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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Wednesday, June 7, 2006

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 afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the House. Orders of the day. Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 17-15(5): National Aboriginal Day, 2006

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On June 21st, the people across the Northwest Territories will once again be celebrating National Aboriginal Day. This year marks the 10th anniversary of National Aboriginal Day celebrations in Canada. It is also the fifth anniversary of the National Aboriginal Day Act, which made the Northwest Territories the first and only jurisdiction in Canada to recognize the day as a formal statutory holiday.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, this is important to me as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations and as Premier because it demonstrates how strongly we feel about honouring aboriginal people of the Northwest Territories and Canada.

Our aboriginal heritage shapes the way in which our government conducts its business and how we work together to build and strengthen our territory. The traditions, culture and language of the Dene, Metis and Inuvialuit are an integral part of our unique northern identity, so it's only appropriate that we have a day to recognize aboriginal people.

Mr. Speaker, our commitment extends well beyond our annual day off and to celebrate some aboriginal cultures and traditions. Our government is bringing the spirit of National Aboriginal Day alive through our daily work and with aboriginal leaders, communities, governments and organizations.

The GNWT is fully committed to the objective of concluding land, resources and governance agreements in the Northwest Territories. Achieving this goal follows the GNWT's strategic plan of self-reliant people and communities in the NWT. This will enable our residents to realize the political, social and economic aspirations and result in more stable, political and economic environments in the Northwest Territories.

We remain committed to this goal as we work towards developing respectful, government-to-government relationships and continue to honour the diverse cultures

and outstanding contributions of aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories and Canada.

Mr. Speaker, this June 21st, I will ask all Members to join me in encouraging the people of the Northwest Territories to get out and participate in National Aboriginal Day activities in their communities. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Minister's Statement 18-15(5): Energy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, in recent months we have seen energy prices reach record levels. The continued high demand for energy resources in growing economies such as India and China will likely mean energy prices will remain high for the foreseeable future.

As a result of these worldwide pressures on energy supply and costs, it is imperative that the Northwest Territories address our own energy usage and underlying cause of increased energy costs. In the short term, this means we must do more to reduce consumption and increase energy efficiency. We must also recognize our longer-term goal of identifying more stable and reliable energy sources to mitigate rising energy costs and provide all northerners with affordable energy options.

In the fall of last year, this government and Legislative Assembly implemented the energy conservation action plan to increase public awareness on energy conservation and provide individuals, businesses and government departments with the tools to put meaningful energy conservation measures into practice. This innovative plan, aimed at enhancing existing conservation programs, introduced new conservation initiatives and identified new technologies to help reduce energy costs.

Mr. Speaker, to date, this program has been very successful. We are particularly encouraged by our residents' interest in and implementation of individual conservation programs and by the way government departments, boards and agencies and non-government organizations are working together in an ongoing and sustained effort to reduce energy usage and strengthen innovation.

Later today, the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, the Honourable Michael Miltenberger, will provide Members of this Legislative Assembly with an update on the action plan.

Mr. Speaker, given world pressures, it is equally important for the Northwest Territories to look outward when

considering issues concerning the supply and demand of energy.

Today, almost all of our territory's annual energy supply is imported from southern Canada in the form of fossil fuels. Secure, reliable and affordable energy supplies are essential to the long-term interests of this territory.

As a territory, we neither control nor regulate the cost of this energy. As we have seen over the past year, it is subject to sudden and large increases in response to world events and the supply and demand nature of the global economy.

Fortunately, Mr. Speaker, we have significant renewable and non-renewable energy resources, including extensive potential in natural gas and hydroelectricity right in our own backyard. The Mackenzie gas pipeline project is a basin opening project that can bring northern gas to southern markets and has the potential to provide clean, natural gas to many of our communities displacing less environmentally friendly fossil fuels. Our hydroelectric potential is enormous. Projects at the Bear River and the expansion of capacity on the Taltson River also have the potential to displace diesel generated energy in communities and industrial developments.

We must take a long-term view of the development of these energy resources. This means making critical policy choices respecting the development of Northwest Territories energy resources and setting the long-term strategic direction required to ensure affordable and sustainable energy solutions for the benefit of all Northwest Territories residents.

Mr. Speaker, the government has been working on a framework to begin this important discussion. Later today, the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment will table an energy discussion paper titled "Energy for the Future" that sets out many of the issues this government and Legislative Assembly will have to consider in this discussion.

Mr. Speaker, this government intends to continue focusing on renewable energy options and the development of policies that encourages conservation, innovation and the development of sustainable, secure energy supplies for all NWT residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bell.

Minister's Statement 19-15(5): Release Of The "Energy For The Future" Discussion Paper

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Premier has spoken about the potential of the Northwest Territories to develop more of its energy resources in response to rising energy costs faced by our residents.

Looking forward, it is critical that our territory has a coordinated and comprehensive approach to the development, management and use of energy resources in the NWT.

At the appropriate time today, I will be tabling an energy discussion paper titled "Energy for the Future." This

discussion paper was jointly prepared by the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment and also the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Energy for the Future is a way forward, outlining a proposed policy framework to guide future energy decisions and proposing a number of strategic actions in support of this policy framework.

Mr. Speaker, this document reflects the balance that must be struck between future development, management and use of our energy resources while ensuring a high degree of environmental care and quality.

This document is built, in part, upon work undertaken by previous governments. Our government will consider all comments and will certainly be receptive to innovative suggestions as we move forward in the development of a comprehensive energy plan for the NWT.

This plan must consider domestic and export materials for the development and use of our non-renewable, renewable and alternative energy sources, like powering more of our communities and industries such as the diamond mines with hydroelectricity and identifying options for natural gas conversion in communities. It will mark, I hope, the emergence of the NWT as a supplier of secure, affordable and sustainable energy, first and foremost for itself, Mr. Speaker, and then for all Canadians and the North American marketplace.

It is our intention to have a draft of this energy plan for Members of this Legislative Assembly to review in the fall. I encourage all Members and all residents of the NWT to take time to consider these issues and provide input into this energy plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

Minister's Statement 20-15(5): Energy Conservation

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, as the Premier noted earlier, conservation and efficiency are critical elements in addressing the broad range of energy issues facing the Northwest Territories today. Conservation and efficiency provide an immediate response to the high cost of energy and, as a government, now form a part of our business-as-usual approach.

In addition, and perhaps more importantly, energy conservation and efficiency help us to address one of the most serious environmental problems facing us today: climate change. Mr. Speaker, experts predict that unless efforts are made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we can expect to see an acceleration of negative climatic trends.

Between the skyrocketing prices of oil and the serious risks posed by climate change, it is clear we need to continue and strengthen our efforts around energy conservation and efficiency.

To address these issues, this Legislative Assembly approved funding for the energy conservation action plan to retrofit projects on public buildings, infrared thermal scanning on municipal and GNWT buildings and the implementation of new energy-efficient design standards

for GNWT buildings. Additional funding was also provided to the Arctic Energy Alliance to supplement existing incentive programs.

An important part of this action plan is the development of a new approach to energy use. The first step in the process was the identification of three strategies for improving northern energy management:

1. energy conservation within government;
2. energy conservation in NWT homes; and
3. the anti-idling project.

The underlying goal of all three strategies is improving energy use in the NWT through disseminating knowledge, developing skills and improving attitudes towards energy conservation.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most important parts of this program is the marketing and promotional effort to increase energy conservation awareness in the Northwest Territories. This work was undertaken through the Arctic Energy Alliance and built upon public education awareness programs currently offered by that organization. Among the initiatives undertaken is the development of an Energy Efficiency Tips for Homeowners video designed to provide information and instructions on the basic, feasible and cost-effective improvements homeowners can do to make their homes more energy efficient.

The EnerGuide for Housing Program was one of the greater successes of the 2005-06 action plan. By the end of March 2006, over 60 households received incentives through the program. The average incentive paid per household was \$820, resulting in estimated annual energy savings of \$2,000 per household and an annual reduction in CO2 emissions of over six metric tons per household.

To ensure we continue to build on these results, the government will maintain support for existing residents by following through on conservation initiatives identified by the Arctic Energy Alliance in 2006-07.

Due in large part to the new funding provided for the energy conservation action plan, this government's overall spending levels for energy conservation and efficiency programs are higher than in the past. Over the coming months we will continue to develop and implement this action plan and will provide Members with a progress report during the fall session.

Mr. Speaker, we must continue to support conservation and efficiency measures as the most effective means of coping with the high costs of energy.

In addition to this, we will, over the summer months, be updating the NWT Greenhouse Gas Strategy to ensure we have a focused approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and are planning for the impacts of climate change.

Mr. Speaker, emission reduction efforts must continue to be initiated across a number of sectors involving communities, energy suppliers, residential homeowners, non-government organizations and industrial energy consumers.

As a major contributor to the NWT's overall greenhouse gas emissions, industry has a responsibility, as good corporate citizens, to continue to explore and implement innovations to reduce emissions and, in doing so, conserve energy. Efforts to date have included wind energy monitoring to assess feasibility of using wind power, increasing heat recovery through modifications to powerhouse engines and optimization of generators to reduce energy consumption and emissions.

Mr. Speaker, we feel that by taking the right steps and making the right investments now, we will be in a position not only to reduce our overall energy costs, but, more importantly, to reduce our overall greenhouse gas emissions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of FMBS, Mr. Roland.

Minister's Statement 21-15(5): Human Resource Services Update

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide an update on the progress relating to the amalgamation of human resource services.

It has now been one year since we took the first steps towards a modern human resources management structure with the amalgamation of human resource services that resulted in, and continues to result in, identifying issues and areas where improvement is necessary.

One of the issues that was identified last summer was a significant backlog in both the pay and benefits areas. In both areas, plans were introduced in September 2005 to improve the situation. On the benefits side, there were approximately 550 files that were outstanding at the time of the amalgamation. I am pleased to report that all of these files are either completed or in the hands of another party such as Superannuation or the employees themselves for final action.

On the pay side, we began with a backlog of over 1,000 files. More than 60 percent of these files have been completed.

---Applause

The pay office was challenged in addressing the backlog due, in part, to the instability of the human resources systems hardware. Since the installation of new servers three months ago, payroll has run cleanly and without serious disruption each and every pay week. We have made significant progress in addressing the pay backlog and any remaining files will be attended to during the summer months.

Work is ongoing to ensure human resource policies, procedures and guidelines are followed and practices are being implemented in a consistent and fair manner to ensure all employees, regardless of community or department of employment, receive quality service and equitable treatment.

As part of the commitment to transparency, new staffing appeals regulations under the Public Service Act came into effect on April 3, 2006. As a result, all competitions

up to the assistant deputy minister level can now be appealed.

The GNWT's exit survey has been modified and, in an effort to encourage greater use, a streamlined process will be used to request departing employees to complete the exit survey.

In January and February of this year, indeterminate and term GNWT employees were asked to complete a survey that included a set of core questions. A national project team, whose goal was to develop a tool that would enable governments to compare employee satisfaction and engagement across jurisdictions, designed these questions with our input. Approximately 36 percent of GNWT employees responded, providing an excellent snapshot of employees' opinions across the GNWT.

The majority of questions had a positive response. Over 80 percent of employees who responded know how their work contributes to the achievement of GNWT department goals, have positive working relationships with their co-workers and feel that their job is a good fit with their skills and interests. While the overall results were positive, there were a number of areas that identify issues that need to be addressed. Any question where more than 20 percent of employees disagreed or strongly disagreed was reviewed to determine what actions could be developed to improve employee satisfaction in these areas. Mr. Speaker, later today, at the appropriate time, I will table the results of the 2006 employee satisfaction and engagement survey and accompanying action plan.

From February through early April, Human Resources staff were involved in intensive review and planning sessions with the Hackett Group, a company with a proven background in human resource transformation work. Human Resources received detailed recommendations relating to processes and systems and the changes needed to continue with the transformation work. The department has begun to implement the recommendations by the Hackett Group. While many of the recommendations are focused on the internal workings of Human Resources, the result will be an improvement in services for all clients.

We have made significant progress in moving towards a modern human resources service delivery structure. While there is still much more work to be done, we realize that the continued commitment of Human Resources staff is instrumental in achieving excellence in human resource management. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Minister's Statement 22-15(5): A Framework For Action - Phase II

HON. CHARLES DENT: This morning, MLAs joined the Awareness of Violence Against Aboriginal Women Journey for Change Walk. This walk is to remember those who have died, those who are missing and the many still living in violence and abusive situations.

I congratulate the individuals involved in this activity, particularly Marie Speakman, one of this year's Wise

Women Award recipients and the person who came up with the idea for the walk. I wish them well on their journey and I hope we will all take this opportunity to remember how violence against women hurts all of us, our families, our children and our communities.

The Government of the NWT is committed to working with families, community organizations and community leadership to address the problem of violence against women. I would like to update Members on the GNWT's Response to the NWT Response to the NWT Action Plan on Family Violence - A Framework for Action.

As Members may recall, in 2004, the GNWT committed to implementing all 72 actions in eight specific areas identified in this document. Over the past two years, the GNWT, in partnership with the Coalition Against Family Violence, has worked collaboratively to implement the response.

A significant amount of work has been accomplished and partnerships with community organizations have been key to the results we have seen.

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. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Most actions outlined in the Framework for Action have been completed. Significant among these is the implementation of the Protection Against Family Violence Act. As well, resource tool kits have been developed and distributed to frontline workers across the NWT to help them work with families who are suffering from the effects of violence. An integrated response protocol is nearing completion and we thank Yellowknife, Deline and Fort Resolution for their participation in the three pilot projects. We believe the protocols developed will assist frontline workers to work in a coordinated way in helping address the needs of families. Although much has been accomplished, there is still much to be done.

The deputy ministers of social envelope departments have been tasked with the development of A Framework for Action - Phase II. This new action plan will cover the next five years.

The Framework for Action - Phase II will be completed by December and the actions outlined will become part of the GNWT business planning process.

The Framework for Action - Phase II will outline actions that are achievable, measurable and effect changes for people affected by family violence across the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Ministers' statements. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**Member's Statement On Facility Proposal From Children First Society In Inuvik**

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during the budget session, I spoke to the desire of the Children First Society in Inuvik to have their needs incorporated into a new school being built up in Inuvik. Today, Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak on the work that they continue to do.

I believe theirs is a worthy cause, Mr. Speaker, and I will continue to be an advocate for the society. Mr. Speaker, the society has put together an excellent proposal to justify their position. Over 30 businesses and agencies have given letters of support and close to 300 residents have given their support by signing a petition. They even have a detailed floor plan that meets their requirement. They put a budget together, along with an estimate from a local contractor, of about \$2.5 million. Firmer numbers will not be available until after the design phase. Mr. Speaker, can you imagine the amount of bingos that need to be held to raise that kind of money?

Mr. Speaker, many students who attend Aurora College from surrounding communities will have a safe learning environment for their children. Mr. Speaker, this government stresses the importance of early learning and childcare and we have a group that have put together a strong case for an early childhood facility that we should support. They did the work on their own with no consultants. They have done all the legwork. The ball is now in our court, so let's not drop it. We have to send a message, Mr. Speaker, that we don't just talk the talk, but we also walk the walk. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

Member's Statement On Ulukhaktok Print Making And Tapestry Shop

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity to meet and talk with the mayor of Ulukhaktok on April 2, 2006. One item of interest for the residents of Ulukhaktok is the print making and tapestry shop that's been closed for a number of years. Mr. Speaker, the residents of Ulukhaktok are well renowned for their print making and artistic talent. To name one offhand is Mary Okheena. These artists have sold their print making and tapestries around the world. Mr. Speaker, in my discussion with the mayor, Ulukhaktok residents would like to revitalize their artistic talent in print making and tapestries and would like to see the print making and tapestry shop reopen. However, Mr. Speaker, government funding is required to renovate the facility.

Mr. Speaker, government jobs, sports and traditional hunting activities today is the only source of income for a lot of the residents. Today, residents of Ulukhaktok would like to achieve another economic base and source of income. By renovating the print making and tapestry shop in Ulukhaktok, it would enable the residents of Ulukhaktok to achieve another economic base and source of income and prove once again they are well renowned artists.

Mr. Speaker, I will be addressing the issue with the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment today and over the next few months to once again reopen the print making and tapestry shop. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On GNWT Housing Policies And Practices

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Again, I would just like to raise some housing policies and practices that continue to concern me and my constituents. Since very little has changed in the Housing Corporation's policies and practices since raising these issues in this House on numerous occasions over the past two years and also bringing them to the attention of the Minister in charge of housing who, I might add, Mr. Speaker, spent four years on this side of the House adamantly demanding the same changes to the housing policies and practices, I feel it is important to raise the red flag once again.

First, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to stress the need for this government to not only acknowledge the fact that we recognize the difference between the large urban centres and our smaller remote communities, but the need to address and take action on making some tangible changes in government policies and programs to show the NWT public that we can and will make changes that address those differences. This government can no longer stay with the status quo in developing policies that are applicable to everyone, whether in a large or small centre.

Look at the BIP policy. It works good for the small communities, but may not be required in a larger, competitive market system like Yellowknife. The negotiated contract policy again works good for small communities, but is not required in a competitive market or a larger centre where there are three to five potential bidders on any given government contract at any given time.

On the housing side, the CNIT, Core Need Income Threshold, a very cut and dried policy with no room for negotiations. If you are a dollar over the threshold, you don't qualify. A dollar under, you get government money to buy or build a new house. It doesn't matter how responsible and hardworking you may be, how many kids, relatives, grandchildren you support, what the amount of truck or car payments are or the cost to feed your family. All these factors have big impacts on the remote communities, Mr. Speaker.

The rent scales in our remote communities with no market system to gauge what people are willing and able to pay, but a system that says you will pay based on how much money you make or your household makes or how much money you won in bingo last night.

It's all these types of policies that need changes, adjustments and amendments, Mr. Speaker. Some of them are the main contributors to our ongoing housing crises and business crises in the small communities, not to mention the public's contempt and disregard for self-reliance and independent living, which this government

admits it's trying to build on but in reality it just seems to be working against. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Contracts For Winter Road Construction

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation awards fixed-price contracts containing a specific scope of work to be performed for the construction of winter roads for resupply to northern communities. This was an unusual year this past year in terms of weather and conditions for winter and ice road construction. These are circumstances beyond the control of the Minister or the contractor. A bad year such as this past season makes the work of contractors potentially very costly and difficult.

The contractor has the option of ending the contract and pulling their equipment and people off the job, however, Mr. Speaker, everyone on the job, both from the department and from the contractor's forces, is keenly aware of the importance of making the roads available for resupply and the alternatives are not pleasant. Sometimes different equipment is required and sometimes more equipment is required, and sometimes more manpower is required. The contractor wants to get the job done and the window of opportunity can be very limited. There isn't time to go back and undertake a lengthy process to get written authorities and approvals to revise the scope of the contract, so people do what they need to do to get the job done. The freight gets into the communities and the story should have a happy ending.

The story isn't too happy, though, Mr. Speaker, for the contractor who proceeded in good faith out of a sense of responsibility and commitment to getting the job done. He's invested in additional equipment, his equipment has taken an extraordinary beating due to a lack of snow and ice, and the government is saved their expense of having to fly essential fuel and supplies into the community. But the contractor sits with a major loss.

Mr. Speaker, the weather and winter conditions for contracts such as these are not in the control of anyone. In other contracts, where we know that the possibility of forces beyond our control exist -- such as forest management fire suppression -- this government has the ability to appropriate funds in addition to those originally committed and contracted. There is a contingency plan for a particularly dry summer with an unusual amount of fire activity. So why not for contracts like winter road construction?

I wouldn't be happy if the GNWT was going to go back and open up and renegotiate contracts for the supply of goods and services after the conclusion of a competitive process, but I think we need to recognize the unpredictable nature of some contracts given the extenuating circumstances outside of the contractor's control, such as Mother Nature. Any extra compensation would need to be carefully considered and documented, but I don't think it should be ruled out. Any contractor who was awarded the work would have been faced with the same challenges.

Mr. Speaker, later today I'll have questions for the Minister of Transportation regarding his department's policy in dealing with these unique contracts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Member's Statement On Observations On The Northern Mining Industry

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to recognize that it's Mining Week here in Yellowknife. This is an annual event put on by the NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines as a way of paying tribute to the industry and developing awareness amongst the public. Mr. Speaker, I can't make a statement on mining today without mentioning the labour dispute at Ekati and I do hope, Mr. Speaker, that both sides can negotiate an end to the impasse as many of our residents are being negatively impacted because of this situation.

Mr. Speaker, mining is and has been for many years the number one industry in the North. It is certainly the reason why Yellowknife has grown to where it is today. The mining sector currently represents about half of the NWT's gross domestic product and over the past 10 years has brought unprecedented private capital investment into the North. Currently there are three operating mines in the NWT: Ekati, Diavik, and CanTung. Between all three of these mines they employ approximately 2,500 people. Many secondary industries have emerged over the years to support the business of mining, and certainly booms in the construction industry can be attributed directly to this sector. The local aviation industry attributes about 60 percent of its business to the mining and exploration industry.

My point, Mr. Speaker, is that many people in the Northwest Territories have and are continuing to benefit from the business of mining. But while things may be looking good for this sector, its necessary predecessor, exploration, has been suffering for the last several years. Exploration companies can't get permits to do even basic low-level exploration. The problem, Mr. Speaker, is slow progress on land claims, particularly in the Deh Cho and Akaitcho territory. The impasse in this area is stifling grassroots exploration efforts.

This, Mr. Speaker, should also be a concern of this government. Ekati and Diavik estimated 17 to 21 years of mine life respectively. We're already eight years down the road with Ekati. CanTung's tungsten reserves are very short and none of this compares to the 60-year mine life we saw with the Con and Giant mines. Under the current regulatory process it takes 10 years to licence a mine, so it's pretty clear that if exploration companies aren't out there now looking for new resources and sources of minerals, in 10 years or so the NWT economy will be in a major downturn, Mr. Speaker.

In addition, it should be a concern that we now have a mining economy focused almost solely on one commodity: diamonds. In order for the mining industry to become more diversified it needs other commodities on the shelf.

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. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Luckily the NWT has these. We have gold, silver, zinc, copper and rare earth metals that are all trading at record highs. In most of them our forecasts remain high in light of the increased demand from Asia's growing economy. We also have a major storehouse of clean energy: uranium. In order to bring these commodities into production some day, prospectors need access to the land to carry out the grassroots exploration activities. Unfortunately, many of their planned programs are being held up for political reasons while land claims are under consideration.

Mr. Speaker, mining has and is continuing to open a lot of doors for many northerners, whether its jobs, training or new business ventures. The industry places a high priority on creating a skilled northern workforce and is keen to participate in the planning of further transportation infrastructure in the North. The mining sector deserves the recognition it receives during Mining Week, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to encourage all Members and the public to take part in the various events around the city this week. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Member's Statement On CRTC Hearings On NorthwesTel Regulatory Framework

MR. BRADEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. We've had tremendous advances in the telecommunications field in the NWT in the last 25 years. Today I think all 33 of our communities enjoy instantaneous telephone, satellite television, fax, we're getting just about everybody hooked up to high-speed Internet, Mr. Speaker, almost to the point where we're taking all this for granted. Even I can remember the days of telex, typewriters, VHF telephones and things like that. Things were a lot simpler in those days and sometimes I wish they were back. But in contrast, Mr. Speaker, southern communities enjoy an almost bewildering array of telephone and cell phone plan options, other communication options offered by a wide array of competing companies at rates that make us northerners envious for the cheap costs and extensive range of services offered. One of my continuing concerns is for decisions that add to our already high cost of living and doing business up here, Mr. Speaker.

Right now we're on notice that the telecommunications regulator in Canada, the Canadian Radio, Television and Telecommunications Commission, or CRTC, is holding hearings in Whitehorse next month on establishing a new regulatory framework for NorthwesTel that will go into effect in 2007. Among the items to be reviewed are funding for providing service to high cost areas, restructuring the various rates including long distance and local services; for instance, \$2 a month more for individual residential phone lines and \$5 a month more for multi-line business services. They're going to be looking at

competition and how NorthwesTel will be regulated in the future.

Mr. Speaker, the telecommunications business in the North is still complex and heavily regulated in many ways. It is the last large area of telecommunication monopolies in North America. I have concerns for initiatives that will increase our already high cost of doing business and in an age of rapidly expanding technology and new businesses anxious to compete foreseeing that the North is competition friendly, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Awareness Of Violence Against Aboriginal Women

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today is an historical day in the fight against violence against women, especially the violence against aboriginal women in the NWT. At 9:30 a.m. this morning, our aboriginal women, along with their friends and supporters and community groups, started a walk to Behchoko; a walk of over 100 kilometres in the name of raising awareness of this very important and pressing issue.

Mr. Speaker, we're well aware that every day there are aboriginal women being assaulted and murdered and often forgotten and neglected by our society. We also know that violence of all forms against persons from all walks of life are much too prevalent in our society in small and big communities, especially against aboriginal peoples. Our very own Sandra Lockhart spoke this morning at the walk about how the violence against aboriginal women and within aboriginal families are so prevalent that it is rare to meet an aboriginal woman who did not experience violence and abuse some time in their lives. With this walk, the aboriginal women of the North are telling us that this has to stop and they're going to make it happen.

This walk also highlights the responsibility of all levels of governments to take an action to prevent violence and to provide means for healing and recovery. At the same time, this walk brings to the fore the power of one person to make a real difference. I was very honoured that my friend Marie Speakman, the wise woman who came up with this idea and organized it, asked me for my support from the beginning. I want to honour her today and all others in our communities who work on the frontline tirelessly to help victims of violence. This is backbreaking work mentally and physically, and there are many Maries of the world in our communities who do not give up against all odds and always find the strength and courage to combat the aftermath of violence one step at a time and one person at a time.

Mr. Speaker, I could tell you that I had a very nice long walk this morning, joined by the Premier, many Ministers and colleagues of this House, to honour Marie and her team. I'll be joining them again tonight and when they arrive at their destination in Behchoko tomorrow night, where there will be a feast to receive those who are walking with Marie. Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt in my mind that this is the start of something big that will continue to grow. This is an aboriginal women-driven

action initiated by aboriginal women, organized by aboriginal women for aboriginal women, and I look forward to cheering them on as they continue to make a difference in the lives of aboriginal women and their families. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Member's Statement On Healthy Foods In Schools

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I read an article in a national newspaper about the status of Canada schools, Canadian schools banning pop from vending machines right across the country here. The article also said that politicians are following by leading the way for advocating for healthy foods in the school. They're motivated by the high costs of children who are overweight and to look at eliminating the unhealthy foods in the schools. Refreshments Canada, the main trade association representing the non-alcoholic beverages industries, are developing guidelines to make sure that only healthy, low-fat drinks and bottled water will be sold in schools, in high schools here, in elementary schools.

Ontario is getting rid of candy and pop from vending machines in high schools. B.C. has released voluntary school guidelines to phase out junk beverages. In Quebec it is the school boards who determine the nutrition policies and Montreal soft drink vending machines have been banned in public elementary and high schools. New Brunswick is phasing out the pop and other sweetened beverages from all the public schools for 2007. Newfoundlanders are waiting for the government to release guidelines, and, finally, Nova Scotia has drafted a nutrition policy that only milk, juice and water should be sold in schools in the vending machines. These guidelines are still to be debated.

In the Northwest Territories, Mr. Speaker, we have a successful campaign called "Drop the Pop" campaign, which has been great, but it's not enough in our schools here. Who knows what bad habits and illness are developing in our schools and in our children who are in those schools. We're waiting for this government to develop some strong guidelines and leadership, take charge, ban the junk food in our schools, because I heard somewhere God does not create junk and our children are not junk. We need healthy foods in our schools, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Tlicho Community Services Agency And Intergovernmental Services Agreement

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. (Translation) Mr. Speaker, last week I asked a question to the Minister regarding payment to elders and how they are not getting paid as fast as they should because elders are very important and we want to be able to help them. (Translation ends)

Dogrib Treaty 11 Council has asked the Dogrib Community Services Board to operate a number of programs and projects on its behalf that were closely connected to the mandate of the board. These include the scholarship program, a variety of language and culture projects such as the birch bark canoe project, the caribou skin tent project, as well as the trails of our ancestors' canoe trips that involve the youth and the elders.

Mr. Speaker, this collaborative project set a cooperative tone between the GNWT boards and the aboriginal government that is quite unique in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, this was expected to continue under the new Tlicho Government and the new Tlicho Community Services Agency. So it was recognized in the Intergovernmental Services Agreement between the GNWT, the federal government, and the Tlicho Government. Both articles 3.2(a) and 4.5 speak to the roles, powers, responsibilities and accountabilities assigned and delegated to the agency by the Tlicho Government.

Mr. Speaker, the Tlicho Community Services Agency is the only GNWT board or agency which is a subject of an Intergovernmental Services Agreement between the three levels of government: the federal government, the GNWT, and the Tlicho Government. Again, it is quite unique in the Northwest Territories. It is, however, a likely feature for other regions where self-government is being negotiated, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister responsible for FMBS at the appropriate time. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Transfer Of MACA Services And Responsibilities To Communities

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. (English not provided)

Transferring, updating, downloading, dumping. Many verbs can be used to describe the fact that our government wants to save money and cut costs. This old practice of offloading is being used today by MACA in our regions. Offloading is when a government transfers responsibility for services to its regions and communities. In theory, Mr. Speaker, these transfers would be beneficial and welcome in all small and remote communities such as the ones I represent in Nahendeh. This transfer of services and responsibilities will not work if it is less, yes, funded less than what our government ran it for.

Effective April 1st of this year, MACA introduced the development of the O and M funding to its communities. I think the transfer of responsibilities is long overdue. I am concerned, though, that the resources are not sufficient. This ministry has funded this initiative through a complex three-year running average. We are very aware of the growing cost of fuel and energy over the last six months. This three-year average does not address this critical gap in its formula. Communities tell me that they are already in a deficit position with this program as they have to address the shortfall with their own funding. Community

governments are already stretched too thin to cope with these energy cost concerns.

I would like to inform the Minister of MACA and this government that this must be addressed immediately. The formula must reflect the real needs of these communities. I know that this government is interested in genuine community management and will provide the resources to support that. I'll have questions for the Minister at the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Core Funding For The Arctic Energy Alliance

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First off I'll say I'm glad to see two energy statements in regards to the concerns by the Ministers read into the record today, because that will be very important later. Although I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, I'm not old enough to have experienced the telex, Morse code, or other things like that...

---Laughter

...like Mr. Braden has. I can tell you my TV, cell phone and Internet generation has seen significant climate changes and concerns that we see today. My Member's statement today, then, Mr. Speaker, as you've probably guessed, is about core funding for the Arctic Energy Alliance, our energy saving crusader out there.

Mr. Speaker, a number of concerns have risen with the Arctic Energy Alliance's ability to sustain their current workload and mandate in the absence of secure and adequate funding, Mr. Speaker. So I'm glad to say that the government is certainly taking notice of this energy concern and they put it finally under the microscope where it's deserved to be.

I recently have learned that NWT Power Corporation decided to reduce core funding to the alliance to just \$5000, down from their usual \$25,000. The Power Corporation proposes that the \$20,000 shortfall would be made up through fee-for-service work conducted on their behalf by the alliance. I would also note that the \$20,000 corresponds very nicely with the amount of fee-for-service that they charged back last year, and I'll put it this way: the bottom line is it's a \$20,000 reduction no matter how you move those shells around the table, Mr. Speaker.

Last time I looked, the Power Corp is solely owned by the GNWT. So where is our government support for this energy crusading agent of ours? The point I am trying to make, Mr. Speaker, is if the Arctic Energy Alliance is not sufficiently resourced, it will not be able to fulfill the terms of its mandate. I'm also aware that the Arctic Energy Alliance has outgrown its space because of the demand that the customers and clients and the citizens of our good territory are putting on it.

Mr. Speaker, the Arctic Energy Alliance is doing the best it can. In the absence of stable funding and cramped workspace, they are getting the work done. It is time for the departments of ENR and ITI to do some work to make

sure adequate core funding is provided in the next upcoming business plan cycle and give them the ability to pursue mandates to pursue market-driven opportunities and partnerships. Mr. Speaker, this side of the House will continue to pursue this lip service, rhetoric, discussion papers into real concrete dollar deals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Members' statements. The honourable Member from Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement On Recognition Of Fort Smith Long Service Award Recipients

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a Legislature we've always said that employees are our most valuable asset and I, as well, hold that to be true. Today in Fort Smith at four o'clock, the Government of the Northwest Territories are going to be recognizing the service of many employees with the long service awards. While there are too many to name individually, I would like to, for the record, indicate where they work and the numbers of employees.

River Ridge has 11 employees with a total of 130 years of service being recognized. The women's correctional centre has three employees with a total of 30 years of service. The South Slave Divisional Board has 22 employees with a total of 245 years of service. Education, Culture and Employment has one employee being recognized today with 15 years of service. Public Works and Services has seven employees with a total of 165 years of service. Airports has three employees with a total of 40 years of service. Highways has three employees with a total of 65 years of service. MACA has three employees with a total of 15 years of service. FMBS, three employees with a total of 45 years of service. Health and Social Services has 36 employees with a total of 165 years of service. Aurora College, 27 employees with a total of 395 years of service. ENR has eight employees with a total of 125 years of service. ITI has two employees with a total of 20 years of service.

Mr. Speaker, taken in isolation the numbers are there, but they don't really have a significance other than recognizing many years of service, but when you combine those numbers, that's 129 employees with a total of 1,445 years of service. That's one and a half millennium of time and I think it's just an indication of the value that we get from our employees, the commitment that employees have to work for the Government of the Northwest Territories and serving the people, and I'd like to recognize that honour of commitment and years of service and thank them for that. I apologize for not being there, but in this forum I think there is a recognition that our employees are very, very valuable. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors to the gallery. The honourable Member from Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to recognize my daughter Kim and my son-in-law Raymond Wainman and, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to introduce Rylan James Robert Wainman, my grandson.

---Applause

AN HON. MEMBER: Hey!

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member from Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's not too often I have an opportunity to stand up in this forum and recognize somebody from Inuvik. My new CA that operates out of my Inuvik office, Ms. Jennifer DeBastian.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. If we've missed anybody in the gallery...I'd like to recognize Vince McKay in the gallery, a councillor from the Town of Hay River.

---Applause

Anyone else that we've missed in the gallery, welcome to the House. I hope you're enjoying the proceedings. It's always a pleasure to have an audience up there.

---Applause

Oral questions. The honourable Member from Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 71-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of the Housing Corporation, Mr. Krutko. This morning there was a piece on the CBC Radio regarding the issue of the seniors' duplexes that were recently built in Hay River, and basically the crux of the story was that the Housing Corporation had constructed 12 duplexes and they were designed for couples and a number of the new tenants had sold their existing homes prior to moving in. Now, Mr. Speaker, the rent is free, regardless of net worth of the tenant and provided the tenant's monthly household income does not exceed \$3,300, Mr. Speaker. This was a capital project undertaken by the NWT Housing Corporation. Mr. Speaker, the question is, what was the intended target market, people over the age of 60 regardless of financial means? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Krutko.

Return To Question 71-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, this policy has been in effect for 10 years. It was put in place during the

13th Assembly to allow seniors to live in public housing and not pay rent. The policy has been there and we are simply following the policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 71-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I find that completely outrageous. There's been a number of concerns raised in the media and from constituents of mine about the fairness of this approach. Some seniors receive fully subsidized housing while others are struggling day in and day out to maintain independent homes with very little support, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister, what is the plan of the Housing Corporation to address a more fair and equitable distribution of housing support for seniors in the NWT? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 71-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as all the Members know, we are moving towards centralizing our social funding to one institution, which is the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, where we've basically allocated \$30 million from the housing program in regards to subsidies that we provide and through the arrangement of centralizing the funds that are provided to people in the Northwest Territories for programs and subsidy programs from home grants in regards to subsidies for our housing stock for social housing and also in regards to programs that we have from fuel subsidies and whatnot to find a fair process. I think in order to do that now, we have an avenue how we can revamp the program, make it more fair and also have the opportunity to revise it and ensure that we do have a program for people that are in homeownership, but also people in public housing. So there's presently a process in place to look at that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 71-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd suggest the Minister get on that as soon as possible. I mean this type of situation that was allowed to take place under his watch should not be allowed to happen under any circumstances, and he should go back with the Minister of ECE and develop a plan so that there's a means test and people are treated fairly. I'd like to know from the Minister how many other similar housing units has the Housing Corporation made available to seniors at no cost, regardless of means, in other NWT communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 71-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, as I stated in my opening remarks, this program has been there for 10 years. The government-of-the-day made a political decision to allow seniors in social housing not to pay rent. The decision was made and with this government they have made a decision to look at a social income review of all social programs, centralized it in one area and look at exactly the fairness of our programs and services. Right now that review is taking place, they will be looking at these issues to ensure that we have a fair process for all people within our social housing stock to people within the private sector. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 71-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This approach is obviously causing division amongst seniors in our communities and while no one could really begrudge a couple for taking advantage of such a generous program, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation can't provide this level of support to all seniors. It's impossible, Mr. Speaker, that they do that. I'd like to ask the Minister is this an approach to seniors' housing that the Minister plans to expand on? He started on it, but I want to hear an answer from him today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 71-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, as I stated, we are reviewing it through the review of our income security programs. Right now, as a government, we have decided, as Members of this House and as this government, that we are centralizing the programs that we deliver to find a fair mechanism to all people regardless if they live in their own home or are in social housing. Because of the inequities of our programs and services, we want to ensure that everybody is treated fairly. So we are presently going through that process. Once basically there is a review done, the Minister of Education will be coming back to this House to ensure that the programs and services we do deliver are fair and equitable to all residents of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krukto. Oral questions. The honourable Member from Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Question 72-15(5): Transfer Of GNWT Programs And Services To Communities

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My questions are a follow-up as a result of my Member's statement with regard to O and M and the Department of MACA. I'm sure that, well, perhaps the Minister can tell me, Mr. Speaker, if the department is aware of the gap that already exists in the new funding formula for transferring the responsibility of O and M to the communities. It really, really makes sense to everybody's eyes, but using a three-year rolling average just doesn't work, just because of the increase in energy costs. I'd just like to know if the Minister is aware of this, have the

communities contacted him and what's the initial plan to address this? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. McLeod.

Return To Question 72-15(5): Transfer Of GNWT Programs And Services To Communities

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have been working on a number of funding allocations that we provide to the communities. We have had discussions with the NWT Association of Communities. We have had discussions with LGANT, Local Government Administrators in the Northwest Territories, and we've also had a discussion in the communities with the different municipalities about a number of areas where we provide funding. Of course, the New Deal is something that's on the drawing board and we have rolled out the information and communications to the community. We've also been allocated some new dollars to put towards the capital infrastructure in the communities and this has increased from \$17 million to what it is now at \$28 million. We've provided that information and we continue to provide that information for the communities. As part of this process in reviewing community governance, we're also reviewing the water and sewer subsidy and we are also having discussions regarding the O and M for the community for governance. We will continue to do so. We have another round of discussions happening this spring and we plan to bring some of that information forward when we complete all those discussions. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 72-15(5): Transfer Of GNWT Programs And Services To Communities

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister's approach to a discrepancy between how much a community spends and how much a community will receive through this complex funding formula, will that be addressed this year or is that something that the communities can discuss and raise with the Minister soon, because it will impact their current year's budget, Mr. Speaker?

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

Further Return To Question 72-15(5): Transfer Of GNWT Programs And Services To Communities

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, there is and some discussion has already taken place. There is discussions and concerns brought forward by the two associations that we work with and have working groups with. We have had discussions with the community. We've been alerted of areas of concern. For the most part, the communities have come back and informed us that the funding formula is okay but the funding amount may be not adequate. So they're asking us not to change the formula, but maybe look at the amounts that are allocated through the formula and that maybe we need to do something in that area. We hope to have all this information in place and have some decisions

so that we can bring some of this stuff forward during the business planning this fall. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 72-15(5): Transfer Of GNWT Programs And Services To Communities

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have been in contact with the Minister's office to advise him that this fiscal year...and he's absolutely right; the communities are happy with the formula, it's just that because of the rising energy costs in the last six months, like, this formula probably took some time to work on, the six months that they took to work on this formula is just when the gas and fuel prices were rising, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister address this year's shortfall this year as opposed to waiting until next fiscal year? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 72-15(5): Transfer Of GNWT Programs And Services To Communities

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We always take the position to deal with the communities that accumulate a deficit and I'd like to point out we only have, I think this year we have four communities that have accumulated deficits and we continue to work with a recovery plan, we work on doing analysis where they may have overspent or where there are issues about shortfall. So we'll continue to do those things. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 72-15(5): Transfer Of GNWT Programs And Services To Communities

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. No, the issue is that there is already a shortfall because the funding that communities are getting is based on a three-year average, but the average did not include the skyrocketing increase in the O and M, which is basically fuel. So that's the shortfall that the community has asked me to address. Will the Minister look at some type of funding options to provide, to prevent this hardship for this fiscal year? Mahsi cho.

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

Further Return To Question 72-15(5): Transfer Of GNWT Programs And Services To Communities

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the budgets for this year have already been set. I would have to take that under consideration and review the situation with each community. Each community has unique needs and we have historically dealt with the communities and tried to address the issues that are causing them concern and will continue to do so, and if there's a mechanism of working some kind of fiscal arrangement, then we'll explore those options. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member from Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Question 73-15(5): Healthy Food In NWT Schools

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Minister Dent. I'd like to ask Minister Dent is he putting some plan together in terms of banning the junk food in all our schools in the Northwest Territories as outlined, put the junk in the trunk as my friends say and get some action in our schools here? Thank you.

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

Return To Question 73-15(5): Healthy Food In NWT Schools

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. More than a year ago I discussed with the chairs of the DECs the need for us to ensure that healthy snacks were available for children in all of our schools and all of the DECs have agreed that they're moving towards this. I think most of them in the Territories have already moved to ensure that healthy snacks are in vending machines. I will follow up with the DECs and find out just what the state of compliance is with that direction.

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

Supplementary To Question 73-15(5): Healthy Food In NWT Schools

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you. I look forward to that report from the Minister in terms of which schools. Now, can the Minister, again, can he outline some form of action plan of some of the schools who decided not to follow this route? What type of leadership can he provide to his department to get healthy food, get them into vending machines and put the junk in the trunk? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 73-15(5): Healthy Food In NWT Schools

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know from my discussions with the chairs of the divisional education councils that there's a broad acceptance that we need to be moving this way. So I'm certainly of the opinion that the leaders in the educational councils will set the standards in their regions and make sure that they are moving to have healthy foods in all of the vending machines across the North. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 73-15(5): Healthy Food In NWT Schools

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister look at providing some directive, some initiative to all the DEAs in the Territories to come up with some draft policies to have healthy foods, healthy snacks in their schools? Take out the junk food from the school

and provide direction, let his department, this government, provide some leadership. They've provided strong leadership in the past on some other initiatives this government has done. I suggest continuing with that leadership. Would the Minister provide a time frame or something that the communities can report to saying by a certain date we're going to have all healthy foods in this school? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 73-15(5): Healthy Food In NWT Schools

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I trust that I'm not going to have to provide a directive to enforce that happening. I believe that those who are elected to our divisional educational councils are themselves leaders and understand the importance of healthy food and do want to get junk in the trunk. I will work with the divisional education council leaders and if we don't see that movement happening, I may reconsider my position by next fall. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 73-15(5): Healthy Food In NWT Schools

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward again to Minister Dent's position in the fall time in terms of the leadership. Can the Minister, then, look at different avenues in terms of encouraging, motivating these schools to provide healthy foods in the schools, working with the different northern food stores and different community organizations to get healthy foods and take the junk out, keep it in the trunk once and for all? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 73-15(5): Healthy Food In NWT Schools

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, I'd be happy to make sure that we're discussing with our partners that initiative or those sorts of initiatives. I know from my discussions with them already that they are already well aware of the importance of following through on this. So I trust that they will all move to ensure that we're seeing healthy foods in schools and physically active kids. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Oral questions. The honourable Member from Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

Question 74-15(5): Health And Social Services Review In Deninu Kue

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I just want to ask the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources and Health and Social Services a question just referring back to October last year when the Minister has committed, as a department, to do a review of the health and social services arrangement that they have with the Yellowknife Health Authority as far as the relationship with people of Deninu Kue. I just want to know what the status of that review is and, if it's completed, is it available for public consultation? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return To Question 74-15(5): Health And Social Services Review In Deninu Kue

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the review was done. They are just finalizing the consultation with the communities. They've been in there with the various stakeholders and trying to set up meetings with the community leadership to go over the content of the review and the recommendations that were made, and I'd be more than happy to get a copy of that for the Member. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 74-15(5): Health And Social Services Review In Deninu Kue

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess back in October during the session the Minister said that he would commit to the Member that this review would be done in the first week of January. I'm hoping that it probably was done in January sometime, and that was four months ago. The community consultation; is there any specific dates that the Minister can tell me and my constituents when they're going to be in the communities to do this consultation, because it's already four months past when the review was supposed to be completed. When do we start the consultation process, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 74-15(5): Health And Social Services Review In Deninu Kue

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that consultation has been underway. They have been meeting with various groups, individuals and organizations in the community. The one group that they were having some difficulty getting it all together was the actual community leadership comprised of the chief and the mayor and the Metis president. But they have been working on this and we're going to finalize the report, but they were going over the recommendations as well as the content of all the interviews and work that was done. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 74-15(5): Health And Social Services Review In Deninu Kue

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The most important people you want to consult with in these communities seem to be the ones they haven't touched base with yet. I'm sure that the Minister has probably met with the Yellowknife Health Authority and gone over some of the recommendations of the review. Maybe just for the public record and for my constituents' peace of mind, what were the views of the Yellowknife Health Authority so far as the overall recommendations that the review recommended? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 74-15(5): Health And Social Services Review In Deninu Kue

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I haven't seen the final draft. I know that the work's been done, as I've outlined. But I haven't seen the final draft and I am waiting for that to come across my desk. There has been extensive efforts made to connect up with the leadership and I do believe that if they didn't do it as a group, they've managed to meet with them individually. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 74-15(5): Health And Social Services Review In Deninu Kue

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister is in the same boat as I am. It's a review that was done four months ago; he hasn't seen it and neither have I. The leaders haven't been consulted; it hasn't been shared with the community yet. Can I just get some kind of a commitment, a statement from the Minister from his department to say that, yes, we are going to move forward on this and we are actually going to go in the community sometime hopefully soon and bring in a public document in the community and hear everybody's concerns on what some of those recommendations could be? Could we get some kind of a timeline when that's going to be completed? It's already four months overdue, Mr. Speaker. You know, how long does it take to travel to Res? It's only half an hour away, you know, by plane. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 74-15(5): Health And Social Services Review In Deninu Kue

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there has been extensive community consultation and I indicated to the deputy minister and the folks involved to keep contacting the community leadership and if we can't get hold of them, track all the efforts we've made to in fact get hold of them. So I will check with the department, but I will commit to the Member that I will have a copy of that report for him and for myself so we can go over it together before the end of this week. Thank you.

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

Question 75-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement I said I was going to ask about the transportation contract for the construction of winter roads, but in fact the Minister had already given us a pretty good commitment in a meeting this morning so I'm not pursuing that. So I'm going to go to Mr. Krutko instead, the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, there has been a project in the works in Hay River for many months related to seniors' housing. It has been called the Whispering Willows Seniors Complex, and as of late we haven't heard much of a formal or public update as to what is the status of that project. So I'll ask Mr. Krutko if he could please let us know what is happening with Whispering Willows. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Honourable Minister responsible for Housing Corporation, Mr. Krutko.

Return To Question 75-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have been in discussions with the Hay River Seniors' Society and also with CMHC who is also providing funding to this program. We are in the process of putting out a request for proposals for construction of units in Hay River, working in conjunction with the Seniors' Society, CMHC and ourselves. So we're presently in the process of preparing a request for proposal on that project.

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

Supplementary To Question 75-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have two questions, then, as a result of that. No, I have three questions actually. How many units is this complex going to consist of, are they for seniors, and is the NWT Housing Corporation supplying the land on which these units are going to be built from this RFP? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Three questions there. The Minister can answer one or all three. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 75-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I'll answer the last one first and go forward. The land that this project is sitting on is land that is owned by the Housing Corporation. We are contributing to this project. In regards to the numbers of units, again we are working along with the Seniors' Society in which they are also going to be putting money into this project, and also working with the community of Hay River to try to get some money through the capacity funding. But also through CMHC again, they are also involved. So at this time, we are working in conjunction with the three agencies to be able to deliver this program. But also to have a fair and open process, we are going to be putting out the request for proposals and sit down with the Seniors' Society in Hay River, along with CMHC and myself, to ensure that we are being fair and open and transparent and also meet the goals of the seniors for Hay River. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 75-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So the Minister didn't tell me how many units were going to be built, he didn't tell me who the units are going to be for, so I'd like to ask the Minister again -- I hope this doesn't count as a question -- who are the units being built for and isn't the NWT Housing Corporation, in fact, going to buy these units? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 75-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, these units are for seniors in Hay River who basically have low incomes. This is going to be similar to public housing that we provide the seniors at the present time. I know there were concerns in regard to condos and whatnot that were in the mix. That is no longer part of this scenario, so we are only focussing on low income seniors to provide social housing for seniors in Hay River. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 75-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to know if the Minister, at some point, could provide us with some kind of documentation that shows this project in a capital plan anywhere. The other thing, Mr. Speaker, if the Housing Corporation's going to own them, they're low income units for seniors, have they done a market study to identify if there is a demand for them or not? Because I'll tell you something, Mr. Speaker, everyone knows, as my colleague referred to today, that most of the people who moved into the duplexes, whether they were low income or not low income or whatever they were, sold their homes to move in there. So that would kind of speak to you about the demand. I hope that the Minister plans to do some kind of a market survey or something to determine if there's a demand for these units for social housing for seniors.

The other question, and my final question, Mr. Speaker, is, is the Town of Hay River going to allow the Housing Corporation to build social housing on the lot that they have on the riverbank in Hay River downtown? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 75-15(5): Seniors' Housing Project In Hay River

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, everyone knows that this land has been designated for seniors' housing in Hay River for years. It's nothing new to the Town of Hay River, and we have no plans of changing that at this time. Also in regards to the clients that we are looking at, we have done needs surveys, we have a lot of facilities we have in Hay River we're going to have to replace at some point, and we're looking at possibly moving those residents into this unit while we have to either replace the

existing seniors' units in Hay River and move those residents into this new facility, because we do have to replace that facility at some point. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Oral questions. The honourable Member from Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Question 76-15(5): Telecommunications Services In The North

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions this afternoon are for Mr. Roland as the Minister for Public Works and Services and the department that has historically had, I understand, a kind of a watchdog capacity for regulatory matters, and that would include, I'm assuming, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Radio/Television Telecommunications Commission. Mr. Speaker, the GNWT has kept an eye on these kinds of regulatory matters. There are hearings scheduled for Whitehorse next month on a major new regulatory framework for NorthwesTel, the major service provider of telecommunication services across the Canadian North. Mr. Speaker, is the GNWT going to intervene and what positions are we taking to the CRTC on behalf of NWT consumers, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for Public Works and Services, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 76-15(5): Telecommunications Services In The North

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, Public Works and Services is involved in monitoring CRTC hearings throughout Canada to see if in fact there will be impacts on service that's provided in the Northwest Territories, and we will be presenting our case in Whitehorse regarding a number of issues in the Northwest Territories and how our service provider here in the Northwest Territories operates. I'm not in a position to get right into a lot of the detail at this stage. Number one is we'd like to put our position on the table without having other groups who are concerned about the operating environment. For example, I'll give a case; the issue of the high cost service areas that we were involved with in the past and were successful in having NorthwesTel designated to operate in those areas, and had some funds from southern operators move to the North. We know southern operators would prefer not to do that and are preparing their submissions and arguments, and we're again preparing our side of the equation for continued service in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 76-15(5): Telecommunications Services In The North

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, does that mean we are going to defend NorthwesTel's, in effect, monopoly here for at least some of the communities, and we're going to continue asking the CRTC to protect that monopoly through regulatory affairs, Mr. Speaker?

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

**Further Return To Question 76-15(5):
Telecommunications Services In The North**

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that fact is that NorthwesTel is the only largest service provider in the Northwest Territories for our phone systems, aside from cell phones and so on. We are of the opinion that the Northwest Territories is a high cost service area, and that needs to be recognized and continue to be recognized. If it happens to be NorthwesTel operating here, they'll be the company that would benefit. If we have other companies who want to get involved in the North, we would look at that as well. Our position is that the Northwest Territories is a high cost area and the rates across the country need to take that into consideration, much like what's already done and the results of that.

There are a number of other issues that we will be looking at as well. But as I stated earlier, we've prepared our presentation and we'll be delivering that in Whitehorse. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 76-15(5):
Telecommunications Services In The North**

MR. BRADEN: I should try not to read between the lines here because I just might make a mistake. I respect the Minister's situation here where he can't put too many of the cards on the table right now. But I guess the point that I want to make, Mr. Chairman, is that we've seen so many innovations and so many new ways of doing business crop up in the last few years since the last regulatory framework was set up, that I believe we should really be more open and in fact more aggressive in seeing what other options there are out there. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to know what the government can do to convince the CRTC to make this jurisdiction more competition friendly, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Further Return To Question 76-15(5):
Telecommunications Services In The North**

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess one of the areas that we are involved with and would continue to support would help any service provider in the Northwest Territories, is the subsidies that were granted by the CRTC for northern operators and long distance calls and operating those facilities. At this time, we have one major provider in the Northwest Territories for hard line services. If there are other companies interested in that, those types of arrangements would only help their operating structures. So the positions we would put forward, yes, in this case would benefit one company as they are the main service provider. If other companies were to get involved, we'd want to ensure that the environment for that was open enough to create that type of competition. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 76-15(5):
Telecommunications Services In The North**

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, has the GNWT consulted with any of the major user groups in the NWT, like the business or the mining industry communities, other levels of government and consumers, to really verify that its positions are going to be the ones that accurately reflect what we want to have put before the CRTC? What is the level of consultation that we have undertaken, Mr. Speaker?

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

**Further Return To Question 76-15(5):
Telecommunications Services In The North**

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't have the detail as to who we actually were in discussions with. I know we monitored the situation and other CRTC hearings for those types of decisions that would have impact on the service providers in the Northwest Territories. I can get that information for the Member and provide it later. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member from Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

Question 77-15(5): Tlicho Intergovernmental Services Agreement

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. (Translation) Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question regarding elders. We won't be here if it wasn't for our elders. They are the ones who support what we are doing as a government. They really supported us when we were creating our government. These are some of the words of support that they gave us. When the elders give us advice, this is what's in the Tlicho Agreement. (Translation ends)

This is the importance of the agreement signed by the GNWT in this day and age with various parties in the North. One particular such as Tlicho Intergovernmental Services Agreement that we have with the Tlicho Community Services Agency. The GNWT must uphold any employment and also respect what's in the agreement before us, Mr. Speaker. Key issues and important issues need attention. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister responsible for FMBS, Mr. Roland, what is the GNWT's position on the special status of the Tlicho Community Services Agency, specifically the clause I identified earlier, article 3.2(a) and 4.5 of the Tlicho Intergovernmental Services Agreement? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The Minister responsible for FMBS, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 77-15(5): Tlicho Intergovernmental Services Agreement

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the agreements that we have signed as a government to honour our commitments is something we take seriously. We will continue to work with the Tlicho Government and the agency to provide the services that are necessary through that agreement. There are a number of issues, of course, in our operating environment that have to be taken into consideration by all parties. I understand where the Member is coming from with the work with the elders, respecting the arrangements that

were made in the past with them, and I have committed that we will try to work with the agency and Tlicho Government as to how we can try to resolve the issue of elders and payments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 77-15(5): Tlicho Intergovernmental Services Agreement

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week the Minister stated that the Tlicho Community Services Agency gave advance notice of hiring elders when it's required will make it easier within the system. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, on a daily basis we are faced with huge challenges of last minute changes, not only in my communities but in other small, isolated communities. We must respect what the elders' decisions are. Mr. Speaker, due to these unforeseen circumstances, can the Minister commit to amending the policy in the FMBS system that will respect and reflect the Tlicho Community Services Agency Intergovernmental Services Agreement and pay the elders upon their completion of valuable services? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 77-15(5): Tlicho Intergovernmental Services Agreement

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member has raised a significant point. In operations, the Tlicho Government, as he stated, has difficulty from time to time dealing with the daily changing plans of individuals and our elders in trying to accommodate those.

On a larger scale, the Government of the Northwest Territories and our system has even greater difficulty making those small changes. That is why we need to try to arrange a plan that would work for both parties and is a little more difficult than initially stated. One of the other areas we could look at is possibly our contract arrangement with the Tlicho Government and set up a billing system and accountabilities around an agreement of that nature. So there is another option that we can look at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 77-15(5): Tlicho Intergovernmental Services Agreement

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister for outlining the possible alternatives, the contract basis for the hiring of elders, so the elders can be paid upon completion of their services. I am just wondering, Mr. Speaker, when can the Minister meet with his department and our Tlicho Community Services Agency to expedite this process? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 77-15(5): Tlicho Intergovernmental Services Agreement

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a result of the Member's work and questions

earlier in this House, I have already contacted the Department of Human Resources that deals with pay and benefits section. They are trying to make contact with the Tlicho Community Services Agency and their CEO and we will begin that process as soon as we can set up an appropriate time to get together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 78-15(5): SideDoor Pilot Project In Yellowknife

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier in my statement today, in speaking about the various forms of violence, one of the things I mentioned is the importance and the important work that our frontline workers do to deal with a lot of social issues. I should state that my question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. I can tell you that one of the things the Yellowknife committee has been working on at the frontline is the SideDoor Youth Centre. This is a place where there is shelter provided and they have a Living Room Program, which has gone through a pilot project for a few months last winter where youth could go and stay overnight in a supervised condition and they could seek shelter and stay away from trouble.

The Minister had committed in this House that this was a pilot project but that he was reviewing that with a view to extending it. I was told yesterday that this funding has depleted, ended, and there is no hope for future funding and that the organizer of the group is telling me they have had to turn down requests and calls from youth who want to access this service. I would like to ask the Minister how he could be so cold hearted and cut off this program when it just took off. Thank you.

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

Return To Question 78-15(5): SideDoor Pilot Project In Yellowknife

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't consider myself cold hearted. My understanding is that we did provide funding and we are, as far as I know, still considering that. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 78-15(5): SideDoor Pilot Project In Yellowknife

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I must say I am very pleased that the Minister's cold heart is warming up and there is a glimmer of hope that we may still keep this program going. So, Mr. Speaker, may I just take this opportunity to give the chance to review this program and perhaps he could make the results of the pilot program to us. Will he give full consideration to extending and continuing this very important program in our community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 78-15(5): SideDoor Pilot Project In Yellowknife

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The social envelope Ministers gather regularly and one of the issues we have been working on is a Homelessness Strategy. We have done work on that. There have been papers brought forward and we are bringing forward requests for funding and building things into our business plans. One of the things that has been identified as the need to the Homelessness Strategy is the service provided by the SideDoor. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 78-15(5): SideDoor Pilot Project In Yellowknife

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate his answer, but I am not sure if I got as much commitment as I would like to see, Mr. Speaker. I just want to build on his first answer and say yesterday in the House we talked about the merit of this government spending \$320,000 to do a review on an office building. Mr. Speaker, a program like this, we are talking \$20,000 or \$30,000 a year to keep these youth off the streets and into a program where they can engage in healthy activities. Can I ask the Minister to make a commitment here to say that he will review this and he will do all he can to revive this program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 78-15(5): SideDoor Pilot Project In Yellowknife

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In point of fact, I believe the amount of money that was provided was \$100,000 last year and if the Member will check unedited Hansard, I will say it again, the social envelope Ministers have worked together. We have put together a Homelessness Strategy. We are building things into our business plans. There are requests for funding in there and one of the items that has been identified as a need in Yellowknife have been the need that's met by the SideDoor and that has been identified in the work that we've done, the documents that we have pulled together and that are currently processing through the required budgetary and business planning processes. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 78-15(5): SideDoor Pilot Project In Yellowknife

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I take that answer to be saying that it's not a question of if, but it's when. On that optimistic note, Mr. Speaker, I think the expectation was raised in that there was a pilot program. It went until March and they were looking for funding, and this is June and it's not forthcoming. Can I ask the Minister when will these people be able to expect to hear from the Minister as to whether their project is a go or not? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 78-15(5): SideDoor Pilot Project In Yellowknife

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are going through the required budgetary and business planning steps. When that process is completed, that information will be available. This is a yearly process and clearly we want to be up and running well before the coming winter. Even though it's only June, we are planning for the coming cold season. So we are working on this. We have been working on it for a number of months and the paperwork is already in the process. Thank you.

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

Question 79-15(5): Ulukhaktok Print Making And Tapestry Shop

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My Member's statement today spoke in regard to how the residents of Ulukhaktok would like to see the print making and tapestry facility renovated and utilized once again to show artistic talents. My question is for the Honourable Brendan Bell, Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Can the Minister direct his regional staff in Inuvik to visit the mayor of Ulukhaktok to conduct both a physical and visual inspection of the facility and see if it can be renovated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return To Question 79-15(5): Ulukhaktok Print Making And Tapestry Shop

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Speaker, obviously the arts and crafts sector is very important. It's something our government wants to support. We are certainly prepared to investigate the future of the Holman print shop. I will be in Ulukhaktok next week with the Member. We are also planning to bring the regional superintendent, so that is probably the most opportune time for us to have a tour of the facility and make sure the mayor is able to talk to our regional superintendent so we can ensure some follow-up. I will commit to doing that and making myself available for that meeting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 79-15(5): Ulukhaktok Print Making And Tapestry Shop

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response, Mr. Minister. If we conduct a visual inspection of the facility and it cannot be renovated, will there be other options that we can look so they can conduct...(inaudible)...? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 79-15(5): Ulukhaktok Print Making And Tapestry Shop

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will approach it on a business case basis. Obviously it's the BDIC that would have to make a determination or decision as to whether or not they are prepared to make

an investment into a new subsidiary. Since it was rolled up or closed some time ago, I am not sure of the condition of the assets anymore. I am not sure what the investment or the requirement would be, but I would say that I know the community is very proud of their history and their ability in the field in print making. I have seen a number of the prints on my last visit to Holman. In fact, I purchased one there. It's beautiful. I think there is a lot of attraction in having an industry like this up and running. So we will look at it, we will evaluate it and I know the BDIC would be interested in looking at a business case test, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

Question 80-15(5): Inuvik Children First Society Facility Proposal

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the budget session, I asked questions of Minister Dent on the early childhood facility that they were hoping to incorporate into the new school in Inuvik. The government leases buildings, we look for office space, we try to build office space and the people of the Children First Society come forward with a good business case and I believe the government should build this facility and lease it back to them. They are willing to do that. They are willing to give the government back some money. The Minister, at the time, committed to go back to his FMB colleagues to bring this proposal forward to them. I would like to ask the Minister if he has met with FMB with the proposal and, if so, what was the outcome of the meeting? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Return To Question 80-15(5): Inuvik Children First Society Facility Proposal

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I haven't had a meeting with the proponents at this point, but I would be happy to meet with them and discuss their proposal.

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

Supplementary To Question 80-15(5): Inuvik Children First Society Facility Proposal

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the response from the Minister. That was from February 15th. Now we are into June. The design phase is going to start soon and they will be expecting \$550,000 from the Early Child Education Centre to get them through the design stage. I would like to ask the Minister if he could commit in carrying the cost for the design and the preliminary site development stage. Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 80-15(5): Inuvik Children First Society Facility Proposal

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have to apologize to the Member; it appears that he has a copy of a proposal that I haven't yet seen. As soon as I get my hands on that, I would be happy to consider it and see where we might be able to move with

it. I would agree that we would like to do what we can to assist communities to ensure that childcare is provided and I will have to take a look at what they proposed specifically and see where we can go from there. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 80-15(5): Inuvik Children First Society Facility Proposal

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do have a copy of the proposal here and I would be glad to share it with Minister Dent. This proposal was given to me personally by the Children First Society. I will share that with Mr. Dent as soon as we are done here. I would like to ask the Minister if the department has done any work into estimating additional cost of housing childcare programs in schools. Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 80-15(5): Inuvik Children First Society Facility Proposal

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The additional cost would be whatever the cost per square foot is to add the space in a school when that school might be under construction. We have a number of schools in the Northwest Territories in several communities where childcare programs are being offered in classrooms that are essential or not in use as part of the regular school program. For instance, schools that are under capacity. So it is not an uncommon situation. In fact, it's one that we think is good use of a space. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Final supplementary, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Question 81-15(5): Seniors' Public Housing Initiative

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Minister of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. Mr. Speaker, I just want to ask the Minister because there may be some fear or confusion in terms of the news report on the housing issue in Hay River and for my people back in the Sahtu communities that do need this program that are in the house they have been living in for 20 or 30 years, that they are not going to be removed right away. There are some good things and they are not going to be removed or kicked out of their space. Can I ask the Minister what he's doing in terms of clearing up this issue here for people in my communities? Thank you.

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

Return To Question 81-15(5): Seniors' Public Housing Initiative

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the seniors and public housing initiative will continue on at the present time. It's a policy of the government. Again, the policy clearly states that people who live in public housing will not have to pay rent. There is another process that is going on with regard to reviewing the income security review. That now falls within the domain of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. We have decided to centralize our social

funding responsibilities and try to ensure that it is a fair distribution of money. Right now the policy is there and the policy will remain until there is a decision to review the policy. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 81-15(5): Seniors' Public Housing Initiative

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to hear the Minister say the policy is going to stay in place until a review takes place. Once the review is underway looking at the different policies, would the region be consulted, would the elders be consulted in terms of how this policy is going to fall out? I know there are some people in my region that think that this policy should be looked at very carefully, but that time will come, I guess, when the Minister announces the community consultations. So will all our elders be consulted in our communities? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 81-15(5): Seniors' Public Housing Initiative

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before we proceed with anything, we will ensure that we do consult the seniors, seniors' society, the seniors in our community and, more importantly, that through this legislative process that we have in front of us, we will be able to bring it forward by way of committees, but also have that debate here in the House. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 81-15(5): Seniors' Public Housing Initiative

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are some seniors in my region who say it's just as easy for them to get into public housing rather than try to support them through their own independent housing. It gets pretty hard for them. However, Mr. Speaker, each community and region has different scenarios, so I'm not going to take sides on this. As long as it's fair and done in an equitable manner and that our region may be different from other communities, other regions. So will the Minister again ensure that this program here is done for how it's intended to carry out and that our elders would be safeguarded, sort of thing, in the event that they are there, in there for their own security, in terms of not being able to be moved out or kicked out, or their rent will be covered? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 81-15(5): Seniors' Public Housing Initiative

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, again, Mr. Speaker, we have not made a decision to basically have seniors in public housing pay rent at this time. But the reason I'm saying at this time is because presently we are doing a review in regards to the income security review that's going on in the programs we have in the Northwest Territories. Right now there's about \$100 million that's being given out by way of some subsidy or another.

Again, right now those dollars are being allocated to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in which we're going to ensure that we have a system in place that is fair to all residents of the Northwest Territories, from people who live in social housing to people who are in their own private residence. We are going to be doing that through the social review or income social review that's taking place. So again, the review is taking place, we are informing our residents and, more importantly, that there has been no decision to change the policy for seniors who live in public housing to pay rent. Thank you.

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

Question 82-15(5): Seniors' Housing In Hay River

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just in follow-up to the Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation, I had a couple of questions that flow from the questions that I asked before. So when the Minister says that the social housing need is there in Hay River for seniors, is he effectively talking about the replacement of the Riverview Lodge, which now accommodates I believe 12 or 14 seniors who are in social seniors' housing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing Corporation, Mr. Krutko.

Return To Question 82-15(5): Seniors' Housing In Hay River

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Yes, Mr. Speaker. We are in the process of having to do a major retrofit of that facility within the next couple years. Because of that, we will have to basically relocate those residents and also ensure that we have enough housing facilities for seniors in Hay River going forward. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 82-15(5): Seniors' Housing In Hay River

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, who is going to own this social housing facility for seniors, either at the outset of this RFP or at the conclusion or at the end of a period of time? Who is the owner? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 82-15(5): Seniors' Housing In Hay River

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, we are hoping that at some point in time it will be owned and managed by the Seniors' Society in Hay River, but, again, we are working in conjunction with the Housing Corporation and the Seniors' Society to basically work out the arrangement of exactly who will take ownership of this facility once we basically have made a decision on what type of facility we're looking at. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 82-15(5): Seniors' Housing In Hay River

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From that answer it sounds like we haven't decided what type of facility we're at, so I'd like to know where we're at in terms of the RFP. How far away are we on the RFP? And the other thing is, how can you have a transparent, competitive process that the Minister is talking about in regard to the RFP if he already knows that the seniors are going to own the facility? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 82-15(5): Seniors' Housing In Hay River

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, we are in the process of having three agencies putting money into this facility. We have basically CMHC, ourselves, and also the Seniors' Society in Hay River. They are also going to be contributing to this project. So with the three organizations that are going to be contributing, at the end of the day we have to determine exactly how much investment would each group make, and also when those investments will either be written off over a period of time or basically that we'll be able to hand that asset over to an agency or organization in Hay River. It's either going to be the Seniors' Society, it's going to be the Hay River Housing Authority, or it will be the Housing Corporation. But again, we have to determine exactly the amount of investment that each group are going to make and also exactly how long that investment will be carried on the books and written off over a period of time and then be sure what happens to the asset after that process takes place. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Time for oral questions has expired; however, I will allow the Member her final supplementary. Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 82-15(5): Seniors' Housing In Hay River

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would then ask the Minister again, where are you at in the RFP process? How many units are you going to RFP for? Where are you at on that? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 82-15(5): Seniors' Housing In Hay River

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, we are presently at the process of developing the request for proposal and when I have that, I will give it to the Member, inform the Member from Hay River exactly where we're at with this, and also make sure you're fully briefed on exactly where this project is going and also how we're proceeding forward. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The time for oral questions has expired. Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have two written questions today, one to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment and one to the Minister of Housing Corporation.

Written Question 8-15(5): Education Facility Plan

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

- 1) What is the total cost of the 10-year education facility plan for Yellowknife for years 2005-2015?
- 2) What is the total cost paid to establish and administer the Yellowknife Educational Facilities Planning Committee meetings, including the fees and expenses paid to the chair of the committee appointed by the Ministers?
- 3) Please provide a copy of the report of the Yellowknife Educational Facilities Planning Committee.
- 4) Please provide a full and comprehensive explanation of the department's position that 85 percent capacity is optimum school occupancy.
- 5) Please provide a list of all of the schools in the NWT, their enrolment and their capacity as of September 30, 2005. This data should show the number of students in the school; i.e., the Detah students attending school in Yellowknife should be counted in the school they attend, not the Detah School.

Written Question 9-15(5): Housing Cost Analysis

My question is for the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation:

Please provide in-depth financial and economic analysis on how it will cost \$100 million to build 530 new housing units under the affordable housing policy and yet the government proposes to pay over \$220 million to buy 830 workforce-used, converted and transported Novel housing units.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Written questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Written Question 10-15(5): Con And Giant Mines Remediation Plans

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources:

Would the Minister supply a status report on the GNWT's responsibilities and progress in finalizing the remediation plans for Con and Giant gold mines?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to the opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for investment, tourism, industry, Mr. Bell.

---Laughter

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 19-15(5): Energy For The Future: A Discussion Paper On Energy Policy And Planning For The Government Of The Northwest Territories

HON. BRENDAN BELL: That's just fine, Mr. Speaker. That'll do.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table two documents today. The first one entitled Energy for the Future: A Discussion Paper on Energy Policy and Planning for the Government of the Northwest Territories.

Tabled Document 20-15(5): Government Of The Northwest Territories Contracts Over \$5,000 Report

And I also wish to table the document entitled Government of the NWT Contracts over \$5000 Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Tabled Document 21-15(5): NWT Arts Strategy: Progress Report As Of March 31, 2006

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled NWT Arts Strategy Progress Report as of March 31, 2006. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for FMBS, Mr. Roland.

Tabled Document 22-15(5): 2006 Employee Satisfaction And Engagement Survey

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have three documents for tabling today.

I wish to table the following document entitled Government of the Northwest Territories 2006 Employee Satisfaction and Engagement Survey.

Tabled Document 23-15(5): Government Of The Northwest Territories 2006 Employee Satisfaction And Engagement Survey Action Plan

As well, I wish to table the following document entitled 2006 Employee Satisfaction and Engagement Survey Action Plan.

Tabled Document 24-15(5): List Of Interactivity Transfers Exceeding \$250,000 For The Period April 1, 2005 To March 31, 2006

Pursuant to section 32.1(2) of the Financial Administration Act, I wish to table the following document entitled List of Interactivity Transfers Exceeding \$250,000 for the Period April 1st, 2005, to March 31st, 2006. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Tabling of documents.

Tabled Document 25-15(5): Annual Report Respecting Members' Indemnities And Allowances For The Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2006

Pursuant to section 35(a) of the Legislative Assembly Executive Council Act, I wish to table the Annual Report Respecting Members' Indemnities and Allowances for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31st, 2006.

Tabled Document 26-15(5): Annual Report Respecting Capital Accommodation Expenses For The Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2006

Also pursuant to section 35(b) of the Legislative Assembly Executive Council Act, I wish to table the Annual Report Respecting Capital Accommodation Expenses for Fiscal Year Ending March 31st, 2006.

Tabled Document 27-15(5): Annual Report Respecting Members' Constituency Expenses For The Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2006

Pursuant to section 35(c) of the Legislative Assembly Executive Council Act, I wish to table the Annual Report Respecting Members' Constituency Expenses for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31st, 2006.

Tabled Document 28-15(5): Summary of Members' Absences For The Period April 1, 2005 To March 31, 2006

Pursuant to section 19(a) of the Legislative Assembly Executive Council Act, I wish to table the Summary of Members' Absences for the Period of April 1st, 2005, to March 31st, 2006.

Tabled Document 29-15(5): Amendments To Schedule C Of The Legislative Assembly And Executive Council Act – Indemnities And Allowances

In accordance with section 21(3) of the Legislative Assembly Executive Council Act, I hereby table amendments made to schedule C of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, Indemnities and Allowances.

Tabled Document 30-15(5): Report Of The Auditor General Of Canada On The Audit Of The Workers' Compensation Board Of The Northwest Territories And Nunavut

In response to Motion 31-15(3) adopted by this House on March 10th, 2005, I wish to table the report of the Auditor General of Canada on the audit of the Workers' Compensation Board of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

---Applause

Tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for first reading of 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: Committee Report 4-15(5) and Bill 2, with Mr. Ramsay in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, everyone. I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order and what is the wish of committee, Mr. Menicoche?

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. The committee wishes to consider Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2006-2007, as well as Committee Report 4-15(5).

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. We will do so after a short recess. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Good afternoon. We will now reconvene Committee of the Whole. We are dealing right now with page 27, Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2006-2007. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister if he wishes to bring in witnesses.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

Mr. Minister, introduce your witness, please.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Joining me at the table here is the secretary to the FMB, Mr. Mark Cleveland.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Minister. We are on page 27 of Bill 2, Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures. Yesterday we left off on advanced education and careers, not previously authorized, \$4.867 million. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we left here last night, we had a few questions that we were looking for some answers to. Some of the ones that come to mind I wanted to know. I wanted to know the existing square footage of the Deh Cho Hall, the amount of that square footage which is now occupied by client departments of the GNWT and the amount of square footage occupied by non-government organizations who are co-habitants with government departments. That's my first question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the building as it exists now is the total size of 4,488 square metres. The GNWT portion of that is: the district education council section is 1,469 square metres; Education, Culture and Employment is 344 square metres; Aurora College is 429 square metres; Department of Justice is 105 square metres.

For the non-government users: the John Tetso Memorial Library is 233 square metres; Open Door Society is 365 square metres; Multi Media Centre Society is 27 square metres; and, cultural centre is 187 square metres. Thank you.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: That was a pretty fast list there but I was trying to do the math here. Could the Minister pass something out with this on it and maybe even has the GNWT client departments added up and maybe the NGOs added up, so that we could get a sense? Draw us a picture; this is the whole building, this is the government part, this is the NGO part and this is the vacant part. That's what I am looking for.

Also, Mr. Chairman, while we are getting that...Are we getting that? Mr. Chairman, are we going to get that?

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will provide a summary of the building usage, the complete facility as it is, the GNWT users and then the non-government users. I will leave it to the Members to do the addition. I don't have that tallied up by GNWT and non-government users. We do have the square footage for all occupants and then the total facility as it stands is calculated. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, I will look forward to seeing that. I think we are allowed to ask hypothetical questions in Committee of the Whole. If you were building a building just for your government client departments, would these amounts remain consistent? Are they just taking up large amounts because they are in an old building with big rooms or under the standards of space that would be allowable to them, how does that compare with what they have now versus what they would mean under PWS standards for allowable sizes for offices and common areas, et cetera? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the space occupied by the GNWT users is relatively the same, approximately 320 square metres less would be what we would look at for our current requirement. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So I need time to add up these numbers here, but, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the Minister, did PWS consider what their costs would be, what their lease costs would be if they went out to tender for this space to be provided by a private developer? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as I stated yesterday, the department, the recommendation by Public Works and Services to the department was a couple of options and ultimately one, the best value for money long term would be replacement of this facility. Once that project is agreed to -- and that

would have to be agreed to ultimately through the building or business planning process coming up in September -- if that is agreed to then the department, we would have to look at should we build our own or should we now go out for lease space. So that decision is yet to be made. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With respect to the fire marshal's report and the deficiencies that need to be corrected in the building to bring it up to code which constitute this over \$3.5 million, have you had any discussion with the fire marshal as to the absolute outside limit date on occupancy and the undertaking of those corrections? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, if we do not show a plan to repair the immediate requirements that we've been instructed to do, then the occupancy, we could be terminated as early as this summer. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Well, that's good to know, Mr. Chairman, because I still think that there is readily available land which is already zoned for the purposes of a building like this in Fort Simpson in a very prime location and I think that answer says that there is at least a small window of opportunity to have some more discussion on this. I think that's what we should do. I mean, what you have to do is show a plan and maybe your plan is that everybody's moving out anyway. Because you're going to move into leased premises. I haven't given up on that idea that that could be provided and delivered by a private developer much more quickly than the Minister probably anticipates. Yesterday he mentioned something like two to four years. I think that's if the government was building and I think that if they had a sense of what they wanted and could consult with the community quickly enough they could come up with something much more quickly than that.

I guess, Mr. Chairman, I'm just...I don't mind spending money. I don't mind investing money. But I hate wasting money. You know, when this need has come to our attention for something in Fort Simpson, I by no means begrudge the folks of Fort Simpson and the surrounding area good quality facilities that meet their need. That's not what this is about. What I have a problem with is putting \$3.5 million into a building because of poor planning that ultimately could, unless we just did a renovation of that building and those upgrades meet the code, are incorporated into, are considered just the first phase of a renovation program, then I guess it wouldn't be to the same degree of loss, but I'm not prepared to, from what I know, make a determination as to whether or not that's a good investment.

But if we're going to spend \$3.5 million to increase or extend the life of a building by two to four years and then tear that building down, I'm embarrassed, and I think the whole government should be embarrassed by such a plan. I thought earlier today I could sit down and say \$3.5

million equals this and this and this to put this in perspective, but we all know we don't need to do that. Three-point-five million dollars is a lot of money and it equates to a lot of infrastructure on the ground, or a lot of government positions, or a lot of assistants in our classrooms and our education system. I mean, it's quite unthinkable that we could waste this kind of money. So I will be letting other Members speak to this, obviously, but I'm going to put forward a motion to delete this and ask PWS and the Department of Education to come back with an alternative plan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, ultimately this House has the authority to direct us as it feels is the most appropriate action to take. Ultimately, as I said yesterday, there is no capital money in the budget to deal with Deh Cho Hall and that plan, even with this approval to do some renovations to keep it useable for the time being while we look at, as we've directed, the replacement of this facility, that plan would then have to go into the business plan process. The capital plan would then go before committee. If committee feels that renovation is the most appropriate means, then we would take that direction and go with the direction of the House. If committee wants to delete this, then so be it. We'll have to come up with another plan as to what we do. Ultimately without this money approved, we will miss the deadline we have. The next session we have is October. Even for coming back with a plan, an alternate plan, we don't have the authority to expend any money on this facility at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Next I have Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through the Minister Roland or directly I'd like to see if the client department, ECE, could help committee out with some of the background on this.

Mr. Chairman, as the Minister has just outlined, we do have a capital planning process. It normally takes a year or two of discussion and negotiation and preparation to even get a particular project in the cycle of, I guess competition with other projects before it may finally land on our desks here and we can actually approve a project. So it is a multi-year situation. The kind of project that the Deh Cho Hall is, is I guess a very routine, very ordinary kind of a project from a capital planning process, Mr. Chairman. We should have anticipated this or could have anticipated that this would be before us and potentially even work well underway, if not completed by now.

As we learned yesterday, Mr. Chairman, the departments have been dealing with this situation since 2002, at least three, maybe four years ago now, and nothing appeared on the routine capital planning process to give us a suggestion that we should be paying attention to this and doing something about it. Yet today we have this ultimatum before us that a major piece of Fort Simpson's government infrastructure is going to be padlocked and shut down unless we all of a sudden shift all of our process, Mr. Chairman, all of the rules and procedures that have been very carefully built up over time to enable us to make good decisions, all of those rules and procedures and conventions have been swept aside and we have this gun to our heads.

This is the part of this process that I'm really, really unhappy with. What I wanted to find out about from the client department here relates to the kind of involvement that they have had in this and what they did or did not subsequently do. So I wanted to look especially, Mr. Chairman, at the role or the advice that it was getting from the fire marshal's office that if the difficulties with the Deh Cho Hall have been basically flagged and under some kind of review since 2002, how is it that now, within the last few weeks, the fire marshal has laid this ultimatum down? Mr. Chairman, what advice did the fire marshal give ECE as the client department on timing or deadlines to bring the building up to code? Mr. Chairman.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Department of Public Works and Services is the department that's been in contact and dealing with the fire marshal's office. The letter that was sent to one of our senior project managers was dated in January 2006. The fire marshal's office has been involved for some time before that. It is an unfortunate situation where we are in the position we are. Ultimately, much work has been done, so the department has been dealing with this. It's not like this is parachuted in and going to take over other projects. On an annual basis every department can put projects on the planning table, so to speak, and they would have to justify why their project would make the cut for that year and show up in the business plans as a potential approved project. Once that gets the first nod at business plans, we would then draft the draft main estimates including that for final vote of the Assembly. So each department would do its work based on the criteria that's been set out in the capital planning process. A number of factors would be involved. There are five items, I don't have them up front. We've presented that to committee a number of years ago on the capital plan process, and the department can bring forward their plan and it would compete with others. If it ranks as high through the ranking system and makes it right through the process to the business plans, ultimately it would be Members of this House that would direct that if it, in fact, it is a new place or a new renovation. Right now the department has opted with the recommendation that it be a replacement.

Yes, as I laid out yesterday, the first indication and involvement with the fire marshal's office was dated back in 2002 and there's been a number of correspondence, meetings since then. Ultimately we've been given the letter saying here's what you have to do, here's the timeline you have to meet. We've been working with the client department trying to complete this process. Unfortunately we missed the boat on the last capital planning exercise and are now in a position where we have to come forward in this manner through a supplementary appropriation to get the first part of this money to keep the facility open. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Chairman, thank you. I appreciate the Minister's very patient explanation of all this stuff, but you know, he's pointed out one of the obvious stages in here, gaps, that for whatever reason or cause the routine step of getting this into the business plan was missed. One of

the steps that I'm familiar with and very comfortable with when it comes to getting things into the business plan is bringing an issue or problem or situation before standing committee. I sit on the Standing Committee on Social Programs, which has oversight responsibility for ECE. I do not recall in the four or five years that I've been on that committee, Mr. Chairman, any mention whatsoever of a situation in Fort Simpson where the Deh Cho Hall is going to require some capital help. Nothing. Reminiscent, Mr. Chairman, of a certain situation regarding a treatment centre here in Yellowknife where the decision was made way off page without the consultation of the standing committee in what was going on. These are the kinds of things that I need on my side, my colleagues need in order for us to make good decisions, responsible decisions of which we're going to be held to account for taxpayers' money. That's what's missing here.

The question that I want to put to the Minister or the client department is to confirm or correct me in advising of whether or not any item was ever brought before Standing Committee on Social Programs regarding Deh Cho Hall.

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

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not believe that at any time the standing committee was informed that we might be having to look at replacing this building. Mr. Chairman, there were extensive consultations with the MLA for the region over the past two years. The village council has been involved in the consultations, the band has been involved in the consultations, and unfortunately it appears that in the act of maintaining good consultation with the community, the step of informing the committee that this was an impending issue was overlooked.

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

MR. BRADEN: Yes, okay, I've got the information or the confirmation that I was seeking here and that is that a significant part in the accountability process that we need to have on our side of the House was missed. That reason alone will justify my support of the upcoming motion to delete this item, Mr. Chairman. As I've said in the context of this debate before, I think just about everybody on this side has added their voice to we do not want to deny Fort Simpson a valuable part of their community infrastructure, but we've got to be able to hold the government to account on the way decisions are made. That's the issue before us today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand where committee members are feeling those. I've mentioned this quite a number of times about the planning, the process, where we find ourselves now, and as I said earlier, ultimately it's this House that will direct how things are going and the final accountability happens here on the floor. So the Member has mentioned the motion as well as another Member mentioned she's prepared to move the motion, so I suggest that if that's the consensus, then let's get on with the motion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you very much, Mr. Roland. Next I have Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wouldn't be adverse to going straight into the motion because I am going to support the motion to delete this item for a variety of reasons. I think other Members here today and yesterday have discussed how it is that we've arrived here at the 11th hour having to spend \$3.5 million on a building that might have a life expectancy of two to four more years. It's a complete, in my mind, waste of money without a plan to address the office requirement needs in Fort Simpson. It doesn't sound like the Minister has a plan to do that. There's been a lot of talk about, well, it's not in the capital plan. Ultimately, whose responsibility is it that it's not in the capital plan? That's what I was trying to get at yesterday. I believe ultimately somebody's responsible and the Minister stated himself that consultation took place with the Member from there, the village, but one key important ingredient, Mr. Chairman, was there was never any consultation with the people who approve the spending in this government, and that's us. All of us. Here we are at the 11th hour with a gun to our head, like I said yesterday, and it's not fair, it's not appropriate and I will certainly be supporting the motion.

Also, while I've got the floor, I wanted to mention to the Minister I'm not sure where he got all the information on the numbers at the Deh Cho Hall, but, Mr. Minister, in my calculations you have about 8,700 square feet unaccounted for in your numbers if you do the math, and I challenge you to go back and look at the numbers. You're missing about 8,700 square feet of space according to your numbers and I'm not just making that up. With that, Mr. Chairman, I think we're covering a lot of ground we covered yesterday and I think that's important, but let's get on with the motion and let's have this out. Thank you.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As to the numbers, the paper that's been handed out to Members now, the total space used now is 4,488 square metres. That includes government and non-government. The portion of the government usage is split out and, as I read out earlier, the amount of square footage that are occupied by GNWT users and then the square footage by non-GNWT users. There are sections of the building that was involved in a fire in the past and sections of that building have been not used since then, and it's not our intent to renovate that portion of the building or to do the repairs to that. As well, we stated for a new facility we're targeting \$10 million and that would be just for the GNWT users with that. So that's the last comment I would have on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I've mentioned this numerous times before. Again, I don't understand if you have a requirement for office space in Fort Simpson why we don't go to tender and try to get the office space that we need built. Again, I mean this is the first time I'm seeing any of this information as it comes through a supplementary appropriation and it's not right, Mr. Chairman. I just want to mention that again. I think it's not fair to put Regular Members in this position that we're in today. It's not fair to the residents of Fort

Simpson either and I want to mention that as well. Thank you

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think we can find in the past where we have, through this process, established capital programs whether it be renovation or replacement because of timelines and urgency if we had a failure in a facility would come through this process. Why can't we go for office space leases at this point? We would need the authority of this House. We can't just go out for space at this time for a lease. Right now we're in an owned facility and to change that direction, again, the department would have to bring it forward and get that approval through the process we have in place. So I mean I can't add any more further to this discussion, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think the question begs to be asked, well, why didn't we go to tender three years ago or four years ago when we knew this was the case? If you want the approval of this Assembly to do that, I'm looking down the row here and across the way and I'm sure the will would be there. If there's a need in Fort Simpson for office space, the desire and the will amongst the Members here to get that done would be there, but it just wasn't done, Mr. Chairman. I think that's the problem. It should have went to tender years ago, not arrive here on the floor of the House today in the state that it's in and I think that's the key point in this. I think the Minister still has an opportunity to go to tender. Thank you.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, ultimately we need to find space. Spaces where we're occupied at this time we would lose the opportunity to use that space. Going out for a tender at this time we still wouldn't have a building in place for more than a year to complete what's required. I suggest we'd be lucky to get it completed and people moved in in two years if we were to pull something off the shelf and just say we need so much square footage office space. There is some office space, there's a learning centre. So there's different types of spaces here that are required, but ultimately that could be the final decision as we proceed down here. But what we find ourselves now is to make sure we have existing space available for those staff that are on the ground today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Next I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Just this whole issue is we have an opportunity to go over it again at length and we went over it yesterday and as a MLA for Nahendeh that represents Fort Simpson and the issue where this building stands is that I have to tell committee again is, it's not something that's been thrown on the books on this supp here two weeks ago, it's something that I've been working with the community, all levels of the community. Everyone is concerned about the building and the infrastructure and what to do with it

and what's the best way we could plan around it. A lot of what kept getting put off for different reasons, changes in administration, changes in mayorships and everybody has got to be brought up to speed again. It's no surprise that it's come to supp level and they've let us throw in the fire marshal's report. That's something that's been there for some time, too. As to why it wasn't addressed before, I can't answer that, but I cannot support the solution that the government is offering here. I mean I cannot support the motion committee members are putting forward to do away with the solution that the government is offering. I appreciate the Members' concerns about leasing and buying new buildings and that will be addressed in due time, but the solution now is what are we going to do with that building and this is the only solution there is, is to retrofit it and continue with the life of that building.

As for knowing every single issue in every Members' riding, that takes a super Herculean effort. It would be a super human feat to do that and I don't blame you if this is the first time you saw it or heard about it. Like, I brought you guys to Simpson and I showed you the building, but to know every single issue in everybody's riding is impossible. I would just like to do with that and to ask the Minister as well I guess, Mr. Chair, leasing building spaces and purchasing new and the retrofit to the building, are all those questions that had been addressed over the past three years? Thank you.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the process we would follow when it's an owned asset of our own, whether it's a school or a health centre or a warehouse, if it is an owned asset we would go down the process of looking at it and we continue to do that, is just replace it with our own capital dollars and continue to own it. The government at one time reviewed the possibilities and actually sold off a number of its owned assets and looked at leasing more space. That's something we continue to do as we review each situation, is do we do this. Ultimately, what we would have to decide is in fact, because right now we don't have a lease program in place, we'd have O and M to operate a facility. To go into a lease program is a shift from where we are. In fact, as I stated earlier as well, or yesterday, the leased option is something that we're going to have to consider when you look at our total capital plan and the number of projects that are on the books. The capital plan is now going to be potentially capped out, because the requirements are far exceeding the dollars available and we would have to look at ways of getting some of this much needed capital on the ground and leasing is always one of the options. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I thank the Minister for that answer. This is something that the community wants and this is something that I'll champion all the way. It's not some whimsical airy project that just come out of nowhere and I would just like to remind Members that we always said we'll bend over backwards for the will of the community and this is one of their wills, is to see the continuation of this building and Members want to say well, Kevin, you'll get a better building. Yes, okay, let's put \$20 million on the books and I'll be happy to go home to Simpson with a \$20 million

building. In fact, doing that will bring, according to the new motion that we passed early this week of bringing \$200,000 worth of arts into the community, you know, I'll look like a hero bringing that back. But the fact is right now the only solution now is to retrofit that building. I'm flabbergasted as well with the construction projection estimates. Like \$3.5 million and people say well it's not going to cost that much, but it is, it is going to cost that much and that's a fact that's here today. Leasing a building and building a new building, that's going to be done, but today it's what are we going to do with all the employees and where are we going to house them, and this is the only solution that's there and I'm supportive of it and I believe this is the best course of action. Today this is the best course of action. So I support it and this is what we must do. Mahsi cho.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. I didn't hear any question. Next I'll recognize Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I'll just be brief on this because everybody is beating everybody else on what their concerns are that we expressed yesterday. I just want to let it be known that I won't be supporting this motion, not because of what everybody was saying, you know, the government's lack of foresight and lack of planning escalated by all the changes in the political landscape of the day that kind of added to and made this whole lack of planning look even worse. But I know the Minister stated ECE would be left out in the cold along with all these NGOs. I know that the NGOs that are there now, that they make significant contributions to the community as a whole and I'm sure the community doesn't really give anything about whether ECE gets left out in the cold, but I think they care more about their library and their cultural and their multimedia centre and Open Door Society. I think that probably means more to the community than a government department.

I know the Minister is kind of backed into a corner and this is the only way that he's going to be able to pole vault out of there without getting his feet full of paint and all that stuff. The point I want to make is I think this is a real valuable lesson for government that's got to be learned here and I think that's the point that we're trying to drive across here, is the financial management and government planning has got to really take into consideration that we obviously won't know what every communities' needs and wants are. We don't advocate that we should know, but we want to know, as Members, how this government plans on spending public dollars. I think this issue here never was on the books and we never were consulted on it or even briefed on it and given any opportunities to have any input on what we could provide for information or options that this government could look into. I know that the fire marshal could shut down the building tomorrow if he wanted to and the community wouldn't only be out of an Aurora College and a Department of ECE, but also all these NGOs, which, again, I want to stress that the community probably would take a more harder stance in protecting those NGOs than a government department that is going to be doing the renovations.

So just as a last comment I just want to say that I can't support the motion, not because of the fact that I don't think the government's lack of foresight and lack of planning is to be overlooked, but I don't want to see all the other community organizations affected because of this lack of planning and lack of foresight in financial

management. If we do eliminate this out of the budget, then the ultimate bearers of the whole brunt of this deletion here or this motion is going to be those NGOs, which rely heavily on the Deh Cho Hall as a source and an establishment to carry on their business that they do effectively and efficiently for the community and I have to support that. That's all I'm going to say, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. I would just like to remind Members here that there is still no motion on the floor right now. We're just going through general comments. So I didn't hear any question actually to the Minister. So I'm going to refer over to Mr. Lafferty now.

MR. LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Chair. Mr. Chair, I'm just, I guess for yesterday and today, just sitting back and observing what's been said around the table. Talks about this Deh Cho building, we talk about the past the present and the future. We talk about the past where we should've, could've, would've. I think we really need to step backwards and say okay, let's move forward. We need to decide what we're going to do now, because I agree with what Members around the table are saying where they are badly, I guess, disappointed in the whole process where the AOC and the Regular Members weren't consulted. I agree with them that we should have been consulted when this whole thing erupted I guess back in 2002 or earlier. I was quite disappointed that it wasn't on a business plan as well, or capital plans, and we would have had a new building by now if it was the case, but that didn't take place. I guess at the same time my colleague Ramsay has stated earlier that it wasn't fair on us, even for the community of Fort Simpson.

I think a clear message here would be of course we'll move forward, but I think the Minister and the Cabinet heard over and over that they need to consult with us because this is a major step. It's like a catch-22, we're in that position right now. You pass a motion, you're doomed; you don't pass the motion, you're still doomed. Eleventh-hour decision-making is not right. So I think we must keep in mind that we need to decide what we're going to do now, keep in mind that we talk about the dollars and the old building, 1957 building, but at the same time there wasn't much discussion on the people that's in the building. I think we have to really seriously take into consideration that we can't just throw them out on the streets. Of course there is plans in place, okay, well maybe we'll do it this summer, but I think that's my priority. What are we going to do with those resources, the people in the building? Coming from a small community buildings such as Deh Cho Hall is a primary location for community members to visit, to hang out, to ask questions. That's the location where everybody goes to. In my community, it's the culture centre where people gather and share stories. That's an important place we are talking about now. I agree with Groenewegen when she says maybe a contractor could be hired immediately. At the same time, we need to do something now. If we are going to hire a contractor, that's down the road. We need to make a decision today, because certainly I am not going to delay this again. When it comes to the motion, Mr. Chair, I will be speaking on that as well. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. At this time, I would like to recognize Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I just have a few comments and I will conclude with my motion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the numbers, but as Mr. Ramsay said, there are 838 square metres unaccounted for. That's kind of embarrassing. At least I would be embarrassed. You are saying that's a burned out section of the building, but it doesn't say...Okay. It says total building, vacant space, GNWT space, NGOs. If you add all that up, there is 838 square metres missing. Now if you say it's a burned out section of the building someplace, that's great, but say "burned out section of the building, 838 square metres." So the numbers do not add up. Trust me, I have a calculator here.

Mr. Chairman, this whole thing is bad on so many fronts. First of all, it's bad to throw away \$3.5 million in a building that potentially won't be used after two years. It is bad that nobody is stepping up and taking responsibility or any accountability for this kind of planning. That's bad. That looks very bad on this government. If I had even an ounce of assurance that maybe this \$3.5 million would extend the life of this building more than two years, that maybe the code requirements would make it so that we could use it for 10 years, I could probably swallow this. But to say two years for \$3.5 million, then we have more money than we have brains. That's a sad state for any government to be in.

The talent pool is getting shallow when we have that kind of money to do upgrades to a 50-year-old building. Somebody said this is effective and wonderful for the people of Simpson, all these NGO spaces. One thing we didn't get into here is how much we are paying. Now we are finding out there are 838 square metres that are burned out. Are we heating these spaces? Look at all these other spaces, vacant spaces. What is the operational costs on this building? Just think of what the good people of Fort Simpson could do with that money. We have to be prudent on behalf of the people.

Committee Motion 25-15(5): To Delete \$3,520,000 From ECE's Advanced Education And Career Activity In Bill 2, Defeated

Mr. Chair, I move, that \$3.520 million be deleted from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, advanced education and careers activity, Supplementary Appropriation No. 1, 2006-2007. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): There is a motion on the floor. The motion is being distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Chairman, as my colleague Mrs. Groenewegen has said, the people of Fort Simpson deserve better. They deserve to know that there is going to be a long-term solution and answer in getting this piece of infrastructure established. That is probably the most important reason why I am voting against this. We really are not helping this community. We are going to end up disappointing them again because beyond the two to four years that this program might keep the building open, there is nothing.

Mr. Chairman, as has already been said here, it's an embarrassment that this request has made it this far in the process. The ability of MLAs and committees to make good decisions, prioritize things, have been absolutely comprised by government's mishandling of this. I deeply

resent the politics that the government has forced upon Members on this side. Some of us doing something we believe is important for community, a small community, a rural community. Others who are looking at a responsibility and a duty that we have to hold the government to account and to get good value and good measure for taxpayers' dollars. That is what the government is doing. I feel like I am part of a public squabble here. This is the decision that I have to make. It's very uncomfortable. It compromises me with my colleagues. It certainly compromises me with the relationship that I would like to have with the government departments in helping to make these kinds of decisions in a consensus process.

I really feel betrayed in this whole thing, but I am going to do what I feel is the right thing for our institution and I really believe for the community of Fort Simpson to ensure that they do have a long-term solution. This is just a band-aid and I cannot abide by it, Mr Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Braden. To the motion. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Just a brief point to the motion, Mr. Chairman, and following up with what Mr. Braden said, we would like to pride ourselves on making good decisions and having good judgment as Members of this House. This is taking away our ability to do that and I can't believe that anybody feels good about this decision. I can't believe that anybody on this side of the House feels good about it. Nobody on this side can feel good about it. I bet you even the folks at Public Works and Services don't feel good about this, or at Education, Culture and Employment. I think anybody who had to be part of bringing this forward at this 11th hour cannot be feeling good about it and I think that's a very crying shame. Having said that, I move the motion.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 27, Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures, advanced education and careers, \$4.867 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$17.203 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 28, Transportation, capital investment expenditures, corporate services, not previously authorized, \$22,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Highways, not previously authorized, \$4.903 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Road licensing and safety, not previously authorized, \$147,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Transportation, capital investment expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$5.072 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 29, Industry, Tourism and Investment, capital investment expenditures, corporate management, not previously authorized, \$12,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Economic development, not previously authorized, \$607,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Industry, Tourism and Investment, capital investment expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$619,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Page 30, Environment and Natural Resources, capital investment expenditures, forest management, not previously authorized, \$320,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Wildlife, not previously authorized, \$74,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Environment and Natural Resources, capital investment expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$394,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Bill as a whole? Bill 2. Does committee agree to go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2006-2007. At this time we're going to stand down the clauses and turn to page 4, schedule, committee. Schedule, part 1, vote 1, operations expenditures, total supplementary appropriation for operations expenditures, \$69.246 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Part 2, vote 2, capital investment expenditures, total supplementary appropriation, capital investment expenditures, \$45.411 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Total supplementary appropriation, \$114.657 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Mr. Ramsay.

Committee Motion 26-15(5) To Amend The Schedule To Bill 2, Carried

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have a motion. Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2006-2007, that the schedule to Bill 2 be amended:

a) decreased by \$320,000 the supplementary appropriation amount set out in part 2 item 16 Public Works and Services, by striking out "\$8.207 million" and substituting "\$7.887 million" in the column entitled "Appropriation by Item"

b) decreased by \$320,000 the amount set out in part 2 as the total supplementary appropriation for capital investment expenditures, by striking out "\$45,411 million" and substituting "\$45.091 million" and

c) decreased by \$320,000 the amount set out at the end of the schedule as the total supplementary appropriation, by striking out "\$114.657 million" and substituting "\$114.337 million".

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): There's a motion on the floor. The motion is in order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Question has been asked to the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

To the schedule, as amended.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2006-2007, clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): To the preamble.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Bill as a whole, as amended.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Does committee agree that Bill 2 is ready for third reading, as amended?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Bill 2 is now ready for third reading, as amended. Thank you. I'd like to thank the honourable Minister and also the witness. Thank you, Members. I'd like to recognize Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Can we conclude in five, 10 minutes?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Can I have order, please? Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Okay, we're going to consider Committee Report 4-15(5).

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you. Committee will now consider Committee Report 4. Thank you. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. With respect to priorities and objectives of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Progress Report on Priorities and Objectives, we read most of them into the public record. Just as chair, the most important thing for us is to continue our deliberations of pre-budget consultations and we really look forward to planning a fall session and getting out to the five regions. It means different communities; it means 10 communities that we're going to get out there and listen to people and talk about their priorities and their needs, as we represent them in this House with our Accountability and Oversight committee.

Many of the priorities that we stated when we became elected gets confirmed and reaffirmed often with our visits to the communities in the pre-budget consultations. I just want to remind the public that all of us Members here continue to do that, is to maintain and gradually use the strength of the people to continue to hold government accountable when they're deliberating regional balances in capital projects, when they're considering new priorities and new initiatives, is to bear in mind all the segments of our population as very, very important. We also look forward to progressing on a lot of our committee priorities. Continually watching and the progress of the HR consolidation is good to hear an update by the Minister for the public. Even though it's our public service that's being impacted, it also impacts all the people that we do serve. You know, out of the 4,200 employees, we serve the rest of the North and how our HR responds has a big effect on all the people throughout the North, and that's something that we continue to press and represent our people for.

As well as housing. Housing is a huge issue for any Regular MLA, even for Members on the opposite side of the House, even though they're Ministers, they're MLAs as well, and their needs and their ridings I'm sure has a lot to do with housing and how we address those. We'll get lots

of feedback, I'm sure, when we travel out in the fall time because this is the first year we're implementing the full effect of the rent scales, as well as some of the new strategies and the Affordable Housing Program. As well, because many of the Members in this House are not quite convinced of the Novel housing project, I'm sure that when we get out into the communities people will want to know what it is. Initially, people thought they were rundown trailers from the first image that the newspapers put, and that's what they think we're getting.

But it's more information and getting out there and if that's not what they really want, then committee will support that as well.

That's just some of the things that committee is looking at doing, and more open...We'd like to strive for more and more open public briefings with Ministers, and we would like to continue to work towards that. I believe you had one in the past year and we thought, as a committee, that worked well. We'd like to see more of that. But at the same time, as privileged as Members of the Legislative Assembly, we don't want to take away our ability to get in-camera information from the departments and from the different ministries as well. At the same time, our public does have to know what we're doing and what we're talking about in our committee systems.

With that, Mr. Chair, that's my comments with respect to Committee Report 4-15(5). Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. General comments, Committee Report 4-15(5). I don't see any further comments, therefore, does the committee agree that Committee Report 4-15(5) is completed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Pokiak): I see there's no further business in Committee of the Whole, so I will stand and report progress.

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. Your committee has been considering Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2006-2007, and Committee Report 4-15(5), and would like to report progress with one motion being adopted, that Committee Report 4-15(5) is concluded and that Bill 2 is ready for third reading, as amended. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Motion is on the floor. Do I have a seconder? Honourable Member from Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko. Motion's on the floor. Motion's in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Roland.

ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS

Bill 1: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 2005-2006

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 1, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 2005-2006, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The motion is on the floor. 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 1 has had third reading. Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte): Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Accountability and Oversight committee at 5:30 p.m.

Orders of the day for Thursday, June 8, 2006, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
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
 - Motion 2-15(5), Appointment of Two Human Rights Commission Members
 - Motion 3-15(5), Extended Adjournment of the House to October 17, 2006
17. First Reading of Bills

- Bill 9, Write-off of Assets Act, 2006-2007

18. Second Reading of Bills

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

20. Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 2, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1,
2006-2007

22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, June 8, 2006, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 17:27 p.m.

