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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

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Box 1320
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784
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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Friday, October 14, 2005****Members Present**

Honourable Brendan Bell, Mr. Braden, Honourable Paul Delorey, Honourable Charles Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Mr. Hawkins, Honourable David Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Honourable Michael McLeod, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Pokiak, Mr. Ramsay, Honourable Floyd Roland, Mr. Villeneuve, Mr. Yakeleya

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good morning, Members. Welcome back to the House. You may have noticed this morning that we had a bit of a change in our procession. I would like all Members to join me in welcoming our Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms, Derek Edjericon, into the House.

---Applause

Also, for Members' information, the second language in the House today is North Slavey. Orders of the day, item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

Minister's Statement 32-15(4): Premier Late To The House

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise the House that the Honourable Joe Handley will be late arriving in the House today due to his attendance at the official opening of the new Government of Canada building. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

Minister's Statement 33-15(4): Fiscal Update

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last February, I introduced a fiscal strategy that took the necessary steps to ensure the ongoing fiscal sustainability of our government. This meant taking strong action to reduce spending while still making the necessary investments to help us achieve the goals and objectives set out in our strategic plan.

The cornerstone of our fiscal strategy was the introduction of the fiscal responsibility policy. Simply stated, the policy requires us to continually monitor expenditures to ensure we achieve the necessary cash surpluses from operations to finance 50 percent of our annual capital investment.

Our ability to fully adopt the policy is conditional on the federal government amending an existing federal Order-in-Council, which currently sets out an arbitrary debt limit on our government of \$300 million. The amendment we seek is to base the limit on reasonable measures of what we can afford. The affordability measures we propose are contained in our fiscal responsibility policy. I will be pursuing negotiations on this important matter with the federal Minister of Finance, the Honourable Ralph Goodale.

Mr. Speaker, in the short term, we have been successful in maintaining sufficient operating surpluses to stay within the guidelines of the fiscal responsibility policy. However, our supplementary requirements have exceeded our forecasts and resulted in a reduction of our projected operating surplus from \$49 million to \$26 million. Although these supplementary appropriations are for important and urgent needs, we are cognizant that we must exercise care that we do not introduce a level of spending we cannot afford to maintain. We must always closely match our additional spending with increases to our revenues so that our bottom line results stay affordable. As I flagged in my budget address earlier this year, the government must also ensure that it has the cash that will be required to repay a large corporate tax overpayment that we received a few years ago. Next year, the repayment amount will be close to \$300 million.

Mr. Speaker, as I stated in the February budget address, the formula funding arrangements after 2005-06 are uncertain. In future years, our financial agreement with the federal government will be heavily influenced by the recommendations of the Expert Panel on Equalization and Territorial Formula Financing. Over the summer, we have made strong arguments and presentations to the expert panel to ensure our unique needs and issues are understood. It is anticipated that the expert panel will be ready to report to the federal Finance Minister by the end of December 2005. We anticipate that the federal government will then go through a process to review and discuss the recommendations before final decisions are made.

We are hopeful that the Territories' realities and needs will be well reflected in the expert panel report and that the federal government will act appropriately. However, the uncertainty about the outcome of this review forces us to be conservative in our fiscal outlook beyond 2005-06.

In September, the Premier and I met with another panel, the Council of the Federation Advisory Panel on Fiscal Imbalance. Provincial and territorial Premiers established this panel to investigate and make recommendations on the fiscal imbalance between the federal, provincial and territorial governments. The panel was able to visit the community of Behchoko while they were here, and from the many presentations, conversations and discussions they had, got a good sense of the challenges we face here in the North. This panel is expected to report in March 2006, perhaps in time to influence the federal government's consideration of the expert panel report.

Mr. Speaker, our government welcomed the federal government's commitment to provide \$500 million over 10 years for the social and economic impacts of the Mackenzie gas pipeline. However, this funding only flows if there is a pipeline and it only flows to communities directly affected along the route of the pipeline. These

funds do not address the impacts of mining and other resource developments and are not specifically for GNWT impact requirements. Although we intend to work closely with aboriginal governments in the management of these funds, the GNWT role will be more of an advisory nature.

It is important to point out that a one-time fund, no matter how large, does not provide a long-term source of sustainable revenue upon which firm planning and decisions can be made by either the GNWT or aboriginal governments. The importance of successful negotiating with the federal government a fair net fiscal benefit from resource revenue sharing must be recognized. Although we welcome and support responsible resource development and all the economic benefits it can bring, our territory is, and will continue to be, impacted by resource development. Our government's social and infrastructure expenditures are being impacted by resource development, yet the royalties and other resources royalties from this development are flowing to the federal government. In 2004-05, the federal public accounts revealed that Indian and Northern Affairs Canada took in over \$270 million of resource royalties, including those from the Norman Wells field. This must be addressed soon. Negotiations on resource revenue sharing have been stalled for a number of months as the federal government waits for the recommendations from the Expert Panel on Equalization and Territorial Formula Financing. We must get these negotiations back on track as soon as possible. The Premier and I are working diligently towards this end.

In summary, our short-term fiscal situation remains sound, but we face many trials and uncertainties in the future. We will do our best to turn these into opportunities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Minister's Statement 34-15(4): Family Violence Awareness Week

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. Earlier this week, I officially launched Family Violence Awareness Week in the Great Hall of this building. The focus this year is the prevention of violence against women and children with disabilities.

Members of this House know the impact violence has against all members of our society. Its corrosive effects eat away at our communities and families. We must work together to eliminate violence, and we must be especially vigilant in our efforts to eliminate violence against the most vulnerable members of our society.

Mr. Speaker, people with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to violence and exploitation. Their right to a safe and secure environment must be a goal we all strive to protect. Those who prey on vulnerable individuals must clearly understand the people of the Northwest Territories and that they will not tolerate such behaviour.

In all our communities we must hear the message loud and clear: Violence is not acceptable; it cannot be used as a tool of control, nor as a way of taking out frustrations. We must work towards eliminating violence, and we can

only do that through honest and open dialogue and through working together.

Mr. Speaker, this annual campaign is a great example of how community organizations and governments can work in partnership to make a difference.

I'd like to thank the Status of Women Council of the Northwest Territories, which has coordinated this year's Family Violence Awareness Week activities with the help of the Coalition Against Family Violence. This coalition represents a number of community organizations and includes representatives from the Government of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories response to the NWT Action Plan on Family Violence - A Framework for Action also sets out several examples of how partnerships increase the effectiveness of actions taken to work towards eliminating family violence.

I would like to provide you with an update on some of the actions in the government's framework that are being undertaken in partnership with community agencies and other governments.

Mr. Speaker, the Protection Against Family Violence Act was proclaimed April 1, 2005. The Honourable Brendan Bell will provide a detailed update on the successful implementation of this act.

Several other activities are underway including a joint Federal/Territorial Working Group on Family Violence. The intent of this group is to look at funding practices across the GNWT and federal departments and develop a process to coordinate funding for larger projects intended to reduce family violence.

As well, the GNWT is expecting feedback from 50 stakeholder groups on a series of standardized definitions of family violence terms. Having standardized definitions will allow governments and community agencies to have a single comprehensive set of definitions of family violence terms. This will help to ensure consistency in the development and delivery of programs for those affected by family violence as well as set the baseline for data collection.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the GNWT will host a workshop with the Coalition Against Family Violence in November 2005. This workshop will look at our progress in implementing the actions set out in the framework for action and how we can better work together.

A full status report updating the public on the progress of all the actions will be available in November.

Mr. Speaker, I want to end today by reminding everyone in every community in the Northwest Territories we must stand firm in our resolve to stop family violence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Bell.

Minister's Statement 35-15(4): Family Violence

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to provide an update to Members on the

implementation of the Protection Against Family Violence Act.

It's appropriate that we are joining people across the NWT in marking this week as Family Violence Awareness Week. It is a serious problem in all of our communities, in all types of families.

This law has been in force for just over six months. It allows victims of family violence to get protection quickly and easily over the phone. People can get an emergency protection order within a few hours from any community in the Northwest Territories, or they can ask the court for a protection order, which gives longer-lasting protection.

Although some people are applying for orders in person at their local RCMP station, most people are using the toll-free number. We've taken calls from women, men and elders, but we are starting to see a clear pattern. The typical caller is female, with several children. Her partner has been abusing her for a long time, and the violence has been getting worse. The women who call are desperate for help, and they report many different forms of family violence. An emergency protection order is usually not the only thing these families need to stay safe, Mr. Speaker. Trained family violence counsellors and RCMP officers work with them to make safety plans and to talk about things they can do when they think they're in danger.

Mr. Speaker, last week we had our 50th application, and the numbers are still increasing. This usage is the highest per capita in the country. I must say that we were surprised to get this response, but it is a clear indication that family violence is an ongoing problem in the Territories. There have been applications from 14 different communities, and the orders have ranged in length from two to 90 days.

Mr. Speaker, although the new law gives people a new choice, an emergency protection order isn't right for everyone. If a crime has been committed, some people will go through the criminal court process. Shelters provide emergency housing for people who need a safe place to live. Other people will get help from local victim services groups or their social workers, and some people will want to use a combination of the things I've just mentioned, Mr. Speaker.

We all know that family violence is a problem that will take a cooperative approach. To implement this new law, the department has been working very closely with the RCMP and the YWCA. On the broader issue, we continue to work with our partners on the family violence action plan. Department staff have been travelling to communities with the Coalition Against Family Violence's demonstration projects. We're talking to people about what's happening in their communities, giving them information and helping them develop a plan to respond to family violence, and we're learning how we can make our own laws and policies more effective for people who are dealing with violence every day.

Mr. Speaker, I will be tabling a status report on the implementation of the Protection Against Family Violence Act later this session. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Minister's Statement 36-15(4): Midwifery Services In The NWT

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak today about the significant progress that has been made to incorporate midwifery services into the NWT health system.

Midwives work with women and their families, before, during and after birth to keep them and their babies healthy. Midwifery care is women-centred, family-centred, and responds to the unique strengths and needs of each woman and her family, and honours traditional and cultural birth practices. Midwives monitor the physical, psychological and social well-being of the mother throughout the childbearing cycle into infancy.

In addition to being involved in the delivery, whether it is a homebirth or in a health facility, midwives are part of the primary community health care team actively involved in a broad range of activities including:

- health promotion in the community, including education on healthy choices related to pregnancy such as drinking, smoking and birth control;
- information and education to prepare families for the birth of the baby;
- offer counselling and support in getting started with breastfeeding and continuing to successfully breastfeed;
- work with the mother and family on how to care for a new baby, including facilitating the father's participation in caring for and bonding with the baby, and help with family adjustment;
- check on the mother's and baby's health;
- assist the mothers through counselling on diet, exercise and stress reduction;
- identify other resources in the community available to the mother and the family.

This is a newly regulated profession in the NWT, and all midwives in the territory work as part of an interdisciplinary maternity care team. The success to date is a direct result of the collaboration, cooperation and support of the health professionals, communities and individuals.

There are currently two midwives practising in Fort Smith and one in Yellowknife, with plans to add an additional midwife to Yellowknife. Building on the success in Fort Smith and Yellowknife, the hope is to expand midwifery services to other communities in the NWT where the appropriate supports are available.

Since April 2005, the midwife in Yellowknife has delivered 22 babies and the midwives in Fort Smith have delivered three babies; two were delivered at home and one was delivered in the Fort Smith Health Centre.

Next month a representative from Health and Social Services will sign the Agreement on Mobility for Midwifery

in Canada, which recognizes the NWT midwives' credentials in five provinces, and the GNWT in turn accepts midwives from these five provinces.

Mr. Speaker, the Midwifery Profession Act has been a success in the NWT with its 25 births since April. It has provided mothers with another option and the ability to be close to home. Midwives know that if we keep our mothers healthy, they will give birth to healthier babies and take good care of them as they grow. Furthermore, this will have a powerful influence on the health of all members of the family and the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. McLeod.

Minister's Statement 37-15(4): NWT Fire Service Merit Awards Program

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, October 9 to 15, 2005 is National Fire Prevention Week and, as such, is a fitting time to announce the recipients of this year's Northwest Territories Fire Service Merit Awards.

In 2002, our government established the Fire Service Merit Awards to recognize the important contribution of individual firefighters and fire departments in the Northwest Territories. Firefighting is a dangerous occupation. We must not forget the sacrifices that firefighters make and the risk that they face on a daily basis.

In 2005, the department has once again received nominations to recognize the special contribution of individual firefighters and community fire departments. Individual nominations are assessed by a committee of local and territorial fire service and community government officials, against a set of established criteria. These nominations have now been assessed, and I am pleased to announce the 2005 winners at this time. Two individuals have been chosen to receive the Fire Service Merit Awards for 2005.

The first is Cyril Fyfe of the Yellowknife fire department who died in the line of duty on March 21, 2005. We were all deeply saddened by the tragedy involving Mr. Fyfe and Mr. Kevin Olsen at the Home Building Centre and are so proud of Cyril's courage and long-standing efforts to serve the community.

Mr. Randy Hilworth of the Hay River Fire Department was recognized by his colleagues for his significant contributions to their fire department and community.

The department also received nominations for the Community Fire Service Merit Award. This award is presented annually to recognize the success of a local fire department in improving the overall fire protection system in the community over the past year.

Mr. Speaker, in all our small communities, maintaining an active fire department can be a real challenge. To a great extent, we rely on volunteers in all our communities. Finding enough people who are prepared to dedicate their time to taking the training, being on call, going into difficult and dangerous situations is not easy. It is encouraging to

see all the efforts that many communities are making to ensure their fire departments are up to the challenge. At this time I am pleased to announce that the 2005 Community Fire Service Merit Award is awarded to the Town of Hay River Fire Department.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all Members of the Legislative Assembly please join me in recognizing the two recipients and the Hay River Fire Department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On Acknowledgement Of RCMP Efforts In Operation Gunship

MR. BRADEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to acknowledge the work of the RCMP in Project Gunship, a major sweep in the city of Yellowknife and Edmonton yesterday, Mr. Speaker. It was quite by coincidence that while we were having a discussion in the House yesterday afternoon about community policing, this major exercise, which I understand involves some 50 officers, was unfolding. The information that has been made public so far is that we have seen 29 arrests here in Yellowknife and two in Edmonton. Substantial quantities of cash, drugs and handguns have been seized.

Mr. Speaker, we are constantly reminded of, and reflecting on, the impact of drugs on the safety and the security of our communities and our neighbourhoods. At this time, it is very early in the process. We need to be mindful, of course, of the judicial and the justice processes that have to unfold from now. But citizens and businesses, I think, are breathing a bit easier today knowing that a major impact has been made on the supply of drugs here in Yellowknife, and consequently to other communities in the Northwest Territories.

We need to stay vigilant, Mr. Speaker. We know that the impact of drugs and crime, organized or otherwise, is a fact of life in our society. Exercises like this will make a difference, and we are very grateful to the efforts of the RCMP and other law enforcement agencies for the difference they are making. But we also know, Mr. Speaker, that every citizen also has a responsibility to stay vigilant, to stay involved and to do everything they can to ensure the continued security of our communities, their safety and protection from the impacts of drugs, crime and violence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Member's Statement On Lack Of Firefighting Services In Small Communities

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to hear the Minister of MACA congratulate the people who deserve the awards during

Fire Prevention Week. However, Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned about the recent house fire in Colville Lake. My heart goes out to Dora Duncan and her family and to the people of Colville Lake who could do nothing but stand around hopelessly as the house burned to the ground. People could do nothing as the house burned to the ground because there were no fire trucks, roads, or real fire extinguishers in the community for fires of that magnitude. There are only little fire extinguishers that were of no use for this fire. This is the sixth house in Colville Lake that burned to the ground in 10 years, Mr. Speaker.

When I look at the situation in New Orleans, we know the devastation brought on by hurricane Katrina and the carelessness of the government. At this time, I thought we were fortunate to live up here because I thought we could look after our people better than they did down South. Now, I am not so sure. I don't understand why there is no fire prevention or firefighting equipment to be had in these remote and isolated communities. Housing is at a premium and expensive, too. How can we be so careless about people's lives in their homes such as in Colville Lake? Mr. Speaker, I will have some questions to the appropriate Minister at the appropriate time. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement On Role Of A Regular MLA And Dealing With Ministers

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to make a statement today that I hope will help our constituents understand a very key element of how we accomplish work on their behalf. There are many ways to approach our constituency work. We can make statements in the House, ask questions during session, write letters to Ministers and departments, send e-mails, have meetings, issue press releases, hold constituency meetings, have newspaper columns, publish newsletters, et cetera. But to be very specific, many constituents we don't often hear from unless they have an issue with their dealings with GNWT programs or services. In the case of these specific requests for information or assistance, we very often contact the office of the Minister responsible. That is when we either get prompt, wholesome and helpful responses, or not. Each of the Ministers in our government are responsible for a wide range of topics. Our government delivers and participates in the same vast range of areas that any government two, three or four times our size would. So Ministers are busy.

The good news is that although we have a small number in Cabinet, we have a correspondingly small number of MLAs to which this Cabinet is accountable. Being a Regular Member, of course, I think that MLAs and issues they represent on behalf of their constituents should be the very highest priority of our Ministers.

We are a small territory. We represent relatively small constituencies where it is quite possible to know every one of those constituents. This results in constituents feeling quite at liberty to contact their MLAs quite freely about just about anything. That is a good thing. Our ability to serve our constituents well has a lot to do with

the seriousness and importance that Ministers place on our issues. This will always be evident in the demeanour and attitude displayed by the Minister's office.

I could offer compliments and kudos to several offices, different offices today of Ministers, but I want to focus on one department. After being an MLA for the past 10 years, I could say that about 50 percent of the inquiries that we deal with in our office relate to health and social services. So I am happy today to commend the Minister of Health and Social Services and his ministerial staff for prompt and thoughtful responses to many of the inquiries we make and issues that we raise. There are many challenges. I want my constituents to know. Make no mistake...I need unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. I want to make it abundantly clear that I know extremely well, as do the people across the North and in Hay River, that there are many challenges facing health and social services in the big picture. But I want to say that a good working relationship is the premise of why I remain very optimistic about continuing to address those concerns. I would just like to thank the Minister for his attention to those issues. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

Member's Statement On Recognition Of RCMP Efforts

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, like my colleague, the MLA for Great Slave Lake, would like to commend the RCMP on their investigation. Last night, when I was returning to the apartment, a lot of activity was taking place in the downtown area. As I listened to the 5:30 CBC news last night, it was reported that the RCMP was conducting an investigation. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the RCMP on the ongoing investigation.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I say to the RCMP officers in the Northwest Territories and in Canada, we commend you on your endeavours to have peace and tranquility throughout Canada. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Member's Statement On Recognition Of RCMP Efforts In Operation Gunship

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have spoken numerous times in this House about the devastation drugs are having on our communities and families here in the Northwest Territories. As a Member of this House, I have gotten phone calls from constituents heavily addicted to crack cocaine trying desperately to get some help. They get treatment and they try to get their lives back together. However, when they get back to Yellowknife, they face

their demons head on once again. Drugs seem to be everywhere they turn on every corner, and they can't seem to get away from using the drugs.

I have heard numerous times from constituents that access to hard core drugs like crack cocaine can be easier than buying lottery tickets, Mr. Speaker. Trying to get the drugs and dealers off of our streets is something that people have been waiting patiently to see. I was very encouraged to hear the media reports yesterday of the RCMP's Operation Gunship that targeted upper-level drug distribution networks both here in Yellowknife and in Edmonton. I would like to publicly thank the RCMP for this much needed coordinated drug crackdown.

During the last budget session, I was pleased to support the additional \$1.2 million to help fund new positions for the RCMP here in the Northwest Territories. Part of that funding, Mr. Speaker, included a new search and rescue and drug dog and a handler that will be based here in Yellowknife. Mr. Speaker, I will continue to support the additional resources that the RCMP need and require to carry out their work here in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, what I would like to see is a firm commitment from this government to have all of the necessary resources in place to deal effectively and to the full extent of the law with those charged with drug trafficking here in the NWT. All of the hard work by the RCMP yesterday and in the days and months ahead of us has to have an impact. Our justice system has to be ready to deal with this hard work in a fashion that will be meaningful. At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Justice. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Member's Statement On Regional Representation On GNWT Committees, Boards And Councils

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to address an issue important to Nahendeh and other regions in the Northwest Territories: adequate regional representation. Yellowknife and Hay River seem to have consideration based on representation and attention on many issues. Their size and accessibility to administration gives them a considerable advantage over policies and implementation. This policy must address these inequalities and implement the policies of our previous governments to have balanced regional representation.

Reviewing the NWT Public Committees, Boards and Councils Handbook, other than regional ones, the Nahendeh has only a handful of committees, boards and councils with regional representation. The following are just a few high profile examples which lack: Territorial Board of Revision; Worker's Compensation Board; Worker's Compensation Board Appeals Tribunal; Safety Advisory Committee; Public Utilities Board; NWT Power Corporation's board; NWT Social Assistance Appeal Board; Liquor Licensing Board; and I can go on, Mr. Speaker. Out of roughly 35 committees, boards and councils, almost 29 have no regional representation from Nahendeh. Furthermore, it would be partially understandable if these groups had only one or two

members, but many of these groups often have up to 10 members and with no reason for regional exclusion.

Another alarming trend I found was the enormous percentage of committees, boards and councils with all, or high numbers of, representation from Yellowknife alone. Why does the government, who continues to pride themselves on the diverse culture, unique geography and being a government of the people, continue to alienate the regions with little or no representation? The following are a few examples of committees, boards and councils with all Yellowknife representation: Student Financial Assistance Appeal Board; Public Records Committee; NWT Judicial Remuneration Commission; Medical Registration Committee. Residents of the NWT recognize some committees, boards and councils require considerable expertise and experience in this field. However, even these groups must...

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and colleagues. Residents of the NWT recognize some committees, boards and councils require considerable expertise and experience in this field. However, even these groups must have representation from the average residents from all of the regions. The responsibilities and functions of these groups are trusted to them by the Legislative Assembly, the GNWT; the government of the people. These responsibilities affect all of us and have deep implications. Therefore, all regions of the NWT must have adequate representation and not what is convenient, Mr. Speaker. With that, I will be asking our government, at the appropriate time, to state to this House what our regional representation policy is. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

Member's Statement On Graduation Ceremonies In Deninu Kue And Lutselk'e

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on September 15, 2005, I attended a graduation ceremony held in Deninu Kue to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of three students of Deninu school. Mr. Speaker, I again would like to take this time to congratulate Chantelle Beck, Raddanz Hunter, and Vanessa Sanderson for their significant achievements in reaching this important milestone. It was truly with great pleasure to have been part of such a wonderful celebration of local achievement.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to congratulate Don Catholique of Lutselk'e who graduated from Joseph Burr Tyrell High School in Fort Smith on May 27, 2005. I would encourage all of these Tu Nedhe graduates and all other NWT

graduates to continue on with their educational pursuits and aspirations.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize the people behind these achievements, the principals, teachers, the DEAs, and the many community members and organizations who have done a wonderful job in coming together to support and encourage the youth to stay in school, and for instilling value of education in all of their minds so that students of tomorrow can also look forward to finishing high school and making the wise choices which result in a brighter future for all northerners young and old.

Mr. Speaker, the residents of Deninu Kue and Lutselk'e are truly proud of seeing four more graduates coming out of these two small communities. Once again, congratulations. You have all, indeed, set a fine example for the younger people of Tu Nedhe. Thank you and mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

Member's Statement On RCMP Services In The Tlicho Region

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to commend the Justice department. However, Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned with the delivery of RCMP services to the Tlicho communities. There are the same concerns that are echoed in other small communities.

Tlicho residents have told me that on average the police response is 48 minutes. That is quite outrageous in the Tlicho region.

AN HON. MEMBER: Outrageous.

MR. LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, some of the problems with response times relate to dispatching being done out of Yellowknife headquarters. This leads directly to my next question. What are the hours of operation in the local detachment in the Tlicho region?

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned, too, that the police will sometimes not respond to a call because an actual crime has not been committed. It seems to be that that attitude is totally contradictory to the basic concept of community policing. Part of the responsibility of the RCMP is to provide a proactive presence in the communities, not just reacting to crimes in process, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am not saying the RCMP are ignoring the needs of the communities. I suspect that if anything RCMP are overworked because of the impacts of resource development in the North, and that concentration on serious crime is the only way it can be dealt with with the workload. I am sure the RCMP want to have a more proactive role in the community, Mr. Speaker, and be able to work with the people to reduce crime, rather than just reacting to immediate threats to life or property.

Mr. Speaker, we must address policing issues. Locally, residents must do everything they can to support RCMP to do their jobs. The Tlicho and the GNWT leadership have a role to play in ensuring that the RCMP have

adequate resources. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Justice at the appropriate time. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

Member's Statement On Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Project

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we've been hearing talk of the pipeline for a long time and, as one of my colleagues asked this morning, what pipeline? It's time to quit talking, Mr. Speaker, and time to get working. Most people in the NWT stand to benefit from the construction of the pipeline, but now it seems that the project is running into one delay after another while everyone tries to think of what they can ask for next. The problem is, Mr. Speaker, that there are many excessive demands from all parties, and this is preventing the project from moving ahead and we may never see a pipeline.

There are many young people along the valley attending or planning to attend school for training to take advantage of any potential job opportunities from construction of the pipeline. As a result, many positions will be filled by well-trained and qualified northerners who are not just hired to fill a quota.

Mr. Speaker, there are many businesses along the valley that have already planned and prepared for the pipeline by increasing their capacity to absorb the potential workload. It is unfortunate, however, that the future of the pipeline still seems uncertain, and all the time, money and energy in preparing may be lost. Claimant groups are demanding to be compensated for crossing their traditional lands. I firmly believe that these groups should be compensated by the proponents of the pipeline and by the federal government. This land is their inheritance and they should not sell their birthright for a morsel of food.

People are and will be paid big bucks to negotiate on the claimant groups' behalf, so they will continue to benefit while many of their people live day to day. Many groups have formed joint ventures with some of the companies, and they will benefit from the construction of the pipeline. We even have a one-third share in the pipeline itself.

The proponents have asked for concessions on the money they plan to spend. They have potential revenues of \$40 billion, yet they want the Government of Canada to give them a break. I say come on, give us a break.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Shame, shame.

MR. MCLEOD: Even the NWT can't get a deal like that.

The North has a lot to offer in the way of resources, and everyone is entitled to a good deal that will work for us all. A few leaders in the NWT, our Premier included, know that this project should allow us to be independent and are trying to move it forward.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays?

There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: We should lock all the parties in the same room until they can reach an agreement that will work for everyone.

I do not believe this project is doomed, contrary to what some people think; however, we have lived without this pipeline for years and we'll survive without it, but with so much at stake, we have to think of our children and grandchildren and we must help pave the way for their future.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, this project, along the Mackenzie Valley highway from Wrigley to Tuktoyaktuk, should be our legacy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Member's Statement On Education Concerns Regarding Pupil/Teacher Ratio And Special Needs

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, education of our children is right up there with the health of our citizens in terms of its importance in determining quality of life, and I believe that the constituents of Range Lake have every right to expect the very best out of this government. This is the best gift that life in the North has given to me, and I take my job of improving on this tradition very seriously, and I have to tell you that this Minister and this government is not doing a very good job in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, reducing the PTR and reducing special needs funding is not translating into real, tangible benefits in our classrooms. I agree with the Minister that we can't spend millions to do a formal assessment, but I would suggest that walking through our schools and talking to the parents, teachers and students should give him all the information he needs. I encourage the Minister and his officials to do more of that across the North.

Mr. Speaker, PTR, pupil/teacher ratio, of 14 students to one means absolutely nothing to students of a French immersion class of 31 in a local school. Mr. Speaker, a special needs funding increase from eight percent to 15 percent says nothing to a Grade 5 class of 28 students in Yellowknife where there are four special needs students with no assistance whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, section 7 of the Education Act, the inclusionary schooling provision, as the Minister read yesterday, "that every student is entitled to have access to the education program in a regular instructional setting in the community in which the student resides and that an education body shall provide a student with the support services necessary to give effect in accordance with the direction of the Minister," is not worth the paper it's written on for those parents with children with autism or any other serious special need who have to line up every year through the school board to convince them that they need special needs funding, and to pray that they're going to

get somebody, and to be told that they can't because there's just not enough money to go around.

Mr. Speaker, it's not just the students with special needs who are suffering. This affects the ability of all children in every classroom to learn and the ability of the teachers to teach. Mr. Speaker, I'm looking for real improvement in this area, and I suggest to you that the Minister saying he's doing a survey every five years or talking to the chairs of the boards...Mr. Speaker, may I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement?

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm looking for real improvement in this area and not just empty statistics, and I suggested to you that the Minister saying that he's doing a survey every five years or that he's talking to the chairs of boards twice a year is just not going to cut it. I expect nothing less than our school system knowing at any given point what the special needs of our students are and how we are meeting them all across the Territories. We wouldn't think of treating patients with illness randomly and choosing who's going to get service, and I don't know why we think it's okay for us to do that to our children with special needs and the general student population.

Turning a blind eye, closing our eyes and throwing some arbitrary sum of money aren't going to deal with this very important issue, and I expect the Minister to give us more precise information and more precise action. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 112-15(4): RCMP Service Levels

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement today I spoke about the problems the residents of Tlichu had with accessing service from the RCMP. Can the Minister of Justice inform the Assembly whether there's a standard service level that a community of a particular size can expect to receive? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question 112-15(4): RCMP Service Levels

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me start by saying I want to thank the Members in the House for the support they're showing the RCMP. Obviously, yesterday was a banner day for the Northwest Territories, for the RCMP, and will go a long way toward ensuring the safety of our residents.

In terms of standards of service, the RCMP, with the resources that we provide them, determine where

manpower is most needed and scheduled accordingly. They are and have made one of their priorities working with us. One of the priorities we've talked about is staffing in small communities, especially those without detachments. We recognize that there is a challenge in responding. I know the Member is very concerned about it, and certainly we intend to meet with the Tlicho leadership. I know the MLA was instrumental in setting up a meeting that the dates had to be changed. We're certainly still committed to coming into the communities to talk about the service levels in those communities. But as per standards, I think it varies by community. There isn't a determined service level on the basis of size of a community. There are so many variables that come into play: proximity to other closer regional centres, et cetera. So it does vary by community, but let me assure the Member that it is of highest priority that we work on improving the service levels in our smaller, outlying communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary To Question 112-15(4): RCMP Service Levels

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I stated in my Member's statement, the RCMP workload is impacting on the service levels in the isolated communities. Can the Minister inform the Assembly whether there's a plan to increase the number of RCMP officers in the communities so that they can take a proactive role, rather than a reactive role in community policing? Mr. Speaker, mahsi.

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

Further Return To Question 112-15(4): RCMP Service Levels

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the Member is absolutely correct in saying that when the RCMP is taxed and pressed because of the level of activity, they end up having to, first and foremost, respond when crimes are committed. They want to and are committed to doing proactive work, working with the community, working with the schools. We know that their presence alone in a community goes a long way toward acting as a deterrent, and that's something that is very important. So the RCMP is absolutely committed to that approach.

As a government, we've been responding to the RCMP's needs through the business planning process. They've submitted a business plan to us. It was a three-year ask for resources. We're going into the third year of that plan now and we'll be discussing that in the upcoming budget session. Suffice it to say there will be additional resources for the RCMP, but until that budget session I hesitate to get publicly into the details. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Question 113-15(4): GNWT Response To House Fire In Colville Lake

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I spoke to Chief Richard Kochon of the Colville Lake Dene

band, and we talked about the recent house fire in Colville Lake. You could hear the sadness in his voice over the phone. He was wondering about the response from this government. Mr. McLeod, the Minister of MACA, recently made an announcement, and I quote, "Fortunately, there are many things residents can do to make their homes safer. Fire Prevention Week is a time when the local fire departments reach out to the communities, teaching people at every age how to prevent fires." Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask Mr. McLeod if there are any types of fire prevention programs scheduled to be in Colville, being there is no fire department. Thank you.

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

Return To Question 113-15(4): GNWT Response To House Fire In Colville Lake

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our responsibility for fire prevention flows from the Fire Prevention Act. Our department has many duties and responsibilities in that area, from investigations to inspections to building reviews; it is also involved in training, and we also provide capital for equipment. Colville has been a community that has wanted to live a traditional lifestyle. We've had the fire marshal going in two and sometimes three times a year to work with the community over the last while. The community has recently passed a BCR to create a fire department. As of yet, there is no active fire department. We continue to work with them and hopefully will have something in operation to provide fire services for that community.

But I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, our responsibility in those areas is in the form of support. We cannot force people to be on a fire department. That has to come from the community, and the municipality is responsible for creating the fire department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 113-15(4): GNWT Response To House Fire In Colville Lake

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Mr. Minister. I understand that the community of Colville Lake wants to maintain their traditional lifestyle in Colville Lake. However, Mr. Speaker, the Minister is saying that they cannot force anybody to be on the fire department. But for people in Colville Lake, that's where we have flexibility, and there could be some creativity by this government to look at training people in the communities that do not have any type of fire department training or prevention or other services. So they're going to sit around and see another house burn down. My question to the Minister of MACA is, how many times has someone from his department gone into Colville Lake to deliver some sort of fire service training, fire prevention program, public safety or education courses? That's the question. Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 113-15(4): GNWT Response To House Fire In Colville Lake

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't have that exact detail. I know over the

last three years we've been there at least once if not twice to set up training programs. We cannot force the community to attend. We have been very unsuccessful in attracting people. The community has agreed that we should have it on those specific dates; however, if the interest is not there, that's not something we're in a position to deal with. It's very costly to set up these programs, it's costly to go into the communities; however, we can't do it by ourselves, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 113-15(4): GNWT Response To House Fire In Colville Lake

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if there are no fire trucks or no other means of having some sort of support there to fight these fires, how can you... People are not going to be interested. You need some equipment, you need some roads and some water. You need some equipment to get the people there. So it's ludicrous. My question to the Minister is because there aren't any kind of provisions in terms of protection against house fires, can the government look at some provisions to have the equipment there for the people to use? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 113-15(4): GNWT Response To House Fire In Colville Lake

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what kind of equipment we can put in the community of Colville Lake at this point. Maybe we can sit down and talk to the Member. As the Member has pointed out, you can't put a fire truck in there because there are no roads and there is no water plant at this point. So it's something that we have to be very creative about. There are mobile water pumps right now; there are dry chemical provisions; but it's very difficult until we have the infrastructure in place to house a fire hall, a fire truck and the roads that they can travel on and the system to fill up. We can't provide that type of equipment, so I'm not sure what type of equipment the Member is referring to. If he has some suggestions for that, we would take that into consideration. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 113-15(4): GNWT Response To House Fire In Colville Lake

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a lot of suggestions and Colville Lake has tons of suggestions to stop this type of situation happening in Colville Lake. Are there any future plans to start spending money in Colville Lake to look at fire equipment or some creative solutions in terms of training in Colville Lake? I guess the question would be, when will the Minister come to Colville Lake and talk to the people? They will certainly give you solutions when you get there. Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 113-15(4): GNWT Response To House Fire In Colville Lake

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to hear the Member say that. We are very open to going to Colville Lake to talk to the community, to talk about the different infrastructure needs there. There is a plan to put in a water plant for next year. However, it's still a question of how do we get the water from the plant to the fire. We still need that mechanism. I would be glad to send our officials up there. I am hoping to have somebody in a position to attend the community meetings myself. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Question 114-15(4): Ongoing Impact Of RCMP Operation Gunship

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Justice. It gets back to my Member's statement, where I was talking about the drug crackdown that took place here in Yellowknife and in Edmonton yesterday. I know there is a good deal of work that went into the operation yesterday and the ongoing investigations that are in place. I wonder what the Department of Justice is going to do to ensure that all of the hard work yesterday by the RCMP will have the maximum impact of keeping drug traffickers off of our streets. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. I will allow the Minister to answer the question, but I would just caution Members that the judiciary is a separate arm of government and we have to watch it. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Bell.

Return To Question 114-15(4): Ongoing Impact Of RCMP Operation Gunship

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I understand where the Member is going with this and the nature of his question. The Member knows that it is the GNWT that is responsible for the administration of justice in this territory pursuant to our Northwest Territories Act and that, of course, is separate and apart from the prosecution function which, in the NWT, is the mandate of the federal Department of Justice.

In the past, when we've needed additional courtroom space for the administration of justice, we've gone out and found that. I am not sure that would be the case here. I doubt it. If it was, we would certainly do that. I can assure the Member that -- and I think he referred to people being back on the street in his Member's statement -- nobody is going to be back on the street because our Department of Justice failed to provide a courtroom, a court reporter or a court clerk. I can give the Member that assurance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 114-15(4): Ongoing Impact Of RCMP Operation Gunship

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for his response. I will be careful with my

questions. I know and can appreciate the difference in the Crown prosecutor's office and the Minister's department. Are the resources currently in place in the Crown prosecutor's office to deal effectively with those being charged with drug trafficking? That's the question, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 114-15(4): Ongoing Impact Of RCMP Operation Gunship

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's not my department. It is the federal government's Crown prosecutor office. I don't think we have seen a case to date, I don't believe, where the Crown prosecutor's office, for lack of resources, has had to stand down a prosecution. I can't imagine that that would be the case. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

Supplementary To Question 114-15(4): Ongoing Impact Of RCMP Operation Gunship

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know the operation yesterday was targeting more high-level drug trafficking. Could the Minister let the House know if the department is working with the RCMP on targeting the street level crime that's taking place and the street level drug trafficking that is taking place here in the city of Yellowknife and other communities around the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 114-15(4): Ongoing Impact Of RCMP Operation Gunship

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a very real problem and certainly a priority for our government and the RCMP. They've been listening to and hearing from our public for quite some time that not only do they need to go after the big fish or the high-level dealers, but deal with the street level. The RCMP intends to do that. We've been working with them. They have now unveiled a pilot project called the NWT Street Team. It will dedicate some officers to dealing with disrupting the supply of drugs in our communities, which is very important. So there will be a lot of work going into this over the next year. We have to be cognizant in communities to work to reduce the demand, and support people to get the help that they need. The strategy has to be multi-pronged. But I can say that this is a priority for the RCMP and they are moving forward on this, and I am certainly happy to see that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 114-15(4): Ongoing Impact Of RCMP Operation Gunship

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the RCMP's operation yesterday, they brought in a drug dog from Peace River and one from Wetaskawin, Alberta. I know in last year's budget, we had approved funding, \$1.2 million, which included a search and rescue/drug dog and a handler. I wonder if the Minister knows when that resource will be on the ground here in the Northwest

Territories able to help tackle the drug wave here in the Northwest Territories.

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

Further Return To Question 114-15(4): Ongoing Impact Of RCMP Operation Gunship

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, I indicated I believed the dog was already present in the Northwest Territories. In fact, that was wrong. I understand the dog will be here November 6th and will be based in Yellowknife but available for use right across the territory in their operations. I think we can look forward to that. That gives us some additional capacity in this regard and it's much needed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Question 115-15(4): GNWT Office Space Procurement

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the honourable Minister of Public Works and Services with regard to the procurement practices of our government. Recently in Fort Simpson, the PWS leased some office space locally, and I am here to say that I don't think it was done properly in following a proper procurement process. There were no tenders put in the newspapers or asking the general public to bid on the contracts, Mr. Speaker. So I would like to ask the Minister today, what is the procurement process when you are looking for office spaces in our regions and communities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 115-15(4): GNWT Office Space Procurement

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of practices put in place about how we procure supplies or lease office space in communities. We put out a public request for proposals or a tender on facilities and rate them through the proposals that are received. The others would be in the communities themselves where we know there isn't adequate space available; if there was only one supplier available, we would go directly to that supplier and have an arrangement made with them. It's almost case by case because, for example, for office space, there are standards that have to be met that we would look at if we decided to go out for a public offering. In the case in the Member's community, I believe the example he is looking at is one where we have gone directly to a supplier in that community for space that was available.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

Supplementary To Question 115-15(4): GNWT Office Space Procurement

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister is absolutely correct and that is what the government chose to do. They went directly to one owner, one building in the community when there is another

business that offers office space. What happens is you have two providers for the service and our procurement policy, Mr. Speaker, is we offer the opportunity to everybody for goods and services that we need. In this case, it didn't happen, and I would like to ask the Minister why.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 115-15(4): GNWT Office Space Procurement

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the community the Member is speaking about, there was a search done to see what would have been available in that community for these offices that we are looking for. One of the conditions we have is it has to meet a certain standard. The other business the Member is referring to did not, from what I am being informed, have the adequate space available to meet what was being requested. It was on that basis that we made the decision to proceed with doing a sole source to one company.

I am prepared to sit with the Member and go over this file if he feels we were not provided accurate information on what was available in his community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

Supplementary To Question 115-15(4): GNWT Office Space Procurement

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the procurement of office space in Fort Simpson, that's exactly what has happened, Mr. Speaker. There was no opportunity given to this other provider. He's got office space. It's a prefabricated building, which is like a trailer. One of the reasons he was given, Mr. Speaker, is because it's a trailer-type office space and the government says they don't even consider that. If I asked a written question today to ask the government to list all the trailers that we do rent throughout the NWT, I am sure it's going to be there. This reason is not acceptable. As well, can the Minister tell me in what process do we disregard a tender or public proposal call for sole source or negotiations only? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 115-15(4): GNWT Office Space Procurement

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, it's a case-by-case review of what we are looking for. In this case, we were looking for office space. We are familiar with the community and went to the department with our own staff there on the ground in the community and did an assessment of what is available in that community and if it would meet the requirements for that particular office space. We were informed that there was only one suitable location available to us. On that basis, we made a decision to go to a sole source process. So it's case by case. If there are other opportunities out there, if you are aware of other adequate building spaces, then we would use an RFP process. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 115-15(4): GNWT Office Space Procurement

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this case, it appears there is a wrong here, and the wrong is that our protocol wasn't followed, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I think our policies dictate that it's Cabinet that determines to authorize negotiations. In this case, it's apparent that regional staff or administration decided who gets the contract and who doesn't. I don't think our government should be able to do that. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister who authorized the sole source negotiations on this file? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 115-15(4): GNWT Office Space Procurement

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of procurement policies that we do have within the government: sole source is one of them, negotiated contracts is another, and public tender process is the one we use most commonly. In this case, it wasn't the staff on the ground in the community who made that decision. They provided the information to headquarters here and, from that information, it was brought forward to me that they were proceeding to make that decision based on the information that they had in hand. That decision could be made here in headquarters and that is where it was made, not at the regional office. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Question 116-15(4): Addictions Treatment Services

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I share the views of other Members in congratulating the RCMP for some of the major arrests that went down. The thing is that once the smoke from this clears, we still have to address the needs of those who are addicted to cocaine and drugs and that is an ongoing issue that we have to pay attention to. So my question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. The people who are involved in dealing with those with drug addiction speak about the need for a spectrum of services that have to be available to those who need them. The spectrum speaks to a treatment centre that people often speak about, but there are lots of other programs. People can go to a treatment centre, get dried out, be treated and sober, but they have to live their everyday life and they need support in that regard. I know there are groups in Yellowknife who are working to set up a transition home for men, especially, who have substance abuse problems. I know they were looking at submitting an application to the Minister for some funding. Would the Minister indicate whether or not he supports providing that assistance? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question 116-15(4): Addictions Treatment Services

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are working with a number of

groups, and we give all these proposals serious consideration of what fiscal resources may be available to meet such requests. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary To Question 116-15(4): Addictions Treatment Services

MS. LEE: Am I to understand, then, that the Minister is not aware of a proposal at this time?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 116-15(4): Addictions Treatment Services

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am aware of a number of proposals, some related to the Salvation Army and their plan to build an addition. The specific project the Member references is not clear enough for me to know if that's the same one. If there is another one, then I am unaware of it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The people in our communities and in our cities always express their frustration at what seems to be a lack of action on the part of the government to address this drug problem and crime problem that seems to be prevalent in our communities. They don't understand why the Minister is not talking about building a treatment centre and providing support to those who need to get some help. There are some real long-term residents, just regular citizens, who are struggling with this very serious crack and drug problem. Whenever I ask that question, the Minister always speaks about the millions of dollars that we are spending to deal with mental health people and addiction...

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have a question, Ms. Lee?

Supplementary To Question 116-15(4): Addictions Treatment Services

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sorry. I would like to know if the Minister sees a transition home for men who are addicted to crack or any other drugs as part of his plan for addressing people with a substance problem?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 116-15(4): Addictions Treatment Services

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in fact, we do invest millions of dollars. We had initiated and completed two years of a three-year plan for mental health and addictions. For the third year, we have the funding there and we are taking the time to review where we've been, where we are and where is the best direction to go. I have approached the committee for their input. We have also gone to the authorities. We are also going to have Ms. Chalmers, the author of the State of Emergency report that initiated this plan three years ago now, to take a look to see the work that we have done. In the meantime, we know there are drug issues. Crystal meth is coming. We know about

crack cocaine. We have made arrangements locally with the Salvation Army and other groups to try to address that issue. So we are looking to the future, to where we go. We are looking for input, and we know there has been interest in creating another treatment centre in the Northwest Territories. That's definitely one of the options on the list. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 116-15(4): Addictions Treatment Services

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister is still floating from the compliment that he received earlier and he's not getting to the specifics of what I am trying to get at. Could I ask the Minister to enquire into this proposal that is being put forward by the people in the community who are in the know about dealing with people with substance problems? They are really looking at setting up a transition home or home for men who are trying to live a sober life. Living with sobriety requires a home that is conducive to that, and there is a proposal...(inaudible)...gives its best consideration on that proposal. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 116-15(4): Addictions Treatment Services

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

Question 117-15(4): Policing Services In Sachs Harbour

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to follow up with what the Member for Monfwi raised regarding policing services. It is appalling to hear that it takes over an average of 48 minutes to respond to calls in the Ticho region. Mr. Speaker, it takes an hour-and-a-half to fly to Sachs Harbour from Inuvik. Maybe we should send two of the RCMP officers over to Sachs Harbour. I would like to ask the Minister of Justice, has there been any progress to date in regard to policing services in Sachs Harbour? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Bell.

Return To Question 117-15(4): Policing Services In Sachs Harbour

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated earlier, it is a priority of the government to work with the RCMP to come up with an approach for policing in our smaller communities. I think it is a reality that we will never have detachments in every community in the NWT -- some of the communities are too small -- but we are going to try to increase the number of detachments that we have. Having said that, it is very important that all of our communities have a police presence and have an adequate response by the RCMP. That is something that we are targeting. We have a working group of senior Justice officials and RCMP members who sit down and

better understand how we can most appropriately target the problem. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Pokiak.

Supplementary To Question 117-15(4): Policing Services In Sachs Harbour

MR. POKIAK: Thank you for the response, Mr. Minister. I would like to follow up. I know yesterday the Member for Sahtu talked about special constables. I spoke with the commander and chief of the RCMP when he was traveling through Tuktoyaktuk and Paulatuk, and he did say that he had sat down with the department. Can the Minister indicate to this House exactly what plans they have in place to deal with the RCMP presence in the Territories? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 117-15(4): Policing Services In Sachs Harbour

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the question of an RCMP presence in the Northwest Territories, I have indicated the RCMP did submit a business plan to this government that deals with the need for resources going forward. We have decided to approach it with a three-year response. We are into the third year of that response coming up in the budget session. We will have additional resources for the RCMP but, again, the level of detail that the Member is looking for is probably something that we had best deal with in the budget session. I can tell the Member that additional resources are coming and will be spread across the territory. We are going to target those communities that don't have detachments and talk about a plan for providing them the best level of service we can. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Pokiak.

Supplementary To Question 117-15(4): Policing Services In Sachs Harbour

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a quick comment. Can the Minister explain how soon the additional resources will be coming to the Territories? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 117-15(4): Policing Services In Sachs Harbour

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. April 1st of next year is our new budget year. At that point, funds will flow to the RCMP from the government. I know the Member is aware that we fund 70 percent of the operations of the RCMP; 30 percent comes from the federal government. The commitment is already there. We will be discussing that and have been discussing that through the business planning process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 118-15(4): Wait Times At Walk-In Clinic In Hay River

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Health and Social Services, the Honourable Michael Miltenberger.

Probably one of the concerns we have had raised most often at our constituency office, and just from meeting people in the street and talking to them -- townfolk of Hay River -- is the wait time to get into the Hay River Medical Clinic. That seems to be the hot topic right now in Hay River. With all due respect to our CEO and our board, they have devised a new plan where they are trying to resolve issues like backlog and avoid no-shows. Certainly people have a responsibility for those kinds of things, and there is always several sides to any given story. I just want to give you an example of what seems to be coming down to almost a work-to-rule.

We should have six doctors in Hay River. We have three: Two are leaving, and we have one half-year locum. I know the Minister can't wave a magic wand and make doctors appear; however, this is compounding the problem. The people of Hay River received in their mailboxes recently something called walk-in process. It says, "The walk-in clinic is not for prescription renewals, reviewing test results, requesting referrals, no-show for medical scheduled appointments, and no WCB follow-up. You can't do a walk-in to quit smoking; you can't do a walk-in for wart removal, dandruff, lumps or bumps that you have had for years or any ailments that you have had for six weeks or more." This was sent to every household in Hay River. The walk-in clinic in Hay River is kind of like "come take your chances." If the doctor is busy at the end of the day at 5:00, you could have sat there all day, but they clear the office and say go home, come back another day and try. If you try to book an appointment, they tell you that you have to wait until next week for this time slot. It is just this new regime, which I understand is supposed to help, but I have been in Hay River a long time and I remember the good old days when we paid doctors on a fee-for-service basis and nobody got sent home without seeing the doctor.

I just want to know, realistically, as the Minister of Health and Social Services, is there anything that you can do to help us address this, or is this something that has to be managed at a local level? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return To Question 118-15(4): Wait Times At Walk-In Clinic In Hay River

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member referenced the fee-for-service and at one point there were fee-for-service doctors who made a decision to switch to salary positions. There have been concerns ever since about productivity issues; we work with the doctors and have tried to address that; we have added more doctors; we are going to continue to work with the doctors and the authorities to recruit.

The Member points out a problem that is an issue, and that is the access to doctors. I can tell you that the

constituency that I represent has the same circumstance. I still, on a regular basis, get notices from the small communities, especially up north where they are on emergency services because they don't have nurses.

The authorities have a significant amount of responsibility and authority to try to address these issues as best they can. The Member does have me somewhat at a disadvantage; I haven't seen the document that she is referring to. I take the Member's point that there are problems with waiting times in the community and now that the Member has raised it, I will commit to following up with the authority and with the department and look at the circumstances. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 118-15(4): Wait Times At Walk-In Clinic In Hay River

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we switched from fee-for-service to salary, it was intended to be a recruitment tool to get physicians to come here so that they would be able to enjoy a quality lifestyle. We could offer a definitive package which was competitive with other jurisdictions in Canada. Is the department looking now at doing a combination of fee-for-service, where there is a salary and a fee-for-service combination, something that would encourage physicians to see more patients on a daily basis? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 118-15(4): Wait Times At Walk-In Clinic In Hay River

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a system, we are doing a number of things. We have added nurse practitioners; we have added midwives; we are going to look at trying to improve and upgrade the licensed practical nurses that we do have to give them a greater scope of practice; and we are going to work with the doctors with whom we have a long-term agreement that goes to 2008. But the Member raises a very good point. We are always looking at ways to improve how we do business, and we are going to be looking seriously with the doctors at ways to maximize performance and deal with the issues of wait times. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 118-15(4): Wait Times At Walk-In Clinic In Hay River

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you. For all intents and purposes, the old system of privately owned clinics run by physicians on a fee-for-service was private health care to some extent. What is the rule, or what would the opinion be now, of the Department of Health and Social Services if a physician wanted to come to Hay River or Yellowknife or Inuvik, set up a private clinic and bill the government on a fee-for-service basis? Seriously, it could run some very serious competition on the system that we have got right now. What would be the response of the department to such a proposal? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 118-15(4): Wait Times At Walk-In Clinic In Hay River

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have contractual arrangements, in actual fact, with all the doctors. They're on salary, but they all have contracts. In fact we do, I think, still have four fee-for-service doctors in Yellowknife. So the issue of fee-for-service is a reality that exists in the North and we can't exclude them from anywhere else, in my opinion, if they exist in Yellowknife. We've already accepted that fact. So there's nothing, in my opinion, to preclude a doctor from setting up a fee-for-service arrangement. We already have the basic process set up in Yellowknife as we speak. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 118-15(4): Wait Times At Walk-In Clinic In Hay River

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you for that, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for that. We're trying to think outside the box here in terms of how to address this problem because we don't want people to see our communities as having a lesser standard of living or quality of life because of lack of medical services. So those are the kinds of things in discussions we'll probably have in our communities. I'm glad to hear that response, and I'll certainly pass that on in Hay River, that maybe we'll have to do some recruitment as a community on our own, quite apart from what the Minister does. You know, I can't think of a question, but we'll continue to work on it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave. Mr. Braden.

Question 119-15(4): Implementation Of NWT Recycling Program

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions this morning are for Mr. Miltenberger as the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, and they concern the Beverage Container Recovery Program, Mr. Speaker, something which this legislature has been working on for a number of years and really with anticipation for the November 1st implementation. However, it has stayed on the radar screen and, unfortunately, not with such a high degree of anticipation. Among a number of issues that continue to dog this program is the realization that now within about two-and-a-half weeks of the implementation, Mr. Speaker, a number of communities still do not have this system fully implemented, especially depots whereby containers can be returned and recycled. I wanted to start with a question on this one, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister. Which communities will have depots ready to cash in empties by November 1st? Thank you.

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

Return To Question 119-15(4): Implementation Of NWT Recycling Program

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to point out that this very important initiative was created late in the life of the 14th Assembly and was seen as something that was put into place before that Assembly finished. The 15th Assembly has picked up that challenge, and we're moving on that. Mr. Speaker, through this program, we estimate that we discard about 25 million containers over the course of a year. That's over 500 containers for every man, woman and child in the Northwest Territories. We've picked a date of November 1st that we want to try and roll out this program in all the communities that are ready. We have coverage for, we believe, over 80 percent of the Northwest Territories population. The specific communities that will have depots are Yellowknife, Hay River, Inuvik, Fort Smith, Fort Simpson, Behchoko, Fort Resolution and Nahanni Butte. We're in active discussions, as we speak, with Gameti, Paulatuk, Holman and Tuktoyaktuk, as well. So we're making every effort to make sure that we're ready. We're going to be starting this program November 1st, and we're going to be working actively up until then and beyond to ensure that every community has capacity to have a depot. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 119-15(4): Implementation Of NWT Recycling Program

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, from a consumer's point of view, a pretty critical part of this program, given that I think most northerners want to participate in something that's going to help the environment, is that if there's going to be a collection that's going to start on November 1st, it's going to take at least 15 cents extra for each container. There should be some way that they know they can turn that in and recover at least part of that fee. My question, Mr. Speaker, is what are the government's plans for those communities that will not have a depot on November 1st? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

AN. HON. MEMBER: Good question, Bill. Good question.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return To Question 119-15(4): Implementation Of NWT Recycling Program

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're going to work with individual communities, but my suggestion to everyone is keep your containers and we're coming.

---Laughter

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 119-15(4): Implementation Of NWT Recycling Program

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, in the meantime, I'm not going to be able to keep my money. I'm going to have to give my money to the government while efforts go on to set up a way to return it. Mr. Speaker, how does the government square this? How does it justify proceeding in

these smallest communities where the cost is the highest, with taking this deposit but not having a way of returning it? Justify that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 119-15(4): Implementation Of NWT Recycling Program

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this project is a good idea, and we acknowledge the fact that we have some communities that we haven't made arrangements with yet. We still have some time left, but the reality is that we are going to unfold this and it would be almost impossible to just pick and choose individual communities. This cost is put on the distributors and it goes to the communities, so Members can keep their cans and their bottles of beverages and we will compensate them. The program is there, and we're going to do everything in our power to make sure this works. We have coverage for over 80 percent of the population of the Northwest Territories, and it's important that we start moving on this. There was enormous pressure that we were dragging our feet, that we were delaying and we weren't in fact getting this program up and running. Well, we're going to do that. It's going to take some time, but we're going to work it through and get it up and running. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 119-15(4): Implementation Of NWT Recycling Program

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, the issue is not at all the validity and the decency of this program. The issue is in implementation and fairness, especially to those people in the smallest communities -- and I will say this again -- where the costs are the highest, and they have no choice in this matter. This is not good government. Will the government, in those communities that cannot be served with a depot by November 1st, withhold, defer this program until such time as a depot is available? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 119-15(4): Implementation Of NWT Recycling Program

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are going to proceed, and we're going to work with every community to come up with arrangements, alternative or interim as they may be, to ensure that people have the ability to get their beverage containers to a place where they can be compensated. If there's no depot in that community, then we'll make arrangements to make sure that people can have those containers taken to a place where compensation can be made.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Question 120-15(4): Promotion Of NWT Manufacturing

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my questions will be for the Minister of ITI, and it's in regards to a "buy northern" program. This government spends a lot of money on northern-based industries to support them, and I applaud them for such efforts. They put a lot of efforts into the arts and crafts and even the secondary diamond industry. Even the local Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce, to their specific credit, promotes "buy local" to help support local businesses that continue to give back to the communities. So when I look at northern manufacturers, I think of such companies as Arctic Wild Harvest; we have the tea lady; we have Energy Wall Trusses, and we even have the Fort McPherson canvas bags. So what are we doing to promote these? My question to the Minister of ITI is, what are we doing to create a program to make a made-in-the-NWT program to help build a little pride in northern awareness so we can buy and shop local? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bell.

Return To Question 120-15(4): Promotion Of NWT Manufacturing

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have, for some time, been without an NWT manufacturing strategy, and it's been something that we've discussed and wanted to move forward on. I've asked the department and the BDIC, the newly created BDIC, as part of the terms of reference for the program and service review they have embarked on, to also consider what we might do and what kind of support we might better provide to the manufacturing sector. It is difficult. There are many hurdles in order to have a viable manufacturing sector. We're very distant from markets. The cost of inputs, labour and utilities, is higher in the North than it is in the South, but that's not to say that we can't have a strong and viable manufacturing sector. So this is something that I've asked the BDIC and our department to look at and consider as they go forward with this program service review. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 120-15(4): Promotion Of NWT Manufacturing

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the honourable Member for mentioning that we don't have a strategy. That's something I'd like to see us work on and maybe see if we can get a commitment from the Minister, in the long run, to do that. But I don't think a northern strategy necessarily has to be where we have to start. It could be where we're going. I believe very strongly that the northern manufacturers need to be supported and this government needs to get behind them. I'll speak to something that's probably near and dear to the Speaker's heart, which is that I bought windows from Arctic Front out of Hay River, and I was exceptionally satisfied and promoted them to several people in Yellowknife who bought them. So these northern manufacturers are producing great quality products in our North, and I think it's imperative that we go the extra mile. So would the Minister consider something along the lines of a logo

identification program? It could be something as simple as little stickers that said it was made in the NWT, just like the U.S.A. did a few years ago when they showed everyone their labels, "Made in the U.S.A." So would the Minister look at maybe making something simple like a "Made in the NWT" logo to help build that pride? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 120-15(4): Promotion Of NWT Manufacturing

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is something that's come up in my recent consultations with chambers of commerce across the Northwest Territories. We had some discussion around such an initiative in Fort Smith, I believe. It is something we'd like to look at. We've talked internally about our arts and crafts and how to ensure there is a premium and additional margin for people producing arts and crafts in the Northwest Territories. We've talked about branding and tags that would have some reference to the artists who created the crafts. But with that and with that branding certainly will come "Made in the NWT" labels. Could that be expanded to other products? It probably could. It's something that I'd like to consider in my discussions with chambers of commerce and I think it is a good initiative that could be discussed and debated as the program service review is undertaken. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 120-15(4): Promotion Of NWT Manufacturing

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are more than 400 people who work in this industry of northern manufacturing and I think it's important that we take a serious look at that. This manufacturing industry commits over \$63 million to our northern economy, and I think it's more than a laughable number; I think it's quite a serious number that we have to pay serious attention to. So I believe in my heart that they deserve a lot of respect. So would the Minister seriously consider and maybe commit today to at least look into a logo program, which would only cost pennies, so we can put stickers on products made in the North so we can continue that recognition? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 120-15(4): Promotion Of NWT Manufacturing

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll certainly investigate that possibility, and I think it could be a component of an NWT manufacturing strategy. This is something that I think is very important. So I can give the Member the assurance that we'll discuss that as a department; discuss it with the BDIC; and certainly talk to chambers of commerce about that initiative; and, again, give the Member my commitment that we do intend to develop an NWT manufacturing strategy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 120-15(4): Promotion Of NWT Manufacturing

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that commitment from the Minister, because a little logo program doesn't need a lot of administration and a long time research, so I look forward to his response on that when he gets back to me. Would he also look towards making a web site? B.C. has a "Made in B.C." program and apparently it's hugely accepted and seen as a special launch to promote B.C. manufactured products. Would he look at creating or maybe implementing something similar to the B.C. "Made in B.C." program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 120-15(4): Promotion Of NWT Manufacturing

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll admit that I'm not familiar with the "Made in B.C." program. The concept sounds sound, and I can give the Member my assurance again that as we investigate an NWT manufacturing strategy, we'll look at all these possibilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

Question 121-15(4): Access To Northern Strategy Funds

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Honourable Joe Handley. It's just a question on some Northern Strategy dollars that have rolled out in the last couple of months. I just want to ask the Minister if any of these Northern Strategy dollars have been accessed by any of the communities in the NWT to date. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 121-15(4): Access To Northern Strategy Funds

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, no. No communities have accessed any of the money. The money will not be available to any of the Members until this House has debated the proposal and has agreed with it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

Supplementary To Question 121-15(4): Access To Northern Strategy Funds

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Premier, for that. I guess the proposal that this House will be debating, are we going to bring that proposal forward any time soon and get the debate over and done with so that communities can access these Northern Strategy dollars? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 121-15(4): Access To Northern Strategy Funds

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, yes, the money is identified in the supp and will be open for debate at that time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

Supplementary To Question 121-15(4): Access To Northern Strategy Funds

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess it has just come to my attention that Nunavut and the Yukon have already had access to these Northern Strategy dollars and the communities are already putting proposals forward to spend some of that money. I guess the Minister is well aware of the divisiveness in the communities that has arisen because of these Northern Strategy dollars. Does this government have any plan of assisting these communities to work out and develop some good community plans to spend some of these northern infrastructure dollars? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 121-15(4): Access To Northern Strategy Funds

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, last spring when we had the Circle of Northern Leaders meeting, we heard very loud and clear messages from local leaders that they wanted the ability to lead, to be leaders. They are elected. They wanted to be able to decide on the highest priority of their communities. Generally, that's what we heard across the Territories. So we have designed this proposal in a way that responds to that. Having said that, if some communities would prefer to submit applications to us and have us decide amongst the applications that we receive, then we're starting to prepare to do that. That's been the conventional way of doing it, and that's always an option for communities if it's too divisive or they have other reasons why they would like us to do it. They have three years to access the money, and we'd be pleased to do it, but at the same time we want to respond to the message we heard loud and clear from local leaders to let them lead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Final supplementary, Mr. Villeneuve.

Supplementary To Question 121-15(4): Access To Northern Strategy Funds

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was just wondering, I know the communities probably don't want the government to decide how they're going to spend these dollars because the autonomy has gone to the community level anyway. But I just wanted to ask the Minister if the government would propose or consider an option of being mediator to a lot of these community governments that are having problems with each other in developing good comprehensive plans on how they're going to spend these dollars and where their priorities should go. Is the government willing to entertain a position of that nature? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 121-15(4): Access To Northern Strategy Funds

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we would be willing to do that, but we will not interfere unless the community asks us to come in. We will have people, through the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, who will advise them on how the money has to be accounted for. But in terms of setting their priorities, we won't get involved with that unless they are asking us to help them do it. Of course, if they have questions, we're always open to answer questions, provide advice, provide help wherever we can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Going back to my Member's statement today on the pipeline, I have a couple of questions for Mr. Handley. I read, with interest, some of the comments he made in the paper about some of the demands being excessive. Does he believe that this could possibly kill the project? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. That's kind of asking the Minister for an opinion, so I would have to rule that question out of order. If you want to rephrase your question, Mr. McLeod.

Question 122-15(4): Government Position On Future Of Pipeline

MR. MCLEOD: Rephrase it? Okay. Let me try that again.

---Laughter

What is the GNWT's position on this? Does the GNWT believe that this could possibly hurt or kill the project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I did it again.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. I will ask the Minister to respond on what the GNWT's position is on this. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 122-15(4): Government Position On Future Of Pipeline

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly don't feel like the Maytag repairman anymore. Mr. Speaker, our government's position is that the pipeline will happen. It will take place. But the negotiations are proceeding. Every day, I am in contact with some of the parties, all of the parties, depending on what is happening, and monitoring what is going on. This is very tough negotiating. There are \$7 billion plus just in the expenses, plus huge amounts of revenue if it goes ahead. It is a huge amount of revenue for us as a government, for the federal government, for the producers, for the aboriginal organizations and governments. So it is very tough negotiating. But our view is that this pipeline will go ahead. Any time people make demands that are put forward as ultimatums, that tends to threaten things. I don't think it serves a really good purpose. We believe that this is good for the North and will happen. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. The time for oral questions has expired; however, I will allow the Member to have supplementary questions. Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary To Question 122-15(4): Government Position On Future Of Pipeline

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Premier for that. Let me try another one. I know the Premier has been working hard trying to get all parties together here to get this thing going. Is there anything more that this government can be doing? Are we a serious player in some of these negotiations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 122-15(4): Government Position On Future Of Pipeline

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, we are a very serious player in this project. It will make a tremendous difference to communities along the valley. I have travelled to many of the communities. I have seen the situation that people are living in where there is unemployment and poor housing and so on. This is an opportunity that we...

AN HON. MEMBER: No roads.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: No roads. We don't want to let this one go by. Mr. Speaker, this project is too important for us to sit by. We are major players in it. Some things we are not directly involved in. For example, on the financial considerations that the industry is dealing with, the federal government is directly involved. But we are being kept informed all the time and we will watch that closely because, in the long run, we are the ones as northerners that will end up paying a large part of that bill. Yes, we are watching all the way along. We are a significant player here. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary To Question 122-15(4): Government Position On Future Of Pipeline

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the Premier that this project is important to the valley. With all of these demands being made from all of the parties involved, is this holding up the talks with Ottawa on this resource revenue sharing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 122-15(4): Government Position On Future Of Pipeline

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, no, there isn't a direct relationship between our negotiations on devolution and resource revenue sharing and the pipeline. But we do realize that if there is a pipeline, it means huge financial benefits that will generate to the North and to ourselves as a government. If there is no pipeline, then we have lost a great opportunity, in our view. But in terms of direct relationship, no. I am sure, though, as our negotiators, the federal negotiators and the aboriginal negotiators get to the table, then the information on the value of the pipeline is certainly on everybody's mind. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to seek unanimous consent to return to item 5 on today's Order Paper. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Are there any nays? There are no nays. We will return to Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Ramsay.

REVERT TO ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Mr. Brian Dejardins, with the Northwest Territories Association of Communities, who is with us here today.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to express my personal thanks to Sarah Coey-Simpson who is here as a Page this week. She is going home tomorrow, so I would like to say thank you. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 8-15(4): Access To Special Needs Funding

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

1. How much money, on a year-by-year basis, has been allocated for special needs funding for the last five years for the NWT as a whole?
2. What is the breakdown each DEA/DEC received for this funding for special needs over the same time period on a yearly basis?
3. What are the criteria set out to determine how students with special needs qualify for special needs support?
4. What is the process used to determine who among our student population have special needs and require additional support?
5. Please provide all ministerial directives issued in this regard.
6. What is the number of students who require special needs support in our school system at the current time?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Written Question 9-15(4): NWT Emergency Measures

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

1. What departments are involved in the Emergency Measures Act?
2. Who in the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs takes the lead role?
3. How often are the emergency measures policy guidelines updated?
4. How many times does the staff meet with the communities?
5. How are communities categorized in the emergency measures?
6. Are there any territory-wide emergency measure action plans to deal with territory-wide issues?

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

Bill 7: Personal Directives Act

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that the Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 7, Personal Directives Act, and we choose to report that Bill 7 is now ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 27-15(4): Pension Administration Report - Retiring Allowances Act And Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act As At March 31, 2005

MR. SPEAKER: In accordance with Section 21 of the Retiring Allowances Act and Section 11.1 of the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act, I hereby table the Pension Administration Report - Retiring Allowances Act and Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act as at March 31, 2005.

Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Minister's Statement 24-15(4), Sessional Statement; Bill 3, An Act to Amend

the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act; Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Education Act; Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Judicature Act; Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act; and Bill 9, Municipal Statutes Amendment Act, with Mr. Pokiak in the chair.

ITEM 19: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): We have a number of items to be brought forward today. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Chairman, the committee wishes to consider Bill 8 and Bill 9.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Please repeat that, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee wishes to consider Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act, and Bill 9, Municipal Statutes Amendment Act.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): At this time, can we take a short break?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Good afternoon and welcome back to Committee of the Whole. Right now we are going to review Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act. Would the Minister responsible introduce the bill please, Mr. Floyd Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to introduce Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act. The petroleum products division of the Department of Public Works and Services was established in 1972 to provide fuel sales dispensing and delivery services in those communities not serviced by the private sector. The petroleum products division currently provides these services in 15 communities across the Northwest Territories.

The petroleum products division administers the petroleum products revolving fund under the authority of the Revolving Funds Act and the Financial Administration Act. The revolving fund provides the resources to purchase and distribute the fuel consumed annually in the communities we serve. In accordance with the Revolving Funds Act, the petroleum products division is required to recover advances from the revolving fund through retail sales.

There is also a petroleum products stabilization fund that is intended to protect consumers from fluctuations in costs and minimize the need for frequent adjustments to retail fuel prices. Operational surpluses or losses at the end of each fiscal year are credited or charged respectively to their stabilization fund. Currently the maximum balance in the stabilization fund cannot exceed plus or minus \$5 million at the end of any fiscal year. Should the balance at the end of any fiscal year be above the surplus of \$5 million, the excess surplus is credited to the consolidated

revenue fund. Deficit balances exceeding \$5 million are charged to the Public Works and Services appropriation.

The maximum limit of the stabilization fund was established well before division of the Northwest Territories on April 1, 1999, when the petroleum products division served over 40 communities and had annual sales revenue of approximately \$60 million.

Today, Mr. Chairman, only 15 communities are served with annual sales revenues of approximately \$14 million. This is approximately an 80 percent reduction over pre-division levels. There is no longer a rationale for the stabilization fund to accommodate \$5 million in profits or losses as the petroleum products division no longer has a customer base to service this level of debt without imposing undue hardship on consumers through drastic price increases.

Mr. Chairman, this fact was recognized in the 2002-03 fiscal year when the Legislative Assembly approved the write-off of \$4.191 million deficit balance of the stabilization fund.

The current balance of the stabilization fund is a surplus of \$472,000. The petroleum products division is projecting a loss of approximately \$230,000 for the fiscal year 2005-06 which will be charged to the petroleum products stabilization fund resulting in a projected surplus of \$242,000 as of March 31, 2006.

A new maximum limit of plus or minus \$1 million will still fulfil the intent of the stabilization fund and more accurately reflect the maximum accumulated debt level that the petroleum products division can service without imposing drastic price increases on its customers. That concludes my opening remarks. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Minister Roland. At this time I would like to ask Mrs. Groenewegen for opening comments on Bill 8. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development met on October 11, 2005, to review Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act. Following the clause-by-clause review, a motion was carried to report Bill 8 to the Assembly as ready for Committee of the Whole. This concludes the committee's general comments on Bill 8. Individual committee members may have questions or comments as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. At this time we would like to ask the Minister if he would like to bring in any witnesses.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Can the Sergeant-at-Arms please bring in the witnesses? Thank you.

Thank you. Minister Roland, can you introduce your staff, please? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Joining me this afternoon from the Department of Justice is Mara Heder, and with me is the director of the petroleum products division from the Department of Public Works and Services, Mr. Mike Aumond. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments on Bill 8. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to speak in favour of this amendment. I think the proposal to adjust the fund is prudent business management on the part of the FMBS. From the information provided, I think the new ceiling or floor of \$1 million, given the scale and the size of accounts in the number of communities we serve, is a good piece of work. I am happy to see this and I will be voting for it.

In the midst of such a volatile petroleum pricing environment as we have right now, I would want to ask the Minister or his officials if there is any extra concern. There are some forecasts given here, Mr. Chairman, that at the end of the current fiscal year we will still have a bit of projected surplus of about \$250 million. Is that forecast still a good one, considering the current volatility of prices? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the estimates we have given there are based on the refuelling that has been done recently, so we have had our final communities refuelled through the barging system, and this already incorporates the new prices we paid for the winter resupply that had occurred previously. We feel that we are fairly close with that number.

The reason we are projecting the loss in the stabilization fund is to offset some of the increases on home heating oil. We are dipping into that stabilization fund so that we don't have to bring the price up as far as we would if we did not have that fund there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The PPD serves 15 communities today. How many of those are resupplied by barge or summer resupply only, and how many are winter resupplied? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe we do resupply by barge to six communities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have any further questions.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. General comments from Members? Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you. Just a comment here to the Minister in terms of the surplus that is projected in this department. Is there any type of assistance in helping with the high costs of fuel in the communities in the Northwest Territories? Because of this surplus we have projected here, is there any type of discussion going on in assisting the people like granny from Nahanni, in terms of the high costs of fuel and the amount of money we get in this department? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated in my opening comments, the initial surplus of the fund that we identified was \$472,000. To help offset the increased price of product in communities, we've dipped into that fund and that's the \$230,000 we earmarked as a loss. We are offsetting the cost of home heating oil by 10 cents per litre in the communities we service. So in a way, we are trying to help those in the communities we service. We can only do this because we have that small surplus there. Once that surplus is gone, we are at the full cost of product price that will be charged in each community. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The concern I had is he just indicated that the long-term plans is when we run out of the funds. What then? What are people to expect and what type of assistance will this revolving fund do to help the people? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The stabilization fund is to do what we just spoke of, to try to offset some of the sharp increases. As well, it can provide for decreases in prices if there was surplus there. The way we are going now, we would find if we kept up the practice that we had in the past, we would be in a deficit position of close to \$1 million if we didn't make some of the changes that we had in the last year. Because of the act and direction given of full cost recovery, we would have to come in for some drastic increases. These latest increases are part of a result of going full cost recovery on the product, as well as the increased price of the product that we have had to pay from the distributors. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: These are my final comments to the Minister. The surplus is also going to be credited to the consolidated revenue fund. Why are we throwing this into this huge fund where it will be distributed across the board? Can't we help people with their home heating costs rather than distribute it right across the board? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The dollars that are identified as surplus would stay within the stabilization fund until they exceed the amount of the stabilization fund. So with this amendment we are proposing, our stabilization fund would be set at \$1 million. If our surplus was to grow beyond \$1 million, anything over \$1 million would go into the consolidated revenue. We would keep up to that maximum amount. The same would go the other direction. If we were to go in a deficit of more than \$1 million, then we would have to adjust our prices to come back up to offset that deficit.

So with the maximum allowable amount that we are proposing here, we feel we would be able to maintain that or stay close to neutral on the amount without having to

drastically make changes to prices or to be putting money back into the consolidated revenue fund. If we had so much surplus that we went beyond the maximum allowable here, we would have to look at reducing our prices. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chairman, can the Minister advise me how the revolving fund will be impacted by the contractual arrangements we have with the small communities I serve in the Sahtu and assist them in the operations?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the contractual arrangements we have for dispensing of fuel in the communities is done on a community-by-community basis and seeing who would be interested when we put these packages out for response from the public. The fund isn't set up to affect the price of those contracts for delivery. What the fund is there to do is mitigate the increase that we would have to go forward with if the price of the product has climbed as much as it has. From last winter's resupply through to this summer, there's been a drastic increase in the price of product. By example, we have lowered the impact on communities with home heating oil by 10 cents because we are in a positive situation in this fund. At the same time, we have to ensure that we don't go into a negative side of the balance, and the directive now given is that all communities would be very close to 100 percent cost of the product being delivered to the community. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Yakeleya, thank you. General comments. Clause by clause. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a quick question on the stabilization fund, also. Just getting back to what the Minister was saying that communities are going to start paying 100 percent of what the actual product is to deliver to the communities, the stabilization fund that offsets projected losses and is not offset by revenue...It's to offset any changes to the cost in the communities. How would that happen in the first place? If you buy a product and you ship it to the communities and you put a price on it that's going to recover the cost or hopefully most of it, how would the price get changed? Even if the market changes, there was a cost that was incurred and the market really doesn't have any effect on the communities that are annually supplied unless the cost changes from year to year. How would that stabilization fund offset any changes that could happen during the middle of the year? I just don't see how it works. Maybe the Minister can clarify that for me. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, before we went to a full cost recovery model for the pricing of the products, there were some communities that were paying more than the actual cost of product in that community and helping some of the smaller communities. We've had to make the change because it

was deemed not to be fair to those communities that would have to pay more than what it cost for them to get that product to the community. The stabilization fund itself would come into impact in the areas and times when refuelling does happen. So there would be no changes throughout the year as long as we did not run short of product and resupply at another time of the year. The goal is with our tankage in the communities and with the expected usage of the fuel that we have in those communities, we should not be running out of product. So there wouldn't be an impact until the following resupply time.

It was asked earlier how many communities are serviced by barge. We have six communities serviced by barge alone. There are two other communities who receive barge shipments along with winter road shipments. So there are eight communities by barge, but they also receive winter shipments and that can change the price, so it wouldn't be on an annual basis. So the communities we serve through the petroleum products division are somewhat protected from the day-to-day fluctuations that we feel in the larger communities where it is serviced by the private sector. That is both a good thing and a bad thing, because through a community in the private sector, the price of the product would climb and be adjusted monthly or daily, in some cases, whereas in our case, the price would not be adjusted until we had a resupply and there could be a significant difference between a previous year's product price and the new price we pay on the same product. That's what we found ourselves facing this summer. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Minister. I just want to get this stabilization fund straight. I know in the past when some communities paid a little more than they would have had to offset the higher cost of fuel in some of the other communities, that wouldn't affect the stabilization fund at all, or it shouldn't. What criteria are used to get this stabilization fund implemented to a community? Is there some kind of cost ratio that is used to determine when a community needs some of the stabilization money to offset the high price in retail gas prices? How does the government determine when the stabilization fund gets tapped into by a specific community other than fuel shortages like Lutselk'e with the planes going in? I am sure the stabilization fund kicked in on that. Other than that, besides the communities running out of fuel, what criteria are used? Is there a 30 cent difference, 10 cents or what? What is the government's rationale for when the stabilization fund kicks in for any community? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Minister.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the stabilization fund, as it's set up, would not address community-by-community specifics. What we would look at doing, as we have done in this case, is to look at the total amount of the product cost and how much of an impact that would have. We set an across-the-board 10-cent reduction in the price of home heating oil. So in each community it isn't set at a flat rate, either. The cost of that product to get to that community is 100 percent cost recovery as we go forward here. Every community would pay for the price of the product, the

shipping and the contract of that community to have it delivered. So we wouldn't necessarily do it where one community saw a drastic increase and try to address just one community situation. Because the product price across the board has gone out so much, we looked at implementing just a 10-cent reduction on the home heating oil across the board. So that's for every community we service through the petroleum products division.

The formula that we would look at is based on when resupply is done; we would look at the amount of increase and look at the affordability issues. In this case, we focussed on home heating oil because home heating oil is essential compared to gas for vehicles, and so on. So that is why we've targeted the 10-cent reduction for home heating oil. For more detail on the stabilization fund, when you do receive costs or refuelling happens and the ratios used, I can have Mr. Aumond provide more detail if committee members want.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Is that agreed by committee? Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This year the price of fuel, diesel fuel in particular, which is used for home heating fuel, increased by approximately 40 percent. We were unable, as a program, to absorb those kinds of increases without putting ourselves into a serious deficit situation where we wouldn't really recover without having to impose more drastic price increases that we just saw recently.

As the Minister indicated, we were able to use the surplus funding, half of it approximately this year, to mitigate the increase in the price of fuel by 10 cents a litre. So we are charging right now about 10 cents per litre less than the full cost across the board. FMB made the decision to target home heating fuel as it's really a requirement for shelter.

As time goes on, if nothing changes and we continue to subsidize heating fuel, then eventually we will have no more surplus left and we would be in a deficit situation, which would require another decision as to whether or not we wanted to continue to provide that type of relief for people in the small communities.

Before we went to full-cost pricing, I guess we were imposing a blended approach whereby some communities, or for some products, we would be making a profit and use that to offset the costs in the higher-cost communities. As long as the price of fuel was in a relatively narrow range, as it was over the past four previous years, we were able to do that. Since the price of product has spiked dramatically, we would really have to increase the price in those communities by such an extent that it would be really unfair to ask them to provide that type of a subsidy to the other communities.

That leads us back to the approach of going back to full-cost recovery. In terms of the matter of using the stabilization fund to mitigate these prices into the future, it will depend on what the price of product is in each community and also what the community contractors are charging us to dispense the delivery in the communities. Those are the two cost differences between communities in terms of the cost components of the price. So as long as those two continue to move, then the price will move in accordance. Depending on how high the price of fuel

goes, then we will have to make a decision on how much of the stabilization fund into the future we want to use to mitigate or offset those increased costs. I guess one way you could look at it is what is really affordable in terms of home heating fuel versus gasoline which is a more discretionary product. Hopefully that answers your question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. General comments. Are Members agreed to go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act. Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Bill as a whole?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Does committee agree that Bill 8 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Bill 8 is now ready for third reading. Mr. Minister, I would like to thank you and your staff, Mr. Aumond and Ms. Heder. Thank you very much.

We will just wait for a staff change until we go on to Bill 9. Thank you.

Thank you, committee members. We will now proceed with Bill 9, Municipal Statutes Amendment Act. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister, Mr. Michael McLeod, for his opening comments. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and honourable Members. I am pleased to speak to you today about Bill 9, Municipal Statutes Amendment Act. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the members of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development who conducted the public hearing on Tuesday, October 11th. Those Members were Mr. Menicoche, Mr. Ramsay and Mr. Hawkins under the able leadership of Mrs. Groenewegen, the chair, and they provided very thoughtful questions and comments on the proposed amendments. Bill 9 contains three amendments to the municipal statutes, which include the Charter Communities Act, the Cities, Towns and Villages Act and the Hamlets Act.

The bill before you proposes three changes to each of the municipal statutes, and all three changes are in the nature of housekeeping amendments. By way of background, the current municipal legislation was passed during the Sixth Session of the 14th Legislative Assembly and became effective on April 1, 2004. That legislation modernized the Charter Communities Act, the Cities, Towns and Villages Act and the Hamlets Act. Since then, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and community governments have worked with the new legislation. That experience has made it apparent that the amendments contained in the bill before you are required.

The first amendment deals with refinancing of long-term debt. Under the current legislation, if a community government wishes to refinance long-term debt, they must seek further approval of the voters or the Minister or both. This is true even when the original debt was approved by the voters or the Minister. This procedure is both time consuming and very costly for the community governments.

The amendment we propose will enable community governments to create a bylaw authorizing refinancing of long-term debt that does not require the approval of either the voters or the Minister, so long as three conditions are met. First, long-term debt must be used solely for the purposes of refinancing an existing long-term debt. Second, approval of either the voters, the Minister or both was obtained for the original debt or it was exempt from such approvals. Third, the principal amount to be borrowed does not exceed the principal amount borrowed under the long-term debt being refinanced.

The second amendment proposed is for written notice. This amendment will require a person who intends to bring an action for loss or damage from snow and roadways or just repair of roads to provide written notice within 30 days of the event that gave rise to the action. Communities can establish a longer notice period through a bylaw.

Communities have expressed concern that currently, a person can indicate an intention to sue verbally to anyone associated with a municipality in an informal way that may not be recognized as serious notice that an event has occurred. The proposed amendment will clarify that if an event has occurred, it must be indicated in writing to the senior administrative officer. Clarifying the intent of this provision will have a positive impact on the liability exposure of community governments.

The third amendment deals with transferring of unpaid land-based service charges to property taxes in communities that are municipal taxing authorities. Before the coming into force of the new municipal legislation, municipal taxation authorities could transfer unpaid water and sewer bills to property taxes. That function was inadvertently omitted in the comprehensive amendments and needs to be reinstated. This amendment is intended to do just that.

Until this proposed amendment is passed, municipal taxation authorities have to carry the unpaid water and sewer charges while continuing to attempt to collect them. Once this amendment is approved, municipal taxing authorities will have again have the authority to transfer unpaid water and sewer charges to property taxes and effect collection through the property tax process.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to advise you that the department has consulted with the Northwest Territories Association of Communities and they are supportive of the proposed amendments. Mr. Chairman, I look forward to the opportunity to answer any questions members of the Committee of the Whole may have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mrs. Groenewegen, opening comments. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic

Development met on October 11, 2005, to review Bill 9, Municipal Statutes Amendment Act. This act makes minor amendments to the Charter Communities Act, the Cities, Towns and Villages Act and the Hamlets Act.

The committee asked for an explanation of the new amendment that deals with transferring unpaid service charges to property taxes. The amendment will allow a municipal taxing authority to recover any outstanding bills or fines that relate to real property and charge them against property taxes. A homeowner, for instance, could lose their property over unpaid parking tickets or library funds. The committee was particularly concerned that there is no dispute resolution mechanism associated with this municipal power.

The Minister and his staff advised that this function was inadvertently omitted in the comprehensive amendments and needs to be reinstated. The Minister further advised that communities have requested this amendment be made because they have had to carry unpaid water and sewer charges, while continuing to attempt to collect them, and this has caused a hardship.

As part of the New Deal, this is a tool that will allow all municipalities to collect outstanding fees that are owed to them. Finally, the Minister advised that there are no dispute mechanisms, but an appeal process can be put in place by the municipalities. Following the clause-by-clause review, a motion was carried to report Bill 9 to the Assembly as ready for Committee of the Whole. This concludes the committee's general comments on Bill 9. Individual committee members may have questions or comments as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. At this time I would like to ask the Minister if he would like to bring in any witnesses.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Yes, I would, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Would the Sergeant-at-Arms please bring in the witnesses? Thank you. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Agreed. Thank you, Mr. Minister. Can you introduce your staff please?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, with me today I have Debbie DeLancey, the deputy minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, and also, on my right, I have Sheila Bassi-Kellett, the director of corporate affairs with MACA, and Mara Heder who is the counsel with Department of Justice.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments on Bill 9 by Members. I recognize Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. With respect to the amendments on Bill 9, I, too, would like to voice my concern with respect to the municipalities being able to collect outstanding fees that are owed to them through the taxation bill. It is laid out clearly here in the chair's opening remarks of the dispute mechanism that is noticeably absent. Already in the small communities, people are disputing their taxation bill because of overlaps of band and territorial government land issues or just

confusion of who owns what land. That confusion already exists. Now we are also giving municipalities the opportunity to tack on water bills, library fines, et cetera, on these bills when they are already in dispute. I would like to know what the Minister has planned to build this dispute mechanism for this amendment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the ability to transfer unpaid water or sewer bills, service bills, within a municipality applies to the municipal taxation authorities, which are basically the tax-based communities. This is a section that was in there historically. There has been a request to put it back in place. We don't formally have a dispute mechanism as part of this bill. However, there is a section that allows the communities, through the municipal legislation, to set up a bylaw that will allow for the creation of a dispute mechanism or an appeal board. So the communities have that ability to do so. We, as a government, are not in a position to force them to do so, but the ability is there.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I just have difficulty in playing a part in allowing somebody to lose their house and their land because they owe a library fine and they refuse to pay it for whatever reason, but they are maintaining their land taxes diligently, as many hard-working people do. If they have a dispute over water and sewer services and they aren't paying it, it appears that we are allowing a system where they can lose access to their house and land because we are allowing the municipalities to tack on these bills and outstanding fees on the taxation bills. As a government, we are allowing this without giving it the thoughtful process of how are we going to stay responsible for this process. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it's our view that this is a process of governments being responsible and also giving the municipal taxation authorities some tools in their toolkit to be able to collect outstanding arrears in the area of water and sewer and other services.

I want to apologize to the members of the committee. During our discussion, there was concern raised about what could qualify and we had to go back and do some research to really spell out the specifics. We have been able to do so, and we've been able to define what falls under this category. It's only services that can be transferred over; arrears for services rendered by the community. We had talked about parking tickets and apparently this does not qualify. We have clarification on that. So this is something I wanted to clear up.

There is really no other mechanism for a municipal government to collect, failing this being in place; I guess a collection agency or just plainly cutting off the service. The communities wanted to be able to resort to a system that will allow them to put this as part of their property tax and get them a lot stronger way of collecting arrears.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am glad the Minister clarified some of the allowables, as it were. I don't know; my gut feeling tells me it's an uncomfortable amendment. I know it's already in there, but this particular amendment is uncomfortable to me. I don't think it's really thought out. Once again, we end up in a situation where something sounds like a good idea when we discuss it in general, but when we put it into practicalities, it just doesn't work out. I think here is another system that is just not going to work out because it's the individual, the taxpayer, who is going to end up losing out in the end. Once again, in the small communities we have taxpayers that dispute it right from the get-go, and now to further burden them with water/sewer charges or whatever other charges on their tax bill...The Minister said it himself. They won't be getting water and sewer if they aren't paying it in the first place, so I don't know.

There are people already disputing their land taxes in the small communities I represent, and to further burden their cause by adding water and sewer charges, I just don't see what type of dispute mechanism the department is willing to put into this. Why are we just going to abdicate all of the responsibility? What kind of mechanism is going to be in place? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to point out that it should be clear that the ability to transfer unpaid charges to property taxes only applies to municipal taxation authorities, which are tax-based communities. That's something that was in place historically from the 1970s. This is not new. This was by mistake left out when the drafting of the legislation was brought into place during the 14th Assembly. We are trying to rectify that. The communities have asked us to do so. There is the ability for municipal taxation authorities to create a body that will deal with disputes or appeals. That is under the legislation. That is through section 72(g), to be exact. We cannot force them to do that, but they have the ability to do that. If somebody feels like they aren't being treated fairly, then they should go directly to the municipal council of their community. I am sure the council would be in a position to deal with it. If council is ignoring the right for an appeal, I am sure the public will change that at the next voting day.

---Laughter

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I have to ask the right question. Can the taxpayer lose everything he owns because he owes an outstanding water and sewer bill, yet his taxes remain paid up? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Yes, Mr. Chairman, that's correct. If there are certain significant arrears and the municipality is unable to collect them, there is the possibility that the properties could be seized.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I cannot be in favour of something that doesn't have an adequate dispute resolution attached to it. With that, I will end my comments. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am in favour of the amendments that are coming forward today. I will be voting in favour of them, but I do have some questions for ultimate clarity for the public. There is a notice for 30 days, and I had concerns whether that restricted someone's right over the long term for suing the municipality. If someone slips and falls and didn't notice the ill effects right away, does the Minister see that this notice of 30 days restricts somebody's ability to sue for damages or the potential to sue for damages related to some type of slip and fall that they didn't provide notice of? Can I get some clarity from the Minister on that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there is a 30-day requirement that notice would have to be given and a two-year statute of limitations after the 30 days to start action. Failing that, they would have to demonstrate to the court that there are reasonable grounds to explain why they couldn't provide the 30-day notice. The 30-day notice is there so that the municipality has opportunity, in the case of somebody who slipped and fell, to see what the conditions were, to be able to check out why and how it could actually happen. If it were any longer than that, it would be very difficult. It also gives the municipality notice that there is a potential problem, and they can rectify it. That's why the 30-day period is there. Other jurisdictions have different periods. I think Alberta has 21 days and B.C. has longer, so it differs. Most jurisdictions have a certain time period when you have to give notice by.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the answer by the Minister. So a person can still sue if that's the appropriate mechanism.

My next question is regarding the transferring of unpaid services to property taxes. It was I who asked if parking tickets would apply. The other day it was okay and today it isn't. The Minister had said it's only applicable to services. Could I get the definition of how the Minister sees what services are? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that's correct. We had to do some research and get some clarity on what could actually apply. Apparently anything that is considered to be offences would not be applicable in this case. The transfer of unpaid charges only applies to the services that are provided by the City. Maybe I could get our legal counsel to give further clarity on the actual definition.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Heder.

MS. HEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under this provision, the only services that can actually be charged are the ones that relate to real property, and the specific services are actually defined in another section of each of those acts. In the case of the Charter Communities Act, it's section 62. There is actually quite a long list. I can read those off, Mr. Chairman, if you wish. Okay, they are actually defined in each statute. So in the case of the charter communities, it would be section 62, so you can actually know which particular charges you would be looking at that could be applied to real property.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Heder. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess my opinion on that is a parking ticket may not seem like a service to the person who is getting it, but it is a service to the community, as well as a speeding ticket. That's a safety issue. I guess it's a matter of definition. I am in favour of that. Would you define a library charge a service in this regard, because this was mentioned earlier today? I was asking specifically to parking and speeding tickets because there are people who have quite a lot of parking and speeding tickets out there and it makes it difficult for the city to collect on them. There are other things like ambulance fees that the City had difficulty collecting when I was a councillor. This only applies to those people who have property. Specifically, do you see ambulance or library fees falling into that category? That wasn't an idea of mine, but let's get clarity on that while we are here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the services that qualify under this change are unpaid charges that provide a service. Anything that is considered to be an offence or anything that would go through a court system or quasi-judicial system would not qualify. That may be a simpler way of defining it. It's a service provided by the municipal taxation authority, and if the service is provided by the City for an ambulance service, then that would qualify. A parking ticket would not qualify because there is a separate process for that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will keep my comments fairly brief. I appreciated the fact that we had the opportunity to go through the public hearing on these three amendments on Tuesday. I certainly can feel for the municipalities in their need to get these amendments approved and get on with life. I will be supporting the amendments as they stand. The one quick issue that I wanted to bring up, and I don't know if it's the way things are normally done, but we had the public hearing on Tuesday and somehow something funny happened right after that meeting obviously, because I think the department went back and consulted with the NWTAC after the public meeting and raised some alarm bells with the Yellowknife city councillors. We got a number of phone calls and e-mails yesterday for whatever reason. I think it was much to do about nothing. I would like to know, Mr. Chairman, if the Minister can tell me who

consulted with the Northwest Territories Association of Communities. If we have legislation before us dealing with the Housing Corporation and we go through a public hearing, does the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation go over and consult with the LHOs? The same can be said for any one of the departments. Is this a common occurrence? If it is, I would like to know because certainly if the Northwest Territories Association of Communities had some questions or concerns, they could have been at the public hearing the other day. I came away yesterday thinking that the City of Yellowknife thought that the Yellowknife MLAs were adamantly opposed to these amendments, and they're not. I didn't hear that at the meeting the other day. We asked some simple questions. That's our job. I would like to ask the Minister for a response. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, it's our position, and certainly through my encouragement, to share our information with the municipalities. We are working with them, and we have a partnership arrangement. We have a number of working groups established, so we take every opportunity to share our information, share our discussions with them. In this case, we did debrief the NWT Association of Communities. We had our staff meet with them and inform them of what went on. Yellowknife is a member of that association. We can't control what they do with that information. It's up to them. We make it a standard practice to provide information or any kind of request they come forward with, especially when it's public information.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the Minister's response to that, but again none of us that were in that meeting in GED knew that was going to take place. Perhaps in the future the Minister could let us know that that type of consultation is going to take place after the fact. I know it took place before the fact, but I didn't know it was going to take place after the fact. I know it's very important for the City of Yellowknife, very important for the tax-based municipalities to get on with things, and these amendments will allow them to do this. I don't see any difficulty in approving these. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Once again, I will point out that it was a public presentation, and we would certainly encourage the NWTAC to provide people to attend those meetings in person. We will voice the concerns that are being related to us for sure. However, having said that, it's still our position, and I think it should be expected as standard practice on our part, that we will be presenting our information to the NWTAC. We have committed to doing that with them and have been doing that for the past several years. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. I have Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I have some general comments and a question with respect to these amendments. My general comments are related to what Mr. Ramsay just stated. Listening to Mr. Ramsay's statement and the Minister's response, I think the Minister may be misunderstanding or missing the point that the Members on this side are trying to make with regard to what transpired in the standing committee process. Mr. Chair, let me just put it on record that I have no problem supporting these amendments. They are quite minor in nature. I have to tell you that I've been here...this is my sixth year. We spent almost the entire last Assembly addressing the needs of the NWTAC. We went through a huge revision of municipal legislation. All along the way, I believe that the House showed strong support for the aspirations of the committee.

Another thing about amendments that have to do with municipal power, I have a huge deference for the powers of municipal governments. I believe that the devolution of power to municipalities is a good thing. I could only speak largely for our City of Yellowknife. Their elected body, their independent body, is accountable to our citizens in a way that we are. They should have the freedom to make those choices. I have to tell you that it came as a great deal of surprise when we Yellowknife Members received these e-mails yesterday with red flags all over them. I had no idea that these amendments were even controversial. As I was trying to remember what these were, for those who don't understand how we review bills in this House, we do get what is called a legislative proposal at the beginning of the process where the government comes and tells us a general idea about what these bills are suggesting. I do remember seeing the legislative proposal for this amendment way back, probably months ago. I remember being told that some of the amendments were something that were housekeeping in nature and that it was one that was missed. Substantively and procedurally, I would have been inclined to support them anyway. Given that I am not a member of GED, it would have been a natural course for me to have a second look at that once GED brings it to this forum, which is where it is at now.

I can understand the Minister saying that, as the Minister of MACA, and the department has a close relationship with the NWTAC, and so they should. But I think what he is missing is the fact that something got lost in translation. However they interpret it, it got into a real misrepresentation of what transpired at the meeting. I think we should all be alarmed by that. I think there is some misunderstanding, maybe in the departments about what it is that the MLAs do here. I say that in terms of many other things as well. Maybe they should be reminded. We ask questions. It is our job to deliberate. We should be comfortable. We should feel like we are comfortable in asking questions about what some of these amendments are. It shouldn't be misinterpreted and misled to believe that, somehow, because we are asking questions, that we are opposing them. I have a very serious concern about that because half-baked or half-interpreted information can lead to problems that probably should not be warranted. I just want to put that on record and to state that I have an open-door policy with the NWTAC and the city council. I am always open to give my opinion about things that we talk about here. I am generally inclined to support whatever the municipal level and the local government wants to do.

That is my general comment. The Minister could choose to respond to that or not. I hope that the staff and everybody else will take our questions in good faith and that it is only simply a matter of us trying to do our job.

I have a question on the service question, because this amendment is speaking about being very specific as to whom the people could serve their notice. The requirement for service and who we serve that notice to is a huge area in law because, if somebody is being sued, it is only fair that you have to be notified that you are being sued. The situation gave rise to this amendment. I got that information, and I could see why the municipalities want to make it very specific that anybody who wants to sue the City for slippery roads, or whatever situation, that might result in a huge liability, that it be served correctly and served to a specific person and not somebody like an ambulance driver or somebody who is related to the City. I can see how the way it exists is so broad that the municipalities want to narrow the scope of people that may be subject to service. I am just wondering if we might not be going too much into detail. Like SAO for laypeople, they may not know what SAO is. I guess if you are going to sue the City, you will have to find out who you should serve it to. What if somebody just wants to serve to the mayor? What if they want to serve to councillors? I know this is an area that is well established in law. I want to know if anybody has done legal research to see if we are not, by this amendment, narrowing the scope of the individuals who can be served with respect to suits against municipalities. I don't know if the Law Clerk wants to answer that, or the legal advisor. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we certainly take the comments about the briefing of NWTAC and the possibility of translation. Some of the comments may be misinterpreted through translation. That is not our intent. Our intent is to share the information and to share it in the best way we can. We will encourage NWTAC to attend the public presentations in person if it is possible for them. We will also encourage them to use Hansard. However, there is still that avenue that we have made the commitment for, which is to share information that's public with them and to talk about it. But we will take every opportunity to encourage them to get it first hand if they can.

Regarding being able to direct the notice to one individual, it was the intent of this amendment to make sure it is clear who can receive a notice of a court action. That person was the senior administrative officer. We would expect that a council would know as much to redirect an application or a notice to the appropriate SAO of the community. I am not sure if you want to add anything to that. Maybe we will have our legal counsel expand on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Heder.

MS. HEDER: Thank you. I would just like to clarify with that particular provision. It is actually notice of the event, not notice of the intent to sue. So at that particular point in time, someone who has been injured wouldn't actually have to have contacted legal counsel, although they may have at that point. They could simply provide a written notice. This does not require any sort of legal counsel in

order to prepare it and submit that to the senior administrative officer.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Heder. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you. I think that changes quite a bit, really. That changes it in a way that makes it even more problematic for me in that I don't think general citizens would, if they were walking down the city sidewalk and they get injured and they think about, okay, maybe I have some claim here, I don't know if that person will think about going to an SAO to provide an intent that some time down the road I think I may be suing you if I can't work because of my injury or I broke my ankle. I want to know what the law says. Is there any other jurisdiction that has something this specific about notice of event? That takes a lot of preparation for somebody in advance as to what he or she may want to do or not do. I would suggest that in that sort of case, a person might be more prone to going to talk to a city councillor or the mayor, going, you know, I got hurt walking down the street and I want you to know about that. I don't know if that person will be thinking...How would anybody know they have to go to those means; that they have to go to the SAO if they want to do that? Am I misunderstanding this? What is the law on this for other jurisdictions and why are we having this provision? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The way the initial legislation was drafted was that it was acceptable to have notice of the event brought forward verbally to anybody who was on municipal council or senior staff. We wanted to make sure that this was clear that this was the process, and I'm sure that if the event was served as notice there was going to be an intent to follow up. Now what happens in other jurisdictions, maybe we'll have our legal counsel talk to that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Ms. Heder.

MS. HEDER: I can actually speak more familiarly with Alberta. They actually have a 21-day notice requirement. I don't have the legislation in front of me and I don't recollect if it is specified in the legislation that it would go to a specific person; however, I would suspect that their administrative process would normally require that such a service does go to a particular person or at least a particular office and that that information would not be particularly difficult to obtain upon inquiry.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Heder. Next, I have general comments on Bill 9. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a quick question on this enabling community governments to transfer charges for unpaid municipal services to properties. Maybe the Minister could just give me some clarification on how that would work or how this would enable communities to transfer charges for community services for squatters, for instance. Would this apply the same as the PATA act applies today as far as municipal property taxes in all the NWT communities that have squatters? Is this any different from what we have in place today?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure if anybody would have the title or label of squatters if they were paying taxes. I'm not clear on exactly what the Member is getting at. If he's asking if services being provided to squatters would be transferred over to property taxes, unless they had land tenure, there's no ability to do that. It doesn't apply to all the communities, it applies only to the municipal taxation authorities which currently are only the tax-based municipalities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess in Yellowknife, for example, there are quite a few squatters out on the Ingraham Trail and squatters do pay property taxes, as a matter of fact. But they just don't have any legal title to their property, whether a lease or what have you.

I guess just to get away from that, it's not so much the squatter issue, but I'm more or less concerned about the issue we have today about property taxes and outstanding arrears in the communities that haven't been properly assessed and all that. Are we just giving these responsibilities that the government had to fix the situation of the property tax situation that we have in the NWT? Are we just handing ITI down to the community level now without really giving them any direction of what the situation is with the property assessment section, why communities aren't assessed and what negotiations are going on with getting them assessed and correcting all the inadequacies that have been done in the past? How are the communities going to be able to fix something that the government hasn't fixed yet? This is basically what I'm asking.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, the comments may be a little outside of what we're talking about in terms of amendments here. We're not asking for an amendment so the government can start collecting water bills and sewer bills. The municipalities already do that. The municipalities already collect property taxes. In the case of transferring the unpaid charges, it only applies to tax-based municipalities. If the Member is saying how can we fix something we couldn't fix, the responsibility has always been with the taxation body that collects it. This procedure was in place since the 1970s. There was an error when the new legislation was drafted up. Somehow it was left out, and the communities have asked us to put it back in place. So we're not transferring any responsibility over to the City or to the municipal taxation authorities. We're trying to rectify a problem that has occurred as a result of drafting new legislation, and we want them to have the ability to be able to collect unpaid service bills without having to go through the expense of hiring a collection agency or going to the courts. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm confused a little bit here. The Minister is telling us this amendment only applies to municipal taxation authorities,

yet the amendment applies to the Charter Communities Act and the Hamlets Act and the municipalities act. As far as I'm concerned, that includes all the communities of the NWT. I just don't see. Are the MTAs only under the municipal taxation act? These amendments go right across the board to the Charter Communities Act and the Hamlets Act. Why is it that these amendments are only applicable, I guess, to the MTAs? Why do we have these other amendments in front of us? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, I apologize if we weren't clear. There are three amendments we're talking about today. The amendment referring to the unpaid charges and transferring them to property taxes applies only to municipal taxation authorities, and if you look at the three different acts or three different classifications of communities, you'll see the wording is different. There is the opportunity. So it only applies to the municipal taxation authority. Right now there are only the tax-based communities that are part of that. This will apply to the hamlets and the charter communities once, and if, they decide to become taxation authorities, but they're not at that level yet. So it only applies to the tax-based municipalities, and only this portion is different for the three different categories of communities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Next I have Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to clarify that provision again. Could I ask legal information about why we have to...If somebody doesn't give notice of an event or doesn't give it to the right person, would that then mean that he or she would be deprived of a chance to launch an action later on? Is there that direct correlation? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: We'll have our legal counsel answer.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Heder.

MS. HEDER: Thank you. There is that possibility that they could be deprived. However, in the subsection that follows this particular section, in each piece of legislation there are a number of situations under which the 30-day notice may be waived. One is if the person provides a reasonable excuse. The other two, I think, aren't particularly relevant to your question here in this situation. Reasonable excuse could entail a wide variety of a number of different situations. It may be that what you're mentioning could be considered a reasonable excuse, although that would be completely based on the particular situation that occurred at that particular time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Heder. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you. I think that is sufficient for me. By this amendment, we're giving powers to the municipalities and municipal governments to enforce this, and I have to respect that. If they choose to do that and implement that, we're just simply giving that power for them to do it.

I have another question about the questions about being able to transfer outstanding debts to...Sorry, I'm looking at the opening statement. You know the section that I'm talking about. The Minister mentioned earlier that the outstanding debts relate only to real property charges. So I'm interpreting that to say that real property charges would not include parking fees or library fees, but it would include something like water and sewer charges, I would think. So real property charges, meaning it has to be cost related to the land. Now I'm wondering, what other kinds of charges would there be that would go into that category other than property taxes and water and sewer charges? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, I guess we should read it out. We offered to read it out earlier, what actually falls under that category. We could do so.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee.

MS. HEDER: Under section 62(1), a charter community may, for a municipal purpose...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Excuse me. Thank you. I'd like to recognize Ms. Heder again, please, for the record.

MS. HEDER: A charter community may, for a municipal purpose, establish, deliver and operate services, public utilities and facilities. What actually the next subsection describes is the powers of the municipal council to pass bylaws. It doesn't actually list every single specific type of service. That would be something that's more operational in nature. But I can continue reading the bylaw powers they have under 62(2). Subject to the Public Utilities Act, council shall, when exercising the powers referred to in subsection (1) by bylaw, set the terms and conditions applicable to users; set reasonable rates or amounts of deposits, fees and other charges; provide for charging and collecting these deposits, fees and other charges; provide criteria for when service will be discontinued, disconnected and refused; and, provide for a right of entry onto private property to determine compliance with terms and conditions of use, to determine the amount of deposits, fees or other charges, or to disconnect a service. So that broadly describes the types of services that could be provided by the particular municipality.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Heder. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: I'm not sure if that really got to the kind of detail I was looking for, but I'll just...that's okay. I can see it has to do with the utilities and general kind of costs that the municipalities probably want to recover. I think they should be able to do that. I know I have to depart a little bit from other Members who had a problem with this provision in that it really is up to the municipalities to set this up. The homeowners probably have a choice of paying these fees or losing their house. Anyway, I won't go there.

Could I just ask the Minister about whether these provisions...We're just simply giving the power to the municipalities to enforce this or set this up. It's up to them really, or are we giving them a mandatory requirement in passing these? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we're just making the allowance in legislation. It's up to the community whether or not they want to incorporate this as part of how they collect their fees.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you. I think that is the crux of the merit in this legislation, and on that basis I am happy to support these because it is simply giving the powers to the municipal governments to do this, and it's up to them, and they do account to their voters about these provisions. I think that's it for my questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister, any comment? Thank you. General comments on Bill 9 by Members? Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I speak in favour of the bill and all the amendments. I believe there are some aspects of administration or understanding in here that can be resolved if they're not already, you know, the resolution is already in the body of the act and the conduct of senior officers and administrators in the department and at the municipal level. I guess the kind of points my colleagues have raised have had a pretty good discussion here, and I think are indeed manageable.

I just have one question for clarification, and it relates to this condition whereby tax-based municipalities can bolt on unpaid municipal fines or services to the tax bill. The concern that if they're disputed that could throw a taxpayer's property in limbo -- I wanted to find out if a disputed cost is going to go onto my tax bill, have I had a chance to resolve that at some other level, or is the municipality just sort of going through the process and saying Mr. Braden didn't pay his water bill; he's going to have a big tax problem next year. Do I get a chance to address that dispute in some other context or some other different process before it gets strapped onto my tax bill?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, it would be our expectation that the community or municipal government would give some form of notice to individuals who had arrears that they were in a position to be having their charges transferred to a property tax. However, having said that, there is no real formal notice requirement in this legislation that requires the municipal government to provide that in writing. It really would be what the communities decide to set up in terms of process. There is no other outside appeal mechanism aside from the municipal government.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I guess the courts would be another avenue.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Alright, I'm not at all well versed in this kind of administration. As a taxpayer, I would like a

chance to resolve a dispute over a water bill, library fine or a parking ticket in some kind of process before it would go to that higher level or that second tier, being my tax status. Would setting that kind of thing up or requiring it be a responsibility of the territorial government to ensure it's there, or is that something that each municipality has the jurisdiction to decide on? Is there any kind of clarity there? Whose job is it to make sure I have a reasonable chance to argue my case? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. At this time, I'll recognize the clock. We're hitting 2:00 here now, so at this time, I'll rise to report progress, and the Minister will have to answer that on Monday. Thank you. At this time I'd like to thank the Minister for appearing before us, plus the staff. Thank you very much. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them out. Thank you.

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

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act, and Bill 9, Municipal Amendments Act, and would like to report that Bill 8 is ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. The motion is in order. To the motion. Is there a seconder? Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 21, third reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS

Bill 10: An Act To Amend The Income Tax

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 10 has had third reading. Item 21, third reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bell.

Bill 6: Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2005

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Bill 6, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2005, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 6, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2005, has had third reading. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Monday, October 17, 2005, 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. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2005-2006
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Minister's Statement 24-15(4), Sessional Statement
 - Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
 - Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Education Act
 - Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Judicature Act
 - Bill 9, Municipal Statutes Amendment Act
20. Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act

22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Monday, October 17, 2005, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 14:07.

