote, "While the governments' endorsement..." -- governments meaning NWT and federal -- "While the government's endorsement of the overall objectives of the recommendations submitted by the JRP in their report only 10 of the 115 recommendations directed to government can be accepted as written." I was really very surprised when I learned of that information. I am pretty much shocked and dismayed.

The governments of Canada and the NWT further state that they propose to accept the intent of 77 of the recommendations that directly refer to these two governments, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada. They state they cannot accept them as written. Again, I have difficulty with that. So we have 115 recommendations, less 10, less 77, and that leaves 28. Well, what of those 28 recommendations? Well, the governments propose not to accept them; 28 because they are out of scope of the JRP mandate in their opinion, and eight are rejected outright, I feel really strongly that we should be -- we, as a GNWT government and we as Members of this government -- pushing hard to have all recommendations accepted.

I think the future of our Territory is at stake here. The impact of the Mackenzie Gas Project will affect the NWT for a very long time and we're duty bound to get the best possible result from the JRP and the National Energy Board hearings both for our present residents and for our future residents, our children and grandchildren. The JRP recommendations are written to protect our people, our land, our communities, our Territory, and I really truly believe that.

So what of the statement that they accept the intent of 77 recommendations? It sounds pretty positive, Mr. Chair, but what really does it mean? I have no idea. Will there be language in the response which indicates actions on the part of our government? Language and resulting actions which are strong enough to accomplish the objective of the recommendations as it's proposed by the JRP? I, unfortunately, have to doubt that that's true. If the

government really was about to take some action relative to those recommendations where they're accepting intent, then I think they would have said, yes, we accept the recommendation.

The interim response has a number of reasons why they can only accept the intent. They say that some recommendations fetter the discretion of future regulators, that some recommendations hinder future development, that many require financial resources for them to be implemented and that several recommendations impose unattainable guidelines. So if we look at these one at a time -- fetter the discretion of future regulators -- if a future development related to the Mackenzie Gas Project comes forward for approval, this is a related development, and it's quite possible we'll have that.

Don't we want the applicants to be bound by the principles of this original project? I would say yes. Hindering future development, the scope and the pace of future development should be controlled. Why would our government not want a say in what affects our Territory down the road? That is what I hear this interim response saying: we don't really care what happens in the future.

This is a huge project with huge impacts. The National Energy Board is going to approve the project for capacity for 1.2 billion cubic feet per day of gas. But these hearings only contemplated details for 0.83 billion cubic feet of gas per day, so there is a discrepancy of some 0.4 billion cubic feet of gas. Who is going to consider the implications of an expansion from 0.83 to 1.2? In my mind, it is a significant development, the impact of which is yet to be considered. The NEB is approving a project for 1.2 billion cubic feet, so any recommendations to the project should consider the total extent of the development at 1.2. I have to ask the question: do we want to leave it to somebody else to decide our fate? That is what I see we are doing by not accepting recommendations relative to future development.

The third one talks about requiring financial resources. Absolutely there is a need for money to implement these recommendations, particularly those recommendations that are related to potential social issues for our people and our communities. Yet our government is basically saying no to those recommendations and they are saying no because they are too expensive. I feel we should be using this process to negotiate for better financial resources to implement the JRP recommendations. They are not out of this world. I believe they are things we should be doing anyway. They are certainly things that we say that we want to do. We need to recognize the needs of our Territory and use this opportunity as leverage to get the resources we need to accomplish our goals. I believe those recommendations are part of our goals.

Impose unattainable timelines. That is another reason for not accepting. I would ask the question: don't we all need a target? By not accepting these recommendations, the government is telling us that they are not important. So in not accepting them as written, will the NEB rewrite them with new timelines and targets? It is unknown. But if they are not rewritten with timelines and targets, the issue will no doubt fall off the table. No timeline, no target; there is no incentive for action.

Some of the recommendations which I believe are the most important are many of the ones in chapter 15 which is titled Economic Impacts, particularly ones about resource revenue sharing and transition planning. They speak specifically to things that will benefit our Territory if implemented. All of those recommendations in chapter 16 of the JRP report, Social and Cultural Impacts. The recommendations in chapter 18, which is Monitoring, Follow-up, and Management Plans, and chapter 19, which is Sustainability and Net Contributions, are also extremely significant.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the lack of opportunity for input by Regular Members on the NWT government's response to the JRP recommendations I consider somewhat shameful. I hope that our Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, who has said that he will listen, is actually doing that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. General comments in regards to Tabled Document 4-16(5). Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Because the scope of the JRP is so broad and detailed and because this Cabinet has failed in its duty to provide the Members with adequate opportunity to provide input into this response, I will confine my comments to specific remarks on the most major recommendations and general comments on broad subject areas in the report.

I would first like to quote from the JRP report's observation in the section Public Confidence and Government Preparedness. "Many participants in the panel's review expressed a major concern about the readiness of governments to respond to and adequately manage the impacts of the MGP. As a result, many of the panel's recommendations are directed to governments. The panel is generally satisfied that if these recommendations are adopted and implemented, governments would be effective in addressing the concerns to which the recommendations are directed." The panel report went on to say, "The panel was provided with documentary evidence of criticism from independent sources of government shortcomings and delivering on its legislative obligations and its existing commitments and meeting the spirit of those commitments." However, the panel did express its confidence in the potential for

government to act by saying, "The panel is also satisfied that if governments accept and act on the recommendations that are directed to them, governments would be ready and prepared in the sense of being able to respond to the challenges that the project would present. The panel is satisfied that implementation of its recommendations would address the issue of public confidence."

Regarding government's intention to step up to the plate on the JRP, I am extremely disappointed, as is Ms. Bisaro, by the statements in the two governments' overview of the draft interim response stating that a mere 10 of the 115 recommendations -- that is less than 10 percent directed at government -- will be honoured. The overview emphasizes the intention to respond in a modified way to many recommendations. I will be looking for details to ensure the spirit and effect of the JRP recommendations are not diluted to meaninglessness through equivocation.

Again, however, Cabinet's refusal to fully involve Regular Members in the review and in the development of responses is unacceptable. Without input into the acceptance, rejection or modification responses, Members have been locked out of one of the most important pieces of business ever considered by this Assembly.

Then there is the issue of the government's NEB response. There are numerous recommendations in the JRP report dealing with the general issue that the proposal under review is for the development and shipping of 0.83 to 1.2 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day. The JRP recommendations repeatedly make the point that this is the extent of the review and no authority should be issued beyond these production levels without a later comprehensive review. The presentation of the GNWT legal counsel of the Inuvik NEB hearings contradicted this approach. I want to emphasize that this position is completely unacceptable. In all areas where the JRP recommends a limitation of authorities and approvals to a project for 0.83 to 1.2 billion cubic feet of gas per day, this government should heed that direction.

As I stated in my earlier general remarks, I also reject the government's position regarding what is described as fettering of future discretion. The JRP is simply serving the requirements of the MVRMA and claims agreements that provide for Northerners to have their say in controlling the pace and scale of development and the necessity for addressing cumulative effects.

My next major comment deals with the issues covered in chapter 16 of the JRP report, Social and Cultural Impacts. This chapter, while the longest in the report with 26 recommendations, is a catalogue of the mostly negative social and cultural impacts anticipated to result from the project without

mitigation. These include the needs for closed work camps; measures to minimize negative interactions and spillovers of effects into communities; alcohol and drug abuse prevention; policy addiction and treatment measures; increased resources for policing including drug and alcohol enforcement; increased and coordinated health care services; the availability and expansion of homelessness, family and women's shelters and seasonal weekend and day child care spaces; mental health and suicide prevention programs; elders' care availability and service expansion.

Sections of other chapters also point out the need for financial arrangements with communities to offset the upsurge and demand for community infrastructure and resources. Clearly the JRP report anticipates a vast increase in the demand for critical social, family and human need services. What the JRP report is saying is that without a huge ramping up of both regular public services and the critical issues services and measures required to mitigate negative social impacts, the project will have disastrous social consequences for many citizens and our communities. In this area, government will not meet its responsibilities without taking on the full weight of these recommendations which means huge increases in costs. Unless the sources and amounts of these funds are assured and programs underway well in advance of project start-up, it will be irresponsible to allow these impacts to begin.

Environmental impacts are a huge area of concern dealt with largely in the recommendations of the report, chapters 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13 and 18. The scope of these recommendations is too vast to be dealt with meaningfully in the short time available to us here. They are the product of detailed, expert and analytical consideration by the JRP and stretch across the interdependent web of our ecosystems.

In speaking to these recommendations, I want to again emphasize a single main message of the JRP in delivering its report; the project should only proceed if all these recommendations are met. This counsel is critically meaningful in matters affecting the project's basin-opening impact upon fragile northern ecosystems, much of it in a precious, pristine state. This is our birthright held in trust by our governments for our citizens and, indeed, the world. This project must not proceed without thorough implementation of all the environmental protection measures outlined in the report. We have the opportunity and the JRP report has given us the detailed direction to try to write a new page in sustainable, environmentally responsible resource development. We have the opportunity to do it right.

I am calling on this government to meet its responsibilities and insist that all other parties meet their responsibilities by implementing the recommendations of the report dealing with the protection and management of such matters as

environmentally safe construction standards, air, water and soil quality, spill prevention and management, and environmental emergency plans, wildlife protection including management plans, critical habitats, endangered species and species at risk, fish and marine mammals, land use planning, habitat offsets and protected areas, and cumulative impacts monitoring and assessment.

Greenhouse gas issues are another major concern. I point specifically to the report recommendations 8.2, 3, 6 and 7. Recommendation 8.6 is critical, saying, "If federal regulations under the Kyoto Protocol Implementation Act are not in place by the time the proponents make the decision to construct the MGP, the National Energy Board, as a condition of any certificate or approvals it might issue in relation to the MGP, require the proponents to establish, in collaboration with Environment Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories prior to the commencement of construction and in sufficient time to perform the final decision a greenhouse gas emissions target or series of targets basic program." The report states the details of this program. Does the government's response give notice that new NWT reduction targets are to be established this coming April? I point to the critical recommendation, 8.7, that before issuing any approval or certificate, the NEB, "require the proponents to include greenhouse gas emissions from their facilities in the Mackenzie Gas Project's ongoing monitoring program and to report annually following the commencement of construction on the project's achievements with respect to greenhouse gas emission targets."

As a general counsel to government, I could not agree more to recommendation 8.8 that, "the Government of Canada develop and implement as soon as possible legislation and regulations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Canada to meet or exceed existing national targets in the Climate Change Plan for Canada." The recommendation involving transition to and increased reliance upon lower greenhouse gas producing natural gas directed to replace other fossil fuel sources is also essential. In all these cases I urge this government to fight for these measures as mandatory steps in its development of a joint response.

Mr. Speaker, I note the clock is running down. If there are others, I'm happy to give way. If not, I would ask permission to finish my statement.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments with regard to... Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very briefly, I want to say how important the economy is in the Northwest Territories and the opportunities and benefits that this project will bring directly to the people in the Mackenzie Valley in the Northwest Territories in terms of moving the economy and that

we certainly need, through this process, a need for a balance between the water, air and land and extracting resources from our land.

Mr. Chairman, this whole process is like a big octopus, there are so many legs all over you have to pull things together. What is more important, in terms of coordinating all these different boards and agencies and the different needs of the people down the Mackenzie Valley, they certainly spent a lot of money putting a report together, they heard a lot of people. I believe the budget was over \$20 million for this stage here.

One of the most important things that I wanted to mention, Mr. Speaker, is that the people want to see our land use plans completed in the Mackenzie Valley. That's very important. That's very key to this project here. So I would support a strong implementation of all the land use plans that were developed through the Mackenzie Valley here and that first and foremost that our culture as people is protected, which I make note, Mr. Chairman, that our culture is our land. So that's number one in the hearts of the people here.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to say that we've come a long way from the 1940s when the CANOL Pipeline was constructed from Norman Wells to Whitehorse. It took 30,000 men and 13 months and it was done. In the 1980s we had a pipeline being built even though there was opposition. The pipeline did go through. There were certainly missed opportunities in terms of training and business for the people along the valley. Now, today, I think we learned enough to know what things are important to us; for example, as it's stated in the recommendations. So I look forward to seeing how these recommendations are going to be moved along.

There are some tight deadlines in terms of working with the aboriginal governments, looking at some of the boards and agencies. Certainly, looking at the land claims, the land owners, and areas that need to be protected.

Mr. Chairman, the lessons we learned are right in our backyard in the Sahtu, in the Norman Wells oil and gas field with the Enbridge Pipeline. You can count on your hand how many people have been hired over the years with Imperial Oil, or maybe two hands, I should say, and what type of a record they have in terms of employment, training programs, environmental issues that we still face today in terms of the monitoring and the quality of our water and our air around the areas. We should really look at that in terms of getting a little stronger in terms of going forward with this initiative here.

I want to say that I look forward to this government here working on some of the recommendations. They are under a tight time frame in terms of some of the recommendations, but I will be supporting this government and the Minister in terms of moving this forward. The pipeline is an important economic

initiative for the people in the Mackenzie Valley; however, we need to make sure that our land use plans are done, they're finished, and they're enacted and implemented as soon as possible. Thank you.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to continue my comments. I've listed a number that I'm hoping the government will fight for as some of the mandatory steps.

Regarding cost to government, the mitigation of social and environmental impacts resulting from the project will involve huge costs. I have urged our Ministers for some months to supply their estimate of the increased program costs that would result from the project and I ask for this again now. I'm sure the people of the Northwest Territories would love to hear this; they've been asking too.

The lack of participation, real participation and response of this government is incredible on this issue. I've also urged this government to enter into immediate negotiations with the federal government to identify and secure the major new sources of funds that will be available.

For the future, this government must vigorously support and pursue immediate negotiations on recommendation 15.11: "The governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories and the Aboriginal Summit continue negotiations towards settlement of an NWT-based resource revenue sharing agreement on a priority basis, and that such an agreement be finalized in advance of the National Energy Board granting the proponents Leave to Open. If an agreement is not concluded by that time, the panel recommends that the Government of Canada set aside 50 percent of the non-renewable resource royalty revenues it receives from the Mackenzie Gas Project to be held in trust for the Government of the Northwest Territories and aboriginal authorities until such time as a resource revenue sharing agreement has been concluded."

With this recommendation, the JRP has expressed the need for and desirability of the future assumption of resource revenue sharing by the territorial government. It is powerful recognition in support of this government's aspirations and must be insisted by this government and in its full detail.

My time is brief and I'll make short closing comments on the economic benefits and workforce development matters dealt with in the report and on this government's completion of a socioeconomic agreement with the proponents. The SEA, in short, is not good enough by a long shot. It is, for example: not linked to a larger vision of sustainable future for the NWT; it does not contain even a general statement of support from the proponent on

devolution or revenue sharing; it does not contain hard and fast guarantees of economic benefits for citizens of the NWT; contains no sanctions or penalties if the proponent does not meet its voluntary employment procurement, training or other commitments; is unclear how the proponents' targets apply to contractors and subcontractors; contains no firm residence requirement or commitments to affirmative action for women; contains weak, under-resourced and ineffectual monitoring provisions; and is little more than an update of commitments made by the proponents themselves in 2004.

Now that the details of the JRP report are known, we can proceed more intelligently towards negotiations of a meaningful specific agreement for ensuring socioeconomic benefits for our residents. We should do this in light of today's announcement, as I understand it, that the Beaufort-Delta Health Board has been disbanded today reflecting once again our capacity challenges. And we're going to ramp things up?

AN HON. MEMBER: It's about time.

MR. BROMLEY: I agree. There are major, major challenges here. We should forget this agreement, this socioeconomic agreement, so called, and start from a new page now that we have the JRP's excellent insights into our needs.

I also want to comment on the transparency and peculiarity of this public process. Well before these governments' initial responses were drafted, the National Energy Board held its final public hearings to gather the comments of others with a critical stake in this outcome. These groups had to do that without knowing how governments would react so their comments could not be informed by the critical input of governments' response. Worse than this reversal of process is the fact that we don't know whether the government responses will be made public before they are sent to the National Energy Board so the public will have an opportunity to comment. I urge this government to ensure that its final response to the NEB is publicly released, preferably before it is... And just because the Premier is busy speaking to somebody else, I'm going to repeat this. If I can have the attention of the Premier for just a minute. I urge this government to ensure... Thank you. I urge this government to ensure that its final response to the NEB is publicly released, preferably before it is supplied to the National Energy Board. And most especially, I urge aboriginal governments, through their critical review of the joint government response, to help ensure the rigorous and comprehensive response the JRP indicated is required, is indeed put in place. Mahsi.

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

MR. KRUTKO: I'd like to move a motion to report progress.

---Carried

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

Report of Committee of the Whole

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

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Committee Report 1-16(5), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on On-Line Petitions; Committee Report 2-16(5), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on the use of Laptops, Computers and Hand-held Electronic Devices in the Legislative Assembly; and Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project, and would like to report progress with six motions being adopted and that consideration of Committee Reports 1-16(5) and 2-16(5) are concluded. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The motion is on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 5:

APPRENTICESHIP, TRADE AND OCCUPATIONS CERTIFICATION ACT

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha that Bill 5, Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification Act, be read for the third time. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 5 has had third reading.

---Carried

The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

BILL 7:

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ELECTIONS AND PLEBISCITES ACT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act, be read for the third time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 7 has had third reading.

---Carried

The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 10:

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT (OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES), NO. 1, 2010-2011

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Bill 10, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2010-2011, be read for the third time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 10 has had third reading.

---Carried

The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 11:

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT (INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), NO. 3, 2010-2011

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011, be read for the third time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 11 has had third reading.

---Carried

Mr. Clerk, would you ascertain whether the Deputy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, Ms. Margaret Thom, is prepared to enter the Chamber to assent to bills.

ASSENT TO BILLS

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Ms. Margaret Thom):

Good afternoon. I am very pleased and honoured to be a part of these proceedings in my role as Deputy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories.

As Deputy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I am pleased to assent to the following bills:

- Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Veterinary Profession Act
- Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Dental Auxiliaries Act
- Bill 3, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010
- Bill 5, Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification Act

- Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act
- Bill 10, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2010-2011
- Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011

Thank you, mahsi cho, merci beaucoup, quanami.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Colleagues, I would like to extend the appreciation of the House to the Deputy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, Ms. Margaret Thom. It was a pleasure having her in the House and we thank her for assisting us today.

As we leave here today, colleagues, I know you're all looking forward to finding some time this summer to attend and participate in summer assemblies, continue your work for and with your constituents and spend this all-too-short season with family and friends. As we all know, the work of the Members does not end when this House adjourns. However, I urge you all to make time to connect with those you love and enjoy the special short time in the North.

A perfect opportunity to do this is on June 21st, when Canadians all across the country are invited to celebrate National Aboriginal Day. This is an opportunity to acknowledge the outstanding achievements and to celebrate the diverse cultures of our aboriginal, Metis and Inuit citizens. We are fortunate to celebrate this special day chosen to coincide with the summer solstice in a land where the sun will shine on those achievements long after it sets in other parts of the country.

Following on the heels of National Aboriginal Day is Canada Day. Please try to take the time to acknowledge and celebrate our special northern heritage and our country. We have so much to be proud of and thankful for.

I would like to take this time to thank the Pages who we have had in this House during this sitting.

---Applause

I extend appreciation of the Assembly to all the Pages who have assisted us during this sitting of the Assembly.

And with that, Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Thursday, October 14, 2010, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements

3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Acknowledgements
8. Oral Questions
9. Written Questions
10. Returns to Written Questions
11. Replies to Opening Address
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project
 - Tabled Document 30-16(5), 2010 Review of Members' Compensation and Benefits
 - Tabled Document 38-16(5), Supplementary Health Benefits - What We Heard
 - Tabled Document 62-16(5), Northern Voices, Northern Waters: NWT Water Stewardship Strategy
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, October 14, 2010, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:46 p.m.