



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**16<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Friday, August 19, 2011**

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**The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Hay River North)

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Friday, August 19, 2011****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. Michael McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Hon. Floyd Roland, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 10:09 a.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey):** Good morning, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements.

**Ministers' Statements**

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 39-16(6):  
'FORGING THE FUTURE' YOUTH CONFERENCE

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In July 2009 the Northern Leaders' Forum was created as a means for all leaders in the NWT to work collectively to advance the interest of our territory and its residents.

We set ourselves a task of developing a common vision and road map for the future of the NWT with input from northern residents, industry, NGOs, and youth. We accomplished what we set out to do, concluding the initiative with the release and tabling of the report in May entitled "Forging the Future - Anchored in our Past, Building on our Present."

One of the most rewarding experiences throughout this process was the engagement of people from various walks of life, especially our youth. It was inspiring to hear about their hopes and dreams, their commitment to this place we call home, and their willingness to participate as citizens to make things better in all our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to advise that I recently had the pleasure and privilege of hosting, along with Minister Robert C. McLeod, the Forging the Future Youth Conference here in Yellowknife.

In total, 42 youth delegates from all regions and backgrounds came together in Yellowknife on July 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. Their task was very specific and intended to build on progress made so far, which had been captured in the previously tabled Northern Leaders' Forum report. Guided by the vision statement and the youth wish list contained in that report, youth were asked to develop two priorities in support of the overall vision.

I am proud to say that the attending youth were very focussed and targeted in their efforts. They worked cooperatively and diligently over the course of the two days. They talked openly about their

hopes for our people, our territory and our future, and agreed on two specific recommendations.

Their first recommendation stresses the need for people to be healthy and addiction free, a prerequisite for unlocking a bright future and taking advantage of all the opportunities that are available.

Attending youth were troubled by the high rates of addiction and the perceived lack of treatment facilities in all regions. The recommendation speaks to the need to conduct consultations for regional treatment centres to hear how best to put in place treatment centres with culturally sensitive and multicultural staff. This would lead to the development of unique treatment and recovery support plans for youth, adults, and elders.

Their second recommendation speaks to the importance of youth assigned to school counsellors, and mentors providing support and assistance to students throughout high school. The recommendation is to place a qualified youth counsellor/mentor in every school who would be well versed in cultural traditions as well as modern education and would focus on supporting student/teacher partnerships.

In addition to providing these recommendations, youth delegates also discussed the importance of enhanced youth participation in political discussions and decision-making. Delegates provided insightful and concrete suggestions, including their key proposal for the creation of a territorial youth council that is run by youth for youth communicating regularly with leaders of the government.

Mr. Speaker, in order to realize the vision and goals contained in Forging the Future, we must translate ideals into action. This task rests with each and every one of us - leaders, government workers, business people, community volunteers, parents and youth. We must all be part of the solution.

Mr. Speaker, later today I will be tabling the summary of the Forging the Future Youth Conference which will provide more information about the discussions that took place at the conference, and I would encourage all Members, present and future, to read the report and listen to what youth have said about the Northwest Territories and their expectations of what should

happen in order to reach our full potential as a people and territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 40-16(6):  
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to speak about the importance of community training and preparedness.

In June the town of Fort Smith was threatened by extreme fire conditions which resulted in heavy smoke and considerable risk to the community. Several residents were evacuated until the risk passed. In July forest fires located close to the charter community of Deline resulted in the evacuation of 108 residents. Both events required emergency management officials to implement measures designed to protect the safety of residents and prepare for the worst.

Thankfully these events did not result in widespread damage, but they do offer a good reminder of how a disaster can strike at any time. In the Northwest Territories, forest fires and floods occur regularly and can easily test the community's ability to respond.

Several months ago community emergency management officials from Deline and Fort Smith participated in training on basic concepts of emergency management. This training provides the skills to effectively prepare for and respond to all types of emergencies. Understanding the framework of emergency management, along with accepted common response protocols in use across the Northwest Territories, greatly increases the timeline and effectiveness of response to an emergency.

This training was put into practice in June and July with a high degree of efficiency and effectiveness by community emergency management officials in Deline and Fort Smith.

There is a wide variety of situations and factors that can cause a disaster in a community. Communities in the Northwest Territories may be particularly vulnerable due to the potential impacts of climate change. In coastal communities, preparation for storms and flooding may be more necessary, while in southern regions the frequency of forest fires may increase.

Municipal and Community Affairs is working with communities and partners to guide the development and delivery of quality of training opportunities to improve the safety of residents and to respond to disaster in an appropriate and effective manner. This includes efforts to improve community capacity to undertake emergency

management activities and to support communities in their emergency planning efforts.

With the recent fire events in Deline and Fort Smith we are reminded of how important it is for all communities to be prepared to respond to emergencies. MACA remains committed to working to advance the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly's goal of sustainable, vibrant, and safe communities in the NWT.

I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating the communities of Deline and Fort Smith for their effort in preparing for disaster and working together to protect the safety of their residents.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 41-16(6):  
KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 12  
EDUCATION PROGRESS

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. One of the ways that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment has worked towards this Assembly's goal of healthy, educated people is through the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative. Regional Aboriginal student achievement forums were an important part of this, with a final forum in May 2011. All the forums had excellent attendance and participation from the youth, elders, Aboriginal leaders, education authorities, and community leaders.

Subsequently, a meeting was held with Aboriginal government leaders, education authorities, and Aurora College to discuss the outcome of the regional forums. All leaders agreed on the four priority areas the Aboriginal Student Achievement Working Group identified as priorities that would improve educational outcomes for Aboriginal students.

For each priority all leaders agreed on specific goals. For early childhood and childcare, leaders agreed to develop early childhood programs, services, and initiatives to optimize Aboriginal children's health and development. For literacy, leaders have set goals to eliminate the literacy gap between Aboriginal and other students. In the area of student and family support the goal is to provide some support services for Aboriginal students and families to help ensure academic success. Finally, the Aboriginal language and culture and resource development, leaders identified support for Aboriginal students to reach their fullest potential to become proficient in language and strong in their culture.

District education authority chairpersons and Aboriginal leaders expressed interest in annual meetings to further discuss the Northwest Territories education system and receive updates

on the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative. All groups agreed to meet annually and proposed signing an education partnership declaration. This demonstrates a shared commitment to work together in a collaborative manner to improve the academic success of Aboriginal students.

On July 20, 2011, all parties signed the historical Education Partnership Declaration resulting in a completed Aboriginal Student Achievement Education Plan, which I will table later today.

This is an exciting time of year with students getting ready to start a new school year in the next several weeks when they will have the opportunity to learn important skills they need for their future. It also provides a fresh start for those who stopped attending school in the past.

As leaders and parents, we must encourage all students to attend school daily, to work hard, to do their best.

This education plan is for our youth. Northern children are our future and they deserve to have the best quality, culturally relevant education system available to them. Through our work, all parties agreed it will take the combined efforts of many departments, youth, Aboriginal governments, education authorities, and community leaders to implement the education plan. Everyone has an important role to play.

Although there has been a significant increase in NWT high school graduates over the past few years, we still have much to do. We must ensure our graduates are well prepared to pursue their educational and career goals and to be active, responsible citizens who contribute to the economic and social well-being of our communities and our territory. The education plan and the education partnership declaration provide us the best opportunity for this.

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

### Members' Statements

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR PAYING OFF HOUSING ARREARS

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all heard from the Member for Nunakput the concern with housing and people being evicted and also the amount of arrears that we have compiled over the last number of years.

Mr. Speaker, in previous governments there were two communities that seemed to have had a problem with arrears and all the other LHOs did not have the arrears that we're seeing today. Yet, Mr. Speaker, some unique efforts were made from

different communities, and I'll use the community of Tsiigehtchic in my riding. They worked with the tenants to work off their arrears by demolishing old Housing Corporation units, which were going to have to be demolished anyhow, and allowed the individuals to work off their arrears in which they have their wage earnings go towards their arrears; the other half they got to keep.

It's these unique types of arrangements that I think the Minister should consider in light of the situation in Paulatuk and also in other communities that you have arrears where we do have a lot of infrastructure that is basically ready to be demolished. Again, that's one of the ways that you can assist communities dealing with the arrears.

Mr. Speaker, it's also important that we ensure that the people we put into our care programs get into homeownership, that we work with them to ensure that they're able to transition as a Housing Corporation tenant to a homeowner, but not to treat them as if they're still a tenant in the Housing Corporation unit by using the 25 percent income in which the individuals are discouraged from basically trying to bring in revenues.

I'll use the situation I have in Fort McPherson where the individual's wife went and got a job at the school as a teacher's assistant, and because of the amount of rent and basically the amount that they were supposed to pay on the unit was almost \$2,500. If they went to the bank and got a mortgage, they would have paid somewhere in the region of maybe \$500 to \$1,000 a year on a mortgage. So it's discouraging for people to try to get into housing and being treated the same way they were as tenants in the Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be having questions for the Minister of Housing on trying to find solutions to arrear problems and evictions. Thank you.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT POLICY

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A key priority of my mandate has been promotion of early childhood development because of its critical role in growing our next healthy generation. Key connections exist with the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative. As I noted last session, with the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative moving to completion before the early childhood development review is done, there is potential for a fundamental error in planning. We can't set an informed course for student achievement until we've considered development of young children before they enter the school system.

What is early childhood development? Providing the nurturing, securing and stimulating experiences during the first years of a child's life that help the child's brain develop and lay the foundation for lifelong learning. In essence, the experiences that children have before they can even speak affect lifelong learning and behaviour.

Consider this astounding and emerging new knowledge: Studies show that our brain development peaks in the first year of life. Language development peaks between six and nine months and begins with development of brain circuitry in the three months before birth.

The greatest opportunity to foster Aboriginal languages starts before birth and goes to age one. Powers of perception and thinking, physical, emotional and mental health, above all, learning, all these capacities are most powerfully and largely developed from prenatal to the third year of life. If we focus on efforts on institutional learning without the early childhood support, we've missed the period of life when efforts -- that's expenditures -- bring the greatest results.

What about the costs? Talk about good investment. In Canada the annual cost of dealing with crime, violence, and problems in mental health and addictions is about \$220 billion. That's direct cost and lost economic potential. The cost of preventing this? About \$18 billion. In terms of return on expenditures, support for programs aimed at the first three years of life gives them eight times greater return and increased capacity compared to dollars spent at age 16. Focus on prevention, save on cost.

The Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative is going ahead, with much good work done. In handing this over to the next Assembly, I'm asking the Minister to ensure that resources are earmarked to efficiently achieve the huge potential we now...

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

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

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. BROMLEY:** The Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative is going ahead, with much good work done. In handing this work over to the next Assembly, I'm asking the Minister to ensure that resources are earmarked to efficiently achieve the huge potential we now realize we can achieve through early childhood development with much less cost than the greater and too-late cost during schooling. Mahsi.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GIANT MINE REMEDIATION PROJECT AND REALIGNMENT OF INGRAHAM TRAIL

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Wednesday my colleague Mr. Bromley raised a number of questions on the Giant Mine remediation project. He stressed the need for independent oversight, ongoing research and reporting arising out of the concerns about the flooding last spring, and the sinkholes that have appeared on the property over this past summer.

One area that he did not mention is the requirement to realign the Ingraham Trail through the mine site to ensure the traffic does not pass directly over the different arsenic chambers.

Over two years ago the Giant Mine realignment was announced as a necessity for safety reasons. Three options were identified at the time.

Option one, which is the least technical and completely bypasses all the arsenic pits, starts near Fred Henne Park and rejoins the Ingraham just past the mine site just before the Yellowknife River.

Option two is the option that closely mirrors the existing highway through the Giant Mine site but is altered to avoid the different arsenic chambers. It would create a very erratic and winding road through the existing site.

Option three, which has already been rejected as unsuitable, was along the lakefront in front of the Giant town property, the old Giant town site, and rejoins the Ingraham Trail past the 'A' headframe. I understand that this route would actually go over one of the arsenic chambers, so its construction would have made the purpose of the realignment completely moot.

Since these options have been identified, there has been little information made public. I have had a number of constituents ask me what are the plans for the realignment and when will they see something done.

Mr. Speaker, last session some of my colleagues asked these types of questions, but the answers seemed to have confused many in the public. So today, at the appropriate time, I will once again be asking questions related to this topic of the Minister of Transportation. Specifically I want to know if a route has actually been selected, and if so, which route will be developed. Will northern contractors employing northern workers be involved in the construction? What is the timeline? What is the cost, and who will be responsible for paying it?

Mr. Speaker, every winter a large number of heavy loads pass over these arsenic chambers, hauling critical supplies to the diamond mines. The Giant Mine site is undergoing odd transformation with the appearance of these new sinkholes. Overflow from Baker Creek is a reality. It may be again.



On top of this, the original notification of this project stressed that the realignment was a safety issue, so why the delays? When will this project get done? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
RECOGNITION OF PEARL NORWEGIAN  
AND FAMILY'S 125-KM WALK FROM  
INUVIK TO TSIIGEHTCHIC TO  
RAISE MONEY FOR CANCER RESEARCH

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to recognize the courage and compassion of Pearl Norwegian, her sister Carol Norwegian, brother Joey Klein, niece Shanta Ansdell, and nephew Mark Ansdell for walking from Inuvik to Tsiigehtchic to raise funds for the Canadian Cancer Society.

--Applause

Earlier this month, Pearl and her family walked 125 kilometres between Inuvik and Tsiigehtchic. Pearl's mother, Therese Remy Sawyer, also known as Terry Norwegian, died of cancer last year but not before she, herself, had completed the walk in 2006. Pictures of the walk show her smiling the whole time. She did it in memory of her husband, Tom Sawyer, who died of cancer in 2001.

One hundred and twenty-five kilometres is a long journey, but as Pearl told me, Mr. Speaker, the pain endured is nothing compared to those who suffered and are suffering from cancer. They camped along the way at the Gwich'in Territorial Park, Caribou Creek, and Wrangling River. They used the time together to bond, share memories, and recall the lessons and traditions their mother and grandmother passed on to them.

The family has vowed to walk between Inuvik and Tsiigehtchic again every five years, with the repeat beginning in 2016. The family not only wants to raise money for cancer research but increase awareness of cancer and the importance of early screening and checkups.

They want to continue their mother's legacy and all they can do to prevent other families from experiencing the loss of a loved one to cancer. The walk ended in Tsiigehtchic at the graves of their mother, Terry; their sister, Esther; and stepfather, Tom.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who supported the walk and congratulations to Pearl, Carol, Joey, Shanta and Mark.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, Pearl Norwegian also served as my constituency assistant and I would like to thank her very much for her work and dedication through this term. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm going to tell the story of a 31-year-old woman who saw the doors of opportunity open for her, only to see this government try to slam them shut. She's struggling to get through them and realize her dream of getting a degree in nursing and then go on to medical school to become a doctor.

She began with the Nursing Access Program at Aurora College because she needed upgrading as a mature student. She is the mother of four children between the ages of six and 14 and she's not rich, at least not financially. She's a tenant in a Yellowknife Housing Authority unit. Luckily, she was eligible for SFA. Everything seemed to be working out. She's a Northerner through and through, born and raised in Yellowknife, and a generous volunteer. She participates in the Foot Washing Program at the Salvation Army.

Busy as she is, she finished year one at the top of her class and she's headed for a degree in nursing. When she graduates, she plans to serve here in the Northwest Territories. Her resolve and dedication to achieve her goal is really remarkable. I know everybody here would cheer her on if they could, Mr. Speaker, and I wish I didn't have to tell you the other half of the story.

Last week the SFA caseworker called to warn her that her funding would run out after this year. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because she will hit the \$60,000 cap on financial assistance. Even this year she is facing a smaller living allowance that has been cut from \$1,550 a month down to \$1,040. Please don't forget she has four kids to feed, Mr. Speaker. In fact, it's because she has four kids that her living allowance pushed her more quickly than most students towards that cap that we have on SFA assistance.

She has been told to seek out other funding. She has been told to get a summer job. Mr. Speaker, that summer job would certainly have to pay her well to cover her daycare and summer camp costs, let alone give her any money for school this fall.

Sometimes the programs we craft in government do not fit the realities of life, Mr. Speaker, and this is one such case. I know the SFA program is under review, but that won't be done, Mr. Speaker, for at least another year, possibly 18 months.

In the meantime, are we going to slam the door on one of our best students? Are we going to tell this constituent of mine, too bad, we just can't help you out anymore? Your hopes and dreams are just too big. I certainly hope not, Mr. Speaker. If we can't help even the most determined, bright, promising

young students, we are heading down a very dark path. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
SUPPORT AND FUNDING FOR THE  
HAY RIVER VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to talk about the adequacy of support and funding for the volunteer fire department in Hay River.

Mr. Speaker, the volunteer fire department has a very long history in the community of Hay River. It is a group of very dedicated and continually trained workers who are on call for the safety and protection of our community at all times.

A long-time firefighter, Chief Ross Potter, recently became a full-time employee of the Town of Hay River, so Hay River now has a paid full-time fire chief. Mr. Speaker, this is a very good service for the community and it allows Chief Potter to actually do the types of inspections that are required that would normally be carried out by the office of the fire marshal. So commercial buildings inspections and different things that need to take place, Chief Potter is able to perform those duties.

I will have questions for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs as to whether or not the Town of Hay River is receiving any remuneration or compensation for the fact that that role has been taken up to some extent by our fire chief.

The ambulance service that the volunteer fire department provides, too, is also a very valuable service. It's not only for emergencies, it's also for transporting patients from the hospital when they require to go out on medevacs. It's also a service that goes outside of our town boundaries. It goes to the K'atlodeechee First Nation when required. It goes out onto the highways around Hay River and rescues and brings in people who are injured in accidents.

I believe that the amount of money that was provided to the volunteer fire department for this ambulance service historically had been around \$25,000. I think that periodically we need to look at the volume of work that's being done, the actual value of the work that's being done, and review whether that amount of money is sufficient as a contribution.

Ultimately, if we want to keep a very good volunteer fire department and ambulance service available in Hay River, it costs money. There are inflationary factors. If the government does not review this and increase the funding, then it falls to the taxpayers of Hay River.

I'd like to thank the volunteer fire department and Chief Potter for the work they do in Hay River. Later today I will have questions for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs as to the financial support and the adequacy of that financial support for Hay River.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
EMPLOYMENT RATES IN TU NEDHE

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

I talked many times during the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly about the important issue of employment in the small communities in the NWT, specifically the low employment rates in the small communities. Although the GNWT has established the Small Community Employment Support Program Guidelines which came into effect April 1, 2011, to date I have not seen any marked improvement to the employment rates in Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution.

In my last Member's statement on this issue, on May 13, 2011, I said that the three employment programs should be delivered at the community level as much as possible and some changes must be made to the program. I made reference to how the communities in my riding have half-time client service officer positions. They are GNWT positions. However, the career development officers is a plan in which this government has in delivering the Employment Support Program.

The communities in Tu Nedhe do not have a community development officer position. I believe that the client service officer positions can effectively fill the role of a career development officer position and create one job with both titles where that job would be able to deliver the program. This would be a new position in the GNWT, a combined position that would be located in the small communities. It would also give the small communities an opportunity to look at other positions that should be created in improving the employment rates in the small communities; positions such as preschool teachers, daycare workers, youth workers, and employment workers, just to mention a few, will definitely go a long way to solving the employment problems in the small communities.

I realize the Small Community Employment Support Guidelines have only been introduced since April 1, 2011, and will take time to sort itself out; however, I believe feedback such as this will enhance the program and make it more effective for small communities to hire people and keep people employed by the GNWT in small communities.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
EXTENDED SERVICE OPTIONS AT THE  
MOTOR VEHICLES OFFICE

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When someone works at one of the government customer service counters, they are providing an essential service as a front-line worker. At times, I'm sure, regardless of how hard they work and how hard they try, there are many days they think it's probably a thankless job. I'm thankful and grateful that many of them keep coming back day after day and providing the essential services that we need so much. So when I come across a matter like I'm going to raise today, I want to raise it with both concern and respect for the job that our public service staff are certainly doing.

Over the years many of us have heard how the motor vehicle registry office is congested. I know the staffers are certainly doing the best that they can. I've been there even myself, sitting back and watching even the slightest conversation and hearing the tenseness and frustration that might be happening, but I've always watched and observed that the staff handle themselves very professionally. I certainly want to make sure that's noted for the record and they're given credit for that.

I thought personally, watching what the Department of Transportation did by putting a TV in the seating area was an excellent way to deal with possible frustration, and I thought that, watching most patrons there, they seemed to be preoccupied by watching cooking shows or fishing shows and they let the time go by unnoticed. The fact is, it still can't change the reality that most people are unable to wait more than 15 minutes because of breaks that they're getting away from the daily routine of their jobs or personal limitations. The suggestion was brought to me, why doesn't the GNWT look at adding a couple of kiosks that people can self-serve themselves through the motor vehicle registration process. This could also include other types of renewals. This is done in other provinces, so why couldn't it be done here?

Another suggestion, of course, was the motor vehicle registry hours are now, of course, as people are saying, better than bankers' hours, officially. A person can look no further than across the street and see that the TD Bank is now open on Saturdays. The question would be why? The fact is, they know that not everybody can make 9:00 to 4:00 and they're out there for customer service.

Another suggestion that came along in the same vein is what about moving to some of these things as on-line services? This has certainly been done in

Ontario, where the government is trying to make their public services as accessible as possible.

Finally, good credit needs to go out to the City of Yellowknife who has rolled out many of their customer service-based priorities to the citizens on line, which makes it very convenient.

During question period I will raise many of these issues and ask the Minister of Transportation if there is a way they can look into these matters and address some of these concerns.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
EVICTIONS AND PUBLIC HOUSING  
ARREARS IN NUNAKPUT

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I stated the housing situation in the Northwest Territories is at the boiling point. Today I have to restate that again.

People in Nunakput are extremely anxious over the eviction notices. The way that evictions are being handled is unacceptable. The situation is out of control. When people in the communities are evicted, where are they supposed to live? What are the social consequences of these evictions? We know the answers: overcrowding, family violence, and homelessness. The e-mails, letters, and phone calls I'm getting on this issue are heartbreaking.

We have never seen harder times in the communities or greater disparity between families. Many parents feel hopelessness and I'm deeply worried about them. This government cannot take such drastic measures without taking impact on people into account. It's extremely irresponsible. In Yellowknife and other major centres, families at least have somewhere to get help. In the remote communities, once you're evicted, the family has nowhere to go.

The inequalities between the communities are also getting worse. Solving our homelessness problem is supposed to be a major priority of this government, but instead we are kicking people out of their homes because they can't pay their arrears and have no means to because there's no work.

I've spoken about these arrears many times. I've urged the Minister to get the staff to review each and every one of these situations to reallocate the arrears. Many people do not actually owe as much as the Housing Corporation claims. This has happened because the system, and reporting the income, and calculating rent are cumbersome and simply not working.

Families in Nunakput are struggling. The cost of living is way too high and jobs are scarce. We cannot continue to kick people out of their homes in this way. It's not right. It's a government

responsibility to give a person a house, a roof over their head so they don't have anything to worry about and provide for their families.

I will have questions for the Minister at the appropriate time.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NWT HOUSING CORPORATION SHELTER REVIEW

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NWT Housing Corporation is currently in the middle of a review of its Shelter Policy. I commend this House for recognizing the importance of this review, and for ensuring that adequate funds for a thorough review were approved in our 2011-2012 budget. This review is important, both to MLAs and to our constituents, and approving those funds has allowed for a comprehensive review, not just a scratch of the surface.

I had an opportunity to provide input to the review earlier this summer and I spent considerable time with the interviewer itemizing my concerns. Mine are only a few of the concerns that are out there. The list is almost endless. For the record, here are mine.

First, there has to be a valid continuum of housing from homelessness to homeownership. We have gaps in the continuum right now, specifically in the area of transition housing and for supported independent living housing for disabled citizens. What little transition housing we do have is provided by non-government organizations and they struggle with their financing. Government, whether it be the Housing Corporation or another department of this government, must provide consistent and adequate funding to transition housing service providers.

Second, we need to revamp how we charge rent for public housing. Our goal in the provision of housing should be to make residents self-sufficient and independent. The current policies and rent scales do not encourage that.

Thirdly, Yellowknife non-government operations provide emergency shelter services here in the city, but their funding varies widely. It seems to depend on the department providing the funding and the circumstances specific to the NGO. There needs to be consistent, equitable, and fair funding for our NGO service providers, no matter which department of the government it comes from.

Fourth, there's a need for a cross-departmental, government-wide review of all policies that impact the provision of housing, the users of public housing, tenancy, and income support. We currently have policies in one part of the government which contravene or inhibit the

application of policies in another part of our government, and our residents suffer as a result. We need to review and revise to make policies enabling, not disabling.

Lastly, a review of the Residential Tenancy Act is needed in three specific areas: the powers of the rental officer, the lack of authority for transitional housing, and consideration must be given to limiting the amount of any annual rent increase.

The election looms large and housing is a particularly...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Ms. Bisaro, your time for your Member's statement has expired.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MS. BISARO:** The election looms large and housing is a particularly important issue for all of our constituents. I urge all NWT residents to take action during the campaign. When a candidate appears at your door, tell them of your housing concerns and ask them how they will deal with them if elected.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NORMAN WELLS NATURAL GAS SITUATION

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In extraordinary times we as the government need to do the extraordinary things to help our people in our communities. No matter how much we prepare for emergencies and training, there is nothing we can do for the unplanned events. However, we still continue to prepare.

The town of Norman Wells, which happens to sit on the largest oil discovery on our lands since the 1920s, had their gas line come close to being shut down, which meant our residents, all of the entire town, would have been completely cut off from their only source of energy. Basically lights out for the entire town.

This situation came close to reality because of two broken pipelines that just happened, and that's another Member's statement. This caused the Town of Norman Wells to declare a state of emergency. Now the real threat of having no gas at all, the town did an extraordinary thing: it brought in a machine to help out with the gas supplies. This was done because safety first for the people, safety for our elders, and basically their actions would seem reasonable, given the challenges before them. Very simple: you either have power or no power. We chose power to the people.

A lot of good, hardworking people are still working with us on a long-term solution to deal with the

shortage of natural gas. Basically the Town of Norman Wells, the Norman Wells oilfield is running dry. Imperial Oil needs natural gas for their own operations and cannot afford to supply the town anymore.

Mr. Speaker, the town requested financial assistance from our federal government and the Government of the Northwest Territories. To date I don't believe the feds have ever replied, and our government said no to the immediacy for financial assistance. They said they did not meet the criteria under the Extraordinary Funding Policy. The government said you're the provider, you pay. Besides, because of the healthy fiscal position with the reserve funds from the natural gas or you can recoup...

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

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

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, the town, like many of community governments, is being punished for their strict discipline and fiscal responsibility. So what's the message we are going to give our communities? Be prepared to pay? Not all communities are equal and yet our government is looked upon to help communities and help with the extraordinary, unplanned circumstances beyond anybody's control.

Mr. Speaker, while the Town of Norman Wells appreciates the immediate support by the GNWT department to examine long-term solutions to their shortage of the natural gas issue and an offer to cover for personnel to help with the current issue due to the broken lines in the pipeline, it falls short of their request to cover the larger bill to recover the cost of keeping the power on in the town of Norman Wells at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
CONGRATULATING THE GRADUATES  
OF THE DEH GAH ELEMENTARY AND  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to honour the graduating class of Deh Gah Elementary and Secondary School. It gives me great pleasure to announce the Fort Providence 2011 high school graduates. They are: Ms. Megan Antoine, who will be attending Vancouver Island University; Ms. Veronica Bouvier, who will be attending Dawson Creek College; Ms. Shiana Sabourin, who will be attending Camosun College in Victoria; Ms. Kristy Tanche, who will also be attending Camosun College in Victoria; and Mr.

Ben Vandell, who will be attending Vancouver Island University.

Mr. Speaker, I also congratulate the families and community for their contribution to the success of these students. We all know it takes hard work, commitment, and perseverance to finalize this first milestone in a youth's life. Youthfulness can bring many things such as distractions, both good and bad, and without family direction and community support, this can be a challenging task at times.

Ms. Veronica Bouvier knows this firsthand as an adult returning to school. Recognizing the value of a good education, she chose to return to school to complete her grade 12. This graduation is a testament to her commitment, and demonstrates to others the value of a high school diploma. When the task is shared between family, friends, and community, the goals achieved can be very rewarding, as proven by the achievements of these students.

Mr. Speaker, to the Deh Gah graduating class of 2011 I offer this: Celebrate this special day with pride and a sense of great achievement, knowing that many people share in your desire for a future filled with happiness and success.

Mr. Speaker, the community is holding the graduation ceremony today in the community hall and will be followed by a feast, a grand march, and a dance. It is with great regret that I won't be there on time to take part in the festivities, but certainly will be around to personally congratulate each graduate over this weekend. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to recognize Mr. Ted Blondin, who is the chairperson of the Tlicho Community Services Agency and who is here with us in the gallery. Welcome.

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

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize two constituents of the Great Slave riding: Andrew Wiley and Karen Wiley. Welcome to the gallery.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to mark this occasion by recognizing Ms. Emma

Ouellette, who is paging in this Assembly while we're in our final sitting. To make special note, she is the daughter of Darrin Ouellette, who once was a table officer who now works for the Assembly as the director of corporate services. Welcome.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Welcome everyone in the gallery today. I hope you're enjoying the proceedings.

Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

### Oral Questions

QUESTION 157-16(6):

#### SUPPORT AND FUNDING FOR HAY RIVER VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As indicated in my Member's statement, I have questions for the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs.

I'm sure the Minister is aware that we have a full-time fire chief in Hay River right now and part of his mandate is to perform some of the duties that would normally be performed from the office of the fire marshal. So when there were inspections or work required in Hay River, it would require the fire marshal to travel from Fort Smith to do that work, and so the government is obviously saving some money there. I'd like to know if that correlates to a contribution of any kind to the Town of Hay River for the support of this full-time position undertaking these duties.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The funding allocation is to the communities and the communities will decide how to allocate that funding and how to budget for them, and if they feel that they have the adequate funding to budget for a fire chief, which in this case they did, they bring on a full-time fire chief, and I commend them for that. But as far as correlating to extra funding to the community from our department, we have pretty well a set figure. I can advise the Member, though, that we are working on a review of O and M funding for the communities and we're hoping to have that work done, working with LGANT and NWTAC to see if there are many changes, if any have to be made, to the way we fund communities. Thank you.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** I would like to ask the Minister if there are any precedents in the Northwest Territories for communities that would find themselves in the same situation as Hay River where they would have a full-time fire chief on the municipal staff, if there is any specific funding

earmarked to support that position in view of the tasks that person can take on that relieve pressure on the fire marshal's office. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, we have a few communities that have full-time fire chiefs and they're paid for by the municipality. Again, as far as them taking up some of the duties or doing some of the work that would normally be done by the assistant fire marshal, once we do the review of the O and M if we find that there's some merit to that, then I'm sure it's a situation that the department will have a look at. Thank you.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Mr. Speaker, if the Town of Hay River could quantify a certain amount of work of that nature that is being done and were to submit a proposal to MACA for an offsetting contribution to support this position in Hay River, is that something that Municipal and Community Affairs could support? I'm just thinking it would be more information if there were an actual detailing of that type of work that's being done that would normally fall under the mandate of a territorial government employee. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I'm sure all the communities come forward and make their case to MACA on the amount of funding that they receive, and if the communities make a good enough argument for funding for a position such as the one the Member is speaking of, I'm sure the department will be more than happy to have a look at it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Your final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to ask the Minister if he sees this as a good model. We see this in other areas such as economic development where a municipality or a community will hire an economic development officer and it will be funded by the territorial government to work... There will be a contribution from the municipality and a contribution from the territorial government for a position like that. I see this position of a full-time fire chief as similar in the sense that this is work, a lot of the work that could fall within the mandate of a territorial government employee. So I see it as a cooperative and joint effort with communities. I think it deserves special recognition in that way as a special category of funding and I'd like to thank the Minister for considering a proposal of that nature. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Again, communities that do their budget, they will budget if they want to bring on a full-time fire chief or whatever other staff they want to hire in the community. As I assured the Member, we are always working with communities, LGANT, and NWTAC just to see how we can improve services that we provide to the community. Again, the whole O and M funding process will be

reviewed to see, working with all these different groups, if any changes need to be made. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 158-16(6):

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT POLICY

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions follow up on my Member's statement and are directed to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. I'm sure the Minister is aware of the critical importance of early childhood development and I want to explore how this has been recognized in the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative review.

The early childhood development research I've cited comes from a presentation to the Canadian Council of Ministers of Education by world renowned early childhood expert Dr. Fraser Mustard. I've recommended Dr. Mustard's work and even his participation in the ECB initiative to the Minister.

Mr. Speaker, how has the Minister assured recommendations in the ASAI report reach all the way down to consider prenatal and preschool measures? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. This particular area is of great interest and also a priority of this government. Early childhood development and childcare has always been a priority of this government. We all know that learning starts at early ages. Part of the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative, the first priority is the early childhood development and childcare.

We've heard over and over from the regional forums, the people of the North, the educators, the parents, that this needs to be at the forefront, the first priority. We have initiated that. This will be part of the document I will be tabling in the House today, later today. It will specifically highlight what we've heard, what the priorities are, the implementation stages for the next government to proceed. Mahsi.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I'm very pleased to hear those comments from the Minister. The scientific information is obviously too powerful to ignore here. If foresters growing trees had similar information, for example, they wouldn't wait until seedlings are five years old to get the best yields. They'd pour on the fertilizer the moment the seed is planted and we must do the same with our most precious resources.

Given the Aboriginal Student Initiative work will be incomplete without full inclusion of early childhood

development considerations, and yet the ECE review is ongoing, how will the Minister ensure that results of the early childhood development review, which will be completed next Assembly, will be immediately incorporated into the Aboriginal Achievement Initiative work? Mahsi.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** We take the same example as the fertilizer on the early seedling. We've heard in communities that even focussing on those babies that are not born yet, they talk about that and how the parents and the grandparents should be talking to their unborn child because that's the most important step. I believe in that as well. We need to spread the news. We need to start initiating our discussion, talking to our children, even though they're not born as of yet. At the same time even little ones.

Mr. Speaker, this particular Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative is a working document. Any document that we produce, there are always changes that reflect on what we've missed out from our previous forum discussions. You know, we may have not captured everything that we wanted. That's the purpose why we are here today in this House and question period. Sometimes we miss out on things, and we can certainly capture that as we move forward.

So this particular area of early childhood development is of importance for this government and will continue to pressure them as we move forward into the next government. Mahsi.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Again, I appreciate the Minister's remarks. I referred earlier today to the scientific information on how the building blocks of language development are laid even before birth and are best developed before the age of three. This government devotes a lot of energy to preserving and promoting Aboriginal language, and rightly so. The science shows our best prospect of success isn't in the formal school system. They begin when the child is still in the womb.

Again, how do recommendations in the Aboriginal Student Achievement report reflect these understandings? In other words, what actions? Can the Minister give some examples of what actions are proposed to support parents in their home and community during prenatal and initial years of their children's lives? Mahsi.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Most of the discussions we've heard at the regional forums are specific to that area of dealing with the ongoing child and even the two and three year olds, focussing on them because they have to start early. That is planted into the document that is going to be tabled. It does highlight the importance of starting early and having parents and educators involved and also the leaders. This is a shared responsibility. We have to do it together. Even the grandparents are involved. So, Mr. Speaker, I will be tabling the

document that will highlight all the specific key points that we've heard, particularly early childhood development. This is an important document that will be tabled in this House. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 159-16(6):  
HOUSING CORPORATION  
EVICTIONS AND ARREARS

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of the Housing Corporation with regard to my Member's statement and looking at alternatives and options to work with tenants that are finding themselves in situations of either being evicted or having arrears and finding ways. As the Minister should know, in most of our communities we have 45 percent unemployment. There are very few jobs to go around. I think as a department you should consider looking at what you can do to help these individuals work off their arrears by either simply cleaning, painting, or in some cases, like I mentioned in Tsiigetchic where they demolished housing units which were going to be demolished anyway, and allow those individuals to take on some training and give them some opportunity to get some work experience, but more importantly, pay down their arrears with 50 percent of the income that they arrive at.

Has the department looked inwards of the Housing Corporation and the housing authorities of how they can work along with their tenants to pay down those arrears? Thank you.

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

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Housing is always looking everywhere to see how we can help those folks pay down their arrears. Part of it was allowing people to get into a repayment plan where they pay X amount of dollars. In some cases, one case in particular, a lady paid for five or six years until she managed to pay it all. It was very small amounts she paid each month. But the Member has a point, though, and it was an innovative solution that was reached in Tsiigetchic. That's one thing we try to encourage our department and all our folks out in the front line to try to come up with innovative ways that we can work with these residents to give them an opportunity to pay down on their arrears. We are always open to suggestions and open to new ideas.

This is one that we just actually had a fairly brief discussion at the beginning of the week with senior management over at the Housing Corp. So this is one that we would consider. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** As we know, we have aging housing stocks in the Northwest Territories. A lot of it does need upkeep, and that's where I'm trying to focus my question on. Those units need some improvements such as painting and the possibility of doing minor renovations and also replacement of, say, electrical fixtures. I'd like to ask the Minister if he could get his department to look at what is on the business plans for capital investment in those different communities and see if some of those investments could be used for the tenants in those units to maybe do some of that work and work off their arrears by simply painting their units so you don't have to bring a contractor in from outside the community. Those dollars will stay in the community and will help those individuals to pay down their arrears.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** We look for every opportunity that we can work with the communities. I know of a few communities where the local LHO will do a lot of their own maintenance and improvement work over the summer. In some cases they'll bring as many as 17 people on board to do the summer work. They also hire a lot of students to work at the LHOs for the summer.

As far as the employment goes, we have to be very careful that these folks, that if they do enter into some kind of agreement with them, we have to be sure that they qualify or are able to do a fairly good job, because we don't want anyone just going into a unit and just slopping paint all over the place and thinking that's acceptable, which it really isn't. We have to be sure all the work is done according to the standards that the local housing authorities have.

**MR. KRUTKO:** It's not a simple question of cash switching hands. Sweat equity is a way that people do work things off, and I know in the past, people did trade, barter, and did whatever they had to do to help the other person out. I think that should still originate in this government. I think we have to be conscious that people do have talents in our communities, and if you can make use of those talents and tell them you can work it off, I think that's all I'm asking for.

I'd like to ask the Minister to take this into serious consideration. Since you look at the arrears that are out there, I think it's going to take many, many years to pay down the arrears simply at \$30 a month or whatever. I think you have to find a way of working with them to pay them down sooner and get these people back into housing.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I'm very well aware of the talents that we have in the small communities, having seen it first hand and knowing that they're quite capable if you give them an opportunity of performing the work. The training that a lot of these folks have gotten over the past number of years working casual for the local housing authority



during the summer is something that's allowed them to continue to work.

I take the Member's point, and I can assure the Member that as a corporation we'll continue to try to work any way we can with the tenants to find ways that they can possibly work off their arrears and that. It's a decision that's made by the LHO but with some direction from headquarters. I can assure the Member that I will have discussion with staff and we'll see if there are ways that we can find solutions to help those in the communities.

The Member is absolutely correct; arrears in some communities are quite high and it would take a long time to pay them down. We'll do what we can as a corporation to see how we can alleviate some of that pressure.

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

QUESTION 160-16(6):  
EMERGENCY PROTECTION ORDERS  
(EPO) PROCESS

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask some questions today to the Minister of Justice and at the outset I'd like to thank the Minister for the information he recently provided to Members about emergency protection orders, or EPOs. It's very helpful information.

Earlier this week we heard a concern raised by a constituent of Yellowknife Centre around a recently issued EPO, and there have been other similar concerns about EPOs in the last year. It would suggest to me that there are some flaws in the EPO process and that some adjustments are necessary. In light of these incidents, I would like to ask the Minister whether or not the department is considering a review of the EPO process, from the application for the EPO to the EPO hearing and beyond.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the EPO, the process, and also the issues that we've been dealing with over the years, we have managed to do an overall review of the EPO process, the guidelines and so forth. At this point it is within my office to review. The recommendations are brought forward. I will be reviewing the recommendations brought forward.

Yes, the review has been done and the recommendations will be coming down to possibly make those changes that will reflect what's been happening on the outset.

**MS. BISARO:** It's interesting to note that there are two reviews relative to the Protection Against Family Violence Act which were posted recently on the Justice department website. I think it was on Monday. The one the Minister refers to, I think, is called an Analysis of Emergency Protection Order Hearings in the NWT and it's dated October 2010. In the summary of findings in that report it says: "The EPO legislation is well conceptualized and well written, but may need some modification to deal with special circumstances." The Minister says he's considering this report. I'd like to know whether or not since this evaluation was received, if the department is considering making modifications to the legislation governing emergency protection orders.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** There is a process that we need to follow. I haven't looked at those recommendations as of yet but I will be reviewing them. When it comes to making those changes, we have to consider all options as we move forward.

**MS. BISARO:** I appreciate that all options will be considered. I guess it's a matter of when we can expect something to come back, when the report will be evaluated. We're getting on to almost a year since it was received.

Another quote from the summary findings is: "Any difficulties with the EPO hearing appear to be in its application, not its design." It goes to the heart, I think, of the matter of some of the difficulties that have occurred in the last while. I'd like to know if the department will consider, when it does its review, the application process and the specific finding from this report.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Part of the recommendations brought to our attention was that matter from my departmental briefing. I will be going through the recommendations and possibly making those changes as we move forward. They are recommendations brought to our attention and we are currently reviewing it. This matter will be before the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly as well as the new government, so we'll do what we can as the department of the day.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister. I'm really glad to hear that the department is actively looking at this report and is actively considering making some changes. I think that there are some necessary. The report presumably was received late last year. It's dated October 2010. I'd like to ask the Minister, if this is going to the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly, when we might expect to see some recommendations for change from this report.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** As I stated, the recommendations are before me now and it will be

part of as we move into the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly government. We're at the tail end of our 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly. There are only a few more days here. I will be reviewing it, and if we need to make those changes, we'll definitely work on that.

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

QUESTION 161-16(6):

STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment getting back to my Member's statement where I talked about a 31-year-old mother of four children, aged six to 14, who is having her living allowance for SFA cut back from \$1,550 a month to \$1,040 a month. She also has been informed by the SFA caseworker that she is only eligible for another year. She is going to hit the \$60,000 cap. The reason she's going to hit this \$60,000 cap is because she has four kids and she's getting a living allowance which is just over twice what a single student would get. It amounts to a discriminatory practice by the department and SFA when it works against somebody for having children. I'd like to ask the Minister if this, in fact, is a reality and how we're going to fix that.

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

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. We are aware of the situation and the only way we can review and make some possible changes is through the review of SFA that will currently be underway in September of this year, and completion we're hoping for next year.

This individual is into her second year, and the following year will be third year. We're aware of the situation and we want to do what we can to support all students in the Northwest Territories.

The cap is there -- \$60,000 -- and the policy states that, and it's fair to all the students across the board as well. We are aware, again, and SFA is currently under review, so the changes will definitely be coming. It will be the voices of the students, because we are reaching out to the students, and that particular student will have a voice in the system as well.

**MR. RAMSAY:** During the review period, which the Minister says might take up until next fall, I'm just wondering if the government is going to have any provision that would see students in the situation that I outlined earlier that would protect students from undue hardship. Especially those with, you know, I said four children, so that they aren't faced with hardships and they're not getting their living allowance reduced while the department and the government is out there reviewing SFA. I think we

should put some provisions in place that can maintain living allowances until the review is done so that students aren't faced with those types of hardships.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** The Department of Education, Culture and Employment works with all students. I know some students are struggling with their daily living allowance. That's the very reason we are reviewing the SFA program. The current policy exists today that we have to follow. We cannot break the policy as it stands. We can amend that policy.

As we conduct the overall review and see the results of the recommendations in due time, we can make those changes. In the current time we'll continue to work with the student and other students, as well, where they can access other potential funding that may be available to them.

**MR. RAMSAY:** I thank the Minister for that. I know the Minister; his intentions are good and I know his office is trying to work out a solution for this student that I'm talking about, this mother of four who is encountering problems. The Minister talked about the review and I just want to get some assurance from the Minister and the government that the SFA review that's going to be started this fall is going to be finished in time for next calendar school year so that we're not going to affect the next two school years. If it doesn't come in until October next year, the students that are in the situations like this are going to be impacted not only this year but next year. Can we get some assurances from the Minister that the review of SFA will be done in time for next school year, which would be next fall?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** The only assurance I can give is that's our goal as a department, to complete the overall review by early next year; for next school year, if that's possible. That is our goal. I cannot guarantee that it will be done before next school year, but our department will do what it can to reach out to the students, the parents, the public, to hear their perspective. In order to make those changes, we want to reflect on all the needs that will be addressed. Definitely that's our goal.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hear what the Minister is saying. Again, there aren't any guarantees here. I appreciate the fact that they want to talk to students. They want to talk to anybody that's interested in SFA, including Regular Members of this House I think should be heavily consulted on that. In the dealings we have with our constituents, I think we can't leave any students out of this equation. While we're studying this, we can't afford to let it drag on. I think we need to get some assurances from the government that we are going to take a set amount of time and get the review done so that it's not going to have a negative

impact on students that are out there awaiting this review to be conducted. I think the Minister said there was a bit of a commitment there, but he wouldn't quite commit. I think we need a firm commitment that the work will get done by early next year so that it won't impact the following school year.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** All I can say at this point is the work will get done next year. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 162-16(6):  
GIANT MINE REMEDIATION AND  
REALIGNMENT OF INGRAHAM TRAIL

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for Transportation. They are in follow up to my Member's statement from earlier today where I talked about the rerouting of the Ingraham Trail through the Giant Mine site.

I understand that there is a public consultation process going on right now that is expected to be done in August, where they're hopefully going to decide on some routing, and hopefully going to decide on a timeline for the completion of this project. I was wondering if the Minister could give me a bit of an update on the results of that public consultation. Do we know a route, has a route been finalized, and what kind of timeline are we working on for the completion of this project? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. About three questions there. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you. I appreciate the recognition of all the questions he threw in that quick question.

Mr. Speaker, we have been working on the realignment of the Giant Mine road. We've been working with the Giant Mine Remediation Team over the last while. We want to ensure that whatever option is selected meets their requirements for remediation. We've also been talking to various stakeholders, such as the City of Yellowknife, the YK Dene, and we've also requested public input on the three options that we put out for consideration. We intend, as the Member indicated, to take one more round of consultations -- that's going on, I think, right now -- and have some results before the end of August, after which a final decision will be made on which route will be taken.

Not to answer the second question but just to give some information, right now the information that we have indicates that there is a preference to relocate the road completely away from the mine site, so

one of the options that does that will be considered. Thank you.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** I'd like to thank the Minister for that response, and thanks for a little bit of clarification as to where the routing might be. The route that's the right-of-way from the mine is route one. Does that mean that route one is the route that will likely be selected?

For the record, I like route one. I think route one is great because it opens up some more land for city development and public usage, so that's good. I'll stop with that one question instead of throwing three at him, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** First of all, we haven't decided on a final route but I think that most people agree that route one is probably the option that meets most of the needs. It reallocates the road away from the mine site, it opens up new land, and it would provide, of course, for a completely realigned highway. That is, right now, probably a favourite. Thank you.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Regardless of which route is selected, do we have a bit of a timeline? The Minister did indicate that he hopes the public consultation will be done by August, but when do we expect, regardless of the route, that the construction will start, and when do we expect to see some completion so that we're not having our heavy loads going up to the diamond mines over the arsenic chambers themselves? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Right now the plan is to have all information gathered by the end of August, the final decision on realignment by the month of September, and start the engineering in the same month of September and into October. We want to have our tenders out for construction sometime in October/November and we'd like to have the construction start this year, the site preparation, and the stockpiling of gravel and crushing and work on the embankment next year. We'd like to have the road opened to the travelling public by the summer of 2012 and final servicing of the road by 2013. Thank you.

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

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks for that update. We look forward to driving on the road in 2012 and 2013.

I guess my last question is about financing. This is part of the Giant Mine reclamation, so who is ultimately responsible for the cost of this road? Will it be the GNWT or can we expect the feds to kick in the bulk of the cost of realigning this road to avoid the arsenic chambers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Of course, the final costs will be dependent on the option that we choose, and the price could be fairly expensive.

However, we expect that the funding will be obtained from the GNWT's Giant Mine Environmental Liability Fund that was previously established, and that's probably where we're going to draw the money from. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 163-16(6):  
EXTENDED SERVICE OPTIONS FOR THE  
MOTOR VEHICLE OFFICE

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask questions directed to the Minister of Transportation. In my Member's statement today, Mr. Speaker, I talked about better customer service approach on the issuing of things like licence plate stickers, driver's abstracts, and that's really what I'm after here, is maybe moving government business forward with an eye to servicing the public a little better.

I want to put on the record, of course, that this is in no way a criticism of the public service of who's providing this service. It's just the way it seems to work in this type of area.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario uses kiosks to serve their clients and customers better, to provide driver abstracts, licence plate stickers, and other types of ID. Would the Minister of Transportation be willing to look into that type of aspect to help the flow of the waiting clientele to get these services? Would he be willing to look into this issue and see if it can be addressed and considered going forward? Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to hear that the Member is not criticizing me for a change.

---Laughter

The Yellowknife driver and vehicle licensing office handles about 60 percent of all transactions that are required in the Northwest Territories. Over the last while we've done a lot of work in redesigning the office adding additional hardware. We've reviewed and improved the process. We've tried to get a setting that's more comfortable for our clients and more privacy.

I think that has gone a long way in the last two years to reduce the waiting times to around 21 minutes with a processing time on average of about seven minutes. Most people can go in and out of the office and obtain their documents in less than a half an hour. With the Member suggesting we should have a kiosk like we have here at the airport in Yellowknife, we will certainly consider installing

something of that nature in the road licensing office. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** I'm kind of glad we're not hurting the Minister's feelings there as he made a special note here. It's good to see that he's sensitive and actually cares about particular issues, for a change at least.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario is leading the way on a number of initiatives of improving services and always with a keen eye to ensure that the services are marked in a way that provides the best quality response times and actions for the constituents, which would be the Ontario people. Mr. Speaker, I would hope the Northwest Territories government has the same type of attitude. The Ontario government has added on-line services, as well as I mentioned self-serve through a kiosk. They've even switched their vehicle registrations and give people the option of having a two-year registration so they don't have to go every year. This is all built around the flow of customer service.

The last thing I want to add is the fact that the hours of operation are a constant concern of many of the constituents. As I pointed out, DMV hours are now better than banker hours, quite clearly, because they open at 9:00 and close at 4:00. Mr. Speaker, some of these concerns are all packed into one issue, which is better customer service. Does the Minister show an interest in some sensitivity to this particular problem, and would he be willing to see if they could investigate and evaluate some of the suggestions I've provided here today in a light to provide better service to our people?

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** As usual, we are ahead of the Member.

---Laughter

We've already investigated what other jurisdictions are doing. The issues and suggestions he raises are very good ones, of course. It's something we are considering. We need to do a number of things prior to accepting anything new. We need to overhaul our motor vehicle information system that is currently being used for issuing services. It doesn't allow us to reconcile and line up with anything like the nature of a kiosk or even hooking up on line. So we anticipate that's going to be done in the next while. We'd like to have a new system or an expanded system on stream and in place in the next couple of years. Of course, that's going to be dependent on the amount of capital investment we will be able to obtain, but that is our intent.

**MR. HAWKINS:** I have to admit that the Department of Transportation or even this Minister is ahead in some of his ideas. I won't take that as a criticism. I will say that's very unusual and welcome to hear that.

---Laughter

Mr. Speaker, one of the big comments -- and I'll give the credit to the Department of Transportation - - was to put a TV in there to keep people occupied while they are waiting for service. One of the observations being made is it takes too long to go through, because the average everyday person doesn't have 15 minutes to run in, because it's not 15 minutes. It turns into almost an hour. I think the Minister himself has had a lengthy and prolonged experience renewing either his own vehicle registration or licence. So he will be able to understand this problem, I hope, from the eye of trying to get in and out for service.

Mr. Speaker, what is the mandate of the department to set a reasonable target time for an in-and-out service delivered by a public service for clients who need to get these updates? What is the mandate of that and what are we targeting?

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** As indicated, we reduced the waiting times by approximately 50 percent, so the average now is 21 minutes of waiting. It takes about seven minutes to process the documents. So it's less than half an hour. We are happy with that. We think if we have electronic support through a kiosk or other means on line, that will improve. That's where we're working towards.

The Member is right; I've personally gone through the system. I think it took me 15 minutes to go through the system. I also checked with a couple of our staff that indicated -- they went through yesterday -- they waited five minutes. So it depends. I think there are peak periods such as Fridays and times in the year that there's a high purchase of vehicles or renewals where there may be some congestion, but overall the service is pretty good. However, we'd like to improve the service here and across the Territories. In the Territories, we continue to move mobile systems, and that's proven very successful also. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the attitude the Minister is carrying here today to ensure that customer service is kept at a high standard, and his approach is to move the issues forward so we can provide better quality service.

Mr. Speaker, the last question is built around timing, which is when can the public see any type of movement forward on this particular issue, as well as where can the everyday citizen provide some input on new suggestions and on these concepts? The Minister says a 21-minute waiting time in the room and I think he said a nine-minute waiting time with the actual customers/clients. That's still half an hour. Where can citizens provide some input on what they feel is a reasonable amount of time -- because they have coffee breaks and they've got to

be in and out -- and that type of information? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, we have issuing offices in a number of our communities. We have a mobile issuing office. We have an office here in Yellowknife. They can contact any of those. They can contact our staff. They can go on the website or they can contact my office. We'd be happy to hear any concerns that members of the public at large may have. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 164-16(6):  
FUNDING FOR EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT  
IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I talked about the Education, Culture and Employment programs for small communities, the Employment Support Program. I have questions for the Minister of ECE on that Member's statement.

Can the Minister tell me if the Small Community Employment Support Program -- I think there are three programs tied together -- has been rolled out to the communities yet? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. There was funding allocated for up to \$925,000 for 2011-2012 under the Small Community Employment Support Program, which is specifically for small communities that can access this funding. It is out there for the communities to access. The program has been very successful in the past year. We've had in 2010, \$350,000 which has been increased by the recommendations of the committee.

Mr. Speaker, this is an excellent program that community organizations can access as well.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell me if there are actual increases and individuals hired in the small communities as a result of this program? Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** I don't have the actual stats per community, but I can certainly look up the Member's riding to see if there's been any increase from last year to this year due to the funding increase. I can provide that information to the Member and also other Members if they are interested in the information. Mahsi.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Can the Minister tell me if this government is ensuring that the Employment Support Program is being delivered at the community level? Not regional level or YK, but

actually delivered at the community level. Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** That is the overall plan, to have the funding allocated to the communities. That's been specified. As of July 2011 there's been a commitment of just over \$521,818 transferred to five regions and on to the communities. So it is a commitment of this government to allocate the funding to the communities so the community organizations can access the funding. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell me why the client service officers that are already located in the small communities don't deliver the program as opposed to using the career development officers, which are mainly in the larger communities? They are in some small communities, but mainly in the larger communities. I just want to know why the client service officers would not be able to deliver this program. Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** The client service officers deliver different roles and responsibilities in communities; more specifically on a subsidy program, client service officers, income security programs, benefits and services into the communities, comprehensive integrated services on individual clients.

The career development officers basically focus on careers, building a positive and effective relationship with key partners, coordinating career development opportunities. Those are some of the key differences between those two roles. Mr. Speaker, we do have a career development officer from the region that visits the two communities in the Member's riding and we will continue to improve in those areas. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 165-16(6):  
HOUSING ISSUES AND EVICTIONS  
IN NUNAKPUT

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My Member's statement today was about housing conditions in the Northwest Territories, especially the community of Paulatuk. What are the plans for dealing with families who are evicted and at risk of eviction in Nunakput communities? What can the Minister tell me that we can tell these people, where they have nowhere to go?

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

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've been working hard with the

residents of the Paulatuk Housing Authority to try to keep them in their units. There are a few examples of tenancies that began five years ago where arrears started accumulating almost immediately. Twenty letters were sent out. Agreements to pay were signed in 2009 that were never honoured. Of 39 that were signed, only one has been honoured. So we've been working hard with the community of Paulatuk to try to keep them in their units. In a lot of cases they don't communicate with the LHO, and that's part of the problem. Thank you.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Will the Minister make sure that housing authorities review the situation, and for each and every family who are in arrears to recalculate to reflect the reality on the charge? Is it the LHO's job to go and do home visits as well?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** We have done a lot of reassessments all across the Northwest Territories. I think there's still one community that we have to work on. But I can assure the Member that a lot of the arrears that were accumulated during the transfer have now been adjusted and there's been quite an adjustment.

Again, this is causing the LHO, it's affecting their ability to do their job, too, or pay their bills without collecting any kind of revenue. A perfect example is a recent \$660,000 bill that they had with the Hamlet of Paulatuk that they had difficulty paying because they just weren't generating any type of revenues. So it affects the operations all around.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Will the Minister ensure that the families get help in reaching their agreements, and deal with the actual arrears, and direct staff to help the people, the taxpayers and the people that they're serving and stuff? That's who they work for, as well, as part of this government.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** That's a very good point, because the taxpayers like to see that their tax dollars are well spent. They are trying to provide a service to a lot of people in low-income housing and we need those people to work with us, otherwise it's never going to work, and this is one of those cases.

We need to find a solution for this. As badly as it's gotten, maybe part of it is because the LHO did not condition them early enough in the life of the Paulatuk Housing Authority to have to pay rent. If you look at some of our better performing communities, we have communities where they're collecting 100 percent of assessed rent, and we have communities at 99 percent. We have no trouble from those communities because they were conditioned early on that housing is a benefit and is something they should be proud of and pay the rent, and a lot of these communities have bought into that. I'd love to name these communities just to make everybody else aware of the good work that's being done in the communities. The smaller

communities are some of the ones that are our best performing LHOs. Thank you.

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

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to hear that we've been through this -- myself and you, Mr. Minister -- in regard to this issue in regard to the payback for the community. I know there are some good, outstanding communities that aren't paying their rent, but most of those communities are doing good jobs.

We're talking about a community of probably about 300 people, 276 people. Minimal jobs -- government -- that's the only thing they're relying on. Can the Minister turn over the funding and responsibility to the local hamlet so they can run it?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** It's not a question of how many jobs are in the community, but in some of the communities where people are working, they're paying their fair share of rent and that's understandable. But if you look at how the Housing Corporation operates, adjustments are made. If you're not employed, you pay \$32 a month. If it costs \$2,000 a month to maintain the unit, the other \$1,968 is subsidized by taxpayers in the NWT. We have 67 percent of 2,400 public housing clients in the Northwest Territories paying \$32 or less; we have 798 clients across the Northwest Territories paying zero. So we work with the communities, and if they're employed, they pay according to the money they make. If they're unemployed, then rent is adjusted.

I did commit to the Member yesterday that we'd be more than willing to sit down with the community to see if they are serious about taking over the provision of housing, and make them well aware of all the challenges that they will be faced having to collect arrears from their own citizens. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 166-16(6):  
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR  
TOWN OF NORMAN WELLS  
IN NATURAL GAS EMERGENCY

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the unedited Hansard of August 18<sup>th</sup>, yesterday, page 36, between Mr. Roland, Premier, and Ms. Bisaro, in one paragraph Mr. Premier made reference to the Norman Wells natural gas situation. I often say that we shouldn't make the people of Norman Wells go back to their coffers or the taxpayers to pay for the natural gas situation within that community. But the policy applies and he had to look at it.

So I want to ask Mr. Premier in regard to the policy that he's referring to, and if there's any type of discussions that could be looked at within the life of this government that would cause this government

to reconsider the request from the Town of Norman Wells for financial assistance.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue of Norman Wells, one, the gas supply has seized our attention. In fact, a number of departments -- Municipal and Community Affairs, Public Works and Services, and our Power Corporation -- are working with the community to deal with the issue that we were all notified that the gas supply would be coming to an end in two years.

The additional pressure that mounted in the spring was the issue of the pipeline, and thereby a reduction in natural gas supply. The community has done their work. They approached us, through the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, to offset their expenditures through our Extraordinary Funding Policy, as they declared a state of emergency. As we looked at the policy as it is, that did not qualify, it did not fit our programming. We have since worked with the community to try to come up with another solution. But ultimately, as Minister Robert C. McLeod has responded to the community, that they had to use their own resources first and then we would have to then look at it overall. So that is the policy in place.

I'm not aware of any additional work going on with that policy at this time. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I want to state publicly that the Premier, along with some of the Ministers, did come into Norman Wells and talk to the town. So I want to say, on behalf of the town, I appreciate the Ministers who were there to discuss this important issue.

Getting back to the policy of the extraordinary funding, under the principles my point is that the community under the principles under subsection 3, community governments should not be penalized for practicing sound financial management, nor should they be rewarded for poor financial management.

I take the point that the Town of Norman Wells through good, sound financial practices are being penalized, because in there states that the town is in a healthy financial position, but it also causes them concerns to their programs and services that they want to run because now they are expecting to pay for unplanned circumstances that are beyond their control. The government, I ask them again if they would consider looking at this request or working with the town to ask the federal government what type of support is there for them.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** We have -- and I must say the Member has been consistent on that -- raised the issue, invited us to meet with the community leadership. We've done that on a couple of occasions. We've come up with an approach to

help the community looking at the actual conversion that has to happen as gas supplies run out. I believe the target for residential customers is 2014. We've started working on that. We as departments have started conversion of our own assets to ensure that we reduce the demand for natural gas to try to extend that gas season, I guess we can call it.

The ongoing work, and I know the community has recently made a decision to look at our offer of this project management process of conversions. The existing situation that the community found itself in, declared this emergency, again didn't fit the criteria both for ourselves and the federal government. We're trying to find a way of addressing that as we go forward, because there's a number of communities that find themselves in a similar situation. I think the Norman Wells situation can be compared in some degree to what the Northland Trailer Court faces.

The community itself is a utility provider, for example, to Norman Wells, and that's somewhat different. That is one of the issues that the community faces. I understand the community council is looking at removing itself as a utility provider. That will have to open. We're hoping that we'll be able to come up with something. Clearly, it doesn't fit under the existing policies. Future governments will have to look at that policy and approach the federal government.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The time for question period has expired. I will allow the Member a short supplementary question. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It seems like the answer could be very simple, yet it's so complex. I ask this government to take this situation in Norman Wells under consideration for the 17<sup>th</sup> to have some discussion under the Extraordinary Funding Policy.

It's nobody's fault. The pipeline broke. The town was left with a situation where they had to bring in a machine that would keep the power and lights on in Norman Wells. The town has also asked to pay for your own power bill and go through that to the customers. The government is doing what they can for a long-term solution. The immediate solution now is that somebody has to pay the \$700,000 bill and it's going to be up to the town because of their sound fiscal discipline and responsibility of doing good management. Can the Premier bring this forward to this Cabinet to look for solutions in the 17<sup>th</sup>?

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** I believe that the situation as we find ourselves in Norman Wells also is being felt in another community supplied by natural gas, Inuvik. There the utility provider is looking at their options and approaching the federal government.

We know that throughout the territory we have to come up with a process that works.

This is such a large issue that in fact at the Western Premiers' Conference that we held here in the Northwest Territories the idea of disasters and disaster mitigation was discussed and then brought to the larger table at the Council of Federation to address this, and we're hoping that through that work we work with the federal government to look at preparation and dealing with matters before they become an emergency. So there is an avenue there. It is at the larger tables, as I mentioned. Hopefully the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly will be able to continue on with that type of work and looking at disaster mitigation and the efforts of prevention as well.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I do appreciate the Premier's continued support for this issue to be resolved in a satisfactory manner. Would the Premier at his next opportunity in his discussions with the federal government look at options as to how the federal government can see its way to support the Town of Norman Wells since they are one-third ownership of the Norman Wells oilfield? Certainly in this day and age they can see some relief to the town to support their bill in terms of helping out in this situation. Can the Premier make a commitment to that?

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** We have limited opportunity left in the life of our Assembly to make approaches to the federal government. As I stated, this is of national significance and importance when you look at what happened to the natural disasters that did occur in Alberta and the prairie provinces for the flooding, and other disaster areas in Ontario, for example. The idea of dealing with the issues before they become disasters is being discussed and will continue to be discussed. There seems to be some favourable language coming from the federal government.

Specific to our communities, we will have a challenge. Thankfully, as the Member pointed out, the financial health of the community was well and they were able to deal with the initial costs of that. We as the GNWT will continue to have to look at how we deal with those emerging situations that face our communities. Ultimately we know we have to support our communities at one level or another, and our approaches to the federal government are one of those ways and we'll continue to try to do that as much as possible.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.



### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 57-16(6):  
ABORIGINAL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT  
EDUCATION PLAN, AUGUST 2011

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled Aboriginal Student Achievement Education Plan, August 2011.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 58-16(6):  
FORGING THE FUTURE, ANCHORED IN THE  
PAST, BUILDING ON OUR PRESENT,  
YOUTH CONFERENCE REPORT, JULY 7-8, 2011

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled Forging the Future, Anchored in Our Past, Building on Our Present, Youth Conference Report, July 7 to 8, 2011.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 59-16(6):  
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE  
REPORT 2-16(6), REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF  
THE AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT ON THE  
NWT HEALTH PROGRAMS AND SERVICES 2011

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 2-16(6), Report on the Review of the Auditor General's Report on the NWT Health Programs and Services 2011.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

### First Reading of Bills

BILL 22:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE  
TERRITORIAL COURT ACT

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Bill 22, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act, be read for the first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 22, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act, has had first reading.

---Carried

The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

BILL 23:  
TOBACCO DAMAGES AND HEALTH CARE  
COSTS RECOVERY ACT

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 23, Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act, be read for the first time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 23, Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act, has had first reading.

---Carried

Item 19, second reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to proceed with the second reading of Bill 22, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act.

---Consent granted

**MR. SPEAKER:** You may proceed with second reading, Mr. Lafferty.

### Second Reading of Bills

BILL 22:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE  
TERRITORIAL COURT ACT

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Bill 22, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Territorial Court Act to increase the monetary limit that applies to the civil jurisdiction of the territorial judges. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 22 has had second reading.

---Carried

The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 22 moved into Committee of the Whole. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 22 is moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration today. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to proceed with the second reading of Bill 23, Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act.

---Consent granted

**MR. SPEAKER:** You may proceed with second reading, Mr. Lafferty.

BILL 23:  
TOBACCO DAMAGES AND HEALTH CARE  
COSTS RECOVERY ACT

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 23, Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill pertains to an action of the Government of the Northwest Territories against the manufacturer of tobacco products for the recovery of the cost of health care benefits caused or contributed to by a tobacco related wrong. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 23 has had second reading.

---Carried

The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 23 moved into Committee of the Whole. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 23 is moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration today.

Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 53-16(6), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2011-2012; Tabled 54-16(6), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2011-2012; Bill 9, Wildlife Act; Bill 10, Northwest Territories Heritage Fund Act; Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Deh Cho Bridge Act; Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act; Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Territorial Parks Act; and Bill 18, An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

### Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. We have Tabled Documents 53-16(6) and 54-16(6), Bills 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23. What is the wish of committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee wishes today to deal with Tabled Document 53-16(6) and Tabled Document 54-16(6), both supplementary estimates. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Okay, with that, we'll take a short break and then begin with Tabled Documents 53 and 54.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** I'd like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. Prior to the break we agreed to deal with Tabled Document 53 and 54. At this time I'd like to ask the Minister responsible for the bill if you have any opening comments. Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** I am here to present Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2011-2012. This document outlines an increase of \$11.807 million for capital investment expenditures in the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

There are four items in the supplementary estimates:

1. \$9.5 million for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to advance funding approved for the Sir Alexander Mackenzie and Samuel Hearne Senior Secondary School replacement project, from 2012-13 to the 2011-12 fiscal year.
2. \$1.729 million for the Department of Transportation to record previous contributions provided by the federal government for predevelopment costs associated with the Deh Cho Bridge project.
3. \$369,000 for the Department of Transportation for a snow blower for the Yellowknife Airport, which will be fully offset by a contribution from Transport Canada under the Airports Capital Assistance Program.
4. \$209,000 for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment for leasehold improvements to the Francophone Affairs Secretariat office, which will be offset by a transfer of funding from operations expenditures.

I am prepared to review the details of the supplementary appropriation document.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. At this time I'd like to ask the Minister if he'll be bringing in any witnesses.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

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

For the record, Mr. Minister, can you introduce your witness.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me the acting deputy minister of Finance, Sandy Kalgutkar.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, witness. At this time I'd like to open the floor for general comments in regard to Tabled Document 53-16(3), supplementary appropriation. General comments. Does the committee agree to detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Can we move to page 5, Education, Culture and Employment, education and culture, not previously authorized, \$9.709 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Total department, not previously authorized. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a quick question. Given that we're advancing this project ahead of schedule, is there any opportunity for savings on infrastructure costs here? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Deputy minister.

**MR. KALGUTKAR:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. By advancing the project, we are going to experience some savings. There is a \$3 million contingency fund that we are going to be targeting for the demolition costs and any environmental liabilities. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** That's good to hear and I hope the Minister will keep us apprised on that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** More of a comment. Total department, not previously authorized, \$9.709 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Transportation, capital investment expenditures, airports, not previously authorized, \$369,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Highways, not previously authorized, \$1.729 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$2.098 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Does committee agree that we have concluded consideration of Tabled Document 53, Supplementary Appropriation, No. 2, 2011-2012?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mrs. Groenewegen.

COMMITTEE MOTION 23-16(6):  
CONCURRENCE OF TD 53-16(6),  
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES  
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES),  
NO. 2, 2011-2012,  
CARRIED

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chair, I move that consideration of Tabled Document 53-16(6), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2011-2012, be now concluded, and that Tabled Document 53-16(6) be reported and recommended as ready for further consideration in formal session through the form of an appropriation bill.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

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

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Tabled Document 53 is now concluded.

As we agreed, we are now dealing with Tabled Document 54-16(6), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2011-2012. At this time I'd like to ask the Minister if he has any opening comments. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** I am here to present Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2011-2012. This document outlines an increase of \$14.310 million in operations expenditures for the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

The major items included in the supplementary estimates are:

1. \$6.012 million for a special warrant approved on June 29, 2011, for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to fund the shortfall for forest fire suppression due to a severe forest fire season in 2011.
2. \$2.296 million for the Department of Executive to support transition and implementation activities related to the Devolution and Resource Revenue Sharing Agreement-in-Principle. This amount will be partially offset by revenues of \$1.171 million from the federal government.
3. \$4.910 million for the Department of Health and Social Services to provide contribution funding to the Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services Authority and the Stanton Territorial Health Authority for extraordinary costs that contributed to the 2009-10 and 2010-11 deficits in these authorities. This amount will be fully

offset by accumulated operating surpluses in other health and social services authorities.

4. \$725,000 for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to support negotiations with respect to transboundary water agreements, which is identified as a priority under the NWT Water Strategy.

I am prepared to review the details of the supplementary appropriation document.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Minister, just to be on the public record, could you introduce your witness, please.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me Sandy Kalgutkar, acting deputy minister of Finance.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Minister. Welcome, witness. Any general comments in regard to the supplementary appropriation bill? Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I may sound like a broken record, but I'm going to state this again for the record. There are a couple of items in here that it seems on an annual basis cause the Government of the Northwest Territories some trouble when it comes to budgeting.

The first one is the special warrant for \$6.012 million approved on June 29<sup>th</sup>. How we budget for fire suppression in our territory has been an issue going back over the eight years that I've been here. I don't think we budget enough. Obviously, in the past few years we've come back for substantially more money than what is budgeted. I don't understand, either, why a special warrant would have to be issued halfway through the summer. Obviously, fires don't stop at the end of June and they continue on into August, and maybe we should take a final tally and clean it all up with one move instead of just doing one halfway through the summer. It doesn't make a lot of sense on how that happens. Again, I think we really need to examine how we budget for forest fire suppression in our territory.

Like I said, it's overdue that we look for more money in this area instead of going to special warrant and supplementary appropriations whenever necessary because of certainly an underfunded amount of money in the Department of ENR. I'd be supportive of us trying to find some more money and budget that more appropriately.

The second item that I'm going to just speak briefly about -- I know Members have heard me talk about this time and time again over the past eight years -- is how we budget the health authorities across the Northwest Territories has been an issue not only for the current Minister of Health and Social Services, the Minister of Finance happens to be the same guy, the government. We really need to come up

with a game plan on governance and how the scarce health dollars are spent in our territory. I don't think we can continue to allow these huge deficits to run up in some authorities and then try to take money from other authorities and move it around. It's basically just a shell game. It's not a permanent solution.

The concern at Stanton obviously is that it's underfunded. It has been for the past years I've been here. We need to come up with a more permanent fix to this instead of just throwing millions of dollars at it whenever we see fit, or have a few extra dollars, or taking money from other authorities and moving it to authorities that require an influx of cash. It's not the way a government should be budgeting. It's not conducive to good government. It's a practice that I think we should try to minimize whenever we can.

Again, a permanent fix. I've said it before, I've been critical of this, we have to come up with a new way to govern health care in the Northwest Territories. Have regional management boards but take the budgeting and dollars that we have and have it under one roof instead of all these authorities across the territory with some running surpluses and some running deficits. I think, from a human resource perspective, we'd also see some savings in that area as well. I just continue to be disappointed that the government isn't trying to come up with more of a permanent fix on health care. It's going to become even more of an important issue as we move forward, and the strains and demands that are going to be placed on our health care system grow. We don't have the dollars to deal with that, so we have to ensure that, like I said, every dollar we spend is going to be spent effectively and authorities are going to be budgeted the way they should. We need to come up with a new way forward and this certainly isn't it.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** The issue of the fire budget is one that I agree with the Member has come up on a regular basis. As we've discussed in the past, there was a decision made to fund it at the lower level and have them come back once they could demonstrate and had some idea of what the costs were going to be. There were some good suggestions from committee that we've made note of. For example, using a 10-year running average is one possible way to look at a more realistic fire budget. We'll consider all those as we look at the upcoming budget year.

With regard to the health and social services system, once again I will point out that across the land every jurisdiction is challenged by issues in the health and social services system. Specifically, we have our own challenges. We have taken steps to address the concern about surpluses. At the same

time we're coming back repeatedly for supplementary appropriations.

The work of governance, as the Member indicated, has not been concluded in spite of the efforts of this Assembly. It will come up again in the coming Assembly. We are also looking at a wide variety of processes that we've dealt with with the Social Programs committee in terms of trying to improve how we do business.

One of the broader issues that I mentioned, as well, which I think has enormous potential for the Northwest Territories in health as well as a whole number of areas, is the fibre optic line up the valley to Inuvik that would allow us to fully use some of the resources we've put in place, such as telehealth.

I agree with the Member that we are going to have to continue to look at all these efficiencies. There are ways to better coordinate, absolutely, the business of the authorities, the administration side, the back office side, and we are taking steps to try to initiate that work as well.

**MR. RAMSAY:** That's good, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Minister for that. Again I think it's an important issue and it can't continue to be downplayed and overlooked.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** General comments. Next I have Ms. Bisaro and then Mrs. Groenewegen. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have similar comments with regard to this supplementary appropriation. I, too, have expressed before and I still feel that we budget for our forest fire suppression completely wrongly. I think our residents and constituents understand sort of a home budget where you estimate what you're going to spend and then you budget for that amount of money. What we do here for forest fire suppression is we budget for the absolute minimum, knowing full well that by the time we have mobilized our forces, the minimum has been spent and there's going to be a need to come back for extra funds.

The Minister has said that there were some good suggestions at committee and I'm very pleased to hear now that they will be considered. It would seem to me that funding the forest fires suppression budget on a 10-year average amount would probably be quite successful and it would certainly leave us with a better idea of what it's going to cost us.

There are pretty much two items in this particular bill which make up this supplementary appropriation and one of them is the \$6 million for the forest fire suppression budget and the other is \$1.1 million, give or take, for devolution AIP. Those two items are about \$7.8 million, and with the amount that we have in our reserve fund, which is four-point-something million dollars, we're left in the hole for

about \$3.1 million. We are not even halfway through this budget year and we are already in the hole in terms of our reserve. So should we encounter any further emergencies in the rest of the budget year, we are going to go further in the hole. I know that things certainly are not going to fall apart, but what it means is that we are probably going to have to borrow money along the way in order to keep our budget in line.

If after the department considers some of the suggestions with regard to the forest fire suppression budget and they decide to continue with the sort of policy that they have now, which is to budget for a minimal amount of money, my recommendation to the department is that a portion of the reserve at the beginning of any budget year must be set aside and allocated to forest fire suppression, because we've got a reserve and we know we need money for forest fire suppression, so we need to allocate a specific portion of the reserve for that purpose. It will then let us know upfront how the budget is going to play out. What we do now is budget for the minimum but then we also expect the reserve to cover all contingencies and don't recognize at the outset that we're going to have to spend more money for fire.

I really don't have any other comments than that. Many of the other items that are here in this bill are offset by other revenues, and that's a good thing. I seriously encourage the department to reconsider how we budget, especially for forest fire suppression.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** I, once again, appreciate the Member's comments. The one thing that's difficult to get an average on, of course, is, while we can do it for the money, is the weather.

If I could just point to British Columbia for the previous two fire seasons where they had a budget in the neighbourhood of \$50 million and had these extraordinary weather conditions where they spent nearly \$500 million. That's part of the challenge. But I take the point of the Members that the base budget is too low. We know that come July even just the starting of costs is going to put us close to exhausting our budget. I make note of those concerns.

Some of these other investments in the supplementary appropriation are good investments. We didn't really count on it because we didn't know it was coming. For example, the Inuvik school is going to possibly save us money and allows the project to be completed sooner. It's a cash flow issue, not so much as a cash issue. We're challenged to be able to respond to those kinds of good investments that put pressure on us in the short term but in the long run are to our collective benefit.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** General comments, Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** No, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm done.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Next I have Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I primarily want to speak to the issue of the shuffling of the funds between the health authorities. I'm sure there are explanations for why these things happen. Let me throw out a couple of examples.

Perhaps a community or health authority doesn't have any doctors on staff, so maybe Stanton is sending out locums or physicians and that's showing up on their budget and not on that other health authority's budget. I'm sure there are some large ticket items which would explain some of this. I have a concern with it if we are not able to provide that kind of information in some level of detail. I'm not talking about every dollar that's spent, but in large categories how we end up with such a large deficit in one health authority and such large surpluses in another.

Another thing that concerns me is, I mean, Hay River Health Authority ended up with a surplus and we can't get, you know, \$50,000, \$60,000 to run a disabled person handy van in Hay River. There are really simple community-based issues and needs and services and programs that are needed that we can't get any money for, I assume because it wasn't budgeted for, and yet we end up handing off a surplus of multiple millions of dollars back to the Stanton Hospital and, I guess, to the Beau-Del as well. I'm sure there's reasonable explanation, but I don't find the government or the department going out of their way to try and explain that or rationalize that in any kind of way. These are large dollar amounts.

The other thing I'm concerned about is when a health authority operates with an unexplained surplus, it could be vacancies, it could be whatever contributes to that surplus, my concern then is in the next year's budgeting process that that previous year's budget becomes the benchmark for what they need to operate in the following fiscal year. That kind of worries me, too, because it could be something extraordinary that caused that surplus for that one year.

I think that the reporting needs to be, well, needs to rationalize the need for this kind of millions of dollars shuffling around between health authorities in the form of a supplementary appropriation. I'd like the Minister's comments on that.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Next on the list is Mr. Krutko.

---Interjection

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. We have been accumulating general comments, but do you want that answered right away by the Minister?

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Oh, okay. I don't want to argue with the Chair. I would like him to answer it, yes.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Very well. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The issue of the financing of the boards and the dealing with surpluses has been an issue for some time. In order to respond to that in a planned, rational way, there was a change made to how surpluses, defining what a surplus is and how it can be accumulated, so that the rules have been clarified and put in place so that the new Surplus Retention Policy is going to be 1 percent of the revenues up to a maximum of \$250,000. As well, we will provide committee members with the information. The work that was done on the budgets of the boards are all based on the audits that are done yearly out of the health boards that document and lay out in some detail the expenditures and where there are cost overruns or not or where there are surpluses. We will share that information with the Members.

As well, I would point out, of course, that health and social services is and will continue to be the single biggest budget item in our budget and the single biggest user of supplementary appropriations all for good reasons, the majority of which is the money will flow to the communities to provide for costs like southern travel, southern placements, and other unexpected costs. I appreciate the concern from all the boards that they wanted some certainty and a clear policy, and we believe we've achieved that now. This is a one-time adjustment. From here on in, we should avoid those circumstances as over time there were deficits or surpluses accumulated as they have been in the past. Thank you.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** I think I'll just let it go at that. There's probably a forum in which these kinds of issues can be raised. Another concern I have -- and the Minister doesn't have to answer if he doesn't want to -- it seems like this is a bit of a strain here. The Minister is not looking up. He didn't make eye contact with me once during this entire exchange, while I was speaking or while he was answering. So I'm not sure how meaningful this exchange is here today, but maybe I'll save my comments for a different forum. Thank you.

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

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My questions are with regard to the executive operations of \$2.2 million and the devolution process. I'm not really clear how to read it. It says to support transition and

implementation. Usually implementation takes place after you have a final agreement. How can you be implementing something that you are still negotiating?

The other aspect of the resources is to provide Aboriginal participation in negotiations. Again, we are leaving out a large portion of our population on the Aboriginal participation in this process, as we all know. We have some 4,500 individuals being represented by two groups, yet that leaves out over 18,000 First Nations people, mostly the Dene people of the Mackenzie Valley, from this process.

What are you doing to include those groups or have side table negotiations to find a way to work around the problem we are facing regarding the bypass? We need to ensure we have a side table to ensure we resolve these outstanding issues and get all parties to the table through the negotiations for the Devolution Agreement, so we have an agreement that's good to all people in the Northwest Territories and not just a minority of people being represented at this time. What are we doing? How is that \$2.2 million going to be expended, and are there monies allocated for that purpose? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will make some brief comments with regard to the implementation piece and then I'll turn the answers on the other issues over to the Premier, who has the file on this.

There was an extensive study done after the Yukon devolution process was completed and a debrief and review to see what lessons could be learned. One of the main lessons learned and documented extensively is there's a need to have the negotiation process and implementation process start almost simultaneously because of the time and the complexity of the issues and the need to move those processes, so when there's a negotiated agreement in place, following very shortly on that would be an implementation plan without another two- or three-year delay to negotiate the implementation after the negotiations. So it was a hard lesson learned through the Yukon process, Mr. Chair.

With your permission, I'd ask the Premier to answer further on the questions Mr. Krutko presented. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. We'll now go to Premier Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The second part of the question is the approach we are using to stay engaged with all the Aboriginal groups throughout the territory. We've done a number of things. One, first and foremost, is the door remains open, and the funds we are requesting, these are prorated amounts for the

remainder of this fiscal year. The future year includes an amount that would incorporate a full year's approach and contributions for Aboriginal groups. That we budgeted to have all Aboriginal groups take part if they decide to sign on to the AIP. That's the first door and avenue of being at the table to begin and do the negotiations.

We are hopeful that as we continue to have discussions and as the new government comes back, they will continue to keep that door open to groups. I know they've had a number of discussions. I've seen the discussions that have happened at the assemblies as well as being at the assemblies myself, a number of them throughout the summer. We continue to urge them coming to the table and being participants.

So the budget has been built so they could be at the table. The federal budget, as well, has the resources that are attached to those who decide to sign and join the process. Further to that, we continue to engage all groups through our correspondence and, like the assemblies that I was able to attend, to inform them of all the progress that is happening and the plans for the work and, again, continue to invite them to the table. So those are there. The money I asked for through this process is to deal with the existing process we have in place. There are no funds for additional processes out there. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Premier Roland. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** That is my concern, is that we don't seem to have the resources or the capacity to assist these people to get them to the table. We have money there to pay people that have signed on. I think it was \$170,000, yet we are asking for \$2.2 million. So there's a small portion there for that consultative process, but what is there to find ways of working around the challenges we are facing? I thought we were going to be close in this process.

There was a bilateral arrangement back in December. Everybody met in Edmonton after Christmas. We came back to Yellowknife to get together and then basically the whole process collapsed around it. There were efforts being made to get parties together and get them to some sort of an arrangement, but we never allowed the process to see the light of day. I think we, as government, still have an obligation to ensure we hear people out on this process, good, bad or indifferent. We need to at least have the resources there to have that take place. This is a critical building block of the northern environment going forward. If you don't have this, you are going to be on a rough road going forward with regard to relationships government to government to government.

It seems like the relationships we have is just with two interest groups. There are five groups still not there. I represent one of these groups and I feel

that we have been unjustly chucked out of the room simply because we don't have an agreeing of the minds where people are coming from or taking the time to understand it.

So out of the \$2.2 million, how much has been set aside to find an avenue to bring those people together with regard to the approval of the \$2.2 million budget?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Once again, I'll offer one fact here and then I'll turn it over to the Premier. I'd point out that in supp one there was a number of dollars put aside for Aboriginal government participation and engagement, which was \$1,266,025 in addition to further money that's in this particular supplementary appropriation request.

Once again I'll ask the Premier if he wants to elaborate or respond further to Mr. Krutko's questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Premier Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess, for the record, I have to say this for the record -- and Mr. Miltenberger touched on it a bit -- supp one had some dollars identified for participation in preparation of the AIP. The Department of Executive also used internal funds to support the work leading up to the protocol that was discussed by the Member. We worked that right through until late January where we brought all the leadership in and provided meeting space and tried to come to a conclusion on that protocol. Unfortunately, the protocol was another negotiation tool, not a protocol on how we work together. It basically stated that we would not sign an agreement-in-principle on devolution unless we negotiated a government-to-government relationship and revenue sharing structure, which is included in the AIP which is to be negotiated. So, in a sense, it was don't sign the AIP but sign this protocol which deals with the subject matters that were being discussed in that protocol.

That aside, we agreed and told all the organizations to come with their budgets and the money they've expended towards that protocol work and we would look at helping them offset those costs. That, as I said in this Assembly, remains open and we continue to look at that.

Aside from what's being asked to deal with the negotiation process in preparation for implementation, as well, as stated earlier, over the years the majority of groups, aside from one group that did not take any funds in this and that was the Dehcho. All other regions tapped into over \$8 million in preparations and actual AIP development, agreement-in-principle development, the devolution

package. The groups were involved and that helped build and strengthen the agreement-in-principle.

Secondly, the door remains open for the groups to come to the table and be full participants. It's of their choice and we continue to urge that to happen, and that way they'll be able to tap into the resources that are available to them. This amount, as I stated earlier, does not have a portion to have a side discussion. That would have to be dealt with through a different process and budget request. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Premier Roland. Any more general comments? Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think that's the whole problem with these dollars that we're being asked to approve here, because it does not really deal with the problem at hand, and more importantly, it does not basically justify spending this type of money on a process that, as you know, is flawed. When you have a flawed negotiated process, you're going to have a flawed result.

I think that we have to realize that as important items such as devolution of the Northwest Territories that we as legislators, as government, have an obligation, regardless if it's through a constitutional obligation or as a moral obligation, to ensure that all parties that are affected... We're hearing in the Wildlife Act there are certain groups out there saying they weren't consulted. We're hearing it here again today. These groups have a legal obligation to be at that table. They have a moral obligation to be involved in the drafting of the Northern Accord.

I was involved in 1988 when we negotiated the Dene-Metis Agreement-in-Principle, signed it off. The same day the federal Prime Minister of Canada, Brian Mulroney, signed an agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories that morning. That afternoon he signed the Dene-Metis Agreement-in-Principle because the two agreements were combined to ensure that we'd have that ability to negotiate those agreements.

The Inuvialuit, they got it made. They got a participation agreement in their land claim agreements. The Dene groups do not have that in the process and we were told the only way you're going to get that is through a devolution or Northern Accord agreement negotiating those elements into those agreements to make them basically have the same standing as the Inuvialuit have by way of participation agreements. The same with NTI. That is why it's so critical that the Dene people be involved in this process and not be stepped on the sidelines and have a group who already have something that's negotiated on their behalf on lands that they own and not be at the table.

I mean, for me this is a political hot potato that's going to blow up not only with this government but



the next government, and this is the legacy that this government wants to leave. For me, this is definitely a legacy that's going to be tarred to this 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly going forward.

I think it's critical that you do re-profile these dollars to find a mechanism that you can either send it to a dispute system or have an arbitrator or have someone basically formulate a mechanism that you have side room discussions with these groups. But simply ignoring them and saying, well, you have one choice, you sign this bad agreement, you come to the table and we'll give you \$170,000. Sure, that sounds like a great idea, but I don't think people are going to sell their rights for the sake of \$170,000 where they know they have the legal right to basically have this thing overturned in future years either through the court process or by not having the final agreement that you're trying to sign off and none of those parties at the table. There's no damn way you're going to sign a final agreement without having those parties at the table. It's either you deal with it now or you basically forget about going forward.

I think by the approach that you're taking, by the hardhat approach of trying to ram this thing through for the sake of two Aboriginal groups and forgetting that there's seven and leaving the other five groups on the sidelines who have more rights by way of legal rights through Treaty 8 and Treaty 11, to basically do what you're doing by way of taking or arbitrating a process that basically you know is flawed.

Again, I'd like to ask, out of the two-point-something million dollars, can any of those dollars be reallocated to allow for side table negotiations to take place during the duration of these expenditures being funded? You're still dealing with the same aspect, but you're looking at it by trying to get the parties to the table and also by saving face in this process. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. It seems that we're talking about detail on a specific point. I will let it go and I will go to Premier Roland to answer Mr. Krutko's question, but I will ask that we consider focusing in on detail after this. Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The process used incorporated Aboriginal groups across the Northwest Territories, all Aboriginal groups. We have fulfilled our obligations under claims. We have provided funds. They have been at the table. In fact, the agreement-in-principle, as it sits, has the handprint of Aboriginal groups on it, the majority of Aboriginal groups.

Now, Mr. Krutko has pointed out there are two Aboriginal groups that have signed this. One group has a settled claim and one group doesn't have a settled claim. So there are differences there

between that, but they both saw fit to decide to move forward, because when you look at this agreement compared to anything else across this country, it is by far one of the best agreements and I think will be a landmark process for future discussions of Aboriginal groups across the country.

Aside from that, the door remains open. This funding, the budget that's been developed here has looked very closely at the Yukon process of what was required and learning from them about their negotiations process, preparations for negotiations. Much of the dollars identified here also come out from the obligations of the AIP itself in preparation for negotiations. The only people being left on the sideline -- and I wish there would be none -- is made by a choice of their own. The door remains open, the invite is there, the dollars are waiting to be flowed and this would add to that as we go forward. The door remains open and we would rather have everybody in the tent working together on this just like we did through the majority of the process in development of the AIP.

This money identified here has been built on our preparation and obligations under the AIP for negotiations looking forward, and as I stated, the future years' budget is built on that same principle. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Chair, just in regard to the Premier's comments, he just said a couple minutes ago that there's no money in there to bring other people to the table at this time. So how can he state now that, oh, you can come to the table anytime you want? Technically, there's no money in this budget to have the people come to the table. That's what he told us. There's only money there for two groups and not for the other groups to take part. That's the point I'm trying to make, is where is the money to ensure that those groups that have an ambition to take a second look at this have an opportunity to take that second look, have the resources to get those groups together and consider possible changes to this arrangement going forward.

This is an agreement-in-principle. This is not a final agreement. You can make changes to this agreement with the parties. As long as the parties agree, it's a negotiated process. There are also elements that are in the land claim agreements that differ from one land claim agreement to the other. Those elements have to be negotiated into a Devolution Agreement, because it's in the land claim agreements under the surface rights section. Those surface rights obligations have to be negotiated into those agreements. How are you going to do it without having those claimant groups at the table?

Again, it seems like it's a simple thing that's, oh well, come to the table and we'll invite you through

the door and basically now you're full participants, but yet there's no money for you to fully participate. That is my understanding of what they stated, is that the \$2.2 million only covers the operational costs and those groups that have already signed. How do you intend to make those additional expenditures? Are we talking about another supp coming back when those groups come to the table?

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** The funding we're asking for incorporates all groups being involved. It's their choice to come to the table. The invite is there to become part of the process we have built into the budget looking at all groups being part of this discussion.

Earlier the question was about a side table reprofiling dollars for a different process. We don't have dollars identified for a different process. This budget amount has been built on the AIP in preparation for negotiations and getting ready for that, as well as incorporation of contributions that would go to Aboriginal governments for their role as we go forward. The sooner they come to the table and sign up, the sooner they are able to tap into the funds that help them do that work as we progress for this work. This amount does include every region and if they decide to come to the table, it's there. If they don't, we'll have to look at year end how the government used those additional resources if groups did not sign up. That would be up to it. We built this on participation of all the groups in the Northwest Territories and we continue to do that and hope that they will come to the table. The funds will be there for them to be full participants and our invite is there.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Time is up. Committee? Detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Detail begins on page 3. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do have similar concerns about how we are ensuring that opportunities continue to be explored and we're active on working towards a collaborative relationship that will actually bring all our Aboriginal partners to the table. I've spoken out on this repeatedly through the lead-up to the signing of the AIP and during the signing. I appreciate the Premier's comments that we perhaps have met the legal requirements, but there are moral and political responsibilities that demand that this government include a focus on continuing collaboration and a focused outreach to continue the discussion with those not at the table as partners yet to bring them into the fold. Be it this funding or additional, I think it needs to be more than here's the deal, sign on whenever you want. We need a collaborative approach. We need to develop this relationship of trust, and that sort of stance will not advance us in that direction.

The second aspect that I'd like to ask the Minister about is does this amount include funding of a comprehensive public process to define a made-in-the-North land and resource management regime that we would like to negotiate or work towards in the negotiations towards a final agreement?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The money that is laid out is to do two things: look on the implementation side, which is actual transferring of the infrastructure, the resources, human and otherwise. There's going to be a significant amount of work in terms of the requirements to meet all policy and legal obligations in our legislation. The broader work, some of which has already started, I would suggest with things like the Water Strategy, in some areas has yet to be completed. The management regime is currently under review by the federal government. They've agreed not to have any major changes pending the outcome of the devolution talks. We've had a lot of discussion on that particular issue as well.

I'll let the Premier respond further, but there is that work that is over and above what is being requested here today. I'll ask the Premier if he would like to elaborate.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Miltenberger has touched on it and I know the Members brought this up in discussions in this Assembly in the past about preparation for taking over the regime itself and the work. As we stated in this House, we're unable to begin that work until we own the legislation. This money is identified for the preparation up to and including negotiations. Once a final agreement is signed, then we can look at doing that work about making changes as we see fit in the Northwest Territories. This request does not include that style of work of changing a made-in-the-North regulatory regime. It doesn't incorporate that at this time.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Premier Roland. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I have indeed brought this up a number of times. The Minister and Premier had indicated he would respond, and then retracted that. I would say I will not be able to support this unless that's there. The Premier insists on putting the cart before the horse and calling it otherwise. We cannot negotiate for what we want unless we know what we want. The public needs to be a participant in defining what we're negotiating for. I obviously feel very strongly about this, as do others. We need to have public participation, and again we have a record of going behind the scenes and

refusing public involvement in this sort of thing. I will not be supporting this on that basis.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. More of a comment. Next on my list is Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to the line item that says "to provide funding for Aboriginal participation in negotiations," can we get a breakdown of what that funding is and what exactly it is used for?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Miltenberger. Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. We'll go to Mr. Kalgutkar.

**MR. KALGUTKAR:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Of the \$171,000 that's targeted for Aboriginal participation, \$100,000 is for the IRC and \$71,000 is for the Metis Nation.

**MR. KRUTKO:** I also ask exactly what can those dollars be used for. Is it simply travel, preparation, legal costs, whatever?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The budget that's being allocated for them is to help them in preparation for the negotiations and being involved in the direct negotiations that they would be included in. For example, the bilaterals or the overall preparation for main table discussions.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Can we get an idea of how many dollars have been allocated since the signing of the agreement-in-principle with these groups and what the terms of these dollars are? Is it up to December 31<sup>st</sup> or is it on an as needed basis?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The money that's before us is to carry us to March 31<sup>st</sup>. The additional information that the Member has asked for, the more detailed information, we'll commit to get that to the Member, to this committee.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Again I do have concerns with the words "implementation activities related to the devolution." Usually you do the implementation after you have a final agreement so that you know what the final elements are of the agreement and then you do the implementation. I find it kind of odd that we're funding an implementation of an agreement that isn't final.

I'd like to know how much of these dollars are going to be expended for implementation. How much staff are we talking about to implement something that's not final? Especially when we're kind of tight in regard to the cash flow of this government and looking at the deficit situation we're probably looking at in the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly, I think there are

better ways to spend this money than having to set something up that doesn't really have an opportunity to do deal with it. Can I get a breakdown of what the implementation portion of these costs are and how many people we are talking about here?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** We'll commit to get that for committee.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Again, if we're not able to get that information immediately, I suggest that we postpone this section of this bill and deal with it once we get the information from the Minister. Because I think to make a decision on spending \$2.2 million, we should know exactly how it's going to be expended and if we're spending money on something that's not going to take effect until future years, I think we have a real problem. Spending money on implementation of an agreement that is not even close to being finalized. More importantly, if you implement agreements after you have an agreement. It's kind of odd we're spending money on people and resources for something that's not going to see the life of this government and more importantly having to hire people and yet we're going to be laying people off in the next while.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** There is detail provided in terms of where this money is going to be spent. The Member is asking what these are for. A lot of it is based on getting people in place to do the work tied to the negotiations or the implementation side. Pick some of the areas. Contaminated sites coordinators, the minerals devolution work. There's going to be a whole range of activities that these folks do tied to either the actual negotiations or to implementation. The two are linked and often there's going to be significant overlap tied to the workload at where we are at any particular time. The detail is here.

I would ask the Premier if he wants to add anything further, but in terms of the actual workload going forward will determine I think how that percentage of work is done between implementation and the actual negotiations.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Finance Minister stated, he'll get the additional information and provide that to Members. In our budget submission I believe we shared with committee a fair bit of that, but we'll get the additional information.

More importantly, as was stated earlier by the Finance Minister in an earlier question around implementation, this isn't the full implementation of working to implement the deal. This is preparation for implementation. The one thing we've learned, as the Minister has stated, from the Yukon experience -- and the Member knows this himself from his own

work in negotiations -- there's a big push for negotiations and when that's done, it seems like everybody runs in a different direction and those that are left to implement find that it's difficult to implement without that background in some of that work. That's what we learned from the Yukon, is that as they signed their agreement, the implementation side were not really prepared for it and that took a lot of additional work. As we prepare for those, we're also preparing for some of the challenges that we would need around implementation and making sure that we have the right information. If you negotiate a bad deal to begin with, implementation is going to be even worse. The Member is aware of that. We'll get the additional information and provide the breakdown of the work and the percentages of the budget.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Premier Roland. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** I, too, like my colleague Mr. Bromley, can't support this on the basis of I don't think we're doing justice to the people of the Northwest Territories by going ahead and not having the resources to try to get people together and find resolution to this outstanding issue. I'll leave it at that.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. More of a comment. Next on my list is Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just had a quick question for the Minister. He mentioned a response to me earlier about how this will contribute to the public's opportunity for participation in defining the northern management regime that some of these dollars will go to water management policies. I'd just like to ask him to expand on that and describe how that is planned, how these dollars are planned to be used through water management policies. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What I was referring to was some of the work we've done as an Assembly with regard to water, the Water Strategy, getting our thinking clear, the principles -- the policy was developed in full collaboration and support of the Aboriginal governments -- is going to inform a lot of the work going forward on devolution as it pertains to the water issue because we've taken the last four years of time to do that. It's in forming our transboundary negotiations as well. That's an example of some of the work that's being done in anticipation of us in the Northwest Territories being able to take over that legal authority. If we waited until we had the Devolution Agreement signed and had no preparatory work done on water, we would be scrambling. People would be asking us what we've been doing and why aren't we ready.

So in this case, the Assembly had the foresight to identify water as a priority and we've worked very hard to move that forward. It's paying dividends today both in terms of the process we've developed with the Aboriginal governments and the public government, but also with the product. This is going to be a very important foundation piece for that piece tied to water in the AIP negotiations.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I appreciate the Minister saying much more eloquently than I can why we need to do this public consultation of the land and resource management regime as this Minister has had the foresight to do on the issue of water. I think he's eloquently made my point. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. No question, more of a comment. We are on page 3, Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2011-2012, Executive, operations expenditures, executive operations, not previously authorized, \$2.296 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$2.296 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Human Resources, operations expenditures, directorate, not previously authorized, \$49,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$49,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 5, Public Works and Services, operations expenditures, asset management, not previously authorized, \$45,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$45,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 6, Health and Social Services, operations expenditures, health services programs, not previously authorized, \$4.910 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$4.910 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 7, Education, Culture and Employment, education and culture, not previously authorized, negative \$254,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, not previously authorized, negative \$254,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Transportation on page 8, operations expenditures, corporate services. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do have some questions on this page. I note that we had \$1.85 million made available from the federal government for research on climate change and associated development projects. Could I ask the Minister will we be using or will we have access to all of these dollars by year end or have we lost some of those dollars? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, we will have access to the money that's available.

**MR. BROMLEY:** My understanding is we will be using about \$700,000-and-some in the remainder in this fiscal year. I just want to be sure that that's correct and ask what the expenditures were from this \$1.85 million in the previous two fiscal years. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Kalgutkar.

**MR. KALGUTKAR:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, the Member is right. The revised budget for 2011-12 year is \$791,000. That's based on the \$527,000 carried forward from 2010-11 and the \$264,000 that was in the department's budget. Some of the projects that were completed in the previous year include a planning study for an access road to the Willow River gravel source in Aklavik; a vulnerability assessment of Highway No. 3; planning for a highway adaption to climate change in permafrost; a climate change adaption risk assessment workshop; and runway vulnerability protocols for some of the runways.

Some of the work planned for 2011-12 include comprehensive stakeholder discussions with the community governments; workshops addressing the impacts of climate change on ferry operations; completion of the DOT Climate Change Adaption Plan; further development on runway vulnerability protocols; monitoring the performance of the highway to source 177. So those are some of the activities that are happening in 2011-12. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Kalgutkar. Mr. Bromley, are you good? Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to confirm, the work done in the past, it would amount to about \$1.1 million. Is that correct?

**MR. KALGUTKAR:** That's my understanding, yes.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I guess my one complaint is that we've had two years of expenditures and I heard

absolutely nothing back on what those things were spent on and the results of the research and development. So I'd like to just register that complaint with the Minister and have him work with his colleagues to remedy that, hopefully on a routine basis.

My concern about this funding, of course, is that given the climate change ultimately involves everything, it would be very easy for these dollars to be spent on other things and claim to be spent on climate change. I consider the list we've heard to include one or two elements of that nature. That's why I think this needs some ongoing oversight and reporting accountability. So that's just a comment. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, just to confirm for the record, we've noted the Member's concerns and we will provide that formal feedback to the work done to date and the outcomes. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. We're on page 8, Transportation, operations expenditures, corporate services, not previously authorized, \$527,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$527,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Moving along to page 9, Environment and Natural Resources, forest management, special warrants, \$6.012 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Land and water, not previously authorized, \$725,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just going through the briefing with regard to this item, it seems like we are spending a lot of money on outside agencies but very little by way of community-type projects and looking at the water issues regarding our communities such as boil water orders and people still having challenges. With regard to Aklavik and THMs and not really focussing on community-based water issues, it seems like your department is trying to solve the national issues in Canada, but not focussing on community-based health and water aspects. What are we doing to work with those communities, whether it's Aklavik that have been recognized to have a health issue regarding water? I'd like to know why aren't we developing a strategy and working with the Northwest Territories communities with regard to these issues.

I'll use the Athabasca Delta, for instance. It seems like we are spending much money in Alberta, but what are we doing for communities like Aklavik when they still have THM issues which affects people's health, and the possible connection to THMs and the water, which is the Peel River, which flows in from the Yukon and the potential water elements that may flow down those river tributaries by way of metals or heavy metals or different types of contamination.

I'd like to ask the Minister how much of this is being expended actually in Northwest Territories communities.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We can go through key points on this list on page 303. The water unit staff have responsibility and involvement with the communities across the North and work on the ground in the communities across the North.

The Wilfred Laurier University contribution is, we partnered up and got, I think, \$3 for the price of one or \$2 for the price of one to a contribution agreement to do on-the-ground water research in the Northwest Territories on areas of significant interest and concern not only to Wilfred Laurier but to the Northwest Territories and the communities.

Source water protection plans are talking about the water supply and security of every community in the Northwest Territories from where the water comes from until it comes out of your tap. That involves all the communities, the Water Strategy implementation, as well as workshops across the land and working with the Aboriginal steering committee.

The Peace-Athabasca Delta is one of the monitoring programs that we're involved in. It's the biggest delta just south of our borders where the water flows from there into the North. We also have involvements not listed here with the Slave, as well, the Slave Delta. In addition to that, the Government of the Northwest Territories spends significant amounts of money through Municipal and Community Affairs in communities to ensure water supply. Public Works has a role to play as does Health and Social Services in terms of environmental health and public health issues and the quality of water.

When you combine all that together, there's a significant amount of money that is spent in addition to this money trying to deal with that particular issue at the community level. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Chair, again, I think this process is too top heavy. It's basically run out of Yellowknife. I think that you have to start doing workshops and having these meetings in the communities. I know in the Mackenzie Delta we

have been requesting having a water conference and we have been talking about the Peel River watershed. There's a major effort being made between the Yukon government and the Gwich'in Tribal Council to develop a land use plan for the Peel River watershed. Again, that's another government in another jurisdiction and we seem to have a better relationship with the Yukon government than we actually have with the Government of the Northwest Territories when it deals with overlap issues such as the Peel River watershed. I've been asking for that since I've got here in regard to trying to have a conference in regard to the Peel River watershed, because the issues that Fort McPherson and Aklavik have had in regard to water directly correlate with the Peel River watershed. There's major mining development that's going on in this watershed and I think it's important that, you know, we're focusing on the Alberta watershed and we're not focusing on the watershed in regard to the Peel River which, again, has to be developed into any process.

Again, I'd like to know, out of the \$725,000, how much of that is going to be expended in actually doing work in the communities with community groups and organizations so that we can develop a made-in-the-North Water Strategy and depending then on groups and agencies from outside the Northwest Territories.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Two things: the Member and I have discussed this and, as well, with the deputies, and as far as I understand, there is money there for a conference to be held in the Member's constituency and the region. The detail has not ever been worked out in terms of having the workshop. It's the one region that we have yet to have the workshop. We've talked about it for some time.

I agree with the Member about the concerns out of the Peel watershed. In fact, we've had correspondence with the Yukon Minister indicating that we think it's time to look at that agreement that was signed many years ago through the Mackenzie River Basin Transboundary Agreement.

The \$725,000 is geared very, very specifically to the negotiations of transboundary water agreements with Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, and the Northwest Territories. That has been identified as a priority issue. We have been working on that for a number of years, as well, and now we're getting to the point where we're very close to sitting down at the negotiating table and this will give us the funds to do that for the rest of this year.

**MR. KRUTKO:** I just have a question going through the detail of that \$725,000. There was \$70,000 for Aboriginal participation. Could you clarify what that \$70,000 has been spent on?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** The Water Strategy was developed in consultation and partnership with the Aboriginal government. We have a committee that was set up to provide oversight to work with the territorial government. That role is carrying over in terms of what's happening with the negotiations and there's a cost to that. We, as well, want to make sure we have, when we have the actual negotiating team at the table, that there's an Aboriginal representative there along with the territorial government representative. Those funds will be expended to fulfill those particular job requirements and obligations that we think are essential. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** So the \$70,000, is that professional fees or is that actually given to each of the organizations to be represented on this panel that you're talking about?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, the negotiator fee is going to be when there is a negotiator decided on that will represent the Aboriginal government, that will help offset... That will be the fee to help cover the costs of that particular individual. The broader amount of \$175,000 tied into working with the Aboriginal committees and groups will pay for those costs. So that negotiator fee will be specific. We anticipate having probably a three member with a lead negotiator and Aboriginal representative at the table along with the GNWT representative that's going to be very focused and highly skilled, so that's to assist us with that particular process. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** It sounds to me that you're talking about one Aboriginal person represented on this panel of three. How do you pick the Aboriginal person that's going to sit on the panel? What's the process going to be used to identify that person or what's the process going to be used to ensure that you have someone there that's representative of the whole Northwest Territories?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** There is work underway, as we speak, with the territorial government, the Aboriginal Steering Committee, to look at who would be the best people suited for the team, including the Aboriginal representative. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. We're on page 9, Environment and Natural Resources, operations expenditures, total department, special warrants, \$6.012 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$725,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** That's the end of the tabled document. Is committee agreed that

we've concluded consideration of Tabled Document 54-16(6)?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Mrs. Groenewegen.

COMMITTEE MOTION 24-16(6):  
CONCURRENCE OF TD 54-16(6),  
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES  
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),  
NO. 2, 2011-2012,  
CARRIED

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that consideration of Tabled Document 54-16(6), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2011-2012, be now concluded, and that Tabled Document 54-16(6) be reported and recommended as ready for further consideration in formal session through the form of an appropriation bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. A motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Question has been called.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Recognizing the clock, I will now rise and report progress.

### Report of Committee of the Whole

**MR. SPEAKER:** May I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Abernethy.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 53-16(6), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2011-2012, and Tabled Document 54-16(6), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2011-12, and would like to report progress with two motions being adopted, and that consideration of Tabled Document 53-16(6) and Tabled Document 54-16(6) is concluded, that the House concurs in those estimates and that an appropriation bill to be based thereon be introduced without delay. 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 Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

### Third Reading of Bills

BILL 7:  
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND  
DEVELOPMENT ACT

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Bill 7, Community Planning and Development Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 7 has had third reading.

---Carried

The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

BILL 19:  
COST OF CREDIT DISCLOSURE ACT

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 19, Cost of Credit Disclosure Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Bill 19 has had third reading.

---Carried

Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan):** Orders of the day for Monday, August 22, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.:

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

20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Bill 9, Wildlife Act
- Bill 10, Northwest Territories Heritage Fund Act
- Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Deh Cho Bridge Act
- Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act
- Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Territorial Parks Act
- Bill 18, An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act
- Bill 22, An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act
- Bill 23, Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act
- Committee Report 6-16(6), Report on the Review of Bill 10, Northwest Territories Heritage Fund Act

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Monday, August 22, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 2:14 p.m.