



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**5<sup>th</sup> Session**

**Day 21**

**15<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Thursday, November 2, 2006**

Pages 667 - 696

**The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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Box 1320  
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Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784  
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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Thursday, November 2, 2006****Members Present**

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

**ITEM 1: PRAYER**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey):** Please be seated. Good afternoon, colleagues. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Roland.

**ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS****Minister's Statement 55-15(5): Shaping Our Future And Action Plan 2006-2010**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, later today I will table two important publications "Shaping our Future 2006-2010" and the supporting document "Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Action Plan 2006-2010."

The document "Shaping our Future 2006-2010" is a strategic plan that addresses the influences on and challenges of our system, and provides goals and strategic directions for NWT health care. The strategic plan is based on the integrated services delivery model, a model for delivery of health care services including mental health and addictions, diagnostic services, rehabilitation services, protection services, continuing care and promotion and prevention.

The strategic plan is intended to provide a focal point for developing a shared commitment to providing people of the NWT with the best possible health care and social services. Its strategies help us to improve the health of NWT residents by encouraging them to make healthy personal choices.

The document "Action Plan 2006-2010" provides information and timelines on the initiatives that arise from the strategic plan and supports the goals and strategic directions laid out in that plan.

A significant part of the strategic plan is the Healthy Choices Framework. This is a collaborative and coordinated approach to health promotion. Examples of initiatives that assist us in preventing unhealthy behaviours include NWT Tobacco Strategy, Healthy Eating and Active Living Strategy and Sexually Transmitted Infection Strategy.

In addition to the public health initiatives noted above, we are working to expand the use of licensed practical nurses, nurse practitioners and midwives to address workload issues and improve client care.

We are recruiting new rehabilitation teams to offer expertise in speech and language therapy, audiology and physiotherapy and to help reduce wait times for rehabilitation services. These rehabilitation teams will be stationed in the South Slave region, Beaufort-Delta region,

Yellowknife and the Stanton Territorial Hospital. They will be travelling on a regular basis to communities within their catchment area.

Mr. Speaker, "Shaping our Future 2006-2010" and "Action Plan 2006-2010" provide the direction to ensure health care needs for NWT residents are being met. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Ministers' statements. Honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

**Minister's Statement 56-15(5): Akaitcho Dene First Nations And GNWT Reach Agreement**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the Members of this Assembly that we have reached an agreement with the Akaitcho Dene First Nations that clears the way...

---Applause

...for the GNWT to resume its participation in the Akaitcho process negotiations.

The ADFN and the GNWT have agreed on an interim withdrawal of 1034 hectares of Commissioner's land within the city of Yellowknife. The Interim Land Withdrawal Agreement is consistent with the objectives set out in the Interim Land Withdrawal Protocol signed by negotiators for the ADFN, the GNWT and the Government of Canada on November 21, 2005, as part of the Akaitcho process negotiations on land, resources and governance.

The interim land withdrawal will protect identified lands from being sold, leased or otherwise disposed of while negotiations are underway. This means that no new interests can be created on the withdrawn lands for a period of five years or until an Akaitcho final agreement is reached, whichever comes first. It also ensures that any existing interests on these lands are protected during the period of the withdrawal. The principles and process for these land withdrawal negotiations were laid out in the Interim Land Withdrawal Protocol.

Mr. Speaker, interim land withdrawal is an important step in a series of complex negotiations that must take place in order to reach an Akaitcho final agreement.

The interim land withdrawal creates positive benefits for the City of Yellowknife as the agreement we have reached will remove the legal uncertainty around the development of municipal lands within the city of Yellowknife, thereby allowing the city to better manage development pressures by ensuring access to the remaining Commissioner's lands within its municipal boundaries. The city was kept advised of progress during our discussions with the Akaitcho leading up to this agreement and they received a full briefing this morning on the details of the interim land withdrawal.

I believe the agreement we have announced today through a negotiated settlement is a positive signal of the willingness of the parties to find solutions to difficult and complex issues. I am optimistic that this will serve us well as all parties continue the important work of reaching an agreement-in-principle at the Akaitcho process negotiations. I ask all Members to join Minister McLeod, the Akaitcho chiefs and me in a brief celebration in the

Great Hall later this afternoon to commemorate this agreement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Ministers' statements. Honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

**Minister's Statement 57-15(5): Minister Absent From The House**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable David Krutko will be absent from the House today to attend the workers' compensation conference in Vancouver, B.C. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Before we go on, Members, I would like to draw your attention to the visitors' gallery. There are a couple of former Members in the gallery; Mr. Steve Nitah and Mr. Robert Sayine are with us today.

---Applause

Ministers' statements. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**Member's Statement On Custody And Access Of Children**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to add my thoughts on the issue of custody and access to children by divorced and separated parents. As you are well aware, Mr. Speaker, under Canadian law, in all matters dealing with children, the key question the court asks always is what is in the best interest of children. In all cases dealing with custody and access of children, the court will consider all circumstances of children's lives including the circumstances of the parents. In all cases, the court looks to give as much access to children to both parents no matter who ends up with the day-to-day care and custody of the children. Because the court believes, as we all do, that it's in the best interest of children to have the support and nurture of both parents.

But we all know, and the court realizes this too, that this is not always the case, or possible, due to the specific circumstances of a case, whether it be because of the location where the parents reside or their life circumstances. In cases of older children, their own opinion and preference factor too. But the court would look at all evidence put forward by both parents before the court to make the right decisions for the children, even if the parents may not like them sometime.

On this basis, Mr. Speaker, I believe it's not supported by the evidence to suggest that the court has a bias against one parent or another. It is true that mothers are more often the one with custody of children by virtue of the fact that mothers are more often primary caregivers of their children, but this is not mandated in law. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I'm seeing more and more cases in my riding where fathers are getting the sole custody of children with access rights to mothers who move away from Yellowknife. I met three single fathers in my riding with teenage children just this summer, Mr. Speaker.

The same is true of child support payments. I was approached this summer by a mother who, since moving back to Yellowknife, is taking care of her children as much as the father, but is being asked to pay a high level of child support which has required her to have two part-time jobs on top of her government job.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also aware that in all cases the court supports and tries to honour any workable arrangements jointly agreed to by the estranged parents who set aside their differences to make it work in the best interest of children. I'm also aware that the court supports any effort at mediation between the parties and in some cases...Mr. Speaker, may I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement?

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

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm also aware that the court supports any effort at mediation between the parties and in some cases would order the parents to enter into mediation talks, especially if it helps to lessen the trauma of the children going through the often adversarial nature of our judicial system.

Mr. Speaker, I'll be watching with a great deal of interest what this proposed shared parenting federal legislation will bring if it does come out. In the interim, I believe the focus of this Justice Minister in this government should be on increasing the resources of legal aid and mediation services for all parents who need help to get through this difficult process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

**Member's Statement On Support For Victims Of Sexual Abuse**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was called away from the House and didn't participate in the motion on the censure of our Premier and the recommendations to help survivors of sexual abuse. I've been a strong advocate of survivors of sexual abuse, especially in residential schools.

Mr. Speaker, I make my statement with great sadness and grief. I'm a victim of the residential school sexual assault. After hearing what the Premier had said, I felt a distance from the Premier. When we were going through the trial, parents, families, friends and even residents of Inuvik came to the trial and demonstrated the compassion that I did not see with Mr. Premier.

Mr. Speaker, at the residential schools, the church and the federal government and the government-hired people like Ed Horne, Martin Huston, John Comeau, George Mazynski, and Paul Leroux. Mr. Speaker, I asked the Premier to read the testament of Dr. Peter Collins, an expert in sex crimes and how pedophiles function. Mr. Speaker, the Premier will be well advised to read this and he will learn a few things about Ed Horne and others like him. What you say to my friends from the era of residential schools, Mr. Speaker, as a token of regret and compassion the Premier should tour the Mackenzie Valley and apologize to each community who went to residential schools, perhaps requesting the bishops of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches to accompany him.

After the Grollier Hall trials we had made a recommendation that the residential school aftermath advisor be appointed by the government-of-the-day. This was not done. As a method of keeping abreast of residence school issues, Mr. Speaker, I recommend again, on behalf of the residential school sexual abuse survivors and sexual abuse survivors across the North, to

point a residential school aftermath advisor. We do not know who the Premier listens to in this office on issues like these, but we must listen to survivors and not to the advisors who live in Yellowknife. Listen to the survivors.

One of my constituents asked me what kind of man is Mr. Handley. Mr. Premier, I had to defend Mr. Handley because I'm part of this government. Mr. Speaker, we, as victims of sexual abuse, can't put our hand out to Mr. Handley like the RCMP did to us when they believed us in Grollier Hall on the sexual abuse issues. Mr. Handley's apologies we are capable of accepting. Mr. Speaker, some of our drummers in the Sahtu are doing a prayer song for us in the Legislature here today.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues for 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. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, some of our drummers sometimes do a prayer song for us at the Legislative Assembly here. Mr. Speaker, now the healing begins with the Premier and my people. Thank you very much.

---Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement On Treatment For Tuberculosis In The Northwest Territories**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, (Translation) I want to talk about some tragedies that are happening in my community regarding health issues. In the last few months it is stated that we have a lot of TB in our region and it's especially affecting the elders in our community. In some of the small communities we don't have nurses working there, so those are my concerns. (End of translation)

In the Northwest Territories, between the years 2000 to 2004 our TB rate was four times the national rate. The Department of Health and Social Services says they are on their way to eliminating the disease. In 2001 the department committed to bringing the TB rates down to national levels by 2005. However, the department is only halfway to their target and has now pushed the deadline back to 2010, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, a few months back it was published in the newspaper that Tlicho is one of the hardest hit in the region of the Northwest Territories. The women and elderly are hit the hardest by this disease, a disease which is easily prevented.

Mr. Speaker, there needs to be professionals in small communities familiar with the treatment of TB and how it spreads. Someone needs to monitor the situation and make sure that people are taking their medications so that outbreaks do not occur, Mr. Speaker. In communities like Wekweeti they only see a public health nurse maybe once or twice a month, Mr. Speaker. Other communities like Fort Smith hire locums when they have a shortage, but this doesn't seem to be the case with Wekweeti, who has to go without proper health care, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I want to say that the health and well-being of my constituents is very important to me and I'm tired of seeing the disease take control of our people, ruining their lives and the lives of their families. In place of fantasies about roads to mines or overpriced bridges, we need to get serious and focus on the health and well-being of the people of the Northwest Territories. Mahsi.

---Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement On Integrated Model Of Health Services**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak today about some health care issues in the Northwest Territories, as well. The Minister provided us with a statement here today on an integrated model of health services and it is true that we are a small jurisdiction. Realistically we cannot expect to have every service in every community. I think we need to have a minimum standard of service available and that would include nurses at least in every community. But when you get into the different sizes of communities, there are different procedures and services that are available.

Stanton Territorial Hospital plays a very integral role to that integrated service and that network of services available to residents of the Northwest Territories and certainly to residents of my community of Hay River. Hay River would like to have permanent doctors, which we don't have right now. We have one permanent position; the rest we rely completely on locums. However, understanding the government does provide the funding for five permanent resident doctors for Hay River, we appreciate that, we could use more help in identifying permanent doctors. I think the department could be doing more, as was raised earlier in helping with the accreditation of foreign doctors, because I know there are doctors around the Northwest Territories, but we don't seem to have a process in Canada or the Northwest Territories for accrediting these doctors who certainly are qualified to operate in their countries of origin.

Mr. Speaker, when the services at Stanton are diminished due to shortages of staff, it affects Hay River as well. It's much easier for my constituents to come here to receive specialized services than it is for them to go all the way to Edmonton. I think that we have the idea of a network. I think that we need to continue to be more creative in how we address staffing, the infrastructure, and filling the positions for the services that we have identified. I think that the plan is good, but there are shortfalls in terms of the human resources to meet those needs. Later today I will be talking more at length about how we can find creative ways of addressing the health challenges, particularly in the area of health care professionals in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement On Misdiagnoses By Nurses In Small Communities**

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The discussion on hiring health care professionals in our health system has been a long outstanding issue, particularly with regard to retention and recruitment. Mr. Speaker, for today my

topic will relate to misdiagnosis of patients by nurses in small communities. I know that nurses do the best they can, but there's always room for improvement in how we treat patients in our communities. I'm aware of three individual cases from Tuktoyaktuk where patients complained of stomach pain and were diagnosed and told it was just a sprain or ulcer. Mr. Speaker, in these cases all three individuals were eventually medevaced out of the community and had to have immediate surgery.

I would like to discuss one case in particular of a young 16-and-a-half-year-old individual who was vibrant and active in sports. He complained of pain in his stomach to his parents. An appointment was made at the health centre and the outcome was he probably sprained something in his stomach which would heal in time. Mr. Speaker, the pain continued for over one week and once again an appointment was made at the local health centre. Eventually the nurse in charge decided to send him to the Inuvik Regional Hospital for a check-up with a doctor. On his arrival to the hospital, this young individual's appendix burst. This created complications during the operation and consequently the young individual ended up in the hospital for one month for recovery, let alone be medevaced to Yellowknife three times, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the parents took time off from work and flew to Inuvik to be with their son while he was recovering from the operation. Not once did a doctor give an update on their son's recovery to the parents during this time. I'd like to report today, Mr. Speaker, that this young person is slowly gaining weight and is becoming active in sports again. Mr. Speaker, if the nurses reacted sooner about the complaint, this young person would not have suffered so much. To me this was a complete misdiagnosis by the nurse in Tuktoyaktuk.

In incidents like this, Mr. Speaker, any patient that complains of pain in their body should have the opportunity to be diagnosed by a doctor. This kind of situation should not be tolerated in small communities regardless if the case may be different, and the nurses may be able to make appointments with a doctor.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I do not want to see any more patients going through what this young person or the parents went through in this ordeal. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to 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. Pokiak.

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, colleagues. In closing, Mr. Speaker, I do not want to see any more patients go through what this young person and his parents went through in this ordeal. Let's not let this happen again. Parents also need to be kept informed on what is going on with their children's medical care while they're in hospitals. Patients are human beings and they should be treated as such. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### **Member's Statement On The Environment And Climate Change**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk briefly once again about the

environment and climate change; climate change which we know is affecting us as we look around us, as I've pointed out in this House before. As we stand here, we know that persistent organic pollutants are sifting out of the air into the land and water and concentrating in the fish and wildlife, and can be found in mothers' milk. We know that our water is being affected. What drives climate change has been determined to be the rising temperature caused by the amount of greenhouse gases put out by mankind, and in the Northwest Territories we are on a per capita basis some of the highest discharges of greenhouse gases in the country.

Mr. Speaker, we are, in fact, contributing to the very problem that we know is having a terrible affect on the land and the water and the animals. What are we to do about this? Mr. Speaker, we are doing some things. If we do the Taltson expansion we will be cutting the greenhouse gases by the diamond mines significantly once we get the power to the mines. If we do the community energy strategies and work with the communities we will be able to help them reduce their reliance on petroleum products.

But the one area that we have to look at more closely that we know is coming, is a major project that is going to double our greenhouse gas emissions, and that is the pipeline. As we look at making sure that we have a socio-economic agreement, and that we have all these other good things in place, we also have to look at what does it mean in terms of the greenhouse gas emissions and what can we do, as a territory, to help mitigate that doubling of greenhouse gas emissions which are going to contribute to the climate change and temperature increase, and, in turn, contribute to the problems that we are experiencing with the caribou, the water, the fish, and all the other creatures that are on this land. That ties then to ourselves as people, the health of the people.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very fundamental issue that has yet to be fully addressed. I know there are plenty of suggestions out there on how to do this. Imperial Oil had \$10.5 billion third-quarter profits this year, \$10.7 billion third-quarter profits last year. They are making vast amounts of money. We have to make sure in the Northwest Territories that we protect the interest of the environment as we do business with these folks; and it is strictly business, Mr. Speaker, with Imperial Oil. They are here to make money and lots of it. Mr. Speaker, I request 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. Miltenberger.

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are talking business; business by them, business by us. But we are going to live here with the results of those decisions, so it is incumbent and imperative upon us to make sure that part of the costs that we calculate are the costs to protect the environment and not add further to the greenhouse gas emissions. Thank you.

---Applause

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



### **Member's Statement On Problems At Stanton Territorial Hospital**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my Member's statement is going to focus on Stanton Territorial Hospital. There have been two major events affecting Stanton that have led to the breakdown of staff morale and the building developing such a sour environment. The first decision happened when the decision was made to privatize the janitorial services back in the mid-90s and, later on, dietary and laundry services in 2000.

Mr. Speaker, this totally destroyed the close-knit, family atmosphere of that hospital. Today in these three areas there is tremendous turnover of employees, language barriers, and daily questions about quality. The GNWT should rethink this whole effort. It was all done in an attempt to save money and, Mr. Speaker, that decision has cost this government more than it could ever have imagined in terms of morale, atmosphere, and quality of services.

I would like to ask myself, how can a government be cheap when it comes to caring for its people? As if that decision to privatize wasn't bad enough, the Government of the Northwest Territories two years ago made what amounts to me to be one of the worst decisions ever made by this government, and that was the Hay Plan reclassification system where government drove a wedge firmly between many of our nurses at Stanton. This mess is still being sorted out, Mr. Speaker, to the detriment of our health care system and to the people that we serve. This reclassification practice, as far as I can tell, is only utilized in one other venue in this country: a psychiatric hospital in Newfoundland. No other hospital treats its nurses in this manner and why do we have to accept this?

What we should be doing as a government is to help all our health care professionals pursue their own collective bargaining unit. I get tired, Mr. Speaker, of hearing why it can't happen. I want to hear how it can happen. Our teachers have their own union. Why can't our health care professionals have their own union as well? Then and only then can we say for sure that they are being dealt with fairly, and, Mr. Speaker, it opens up a world of possibilities in the area of recruitment and retention.

Mr. Speaker, Stanton Hospital is the flagship of our health care system. Why are we not focussed on fixing the human element? There's close to \$28 million going into that hospital in terms of renovations in the next few years. Mr. Speaker, money alone is not the answer. We need to show our health care professionals that we care about them and that we're going to listen to them. Then and only then will things get better. Mahsi.

---Applause

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

### **Member's Statement On Youth Crime In The Northwest Territories**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, firstly I'd like to commend my colleague from the Sahtu for his courage and strength of his statement.

Mr. Speaker, youth crime in the NWT is a real concern and it always has been a concern. It seems lately, Mr. Speaker, that it's getting worse. At a recent town meeting at Inuvik there were many people in attendance trying to come up with some solutions for youth crime and how we

can prevent it. Mr. Speaker, one of the problems I think across the NWT is people will talk and talk and talk, but when it comes time to actually volunteer for something or try to get a program going you see some of the interest start to die.

Mr. Speaker, there's a group up in Inuvik who are having their first meeting tonight, Citizens on Patrol. They're a group of concerned citizens who want to make it their duty to go and patrol the streets of Inuvik and try to keep them as safe as possible. I commend this group. I wish them the best of luck. I encourage the people of Inuvik and across the Northwest Territories to volunteer for these type of groups.

I'm glad to see, Mr. Speaker, that the government is coming forward with a Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act. I'm looking forward to seeing the rollout of that. I would like to see, Mr. Speaker, and I've said it before, consequences for youth crime. Whether they be made to work; made to work, not asked to work. They should be made to work for elders, anything that we can get them to do. It has to be something that's mandatory. We're too soft right now, Mr. Speaker. We give them a choice when they can show up, when they can't show up. So I'm looking forward to the rollout of this act and do what I can to assist the Justice Minister in the rollout of this act and I'm looking forward to seeing the contents of it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

### **Member's Statement On Recognition Of Veterans And Birthday Wishes For His Father James Villeneuve**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I just want to again send out my wishes and this House's best birthday wishes to my mentor and my constituent, my top advisor and, most importantly, my father, James Villeneuve, who turns 71 years young today.

---Applause

I just want to say happy birthday, Dad. I could stand here all day and tell many stories about my dad and what he's done for his family and the people of the NWT for the past 70 years, but as I and many other people who know him can attest to, it's a lot funnier and more entertaining to hear it right from his mouth.

But on another point, Mr. Speaker, I just want to express my sincere gratitude to all the veterans in Canada, and especially the NWT, for their dedicated services in the Canadian Armed Forces to protect our basic rights of freedom of speech and mobility that we all take for granted every day. I look forward to celebrating their dedicated service to our country on Remembrance Day next week, along with many other northerners, Mr. Speaker.

I also would like to express, on the flip side, my frustration for the lack of compensation and consideration that our national government has given to our aboriginal veterans. This kind of grave injustice cannot be dismissed and I urge all Canadians to voice their dismay towards the national government's responsibility to not only be more compassionate to our aboriginal veterans, but to do what is right for all our veterans, and that is showing our unbridled gratitude toward every last one of them for as

long as we can all freely stand here and express that right. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

#### **Member's Statement On Return Of Foster Children To Families At Risk**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a constituent called the other day who is a parent and a very loving foster parent. They're very proud of the fact that they have the opportunity to provide a safe and healthy home to those children at risk. But they're personally concerned with some ongoing duty of care that does not happen when these children are returned to their birth parents. To make it very clear, they first and foremost believe the uniting process of putting families together is truly a wonderful thing. Their concern lies only in the area of where parents in the past have had substance abuse problems and they are being returned, children are being returned to that family without any clear mandate to ensure that those parents are now drug free.

Mr. Speaker, there is no follow up drug testing on those parents who have now taken back the responsibility of their children to ensure that they are now in a true position to do this. What are we doing to ensure that these children are returning to a safe environment? Who is doing a follow up when a parent is declared that now, one month later, they are meth free? We all know that you cannot get off meth that easily.

Mr. Speaker, the concern is quite simple. The fact is they want to ensure that these children are being placed back into their healthy home with the best chance and safest chance that they can have.

Mr. Speaker, we have the moral duty, a personal commitment, to protect these children to ensure that their safety is put forth. Mr. Speaker, embarrassing a parent by asking them to stay clean is not something we should be afraid of. By demanding them to prove it is something that we should seriously consider.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, if we are wrong to demand that parents should be clean when we take their children away due to health and safety matters to protect the children, then let's be wrong, Mr. Speaker, because protecting children and being wrong in the same breath, I think that's correct. I think that's the right way. Mr. Speaker, putting the interests of these children first, making sure that they're back in a healthy environment is something we promised to do. Let's make sure we're doing it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Members' statements. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. McLeod.

#### **ITEM 5: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS**

##### **Further Return To Oral Question 221-15(5): Regulatory Authority For The Enforcement Of Air Quality Standards**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I have a return to oral question asked by Mr. Braden on October 30<sup>th</sup>,

2006, regarding regulatory authority for enforcement of air quality standards.

As the Member correctly pointed out, there is no single government agency, federal or territorial, that has the overall responsibility for regulating air quality and pollutant emissions in the Northwest Territories.

The Government of the Northwest Territories regulates air quality and emissions on lands under our jurisdiction -- those being Commissioner's land -- using air quality and emission standards and guidelines adopted under the Northwest Territories Environmental Protection Act.

To provide an information baseline against which potentially impacts from community and development activities can be measured, such as the proposed Mackenzie gas project, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources also operates modern, state-of-the-art quality monitoring stations in Fort Liard, Norman Wells, Inuvik and Yellowknife. Information obtained through this monitoring network is made available to all residents through the department's website. Finally, the department is currently developing an air quality and emissions management code for the upstream oil and gas industry in the Northwest Territories. Although we don't regulate this activity directly, it is important that the oil and gas industry be provided with direction as to what practices and measures we, the territorial government, expect them to comply with.

Mr. Speaker, with specific reference to the Member's question on the Mackenzie Valley pipeline and enforcement of air quality standards, the National Energy Board has the authority to regulate air emissions from oil and gas development projects on federal lands or those that cross provincial-territorial borders. Environment and Natural Resources has taken an active role in the current pipeline project review process. As recently as October 17, 2006, the department collaborated with Environment Canada to provide advice and recommendations on air quality and emissions management to the Joint Review Panel.

Through our written and verbal submissions, we suggested that the panel, as part of its final report, forward our advice and recommendations on air quality management to the National Energy Board. In previous oil and gas projects, air issues have been addressed through the National Energy Board regulatory process and we are confident that, with the panel's support, the National Energy Board will again fulfill its regulatory responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, it is not this government's practice, nor do we have the financial capability, to monitor and regulate air quality and pollution emissions from federally authorized industrial projects located on federal land. This remains a federal responsibility until resource management powers and resources are devolved from the federal government. In the meantime, we will continue to work with existing federal, aboriginal and municipal agencies to ensure air quality in the Northwest Territories is protected. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

#### **ITEM 6: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize quite a list of people today who are here to

watch the proceedings and to take part in the ceremony later on. Chief Fred Sangris, Chief Peter Liske from Yellowknives; Chief Sayine from Deninu Kue;

---Applause

Chief Adeline Jonasson from Lutselk'e;

---Applause

...and Mr. Speaker, Jennifer Drygeese; Billy Drygeese; Ethel Liske; Peter Liske, sorry, Philip Liske; Jayden Liske; Alfred Belargerion; councillor and elder, Lucy Abel; Don Antoine; Thomas Sayine; Steve Nitah, former MLA; Rita Chretien; Rosalind Mercredi; Dennis Wallace, the federal negotiator; Don Balsillie, the lands negotiator with the Akaitcho. I don't know if Sharon Venne is there yet, the chief negotiator for the Akaitcho. Mr. Speaker, I apologize if I've missed some people. Of course, I think I said Jonas Sangris, yes, and our GNWT staff from MACA and Aboriginal Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to recognize our chiefs from the Akaitcho Territory. Chief Jonas and Chief Sayine from Lutselk'e and Deninu Kue respectively, and also Chief Fred Sangris and Peter Liske from Detah and Ndilo. Also a constituent of mine and former Member of this House and our Akaitcho Territory negotiator, Steven Nitah, along with one of his colleagues Don Balsillie; and our environmental guru for the East Arm, Mr. Steve Ellis. Welcome to the House.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to welcome the leaders and our friends from Akaitcho territory, as well as our mayor, the honourable Gordon Van Tighem. Also, I would like to tell you that starting today until Saturday the NWT Tourism Association is having their AGM and conference and the keynote speaker is the president and CEO of the Tourism Industry Association of Canada, and he is with us today with my super constituency assistant, Cathy Olsen. I'd like to introduce Mr. Randall Williams. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a St. Pat's student, Jayde Lafferty, his last day today as a Page. That's my son.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, I would like to also acknowledge the Akaitcho leadership and negotiators and families for being here. Welcome.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to recognize all the leaders of the Akaitcho Territory to

our Assembly here today. I would also like to recognize, I've got three Pages with us: Jennifer Siakuluk, Aimee Gauthier, and Jayde Lafferty, who are all constituents of mine. I also wanted to make mention, I appreciate all the hard work that all the Pages have done for us here over the last four weeks. Mahsi.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As everyone knows, my position doesn't lend itself well to seeing the gallery, but on my way in I did see a friend of mine, Andy Tereposky, who used to be a former boss of mine. He's also known as an excellent squash and baseball player; very good.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to also recognize the strong leadership from the Akaitcho and from the people around the Yellowknife area. I understand the mayor is also here from Yellowknife and I'd like to also recognize his leadership and his capabilities.

I'd also like to recognize the excellent work that CKLB is doing for us in this House session, because I get good comments from my region in terms of their staff doing excellent work and give them recognition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

**HON. KEVIN MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to recognize Mr. Don Antoine and also Denizeh (sic) Antoine. Thank you very much.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. If we missed anyone in the gallery today, welcome to the House. Hope you're enjoying the proceedings. It's always a pleasure to have an audience. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

#### ITEM 7: ORAL QUESTIONS

##### Question 249-15(5): Proposed Shared Parenting Legislation

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Minister of Justice today and it's a follow-up to my Member's statement. Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if I could ask the Minister as to exactly what this proposed shared parenting legislation is suggesting and what exactly is this government's role in that regard. Thank you.

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

##### Return To Question 249-15(5): Proposed Shared Parenting Legislation

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this point I don't have any information on what the proposed

legislation looks like other than the Minister of Justice has talked generally about family law with me and his desire to see it become less litigious and more avenues for resolution to these issues outside of court. I do know he intends to informally discuss with other jurisdictions some of the ways forward, but, at this point, I have no understanding from him as to what next steps might be or what legislation might look like. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary To Question 249-15(5): Proposed Shared Parenting Legislation**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It appears that he has as little information as I have in this regard and that's okay. But, Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister of Justice is aware of the fact that not only is his responsibility about consulting or being consulted on by the federal Justice Minister about their legislative proposals, but also this Minister's job is to represent the opinions and interest and discussions of the opinions of the NWT people on such proposed legislation. So I'd like to ask the Minister if he would be willing to find a way to get input from a wide, general population of the NWT before he puts forward a definitive position on such legislation being put forward by the federal government. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Bell.

**Further Return To Question 249-15(5): Proposed Shared Parenting Legislation**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. In fact we at the FPT table asked the federal government about our involvement in consultation as legislation is developed, new proposals are put forward; insisted that we need more involvement in that because obviously there are implications for us in our jurisdictions, not the least of which become cost implications. So we've expressed an interest in more formalized consultation. At this point there is no formal proposal on any new legislation, but should there be one I would expect that we would be involved and would certainly ensure all stakeholders in the Northwest Territories had a vehicle for input.

Mr. Speaker, let me also say that I've made the point clear to Justice Canada that we need to renew our contribution agreement between NWT Justice and federal Justice. There are a number of very worthwhile initiatives that are currently being funded in this area; our Family Law Clinic, seminars for parents, mediation for separating couples. We do this not only in Yellowknife and Hay River, but they're available by teleconference, Mr. Speaker. So there are a number of good initiatives. We need them to continue and we're going to need federal cost-shared dollars in that respect. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary To Question 249-15(5): Proposed Shared Parenting Legislation**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In terms of input process and consultation process, I think the Minister is well aware of the fact that there's a very active family law Bar in our territory, that there's a family law section. Would the Minister make a commitment to consult with them extensively and the lawyers that practice in this area, as well as all the parents and interest groups, women's groups? The family law is a very complex area and I think it's important that in order that the NWT puts its position forward that's comprehensive and representative of the

general population, that he does his homework in making sure that he gets all the information that he needs. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Bell.

**Further Return To Question 249-15(5): Proposed Shared Parenting Legislation**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree; obviously the responsibility is on the federal government to adequately consult as they develop legislation. But I certainly won't duck the issue or the obligation to ensure all NWT interests are heard and we have a balanced perspective that's brought forward. So yes, as the federal government goes forward, when and if they propose to develop legislation of this kind, I would ensure that all stakeholders have a chance to voice their opinions and express their thoughts on how we might improve this area of family law. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 249-15(5): Proposed Shared Parenting Legislation**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could I just get the Minister to...He wasn't clear whether he will do the consultation himself or he would ask the federal government to do that. Could I ask him again that if he's going to put a government position forward in this kind of legislation, that he would commit to consulting himself before he forms an opinion on such legislation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Bell.

**Further Return To Question 249-15(5): Proposed Shared Parenting Legislation**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will commit to doing that. I would expect the federal government to take the lead and, in fact, consult in all jurisdictions, involve us in that consultation. But failing what we see as adequate federal consultation, obviously we would step into the breach. But I think there is a role for both parties. We certainly will be involved in this at any rate. Obviously we have an interest in ensuring that this meets our needs in the Northwest Territories. So yes, if there's going to be the development of legislation, we will consult our stakeholders and ensure the federal government has and understands the views of northerners on this issue. Thank you.

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

**Question 250-15(5): Return Of Foster Children To Families At Risk**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated in my Member's statement, I believe this government has a duty of care to ensure that children returning to their birth parents, Mr. Speaker, are given the best chance that they can have. I believe that's a right that we owe to these children to ensure they're safe. So, Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Health and Social Services is, what is this government doing for long-term follow-up of children returning to their birth parents? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Roland.

**Return To Question 250-15(5): Return Of Foster Children To Families At Risk**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the area of foster care and children in protection within the Government of the Northwest Territories is taken very seriously. The safety of the child comes first in our work and often that puts us in an adversarial role as we try to work to bring families together. But we work with families through a family plan, as well as in some cases when things require there's also at times a court order as to the process of having a child reintegrated back into the family. So there's a number of avenues that are taken to deal with the children and reintegration into the family. It's mostly on a case-by-case scenario. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

**Supplementary To Question 250-15(5): Return Of Foster Children To Families At Risk**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Minister emphasizing, and I do believe the children do come first and I believe in the principle of uniting families is certainly the way we should go all the time. But, Mr. Speaker, treatment is a life-long process and I've heard from many people that a lot of folks fight substance abuse in the sense of they work towards day by day solving their problems. So when they get clean they still struggle, but they do meet this. So, Mr. Speaker, before we have a train wreck on this problem, can the Minister tell me if he will investigate the process about ensuring that we have some type of monitoring of substance-free abuse by parents who have the return of their children. Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 250-15(5): Return Of Foster Children To Families At Risk**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the area of monitoring of home environment, again, is a case-by-case scenario. When a child and family services officer works with a case they take the necessary steps to ensure that the home is a safe environment to have the child returned to. Specifically for those families where addictions are involved, a number of things are taken. In most cases it is an agreement made between the child and family services staff member as well as the family members in coming up with a plan that would fit for reintegration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

**Supplementary To Question 250-15(5): Return Of Foster Children To Families At Risk**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I can tell the Minister that if the case was necessary, I would run into a burning building to save my kids, Mr. Speaker. So I don't think we're asking too much of these parents to maybe pee in a cup once a month to prove that they're clean, that we're not putting kids at risk. I don't think that's a big threshold to ask to ensure that they're safe. So, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister again in this way, would he take the lead initiative so that we take the case-by-case scenario out of this to ensure that these kids are safe? Would he lead this initiative by ensuring that all parents who have had substance abuse problems

go through a process of ensuring and guaranteeing that they're clean? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 250-15(5): Return Of Foster Children To Families At Risk**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the present time the court is the only place where the testing can be ordered and that process is from time to time put in place. As I stated earlier, for our side when we become involved as a family, we look at a number of initiatives, come up with a plan that works for the child as well as the family, and follow that through to the family being reunited. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

**Supplementary To Question 250-15(5): Return Of Foster Children To Families At Risk**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't think I'm asking too much and I'm asking the Minister would he investigate this, because he could put it under powers of the director under section 21 of our Child and Family Protection Service Act. We have a duty of care. I'm asking the Minister once again, would he initiate this process so we don't have to have it written in the court document? Would he lead this initiative? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 250-15(5): Return Of Foster Children To Families At Risk**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it isn't as straightforward as taking the stroke of a pen to change a law within a regulation. We have to take into consideration the rights of all people involved. Yes, the children come first in our work and ensuring they have a safe environment, but we also have rules that we have to apply and follow when it comes to dealing with individuals. In this case I will work with the department to see what options are there, but from all indications at this point we have a number of avenues we work with and it involves working with the family and coming to agreement with the family and from time to time that does include keeping a substance abuse situation free from the family environment. Thank you.

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

**Question 251-15(5): Recruitment And Retention Of Health Care Workers**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we talk about our health care system I think that it is fair to say that whether you are a small community in a remote region or at the territorial hospital level here in Stanton, we have issues with recruitment and retention. I would like the Minister of Health and Social Services today if he could for me, please describe what is in place at the headquarters level that would assist health boards with the undertaking of recruiting and retaining their staff. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Return To Question 251-15(5): Recruitment And Retention Of Health Care Workers**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the area of recruitment and retention it has been a problem that we have been faced with for quite a few years, as well as other jurisdictions across Canada. We have worked with the Department of Human Resources and come up with a plan where they have brought people together, worked with our department in coming up with a recruitment team that deals specifically with attracting those in the nursing field as well as the other allied health services. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 251-15(5): Recruitment And Retention Of Health Care Workers**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I was looking for more is what do they actually do? Do they have a web page? Do they go to job shows and job fairs? Do they go out to colleges and universities? What do they actually do? I know they're there in the department. What do they do? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 251-15(5): Recruitment And Retention Of Health Care Workers**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, number one is to look at what resources we have available, what avenues we can use, when do we come in contact with potential employees out there and how do we attract them to the Northwest Territories. As well as provide information, as the Member has stated, through a number of avenues and media to inform those who are coming through our system or becoming aware of our situation in the Northwest Territories and may have interest, as well as what we've done internally within the Government of the Northwest Territories, and that is, for example, the guarantee offered to students from our Nurse Graduate Program as well as our Social Services Program, in that area to ensure that we can keep those that we train here in the North to work here in the North. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 251-15(5): Recruitment And Retention Of Health Care Workers**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister as well if the past practice of signing bonuses for health care professionals is something that is still used. If not, why not? Also with regard to the success of the bursary program, I would like to know what kind of professions are covered by the Department of Health's bursary program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 251-15(5): Recruitment And Retention Of Health Care Workers**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the couple of questions there, the area of work that we have for our bursary program covers a number of areas to keep health professionals in the Northwest Territories or to attract those here as well. I believe we

have that for the nursing field as well as for the physicians. In the area of the past system we had of bonuses, that was implemented for a short term. I do not believe that's in place today and it's something that we thought initially would attract people here and as well reward those for staying on in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 251-15(5): Recruitment And Retention Of Health Care Workers**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister if there is anybody within the Department of Health and Social Services who acts as a trouble shooter or an ombudsman. We hear from people who are practicing in various fields of medicine or health care in the Northwest Territories who encounter problems. They probably could be answered and solved. There doesn't seem like there's a clear path of who they should talk to in these instances. Would the Minister consider there to be any merit to such a position or does one already exist? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 251-15(5): Recruitment And Retention Of Health Care Workers**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware if a position exists within the department. We have a number of avenues of trying to address the issues that come up from time to time and there are issues that do come up, whether it's in the nursing field or in the physicians' field. Our communications side of the equation working with each authority and the senior management meetings are areas that we would look to having addressed the concerns that would come up through the system. That's an avenue as well. Along side with the authorities is the joint leadership committee of all health board chairs as well as the department as drawing on the concerns from all regions and trying to address them as well. Thank you.

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

**Question 252-15(5): Treatment For Tuberculosis In The Northwest Territories**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in 2001 an Alberta TB expert, Dr. Anne Fanning, issued a 26-point plan to improve treatment of TB in the Northwest Territories. As I said in my Member's statement, the Department of Health said they would bring down TB to a national level by 2005, Mr. Speaker. However, the department's halfway to their target and have now pushed the deadline back to 2010. Can the Minister of Health and Social Services tell me why this is? Mahsi.

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

**Return To Question 252-15(5): Treatment For Tuberculosis In The Northwest Territories**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, sorry to say that in fact, yes, as the Member has stated, we've not met the targets that we initially put in place when we reviewed the program. However, we have made a number of adjustments that have helped us to lower the rates in the Northwest Territories. I think we

have to as well accept that some positive steps have been taken and we've included a number of initiatives within the business plan of the Department of Health and Social Services to continue to try to bring that rate down. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 252-15(5): Treatment For Tuberculosis In The Northwest Territories**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister confirm to me that the Fanning report, which reviewed the treatment of TB in the Northwest Territories, said the first and most important of the tenets for controlling TB is finding the symptomatic patients so that they can be cured and transmission stopped? Mahsi.

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

**Further Return To Question 252-15(5): Treatment For Tuberculosis In The Northwest Territories**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member's obviously done his research in getting to the actual quotes. In fact that is one of the parts of the report and in fact is one of the goals we have, is finding out where the source is from and trying to deal with that before things start to spread. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 252-15(5): Treatment For Tuberculosis In The Northwest Territories**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My next question leads to the community needs. Wekweeti only sees a public nurse once or twice a month, Mr. Speaker. I don't think this is enough to control TB in a community such as Wekweeti, a small community. When I look at jobs available on the GNWT website or job posting there are no positions being advertised for a public health nurse in this community particularly. So I would like to ask the Minister what is the Minister doing about the nursing shortage in Wekweeti. Mahsi.

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

**Further Return To Question 252-15(5): Treatment For Tuberculosis In The Northwest Territories**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first of all I guess just for the record and for those that would listen to the questions and the discussion and debate that happens here in the Legislative Assembly, so no fear is out there that we have a TB epidemic or anything of that nature, the fact is I know that we have an issue to deal with. We are taking necessary steps. That has been reduced. We are halfway to meeting our targets. We'd like to be further along that, but unfortunately not there yet, but we'll continue to work to improve that.

As for the nursing situation in the community, I'd have to go back to the department to see what the makeup of our nursing profession or allied health services are available in that community and get back to the Member on that one. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 252-15(5): Treatment For Tuberculosis In The Northwest Territories**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just the Member's statement on Shaping our Future and action plan for 2006-2010, the Health and Social Services Action Plan, when the Minister indicated that the public health initiatives are working to expand the use of licensed practical nurses and nurse practitioners to address over-workload and improve client care. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister with that, what is the Minister prepared to do to ensure the health and well-being of the residents in small communities such as Wekweeti are looked after and monitored to control the TB in the community? Mahsi.

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

**Further Return To Question 252-15(5): Treatment For Tuberculosis In The Northwest Territories**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we've worked out and as I stated in the business plans, the department has put a number of initiatives in to try and address this matter of working to ensure that we have coverage in all our communities no matter how small or what size. I have to again get back to the department as to some of the necessary steps or the steps that may have been taken and get up to speed on that and gladly sit down with the Member and review those results. Thank you.

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

**Question 253-15(5): Shaping Our Future: 2006-2010 Strategic Action Plan For Health And Wellness**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I listened quite intently to the Minister of Health and Social Services' statement earlier today Shaping our Future and action plan, 2006-2010. I know the Department of Health and Social Services in the past has been labelled as the department of perpetual planning and they always seem to be studying or reviewing or getting a working group together, and oftentimes, Mr. Speaker, that's the answer that the Minister of Health gives Regular Members when we ask questions. I'd like to ask the Minister today, how it is possible that they can develop an action plan for the future when judging by comments I've heard from constituents and other health care professionals across the North that it would indicate to me that we have a staffing crisis on our hands? I'd like to ask the Minister how he can do that action plan in isolation of a plan to address the staffing issues. Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 253-15(5): Shaping Our Future: 2006-2010 Strategic Action Plan For Health And Wellness**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, let's be clear; there are issues we have to deal with in Health and Social Services. There are issues around our nurse recruitment equation; the use of fill-ins or agency nurses. But we do not have a crisis on our hands and nothing is about to explode at this point. We have some major issues we need to deal with and we will deal with them. For example, Mr. Speaker, earlier in this session I committed to the chairperson of the Social Programs committee to work on an initiative that would see us doing some work in our facility here at Stanton to deal with some of those issues, to address them and

move forward with a plan to make some changes if that's what's required. But we have worked across the North with our health authorities, with our professionals, in coming up with plans. At times one direction set makes a group of individuals or nurses or social workers or doctors happy and makes another group unhappy. We can go through a large list of things we've tried to do working with those in the field to come up with an adequate response to their concerns and we will continue to do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**Supplementary To Question 253-15(5): Shaping Our Future: 2006-2010 Strategic Action Plan For Health And Wellness**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've heard concerns from staff about patient safety, about staff safety and, Mr. Speaker, I think it's only a matter of time before there's a major incident at one of our health centres and perhaps even at Stanton Hospital. There's issues about cleanliness, there's issues about laundry. There's many, many issues, as the Minister knows. I'd like to ask the Minister again, and I didn't quite here him say this, how can the department go out and develop an action plan without first addressing the fundamental issues here? And that is staffing. How can we do that? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 253-15(5): Shaping Our Future: 2006-2010 Strategic Action Plan For Health And Wellness**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as long as I have been a Member, since becoming a Member of this Legislative Assembly, I have seen the Department of Health and Social Services go through quite a number of work plans to try and deal with the issues that come forward. I think it is time now to implement and make the changes necessary to fix things. The action plan would deal not only in one specific area. It deals with the whole framework which would include how we deal with our professionals in the system. That is why an action plan is put together that we can step forward, move forward and make the changes necessary to ensure that the residents get the service they need when they need it. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**Supplementary To Question 253-15(5): Shaping Our Future: 2006-2010 Strategic Action Plan For Health And Wellness**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the residents aren't going to get the service that they need if we don't have the staff to deliver the service. So again, I take issue with the fact that we have gone out, developed an action plan, without first addressing the staffing issues. I would like to ask the Minister specifically what is his strategy in addressing the staff, the morale issue, especially at Stanton Hospital, but I know it exists in other health centres across this territory. What is his exact strategy in dealing with that? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 253-15(5): Shaping Our Future: 2006-2010 Strategic Action Plan For Health And Wellness**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, I have sent a letter. I have just signed off a letter to the chairperson of the Social Programs committee and have attached to that a draft of a plan, a terms of reference, of how we can proceed with a review of that facility and who would all be involved. I think that is, again, being proactive and taking the necessary steps to ensure that we are listening to those that work for us as well as addressing the service level requirements that our residents are requesting. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 253-15(5): Shaping Our Future: 2006-2010 Strategic Action Plan For Health And Wellness**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Six months ago, a staffing review was done at Stanton Hospital and Regular Members have yet to see even a draft of this. I am to understand a draft went to the department. I asked for a draft two weeks ago. We haven't seen this report. When are we going to be able to see the work that was done by the consultant on the staffing issues at Stanton Hospital? It is that simple, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

**Further Return To Question 253-15(5): Shaping Our Future: 2006-2010 Strategic Action Plan For Health And Wellness**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago I didn't hold the portfolio. Coming up to speed with what is happening, the commitments made, I intend to follow up on those. Ultimately, I work with Members in this area and, as I stated, working with the chairperson of Social Programs and the Social Programs committee on this issue to come up with a process that would address the issues that will make sure employees feel like they can put forward their suggestions or ideas and bring some conclusion to this area and try to create an environment where people feel safe, that they work in a safe environment and are being productive. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Question 254-15(5): Shared Parenting Legislation**

**MR. MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I listened to the Member for Range Lake's statement with interest and her questions to the Minister of Justice, as well as the debate in the House yesterday. I just have a question to follow up as well with the Minister of Justice on the issue of the shared parenting legislation. Mr. Speaker, I think there is general agreement that the best interests of the child are fundamental in this whole debate, that mothers tend to be the primary caregivers, that there is domestic violence and violence against women at three times the national average here in the Northwest Territories and that our shelters are filled with women and children that had violence perpetrated against them by men. I just wanted to ask the Minister, as he is going about this work and contemplating and clarifying his thinking in the position of the government, will he keep those key factors in mind? Thank you.



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

**Return To Question 254-15(5): Shared Parenting Legislation**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. As I said yesterday in answer to questions, the interest of the child are paramount. They have to be. I think generally a child's interests are best served by having access to both parents. That is not always possible. It is not always advisable. We have situations where, clearly, parents are unfit and courts make that determination, Mr. Speaker. But, yes, I agree that we have many difficult issues that we are grappling with. They are all part of this answer to this question. We keep them all mindful, Mr. Speaker. If there should be an opportunity to have some involvement or some input into the development of federal legislation, if the federal government is coming forward, I will make the commitment that I will seek input from all stakeholders from across the Northwest Territories who have an interest in seeing us at balanced legislation that serves the interest of Canadians. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Oral Questions. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Question 255-15(5): Support For Victims Of Sexual Abuse**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Premier of the Northwest Territories. My questions will be around the government's position for support for victims of sexual abuse. Mr. Speaker, the Grollier Hall residential school residence held 2,500 students representing students from about 13 to 16 communities who have been impacted. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House, the Premier stated that his recent remarks to the media do not represent his personal views. Previously, the Premier said that the remarks were his personal views and not those of the government. Mr. Speaker, I am confused. Was the Premier speaking on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories when he made his comments to the media, or were these comments reflective of his own personal views? Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 255-15(5): Support For Victims Of Sexual Abuse**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, no, I was not speaking on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Supplementary To Question 255-15(5): Support For Victims Of Sexual Abuse**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question. What concrete actions will the government be taking to identify gaps in assisting, and services for, survivors of sexual abuse? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 255-15(5): Support For Victims Of Sexual Abuse**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In tackling this issue, which we have to do, it will require that all of the Ministers take a look at their portfolios and where there are things they can do. Mr. Speaker, we have just recently begun the framework for action for an action plan

against family violence. In there, there are a lot of activities that we want to undertake. As well, Mr. Speaker, I might say that we are soon to have a status report on the phase one of that same report. That will be a key piece.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, we are dealing specifically with residential school survivors. Of course, that includes people who have suffered from sexual abuse as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Supplementary To Question 255-15(5): Support For Victims Of Sexual Abuse**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, friends passed away with the Grollier Hall school residence sexual abuse experiences. We know them. Our people know them. Now our children are going to find out about them soon. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Premier also stated that he and his Cabinet strongly support strengthening the policies and programs to support the victims of sexual abuse. Mr. Speaker, if there is one thing that the Premier should have learned from the dance of the last few weeks is that his words have meaning and impact. When the Premier speaks, all residents and all Members are listening. Mr. Speaker, what will this government be doing in the remaining months of its mandate to turn the Premier's commitment in this House yesterday into action and tangible results? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 255-15(5): Support For Victims Of Sexual Abuse**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, we made a commitment to take clear action on this. Of course, the framework for action phase two or the action plan against family violence is going to be a key to it. Now, Mr. Speaker, we were discussing and debating this issue yesterday. I can say that there are a number of things underway right now. This framework will be the key piece of it. There are a number of things in there that we need to take into consideration. Of course, education awareness, training, legislation, showing leadership ourselves and so on are all key pieces of this one. But, Mr. Speaker, we will be discussing this with all the Ministers. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about this with the other two northern Premiers as well, because this is not just a problem or an issue of the Northwest Territories; it is an issue right across the North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Supplementary To Question 255-15(5): Support For Victims Of Sexual Abuse**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during my training with working with victims in residential schools, I was told that sexual abuse is the most powerful type of all abuses to a human being. It is very powerful, Mr. Speaker, very scary and very shameful. So, Mr. Speaker, Members on this side of the House need to see the Premier's apology and his commitment to action, the amount of something that is concrete. Will the Premier make a commitment to this House, and to the victims of sexual abuse in the Northwest Territories today, that his government will implement a meaningful policy and service reform by the time this House sits again in February? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 255-15(5): Support For Victims Of Sexual Abuse**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very interested in getting on with action. I think there are things that we can be doing right now. Mr. Speaker, by February, we should have, or we will have, completed a review of the programs we have, an initial assessment of what is and what isn't working, what resources we would need and hopefully be able to have some things that we can share with Members on some of the priority issues we have to take on and what some possible programs might be. But, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure I can commit today that we will have a full-blown program ready by February, but we will do everything we can, assess what we have, identify the main issues we want to tackle and some program areas we could take on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Question 256-15(5): Consultations For Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, going back to my Member's statement on the concern of youth crime in the Northwest Territories and my support to the government bringing forward this safer community neighbourhoods act or bill, I would like to ask the Minister of Justice when will he start the public consultations and where will they take place? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Bell.

**Return To Question 256-15(5): Consultations For Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Those consultations will begin this month. As I have said, I hope to be able to come back to committee and Cabinet shortly with the results of those consultations, after listening to stakeholders in a number of communities. I don't have the proposed list of communities in front of me, Mr. Speaker, but I will certainly provide that information to the Members. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 256-15(5): Consultations For Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am looking forward to the start of these consultations. If these consultations are being held in some of the larger communities, will the Minister commit, then, to bringing a couple of delegates from outlying communities to take part in these consultations? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Bell.

**Further Return To Question 256-15(5): Consultations For Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, we won't be able to attend all communities in the North. We will have, I believe, regional consultations. I am sure we can bring interested stakeholders in from the smaller communities to those regional centres if that is how the consultations unfold. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 256-15(5): Consultations For Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the Minister for making that commitment. I think that was awfully big of him. I would like to ask the Minister, once this legislation is into law, who would enforce the legislation? Are we looking to starting up a territory of police service? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Bell.

**Further Return To Question 256-15(5): Consultations For Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** No, Mr. Speaker. We would have an investigative unit of two or three bodies potentially. Of course, this is subject to consultation. We have to propose a model that we think would work, talk about how we think it would be structured. Obviously, there will be a lot of thought and input from various stakeholders, but we would have people who do administrative work compile some of the surveillance. But they would have to work very closely with the RCMP who are also, and obviously, already present in most of our communities; not all, but do travel and provide support in policing services in all of our communities. So the RCMP are critical in this. They will be integral to the success of this and we are working very closely with them. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 256-15(5): Consultations For Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister mentioned two or three investigators. Now, are these going to be in each community? Are they going to be based in Yellowknife? Are we looking at bringing on more people to fill these positions? Are we going to fill them from within the department if that is possible? There are lots of questions there, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Bell.

**Further Return To Question 256-15(5): Consultations For Safer Communities And Neighbourhoods Act**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** There are lots of questions with no definitive answers at this point. We are going to discuss options. Our preliminary thinking and in talking to the other jurisdictions that have similar legislation, I think they believe it is most successful to have people who were formerly police officers who understand the nature of surveillance who could have a good rapport and relationship with the RCMP. Members can imagine we want to be very careful not to disrupt ongoing investigations or surveillance the RCMP are conducting. So we need to work very closely with them and have to have people on our staff, or contractors, who the RCMP trusts and are able to cooperate with in order for this to be effective. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Oral questions. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Question 257-15(5): Seniors' Facility In The Sahtu Region**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the honourable Member, Mr. Floyd Roland, Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister in terms of the long-term care facility in Deline for the Sahtu region. I wanted

to ask the Minister if he is aware of some of the ongoing in terms of establishing and building a long-term care facility in the Sahtu region in the community of Deline. Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 257-15(5): Seniors' Facility In The Sahtu Region**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am aware that there has been a fair bit of discussion between Health and Social Services, the Housing Corporation as well as Public Works in trying to move the work along in the community of Deline. There have been a couple of delays, but we are continuing to work to try and move that project along as has been identified by the parties to date. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Supplementary To Question 257-15(5): Seniors' Facility In The Sahtu Region**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister make a commitment, as the previous Minister has made some commitments, as to this facility in terms of having it open? I remember sometime last year the previous Minister said that this issue will not be an issue at this time of the year in terms of having this facility, especially Deline seniors' or old folk's home facility will be open and also looking at a long-term care facility. I know he is working with the Housing Corporation. People in Deline are waiting. The elders are waiting to see if this is a reality. Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 257-15(5): Seniors' Facility In The Sahtu Region**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that there was an agreement to get the work done on this facility dealing with some of the shortfalls and the older structure as it needs to be updated; code violations needed to be repaired. But I will get the latest on this and get back to the Member as to where it stands. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Supplementary To Question 257-15(5): Seniors' Facility In The Sahtu Region**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister here to commit to going beyond where it stands in terms of when will the people in Deline and Sahtu as they were promised -- commitments were made -- when will the seniors have a long-term care facility and also to finish and complete the renovation of the Deline's seniors' facility? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 257-15(5): Seniors' Facility In The Sahtu Region**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't give a date to the Member at this time. Just to be clear, working on the facility was built quite some time ago and some discretions are going on as how it can be utilized by the community and discussions with the community and the Housing Corporation, there was an agreed plan to put

in place of that and the necessary work that was identified. There has been a fair bit of tenant improvements that need to be done. To my understanding, it is over half a million dollars of work required. I will have to get some timelines as to when that will proceed. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Supplementary To Question 257-15(5): Seniors' Facility In The Sahtu Region**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have asked the Minister of Health and Social Services if he would make a commitment to come into Deline and talk to the people in terms of this facility. Mr. Speaker, people in Deline are waiting. At the same time, elders are dying here in Yellowknife at the Aven Manor centre that have come from the Sahtu region. They want a facility where they can go back home to Deline or to the Sahtu to have their last dying days there. It is not happening today. I would like to ask the Minister if he could work on this to see that the elders in the Sahtu can at least have their last wish be granted. Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 257-15(5): Seniors' Facility In The Sahtu Region**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to my understanding, the work that is being done on the facility that now sits in Deline would allow for seniors to live independently in the facility that is being reprofiled. As for a long-term facility that requires 24-7 hours of care, that is something else that, at this point, we don't have, from my understanding, a plan to put a new facility in the community as of yet. That is something that we do have to look at addressing across the Territories as we look at all of our seniors' facilities that have 24-7 care. At this time, with the work that we are doing on the existing facility, I will get up to speed on that and inform the Member of the latest work there where it sits and trying to ensure that facility moves ahead in a timely fashion. Thank you.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice, the Honourable Brendan Bell. Would this government's Department of Justice ever instruct a lawyer acting on our behalf in the case of an alleged victim of sexual abuse go to the issue of consent if it were between a teacher and a student? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. I think that is a hypothetical question, Mrs. Groenewegen. Do you want to rephrase your question? Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Question 258-15(5): Government Legal Counsel Direction In Sexual Abuse Case**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Minister of Justice, has the Minister of Justice instructed a lawyer, acting on behalf of this government, to question an alleged victim of sexual assault to go to the issue of consent when the alleged abuse occurred between a teacher and a student? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Bell.

**Return To Question 258-15(5): Government Legal Counsel Direction In Sexual Abuse Case**

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Mr. Speaker, I know the Member is doing the best possible job to try to phrase this in the general sense, but I think we all know the case that we are speaking to. It is a specific case. I am not comfortable in commenting on something that is before the courts. I don't think it is appropriate for me to do so. So it is very difficult for me to separate this from the case that I believe we are talking to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. We will rule that question out of order. The Minister referenced sub justice. I think that applies in this question.

---Ruled Out of Order

Oral questions. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Question 259-15(5): School Construction In Fort Good Hope**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Transportation this question here in terms of the issue around the NAV Can twin towers in Fort Good Hope that seems to be in the way of future development of a new school for Chief T'Selehye School. Is the Minister working on this issue so that the people in Fort Good Hope can have their school be brought into consideration for the building of a new facility there? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Menicoche.

**Return To Question 259-15(5): School Construction In Fort Good Hope**

**HON. KEVIN MENICOCHÉ:** Mr. Speaker, the Member for the Sahtu raises a good issue that is actually a new issue out in Fort Good Hope. That is the two towers that are owned by NAV Canada. Discussions are underway as we speak, but it being a federal department, it has federal bureaucracy attached to it and answers will be forthcoming. But to date, there has been nothing in the works there. Mahsi cho.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Supplementary To Question 259-15(5): School Construction In Fort Good Hope**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am going to ask one final question. That will be it for the honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Menicoche. Would he work with other Ministers and the Minister of DPW, and the Minister of the Education council in terms of clearing up this issue along with the federal counterparts in terms of ensuring that the people in Fort Good Hope can expect that the Chief T'Selehye School is on time, on budget and ready to go when it is supposed to go? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Menicoche.

**Further Return To Question 259-15(5): School Construction In Fort Good Hope**

**HON. KEVIN MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On time and on budget is our mandate.

---Laughter

Certainly, I can commit to the Member that we will certainly have a look and try to expedite the land transfers and removal of the towers, because it is a very important

project to the community of Fort Good Hope and our North as well. Mahsi cho.

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

**Question 260-15(5): Protocol Regarding Job Performance Of Deputy Minister**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Premier what exactly is the protocol when a Member wants to call into question the job performance of a deputy minister. Is it with one of the...or whoever the department it is with, or is it with himself? Mahsi.

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

**Return To Question 260-15(5): Protocol Regarding Job Performance Of Deputy Minister**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, the deputy ministers report on a day-by-day basis to the Minister, so if it is an issue with regard to some of the daily functions as a deputy minister, then that really should go through the Minister. Mr. Speaker, I don't think there is any specific protocol we have. We understand, though, that if it is of a general nature, then I would certainly be willing to sit down with the person who had concerns. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**Supplementary To Question 260-15(5): Protocol Regarding Job Performance Of Deputy Minister**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Who ultimately makes the call, though, Mr. Speaker? Is it the Minister who is responsible for the deputy ministers or is it the Premier who is responsible for the deputy ministers? If I have questions on job performance, who do I raise those with? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 260-15(5): Protocol Regarding Job Performance Of Deputy Minister**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Legally, they report to me. Legally, I make the final call, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**Supplementary To Question 260-15(5): Protocol Regarding Job Performance Of Deputy Minister**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to request that the Premier make some time available for me here maybe even tomorrow to discuss the issue of the performance of a deputy minister of this government. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 260-15(5): Protocol Regarding Job Performance Of Deputy Minister**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, sure. We don't make appointments here, but certainly I will make time available. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Oral questions. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Question 261-15(5): Methods Used In Caribou Count**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Environment and Natural Resources Minister in terms of the caribou in the region here. I got a call from Colville Lake, Mr. Speaker, over the lunch hour. The Colville Lake people are doing their own count. They are doing their own monitoring. The elders are not panicking about the reduction and the decline of caribou. The Colville Lake people said there are lots of caribou out there. How has the Minister's department or what type of methods has his department used to count the caribou? Thank you.

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

**Return To Question 261-15(5): Methods Used In Caribou Count**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the people of Colville are doing their own count. I am not sure what methods they are using. We have in our historical practice of counting the caribou, we were involved with the Sahtu Resource Management Board. They have been involved in the caribou counts in that area. They share the responsibility in terms of the numbers or the work that was done there. We have tried to use as much as we can from some of the information from the traditional knowledge efforts. We are in the process of working towards having a caribou summit in the new year. We would like to bring in all of the people and start looking at the different numbers. I recognize, of course, that some other jurisdictions are doing their own work and may be contesting our numbers. We've gone out and done accounts twice now and we've also done radio collaring for aerial photos and all the standard practice of counting caribou was used in this case. Thank you.

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

**Supplementary To Question 261-15(5): Methods Used In Caribou Count**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, like other regions in the Northwest Territories, we, in the Sahtu, depend on these special animals to keep us alive and well. Mr. Speaker, my point is that the people in Colville Lake, especially the elders, are not panicking, Mr. Speaker, as they have extraordinary knowledge of the caribou. Yet, we have not used their skills or knowledge to contribute to the caribou survey in the direction dealing with their reported decline. Could the bureaucracy of this government bypass Cabinet and the Legislative Assembly and pass their own legislation? No, they could not. Why are we asking aboriginal people to ignore what the elders are saying? Why are we, as a government, doing this? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 261-15(5): Methods Used In Caribou Count**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I would not agree with the Member's statement on ignoring what the elders have stated. We haven't seen any of the information that Colville may be gathering. We have worked with the people in that riding. The Sahtu Resource Management Board is the board that we have been working with. If there is other information out there, we would certainly like to see it and we would like to see the methodology of how it's collected and compare numbers.

We've gone out on several occasions now to count caribou. We are quite confident in our numbers. If there is information contrary to that, we would certainly appreciate having the opportunity to look at it and have that discussion.

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

**Supplementary To Question 261-15(5): Methods Used In Caribou Count**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are millions spent on this method by ENR and you may be right. However, I am asking for the small community of Colville Lake to take into consideration their methods of counting caribou. So I would like to ask the Minister of ENR, were the communities consulted, especially Colville Lake? Were the hunters and trappers consulted? Thank you.

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

**Further Return To Question 261-15(5): Methods Used In Caribou Count**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is the government's practice or ENR's practice to involve community members. We also work with the regional bodies. I have been in the community of Colville Lake and heard their concerns personally. They have raised the issue directly to me in my travels to that community that the caribou numbers were down, that they were having a very difficult time finding caribou, that they were pointing to the possibility that the resource development activity was a factor. If that's changed, I would certainly like to see that information come forward. If there are new numbers out there, I would appreciate the opportunity to look at these numbers. We make every effort to involve the community. It's a really important part of the aboriginal culture to deal with wildlife. We recognize that. If that is not the case in this situation in Colville, we would certainly like to meet with the Member and see what steps can be taken to rectify that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Supplementary To Question 261-15(5): Methods Used In Caribou Count**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the Minister's comments in terms of working with Colville and working with me in terms of this issue of caribou. In January or this coming year, I believe the Minister is going to host a caribou summit. It's going to be very important for our people in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, it is from our elders that we know about an inscription inside the caribou head or inside the caribou skull. I am waiting for the day when someone will translate this inscription to all of us. The people of Colville Lake have taken the initiative to conduct their own studies of the caribou. I also await their findings. I look forward to the caribou summit in the new year. Who will be invited to the caribou summit and what role is planned for the elders? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** A couple of questions there. Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

**Further Return To Question 261-15(5): Methods Used In Caribou Count**

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, we have a fairly lengthy list of who will be invited to the caribou summit. We are planning to try to have all the stakeholders

affected by the issue of caribou and people who deal with caribou, whether it's on a scientific basis, whether it's the hunters, whether it's community leaders, regional leaders. We would like to have all these people attend. We are also extending an invitation to the Members of this House and we are also planning to have elders come in and talk from a traditional knowledge standpoint on the issue of caribou. We would certainly welcome, if the Member has any recommendations from his region or his riding, as to who he thinks should be involved. We would certainly take those recommendations into consideration, if he would like to have the summit broad enough to involve all the people affected by the issue of caribou and the future of the caribou. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Time for question period has expired. At this time, Members, I would like to draw your attention to the gallery to the presence of a couple of former Members; Lena Pedersen and Leon Lafferty are in the audience.

---Applause

At this time, the Chair is going to call a break and invite everybody to the Great Hall for the signing ceremony.

---SHORT RECESS

**MR. SPEAKER:** Back to the orders of the day. Written questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

#### ITEM 8: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

##### Written Question 35-15(5): Two-Rate Zone Structure

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have three written questions.

My first question is for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

Can the Minister provide a comparison between what customers in the Sahtu communities pay now, and what they would pay under a two-rate zone structure?

##### Written Question 36-15(5): Constitutional Discussion With People Of The NWT

The second question is for Premier Handley.

Given the short amount of time left in this Legislative Assembly, would the Premier consider entering into some type of constitutional discretion with northern people? Alternatively, would the Premier consider initiating discussions with the MLAs at some time within the next 10 months?

##### Written Question 37-15(5): GNWT Medical Health Travel Assistance Program

My question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

What is the Department of Health doing to notify NWT residents who travel outside the North, in the case of having to use the health care centres/hospitals outside the North for medical services? How are we helping our residents who need the NWT government's assistance?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Ms. Clerk.

#### ITEM 9: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

##### Return To Written Question 27-15(5): Out-Of-Country Medical Care

**CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Grannum):** Mr. Speaker, I have a return to written question asked by Mr.

Ramsay on Friday, October 27, 2006, regarding out-of-country medical care.

Approvals for all out-of-country services are based on physician recommendations and the assessment of the medical advisor.

In 2003-2004, one client received approval for out-of-country service. However, the client did not utilize the service.

In 2004-2005, there were no approvals for out-of-country service.

In 2005-2006, one client received approval. However, the client did not utilize the service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Clerk. Returns to written questions. Replies to opening address. Petitions. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Tabling of documents. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Roland.

#### ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

##### Tabled Document 73-15(5): Shaping Our Future: 2006-2010 Updated Strategic Plan For Health And Wellness In The NWT

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, a document entitled Shaping our Future: 2006-2010, An Updated Plan for Strategic Plan for Health and Wellness in the Northwest Territories.

##### Tabled Document 74-15(5): NWT Health And Social Services Action Plan 2006-2010

As well, Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Action Plan 2006-2010, August 2006. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Tabling of documents. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bell.

##### Tabled Document 75-15(5): Business Development Fund Annual Report/Recipients Report

**HON. BRENDAN BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled Business Development Fund Annual Report/Recipients Report April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006.

##### Tabled Document 76-15(5): Elder Corrections Wilderness Camp Pilot Project - Spring 2006

Also, Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Justice, I would like to table the following document entitled Elder Corrections Wilderness Camp Pilot Project - Spring 2006. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

##### Tabled Document 77-15(5): Report On Official Languages

**HON. CHARLES DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two documents to table. The first is a document entitled the Annual Report on Official Languages, 2005-2006.

##### Tabled Document 78-15(5): NWT Power Corporation Annual Report

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled NWT Power Corporation Annual Report, 2005-2006. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

**Tabled Document 79-15(5): Petition Regarding The Lockout At The Nats'ejee K'eh Treatment Centre**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table a petition in a generic form. I've been receiving several e-mails from constituents and it is to the nature of Nats'ejee K'eh Treatment Centre having troubles and they're looking for swift action. I've deleted all names and I have the petition to present to this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Tabling of documents. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Tabled Document 80-15(5): Report On The Victim/Witness Support Service Of A Multiple Child Sexual Abuse Court Trial In Inuvik, Northwest Territories, August 1998**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I table a document, A Report on Victims/Witness Support Services on a Multiple Child Sexual Abuse Court Trial in Inuvik, Northwest Territories, August 1998, Grollier Hall experience.

**Tabled Document 81-15(5): Office Of The NWT Languages Commissioner, Annual Report 2005-2006**

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Tabling of documents. Pursuant to section 23 of the Official Languages Act, I wish to table the Annual Report of the Languages Commissioner of the Northwest Territories for the Fiscal Year 2005-2006. I'd like to draw your attention, Members, to the presence in the visitors' gallery of Ms. Shannon Gullberg, the Languages Commissioner for the Northwest Territories.

---Applause

Welcome to the House. Notices of motion. Honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

**ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION**

**Motion 16-15(5): Health Care Professionals**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Wednesday, February 7, 2007, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that this Legislative Assembly strongly recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories re-examine the pay, benefits and working conditions of its full-time health care professionals to ensure they are treated equitably as compared with temporary contract workers, and to ensure that full-time status is seen from the workers' point of view as the preferred alternative to temporary contract work; and further, that the Government of the Northwest Territories continue to focus efforts on developing an NWT-based pool of locum health care professionals.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Notices of motion. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Motions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, I don't have the motions.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Motions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with the motion he gave notice of earlier today. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may proceed with your motion, Mr. Ramsay.

**ITEM 16: MOTIONS**

**Motion 16-15(5): Health Care Professionals, Carried**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. WHEREAS health care workers provide an essential service to the residents of the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS recruitment and retention of health care workers in the competitive Canadian labour market continues to be a challenge;

AND WHEREAS differences in pay scales, benefits and working conditions between permanent full-time workers and temporary contract workers who often work side by side have contributed to low morale, turnover and burnout amongst permanent workers;

AND WHEREAS lack of a consistent health care staff in many small communities prevents patients and workers from having the time to develop trust in relationships needed to ensure quality of care;

AND WHEREAS Northwest Territories residents expect and deserve a high quality of health care, as do other Canadians;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that this Legislative Assembly strongly recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories re-examine the pay, benefits and working conditions of its full-time health care professionals to ensure they are treated equitably as compared with temporary contract workers, and to ensure that full-time status is seen from the workers' point of view as the preferred alternative to temporary contract work;

AND FURTHER, that the Government of the Northwest Territories continue to focus efforts on developing an NWT-based pool of locum health care professionals.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question is being called. All those in favour? To the motion. Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously I'm going to be supporting the motion. This last two and a half weeks we've had a number of questions to the former Minister of Health and Social Services and the new Minister of Health and Social Services in regards to health care here in the Northwest Territories and where we're going with that. I was happy to see the Minister come up with the action plan for the future. I think it's a good step, although I think we are missing a key ingredient and that is the staffing, and I think it has to go in conjunction with any type of action plan, you have to and need some surety on the staffing and the levels have to be there in order to provide quality care to our residents here in the Northwest Territories. I think the reliance to just pick up the phone and dial 1-800-NURSE and get agency nurses in here is just a practice that is done I think far too often just because it's the easiest thing to do. I think we have a lot of room for improvement in the area of recruitment and retention, especially when new nurses move to the Northwest Territories, fast-tracking them so that they can

get jobs and they can get on the floor and be providing the quality of care that our residents need. I think any delay in that regard should just not be acceptable, Mr. Speaker.

Again, I want to thank my colleagues for putting this motion together and getting it on the floor of the House. We can have some discussion and we can send a clear and a strong message to the government that we have to be doing more than we are currently, especially in terms of staffing. Our residents deserve the best that we can deliver, Mr. Speaker, and I think we're not doing it right now. We need to focus our efforts in the area of staffing, recruitment and retention of health care professionals here in the NWT. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. To the motion. Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I also support this motion. Mr. Speaker, we are very well aware of the challenges in the health care professions area in terms of the shortages and the competition for health care workers. That's why when we do manage to recruit health care workers, or we have long-time health care workers in our system, that we have to do everything that we can to treat them with respect and fairness. When there are so many options out there available to health care workers in other environments, in other jurisdictions, we have to do our utmost to ensure that there are not sometimes what may even seem small in view of the big challenges, small issues, but it's these things, though, that cause people to despair. It causes the morale to go down and it causes people to start looking elsewhere. We cannot afford to have that happen. We can't afford to lose anybody from the system. It is a mobile workforce out there; the opportunities are limitless. I would like to see our government consider the uniqueness of the North and consider unique solutions to ensure that we do recruit and we do keep the health care professionals that we need to operate a very high quality system in the Northwest Territories. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the government will take note of this request and this motion that is coming forward today, and taking it in the spirit which it is intended. We're trying to make constructive recommendations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. To the motion. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, will be supporting this important motion that my honourable colleague has moved, and seconded by the Member for Hay River South. Mr. Speaker, the health care services in Canada is at a crisis point where private health care is going to be a hot topic in terms of our public dollars going into taking care of ourselves, because it seems like nursing in the Northwest Territories is going more into the private sector than us, as government, taking care of our own people in our own backyard. The new kid on the block of agency nurses seems to be getting all the attention, because they are being taken care of quite well by their agency. As the Government of the Northwest Territories we have restrictions, limitations, and it seems that we are unable to compete against this agency, this super agency of nurses. Even with the comparison and we see the agency nurses doing quite well, if we look at our role as employers to our own nurses, we're not doing quite as well.

So I certainly hope that this motion would provide the Cabinet on that side to look at some of the solutions to maintain our nurses here in the Northwest Territories, and maybe come out of the 1960s and '70s era and into the 2006 era, providing nurses the quality of work they do in terms of incentives. That's going to be a tough job for the Cabinet, but we have to do something otherwise these agency nurses are going to continue around the Northwest Territories in their private billing services.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to also say that the small communities are the ones that pay the price, because they have nurses that come in for two to three weeks, and another nurse comes in, and the patients in our communities have to go through the rigor mortis of telling all the aches and pains to a nurse again. So maybe they should just have a tape recorder in the hospital for when the new nurse comes in, the patient comes in, they could just listen to what this patient has gone through. Some patients in my communities, the nurses don't really get to know. So there's suffering in our communities, suffering in the Northwest Territories, so our quality of health care is in jeopardy. I think it can be saved. I think we have a strong government here. We have to shift our priorities, because health care is a moving target. We have to nail it when we can, and it takes that in leadership from the other side.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the Health and Social Services that the Stanton Hospital has initiated an Aboriginal Wellness Program in my region, and the Sahtu has supported that program 100 percent, so there is some creativity and there are some things going on that would support the health. I would like to see some time frames on this motion that the Minister would come back with Cabinet support in terms of things that we can do. So I will support this motion. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. To the motion. Honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to add a few comments in support of this motion. The motion, as it is written, is quite broad and it's aimed at a comprehensive action plan on the part of the government to deal with so many different issues related to recruitment and retention of the health care professionals. But also, I believe this will have implications to the allied health care professionals and other care providers, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I think we are very well aware of the challenges we face, but it's an ongoing task that the government has to work even more stringently than they have done in the past.

Mr. Speaker, also, I think this motion is very broad in terms of trying to get the government to work on this issue that encompasses small communities, as well as the large communities, small nursing stations all across the Territories, as well as a big acute care facility like Stanton Hospital. We do have many, many serious challenges, and I believe this government is already spending a whole lot of money and I think if we could do a better job of spending the money that we are already spending, we should be able to get further ahead.

Mr. Speaker, over the last couple of weeks, the Members have raised questions and brought issues forward about what's been the issues faced in Stanton Hospital. I have already indicated the meetings that I've had, where we've had some real dedicated nurses who have been here for 10, 14, 15, 20 years who are really feeling like their services and what they have to offer are not as appreciated, due to various issues being faced at the



hospital. I am looking forward to working with the new Minister and the government about how we can address that issue.

As the chair of the Social Programs committee, I have had preliminary discussions with the Minister about the time frame and the action plan as to how the survey and the review of the human resource management issue there will be conducted and brought forward to the committee and the rest of the Members, and I'm looking forward on quite a tight time schedule to make sure that that happens.

Another issue is the fact that one of the cornerstones of recruiting and retaining nursing professionals has been the Nursing Program at Aurora College, but I have brought up issues dealing with some of the benefit packages for these new nurses that are not at the level that it should be to make sure that they feel wanted and welcome, and also that they get the resources they need as they start their new career. Also, in an effort to incorporate these new nurses, we're asking the more senior nurses to take on extra responsibilities of incorporating these new nurses into the system, and I think that we cannot lose sight of the fact that we are asking the more experienced nurses to do more on top of what their normal job is, and the government has to look into how their needs are addressed.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, we have a continuing issue dealing with a lack of nurses in many, many communities, and the over-reliance on the use of agency nurses, which is bringing up a whole lot of different issues in terms of the differential treatment between the agency nurses and those long-term northern nurses who are here to stay and who have given a lot of their professional and personal life to the well-being of health care delivery in the North, but they're left feeling like they are being treated less fairly or less equitably than the fly-in locum nurses and agency nurses.

I think, Mr. Speaker, we're well aware of the fact that agency nurses and locum nurses are necessary in our day and age when we need to rely on their services, fill the gaps, but I think the current state of affairs is not working well in terms of how we fit in all of the new nurses and the more experienced nurses and agency nurses into this picture. So, Mr. Speaker, I support this motion and I am doing that in an effort to ask the government and the new Minister to look at this issue thoroughly and see where we could improve the system to make best use of the resources we are already spending, better coordinating, and addressing some of the grievances and concerns that the health care professionals will bring forward not just in the human resource revenue that's going on at Stanton, but some of the issues that the Members from smaller communities have brought forward to this Assembly during this session. So, Mr. Speaker, that is my comments to this motion. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. To the motion. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, stand and support this motion. I thank my colleagues from Kam Lake and Hay River South for bringing the motion forward, Mr. Speaker.

I know a young lady, the first day of school at the University of Alberta there was a big fair and a lot of the hospitals had display booths there. A nice, big display booth from Dallas, Texas, a picture of the hospital and just

top of the line. I'm not sure what ours from the Northwest Territories would say. You know, come work, 40 below, if you decide to stay, we'll pay you less.

---Laughter

You know, Mr. Speaker, it's not about agency nurses. I mean we appreciate the service they do provide. You can't blame them if you're working down south and you get an opportunity to come north and make some good money, and go back south where the cost of living is cheaper.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** That's right.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Who can blame them? I'd do it. I'd do it. But I think the message we want to send here is to the northern nurses, the long-term nurses, the ones who are here all the time. We want to look after them the same as the agency nurses who are coming up. That's our intent here today, Mr. Speaker.

To me, we are sending a message and we are trying to show some support for the long-term northerners, the local girls who are going to get training to become nurses, and all health care professionals. We are trying to send them a message that we will look after you the same whether you decide to stay here. You will be compensated the same as health care professionals that are coming up from down south. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this is the message we are trying to send. If the government can listen to the advice we give them, we would much appreciate it, not only for ourselves, but for a lot of people. I have known nurses who have been up here for 25 years. They are from Ontario and Saskatchewan. They come up and they've been here for 25 years. This is their home now and they want to make it their home. It's tough on a lot of health care professionals to be working side by side with someone who has their way paid up, their rent paid, everything taken care of and the folks who are here permanently are looking at mortgage and all their own expenses. They don't mind doing that. They aren't complaining about that, but they do want to be compensated equally. So that's our intent here today. I am more than happy to support this motion and I do appreciate the Member bringing it forward. Thank you.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. To the motion. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, stand to support this motion mainly in terms of recruitment because something happened in Paulatuk when the nurse left the community and they didn't have any recruitment coming up at the time. It's cases like that when we really need to recruit and retain some of these nurses. So I appreciate my colleagues here for bringing the motion forward.

I would just like to say also, Mr. Speaker, in Yellowknife, for this first year, there is one lady from Tuktoyaktuk that is taking the Nursing Program. I appreciate what she's doing. She's going to go through a few years, I imagine. I give her all the support she can have. Just briefly, Mr. Speaker, I will support the motion.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this motion as well. I think this sends a strong message to our government here that hopefully the

Health Minister is listening to the signal sent today, which is we aren't treating our Stanton employees fairly and I think we put people at risk, Mr. Speaker. We need to find a fair agreement and a fair way of compensation with folks. If we don't do this, Mr. Speaker, we will get burnt out workers, we'll create health care and health and safety issues. People working shoulder to shoulder with agency nurses should be paid fairly, Mr. Speaker, and that does nothing but create resentment. That does not create a happy work environment and, in the end, we will be losing. Mr. Speaker, if we burn out our northern nurses, who will we have left? All we will be doing is trucking in more agency nurses and I don't think that's what we want. We can't burn them out; we can't underpay them because that is not fair. If we have to open up the Public Service Act to address these types of needs such as seniority and appreciation in some manner, so be it, Mr. Speaker. We need to take action on this issue.

We all have been getting calls on this, some more and some less. The fact is, the people there are not happy and we need to find a way to ensure that our health care providers, the ones we go to when we are sick, are there and ready to help us. If they aren't happy, it will be reflected in the system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I will just be brief in offering my support to the motion. I would like to thank my colleagues Mr. Ramsay and Mrs. Groenewegen for putting this forward. I know that this motion speaks to the fact that we have an NWT-driven-based solution here to our health care professional shortage that we are experiencing here in the NWT. I think if we just started moving and put more focus on developing an NWT-based pool of locum health care professionals, that would be a really good start.

Just on the small community perspective on the use of locum health care professionals, Mr. Speaker, I don't think all small communities want a full-time permanent nurse that's going to live in the community for 20 years. I have definitely had the experience from one of my constituents where they felt they were just there too long and they just get into a routine kind of thing. I encourage this government to rotate its human workforce, its human resources, from community to community. I think people always like to see new faces in their communities, not new faces for one month to the next going on forward, but I think that if people that you move around in these pools that are consistently busy in the community every two or three months, I think people would really find that acceptable and would be able to work with it.

So I just wanted to offer my insight into that side of it anyway and say a lot of the small communities do welcome new faces. I don't think going with an NWT-based pool of locum health care professionals...Having health professionals from outside the NWT is not a bad thing. Of course, people from the NWT trained in nursing would be the way to go. I don't think we can build that resource today or tomorrow, but maybe in the future. In the meantime, I think we have to work with what we've got. We are up against a lot of challenges as we go forward with health care in providing health care in the small, remote centres. With that, I offer my full support for this motion. I hope that the government will act in accordance with what we are requesting in the motion,

that they start focussing on an NWT-based health care professional pool. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. (English not provided) Mr. Speaker, I, too, support this motion that is in front of us creating an incentive for the existing health professions in the Northwest Territories.

There are talks about the temp contracts that are coming from the South or wherever the place may be. At the same time, we have to treat our health professionals with respect and also pay them competitively as we pay the contractors who are coming out. That's not the first time we've heard that. We've heard it over and over. I think it's time we stepped to the plate and say we treat health professionals the way we should be treated.

I would just like to highlight that we are doing this for our existing staff right now and also for future potential staff for the health profession in our region.

I would just like to share a story. We have a first qualified nurse from the Tlicho region a first year back that graduated. She worked at Stanton and now she's gone back to university to continue furthering her education. We, as Tlicho, are very proud of her. Someday, Mr. Speaker, she'll come back to our region and possibly become a doctor. I think that's her dream. That's her vision and she wants to work for her people. She's out there getting educated and we are 100 percent behind her as the Tlicho leadership.

It's not only her, but there are others in post-secondary, whether it be Aurora College, Edmonton or elsewhere. They are getting educated. We must set incentives for them to return to our communities, to the Northwest Territories. Right now, as it stands, Mr. Speaker, with the high cost of living, no accommodation allowance, it's very hard to attract those individuals and we've heard it over and over in this House that we have to do something. I think this motion really calls for an action plan, for the government to do something today. If we don't, we are going to be standing here in February stressing that there is a crisis in the North. I foresee that coming, Mr. Speaker, not only in the health professions but other professions as well.

Even talking in my previous Member's statement, the community of Wekweeti, the small communities don't have nurses in the community. There are lay dispensers, but it's just not the same, Mr. Speaker. Those are the communities that we need to focus on as well.

I would just like to say that I fully support this motion. I just want to elaborate on how important it is to have our health professionals looked after well. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. To the motion. Honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am glad the Members share the concern we have about filling our positions and ensuring that our health centres and our hospitals are fully staffed and fully operational to meet the requirements that are there day by day to deal with the constituents and all that they come forward with from time to time and communities, sicknesses and families.

Mr. Speaker, I think we should, for the record, state that we have hundreds of nursing staff and the nursing profession working every day diligently putting in the hours, the overtime, come back and when they are on call or on time off, they fill positions. We are very appreciative of that type of dedication.

Mr. Speaker, going back a little ways so some of the Members realize this is not an issue just for today, it has been affecting Canada and the Northwest Territories for a long time. When I was last Minister of Health and Social Services in 1999, we instituted a bonus system to try to recognize the nursing fraternity and the years of service they had in the Northwest Territories. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, when community health centres had to be shut down because we didn't have enough nurses, there was a lot of negative feedback from Members that we need those facilities open. So the government-of-the-day tried to find where we could get more nurses from. The opportunity came through someone who had the very good idea -- obviously it's working and it's working to their benefit -- of creating agency nurses. The agency does very well by those because they fill in the short term. Yes, unfortunately, the government and health authorities have relied on that filling portion very heavily. It's cost more money, as the Ministers of Health and Social Services have had to come back to this forum requesting supplementary appropriations and more money to fill the gaps.

Mr. Speaker, we should recognize as well that the Government of the Northwest Territories overall, along with the Department of Health and Social Services, has stepped up to the plate on quite a number of occasions to try to ensure that we are dealing with a nursing shortage in the Northwest Territories.

First, Mr. Speaker, our Student Financial Assistance Program, the best in Canada, the nurses who go through that program and work in the Northwest Territories will have those loans written off for the years of service they work here in the Northwest Territories. That's one of the pluses we should be expounding on a little more. As well, regarding our bursary program, that's another area that the Government of the Northwest Territories has stepped up to the plate to try to deal with the nursing issue that we face here in the Northwest Territories. The Graduate Nurse Placement Program is something that we work with the nurses who go through our system and we offer the jobs immediately once they have passed their test here in the Northwest Territories.

As well, Mr. Speaker, looking even further in how we go the next step in dealing with the contract nurses or agency nurses. That is something I want to follow up on a little more, but before I get into that I heard comments about hiring nurses and telling them to come and tell them to come and work for them in the dark in 40 below and we will pay you less. Mr. Speaker, just for the record, a nurse at pay level 14 in the Northwest Territories at the starting of the grid is ranked number one in Canada. The maximum level is 16.7 percent higher. That's adjusted to the cost of living. At pay range 15, starting salary is 5.3 percent higher. At our maximum grid, 9.3 percent higher.

So, Mr. Speaker, as the Government of the Northwest Territories we are trying to deal with these issues. We are also faced with some constraints that we have to deal with and I hope Members will work with as we try to deal with this motion, and that is the fact that we have, as the Government of the Northwest Territories, many Members who have been here for awhile and realize that the

government had to pay out huge dollars, millions of dollars in pay equity because of a challenge that was faced across the board and that has affected how we pay our employees in the Government of the Northwest Territories. That's an environment we have to work with.

Mr. Speaker, in wanting to see action, hopefully as we go through this, we will have the Members' support as we take the next steps. For example, working with the department already in this area, we want to look to apply a Nurse Agency Relief Program as it was designed. So we will have our own nurse pool in the Northwest Territories.

---Applause

We will be able to fill the communities. That is something we are going to start doing and implement the way it was designed. Develop an emergency response team so where communities are short or there's a shortage, we can send a team out to a community that will help deal with the issues. Develop a GNWT nursing agency, again a pool that we can step forward with and have a group of nurses travel to communities and provide the level of service that our residents expect from their health care system. As well, as we have heard on a number of occasions, when we put nursing staff in a facility and they have to fill and work beside a nurse of another specialty, that can create its own problems. So we are looking at re-describing nursing positions that fill a multi-purpose unit and adjusting that area which would help alleviate that.

As well, more in the small communities, we have to maximize the Community Health Nurse Development Program. That's where we take community health nurses and under-fill them to provide more training, so they can do the job in the community. That's another way we are going to be stepping up to the plate and doing that.

So I hope as we implement this, there is some recognition that as the Government of the Northwest Territories, we have stepped up to the plate when it comes to some of the salary issues, when it comes to the graduation program. We no longer continue to search. We continue to search for the nursing fraternity when they come out of colleges in the South, but we went one step up in the Northwest Territories. We, with the college and Education, Culture and Employment and the Department of Health and Social Services, brought the program to the Northwest Territories and then started our own through the Aurora College system Nursing Program and they get their degrees here in the Northwest Territories and we offer them a job when they come out the door.

Mr. Speaker, we are doing a job in trying to make a difference. We will continue to do that with the commitment and support of Members of this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. I will allow the mover of the motion to close the debate. Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to close off this debate. I am happy that I got to move it because I do get the final word on this. I just want to state for the record, and I know the Minister has been here the last two and a half weeks. He hasn't been the Minister of Health and Social Services for quite that long, but I think he understands and he has gotten the message we have tried to send to him. We are not against agency nurses. Where there is a need and a requirement, yes. What I think we have to keep in mind, Mr. Speaker, is the fact

that we want our health care professionals here in the Northwest Territories treated equally, or treated fairly.

---Applause

You know, I think, Mr. Speaker, more than money, more than studies, more than anything, I think what our nurses and our health care professionals need here in the Northwest Territories is our full and undivided support; and, Mr. Speaker, right now, if you talk to a number of them, they don't feel like they're getting the support. That support, Mr. Speaker, has to start at the top, has to start with the Minister and it has to go and work its way down through the upper echelons of the Department of Health and Social Services and out at Stanton and in the health centres, so that the front-line workers feel like they're getting a level of support, and feel that people actually do care about them. I think that's what's missing, Mr. Speaker.

You know, we, as legislators...and I want every health care professional out there in this territory to know that we do care about them. I think this motion starts us on a course. The Minister seems like he's intent on looking at different options, on trying to keep the staff that we have here, keep them happy, show them we care, show them that we support them. To me, Mr. Speaker, that's what it's all about.

I know the Minister says we're doing what we can, but we've also done some things in the past, Mr. Speaker, that haven't helped, and I talked about it earlier: causation. Why are health care professionals feeling overworked and beat up? You know why they're feeling that way? Because of some decisions the government's made in the past, and I talked about the privatization of services, especially at Stanton. It's had a devastating effect on the morale there over the years and it's getting worse.

The other cause that I would point to is the Hay Plan and the reclassification of positions. Absolutely, positively one of the worst decisions the government has ever made.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I want to once again thank my colleagues for supporting this motion, and I fully intend to work with the Minister and I wish him the best of luck with his new role as Minister of Health and Social Services, and want him to know that we support him on this side when he's trying to give the support and showing the health care professionals here in our territory that we care about them, that we respect them. I think that's what this is all about, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi.

---Applause

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

---Applause

Motions. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Motion 11-15(5): Dissolution Of The 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, Carried**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I'm wide awake here, Mr. Speaker, and I apologize.

Mr. Speaker, WHEREAS the four-year term of the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly expires on December 8, 2007;

AND WHEREAS it would be desirable to hold the general election prior to the end of the current term of the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS, under section 9(3) of the Northwest Territories Act, the Governor-in-Council, after consultation, may dissolve the Legislative Assembly thus causing a new Legislature to be elected;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that this Legislative Assembly requests the Governor-in-Council of the Government of Canada to dissolve the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly on August 31, 2007, to permit a general election for the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories to be held on October 1, 2007.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Motion is on the floor. 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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Motions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Motion 12-15(5): Extended Adjournment Of The House To February 7, 2007, Carried**

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on November 2, 2006, it shall be adjourned until Wednesday, February 7, 2007.

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to February 7, 2007, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

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

---Carried

Motions. Honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

**Motion 13-15(5): Appointment Of Chief Electoral Officer, Carried**

**MR. POKIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. WHEREAS the Elections Act provides for the appointment of a Chief Electoral Officer who has the responsibility to exercise general direction and supervision over the administrative conduct of an election and enforce, on the part of all election officers, fairness, impartiality and compliance with the Elections Act and the Plebiscites Act;

AND WHEREAS the current Chief Electoral Officer, Mr. Glen McLean, has expressed his intention to retire from office on January 5, 2007;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Kam Lake, that this Legislative Assembly, by

virtue of section 3 of the Elections Act, recommends to the Commissioner the appointment of Ms. Saundra Arberry as Chief Electoral Officer for the Northwest Territories for a term of two years commencing January 6, 2007;

AND FURTHER, that the Legislative Assembly recommends to the Commissioner that the appointment of Mr. Glen McLean as Chief Electoral Officer be revoked effective January 6, 2007;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Legislative Assembly hereby express its deep appreciation for the service of Mr. McLean to the House and all people of the Northwest Territories.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Motions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

**Motion 15-15(5): Appointments To Standing Committees And The Board Of Management, Carried**

**MR. VILLENEUVE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. WHEREAS there are vacancies on standing committees and the Board of Management due to the appointment of the honourable Member for Nahendeh to the Executive Council;

AND WHEREAS a number of changes to standing committee and Board of Management appointments have been recommended to the Striking Committee;

AND WHEREAS it is desirable to fill these vacancies;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Range Lake, that the Legislative Assembly approves the appointment of the Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger, to the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development, to the Standing Committee on Social Programs as an alternate, to the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures as an alternate, and to the Board of Management as an alternate;

AND FURTHER, that the Legislative Assembly rescinds the appointment of the Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya, as an alternate to the Board of Management and approves his appointment as a full Member of the Board of Management.

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Motions. First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Report of Committee of the Whole. Third

reading of bills. Honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

**ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS**

**Bill 13: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2006-2007**

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that Bill 13, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2006-2007, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 13 has had third reading. Third reading of bills.

Colleagues, before we proceed to assent of bills, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of all Members during the last three weeks. It has been a challenging and difficult session in many ways, and I appreciate that Members have carried out their duties with respect for the roles and decorum of this House.

I know, too, that Members are leaving here today and will continue to work diligently in their constituencies, in their committees, and in their Cabinet responsibilities, until we reconvene in February.

I would like to extend the thanks of this House to the many Pages who have assisted in our work, and to their chaperones, supervisors and teachers.

---Applause

We have had the assistance in this session from 825 Yellowknife Elks, Royal Canadian Air Cadets, students from St. Pat's High School in Yellowknife, and from the Deh Cho, Monfwi and Nunakput districts. Thanks all for their help in the House.

---Applause

Our thanks, as well, goes to Ms. Tonia Grannum, a table officer with the Ontario Legislature, who has provided valuable assistance during this sitting. We hope that you have enjoyed your time with us and we extend a warm invitation to visit us again.

---Applause

November 11<sup>th</sup> is fast approaching and I would ask that you all take time, take the opportunity to acknowledge the courage and sacrifice of those who have served and are continuing to serve in the Canadian Forces, particularly those who are separated from their families during the holiday season.

Lastly, I would like to take this time to wish all Members, staff, and their families, a safe and peaceful holiday season, and my very best wishes for a new year. I look forward to seeing all of you back in this Chamber in February.

Now, Mr. Clerk, would you ascertain if the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable Anthony J. Whitford, is prepared to enter the Chamber to assent to bills.

**COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Hon. Tony Whitford):** Please be seated. Ah, it feels so

nice to sit in this chair again. Good afternoon, mesdames et messieurs, et monsieur le president, monsieur le premier ministre, messieurs et mesdames les deputes, mesdames et messieurs, et amis.

Again it is my privilege and my pleasure to be here among you. Since we last met in June, many things have taken place in our territory, both happy and sad. The people of the Northwest Territories were both honoured and delighted to host their Excellencies, the Right Honourable Michaele Jean, Governor General of Canada, and her husband, Jean-Daniel Lafond, during their first visit to the Northwest Territories in mid-June. Their Excellencies had an opportunity to visit the people of Fort Simpson and Yellowknife. They enjoyed the beauty of the Nahanni National Park and, while here, even caught some fish on Prelude Lake with our Premier. Their Excellencies were pleased to meet with so many different groups of people, allowing them to enhance their knowledge and understanding of northern perspectives on topics of special interest to them, such as aboriginal culture, youth and women's issues. Their visit was a great success and credit must be given to the many people who spent time organizing and preparing for that visit, making it meaningful, interesting and enjoyable for their Excellencies.

Another important visitor that we were pleased to welcome over the summer was our Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Stephen Harper. Prime Minister Harper was also making his first trip to the Northwest Territories. The reception held for him here in the Great Hall of the Legislative Assembly allowed him to talk to many northern residents and to hear first hand their thoughts and their concerns. As well, I understand that he was the recipient of a souvenir hockey stick promoting Deline as the birthplace of ice hockey. As a devoted hockey fan, I am sure that the Prime Minister understood the importance of this not only as an historic event, but also as a passionate issue of the people of Deline.

I have reported to you many times about my goal to visit the communities in the Northwest Territories during my term in office. I can tell you proudly that since we last met I have added the communities of Whati, Detah, Tuktoyaktuk and Fort Good Hope to my visited list. So I'm well on my way to achieving this important and inclusive goal. As well, I have recently revived the Commissioner's Awards for Bravery and for Excellence, and appointed a committee of three to review and to recommend nominees to me for awards. I want to encourage members of the public to put forward nominations of persons they feel should be recognized for their efforts and brave actions.

On a sad note, I would like to extend my deepest sympathies to the families and loved ones of the people that we have lost over the past months. In particular, I want to mention the late Helen Tobie, Ponchit Santos, and the victims of that very tragic airplane crash in the Sahtu. As well, we have had a number of northerners lost to drowning accidents this summer and as recently as this week. To the families of those people, I also extend my sincere condolences.

I have learned this morning that our beloved former Commissioner of the Northwest Territories and now Deputy Commissioner of Nunavut, Mrs. Helen Maksagak, has been admitted to an Edmonton hospital. On behalf of the people of the Northwest Territories, I would like to wish her a speedy and full recovery.

### Assent to Bills

Now, as the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I am pleased to assent to the following bills:

- Bill 6, Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act
- Bill 7, Pharmacy Act
- Bill 8, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2006
- Bill 10, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2006-2007
- Bill 11, Tourism Act
- Bill 12, Garnishment Remedies Statutes Amendment Act
- Bill 13, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2006-2007
- Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2
- Bill 15, Elections and Plebiscites Act
- Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Jury Act
- Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 3
- Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act

Now, as we leave this House to return to our home communities, I wish you a safe and happy travel. As this House will not reconvene until the New Year, may I be the I guess it's the second now to wish you a very Merry Christmas, a peaceful and prosperous New Year, and good health. Thank you. Merci beaucoup. Quanami. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

**MR. SPEAKER:** Now, Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

### ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Mr. Speaker, orders of the day for Wednesday, February 7, 2007, at 1:30 p.m.:

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

- Bill 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
22. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, February 7, 2007, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 17:10.