

Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly News Releases 2005 1

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

YELLOWKNIFE (February 9) - MLA Yellowknife Centre, Robert Hawkins, is seriously concerned with the understaffing issue at the GNWT's Audit Bureau. He feels that the Minister of FMBS, Mr. Floyd Roland, needs to address this problem immediately.

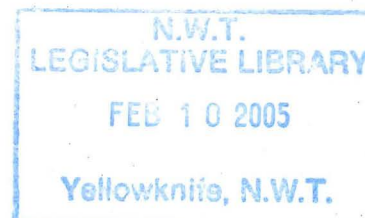
The understaffing in this office is of a great concern to Mr. Hawkins and should be to all residents of the NWT as the function of the audit bureau is to monitor government spending of public funds and ensure this spending is done in the most efficient manner. The fact that this office is not being staffed to full capacity leaves the door open for misspending and mismanagement of public monies. The national headlines have been dominated in recent years with stories involving the mishandling of public money. There have been no events identified to cause immediate concern, but the lack of full staffing in the audit bureau leaves the door open for a possible problem in the monitoring of government spending.

"We have been trusted to monitor and account for the public money, and running this office seriously understaffed does not demonstrate that trust and promise we made to the people," Mr. Hawkins said.

This issue has been ongoing for over five years now and the track record for staffing at the audit bureau has been as low as fifty percent, five years ago. It currently stands in the twenty-five percent range. The over-taxation of the audit bureau's employees and the lack of staff available to fill the positions funded need to be addressed by the minister and corrected. These positions need to be filled in order to safely secure the vital processes provided by the bureau.

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Teaching Grads Left In The Cold

YELLOWKNIFE (February 9) - MLA Robert Hawkins has raised the issue of the GNWT's promise of hiring northern graduates into the teaching field. The promise made by former Premier Stephen Kakfwi has gone unfulfilled and the current government has yet to make serious strides in reaching this goal.

"We've been hearing for a long time, how difficult it is to recruit and keep teachers in the NWT, so it's pretty hard for your average person to understand why education authorities aren't jumping at the chance to hire northern graduates," said Mr. Hawkins.

The member feels that there is a break in the chain somewhere and it needs to be addressed. Either the education graduates from the north need to be aware of the opportunities or the education authorities need to be aware of the pool of resources available.

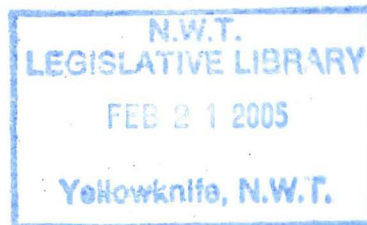
Mr. Hawkins is interested in understanding how these northern trained teachers are not being hired by local education districts, forced to supplement their incomes in other fields. The government needs to examine its promise and either fulfill it or withdraw this false promise, in light of the recent failures in achieving the goal of providing northern graduates with local jobs and northern students with local teachers.

Speaking in the Assembly on February 10, 2005, Mr. Hawkins asked "...will the Premier either withdraw that commitment made by the highest office in this assembly or promise to fulfil that commitment..." in regards to the issue of the hiring of northern teachers.

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For Immediate Release

Cultural Enhancement Commission Members Announced

YELLOWKNIFE (February 18) – The Legislative Assembly today announced the members appointed to the newly formed Cultural Enhancement Commission. The Commission is being established as a result of a 2003 report on Cultural Enhancement of the Legislative Assembly Building and Grounds.

“The Commission members have a very important role to play in advising the Board of Management on making the Legislative Assembly a more representative symbol of the cultures and people of the Northwest Territories,” said Speaker Paul Delorey.

The Commission also has a mandate to promote the connection of the Legislative Assembly to communities across the NWT by selecting and recommending annual themes to focus programs and community exhibits, reviewing and recommending the selection of exhibits when there is a competition for space, and conducting an annual review of the recommendations in the 2003 report to advise the Board of Management of the Legislative Assembly on spending priorities.

The following are the appointed members of the Commission:

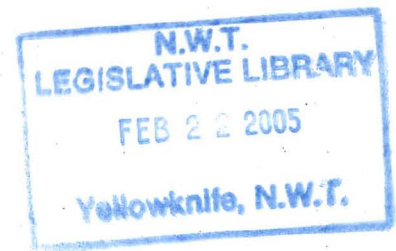
Ms. Annie Felix, Tuktoyaktuk
Ms. Beverly Masuzumi, Fort Good Hope
Ms. Coleen McDonald, Yellowknife
Mr. George Tuccaro, Yellowknife
Mr. Gerald Antoine, Fort Simpson
Mr. Sonny MacDonald, Fort Smith

The Commission will be chaired by Deputy Speaker Jane Groenewegen.

For further information, contact:

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For Immediate Release

Official Languages Commissioner Appointed

YELLOWKNIFE (February 21) – A Motion was adopted in the Legislative Assembly today, recommending the appointment of Ms. Shannon Gullberg as Official Languages Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, for a term of two years.

Ms. Gullberg has been the Acting Official Languages Commissioner since July 9th, 2004. Prior to that appointment, Ms. Gullberg was Legal Counsel for the NWT Languages Commissioner's Office, beginning in 1996.

"The Legislative Assembly is confident that with Ms. Gullberg's knowledge within the Official Languages Commissioner's Office, and her extensive legal background, she will be capable of handling the responsibilities that this position entails," said Paul Delorey, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

The responsibilities of the Languages Commissioner's position have changed since amendments to the *Official Languages Act* were enacted during the 14th Legislative Assembly. Much of the responsibilities for promotion and preservation of official languages in the NWT have been handed over to the Minister Responsible for Official Languages, the Honourable Charles Dent. One of the other significant changes made by the previous Assembly was the establishment of the Official Languages Board and the Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board, each with separate and clear mandates.

The Official Languages Board is comprised of representatives of all Official Language communities. The Board provides the Minister with advice and recommendations on the status of each of the Official Languages and their use in the administration and delivery of services by government institutions.

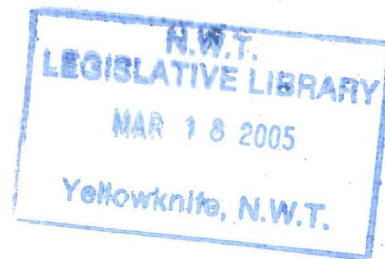
The Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board is comprised of representatives of the Aboriginal Languages communities. It provides the Minister with advice and recommendations on programs and initiatives delivered by communities and government institutions to maintain, promote and revitalize Aboriginal languages.

The Commissioner's remaining responsibility is to receive, investigate and make recommendations on complaints made under the *Official Languages Act*. They are also responsible for preparing and submitting an annual report to the Legislative Assembly, related to the conduct of the Office of the Languages Commissioner and the execution of duties under the Act.

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Press Release

Yellowknife, NWT, March 10, 2005

Four years after panel recommendation:

Braden Pleased with Assembly call for Auditor General review of WCB operations.

Yellowknife NT (March 10, 2005) -- Too many injured workers aren't getting properly treated by the Workers' Compensation Board, and it's time the NWT Government had an independent review of WCB's claims operations, says Yellowknife MLA Bill Braden.

A motion presented by Braden and passed today in the NWT Legislature requests the Auditor General to conduct a comprehensive performance review of WCB's claims administration system and report to the Legislative Assembly.

Braden says workers with up to 17 years history with the WCB's claims implementation service have told him their stories.

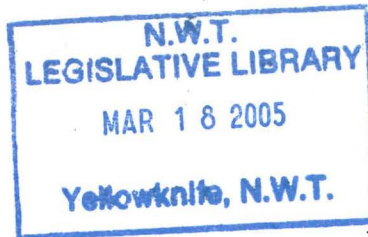
"Their issues range from appeal decisions that aren't acted on promptly or properly, to rejection of medical reports, to a long standing adversarial attitude that puts the health of the multi-million dollar insurance fund ahead of the health of the worker," says Braden, who represents the Great Slave riding.

The call for such a review was first made more than four years ago. Then, a seven-person panel toured both Nunavut and NWT (which share the Board's administration and governance) to prepare for a legislative review of the WCB. Operational issues were not in the panel's mandate, but its highest priority recommendation was for an immediate, independent operational review.

The Panel's report called **Act Now** says the workers' compensation system has become an adversarial one between stakeholders and the WCB.

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For Immediate Release

2nd Annual Circle Of Northern Leaders' Meeting

YELLOWKNIFE (March 18, 2005) - The 2nd Annual Circle of Northern Leaders' Meeting has been scheduled for April 18th to 20th, 2005 in Inuvik.

Along with the 19 Members of the Legislative Assembly, leaders of NWT Aboriginal and community governments and representatives of the Government of Canada will gather in Inuvik on April 18-20, 2005 to focus on the development of a Northern Strategy.

The meeting will be attended by the Honourable Andy Scott, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Minister of State for Northern Development. Invitations have been extended to the opposition critics for Aboriginal and Northern Affairs in the Parliament of Canada.

"This gathering of northern leaders is essential for the positive growth and development of the Northwest Territories," said Norman Yakeleya, Caucus Chair. "By opening this gathering to representatives of the federal government, we are indicating our support for and participation in the development of a Northern Strategy."

On December 14, 2004, Prime Minister Paul Martin and Premiers Handley (NWT), Okalik (Nunavut) and Fentie (Yukon) announced that their governments would be jointly developing the first-ever comprehensive strategy for the North, in cooperation with Aboriginal governments, organizations and Northern residents. The Circle of Northern leaders will provide elected leaders from across the NWT an opportunity to sit around the same table to share ideas and opportunities towards the development of the Strategy.

The 1st Annual Circle of Northern Leaders' Meeting was held on the Hay River Reserve in April 2004. At that meeting, leaders identified the need for a collective northern vision and a unified agenda for action. It was agreed that a similar meeting of leaders take place annually.

"We are hopeful that the momentum from last year's meeting will continue this year," said, Charles Dent, Government House Leader. "We are committed to creating a Northern Strategy that reflects the common and unique interests of all Northerners."

This year's meeting will be chaired by the Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and Chief Richard Nerysoo of the Nihtat Gwich'in Council.

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Press Release, Yellowknife, Friday, 13 May 2005

Bill Braden, MLA Great Slave, hosts constituency meeting to discuss Landlord /Tenant Legislation

Monday May 16 at 7:00pm, Legislative Assembly Building, Yellowknife

Since 2002, Bill Braden, MLA Great Slave has pressed the Minister of Justice for a review of the *Residential Tenancies Act*, the legislation which provides the rules for landlords and tenants in rental accommodation.

In Yellowknife, according to the 2000 Housing Needs Survey, there were close to 3,000 rental and 3000 owned households. More than half the residents in the NWT are affected by the *Residential Tenancies Act*.

With the superheated economy of Yellowknife and the NWT, housing demand and operating costs have jumped over the past few years, making it costly for both tenants and landlords. Scarcity of affordable land in the City has further compounded the problems of availability and affordability of housing.

In March 2003, Braden tabled an affordable housing petition with more than 500 signatures. Affordable housing continues to be a major issue today for NWT residents. It has a significant impact on businesses hiring and retaining employees and on the development of healthy NWT families who can make responsible choices for their futures and that of their children.

The CMHC Yellowknife Housing Market Outlook projects a modest tightening of the rental market by the fall of 2005. Apartment vacancies are projected to decline to 2.5% this fall compared with the 3% level recorded in October 2004. Rents of all unit types are projected to increase by 2.5% this year.

Both tenants and landlords have expressed interest in revising the *Residential Tenancies Act*. Issues such as the frequency and notice of rental increases, payment of rent, termination of tenancy, and the resolution of disputes are issues of importance to both tenants and landlords. The present Act provides exemptions for public housing from certain sections of the Act. Are these still appropriate? There are many issues to consider.

Justice Minister Brendan Bell, will join MLA Braden in a Great Slave constituency meeting on **Monday, May 16 at 7:00pm at the Legislative Assembly.**

Bill Braden
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05-07



For Immediate Release

Henry Zoe resigns as MLA for North Slave

YELLOWKNIFE (May 30) – Mr. Henry Zoe today resigned from his position as a Member of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories for the North Slave constituency. Mr. Zoe cited a need for personal reflection and revitalization in his life as the reason for stepping down.

Mr. Zoe rose in the House earlier today, under a point of personal privilege, to officially declare his decision to resign. The seat becomes vacant with Mr. Zoe's verbal resignation in the House. The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Paul Delorey, will transmit a letter to the Commissioner of the NWT informing him of the vacancy. Once the Commissioner has been informed of the vacancy, he will give instructions to the Chief Electoral Officer to conduct a by-election.

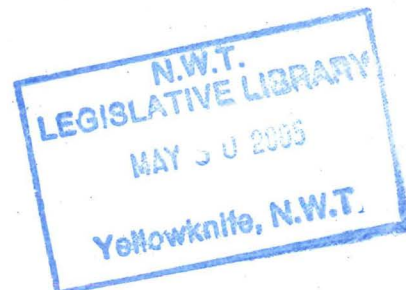
In his instructions to the Chief Electoral Officer, the Commissioner will fix the date for the issue of the writ of election and the date of the by-election, which must be at least 28 days after the issue of the writ.

For further information, contact:

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Chief Electoral Officer
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Northwest
Territories Legislative Assembly
Member for Kam Lake

Press Release

MLA Dave Ramsay suggests NWT exemption from the Goods and Services Tax

Yellowknife (June 2, 2005) - Mr. Dave Ramsay, MLA for Kam Lake, has brought forward a suggestion in the Legislative Assembly of the NWT that the Northwest Territories should be exempt from paying the federal Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Mr. Ramsay stated that of the \$37 billion the federal government collects from the GST across Canada, 0.002% is paid by the Northwest Territories. That amounts to approximately \$60 million, money that would be more beneficial staying in our own economy, Mr. Ramsay stated.

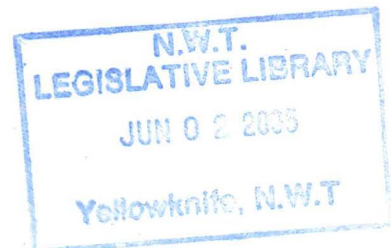
“The Northwest Territories, along with the rest of Northern Canada, is a very expensive place to live,” said Mr. Ramsay. “Any Northern Strategy has to address the issue of cost of living. We also have to find a way to give northern Canadians a break, and to gain a competitive edge to attract and retain a skilled workforce.”

Mr. Ramsay suggested that the Northwest Territories should consider joining forces with both Nunavut and the Yukon Territory, who may also wish to seek exemption from the GST.

“If the federal government’s intention is to have three strong northern territories,” Mr. Ramsay said, “a very good start would be to exempt the three territories from paying the GST.”

For further information, contact:

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Press Release

Petition demands Child Treatment Programs stay in Yellowknife

Yellowknife NT (June 20, 2005) -- Staff at the Territorial Treatment Centre today launched a petition demanding the NWT Government keep a residential treatment program going in Yellowknife.

The action is supported by the YWCA, Yellowknife school boards, MLAs and medical professionals. It is a protest to the Department of Health and Social Services' surprise decision last month to move the 8-bed facility to a yet-to-be renovated jail in Hay River.

The 17 workers are employees of Bosco Homes, an Alberta-based contractor specializing in programming and services for youth with behavioral and mental disabilities.

Spokesperson for the workers, Jim Kipling, said many have years of service with the TTC, and have helped it grow into a solid community-based service.

"We're not the only ones affected," said Mr. Kipling. "We're very anxious for the children, and their families, who don't have alternatives." Half the referrals to the facility come from Yellowknife, and more are from communities to the North. The move to Hay River would add more distance and expense for those families, and hamper the delivery of specialized treatments and support.

The TTC was started in 1988 to house and treat children ages 8 to 14 who present the most hard-to-manage cases of behavior and emotional disturbance.

"We have developed a strong network of support and cooperation with staff at the schools, YWCA and Stanton hospital," said Mr. Kipling. "It has taken years to build this. It just can't be transferred like some government department."

The petition is available for signing with various TTC Staff, the Yellowknife Catholic School Board Office and Yellowknife Education District #1 Board Office. It will be presented to Health Minister Michael Miltenberger and MLAs promise continuing debate of the issue in the fall session of the Legislative Assembly.

For More Information:

Jim Kipling: Spokesperson, TTC employees- 444-2415

Yellowknife School District #1: Supt. Ken Dropko-766-5050

Yellowknife Catholic Schools: Supt. Kern Von Hagen-766-7408

YK MLAs: **Robert Hawkins**, 669-2265 - **Sandy Lee**, 669-2290- **Dave Ramsay**, 669-2295 and **Bill Braden**, 669-2276

05-10



Petition

Children's Treatment Programs for Yellowknife

Whereas:

- The Territorial Treatment Centre (TTC) has been providing intensive residential treatment services to children aged 8 to 14 suffering from severe behavioural disturbances and/or mental disorders since 1988, and
- The GNWT has decided, without proper consultation or consideration of the consequences, to move the TTC from Yellowknife to Hay River by 2007, and
- There is a highly recognized need within our community for children's services (40% of TTC residents are from Yellowknife), and
- Other community services (YWCA, schools, community counselling services) will be adversely effected by the loss of services provided by the TTC;

Therefore we the undersigned petition the GNWT:

**TO CONTINUE YELLOWKNIFE-BASED RESIDENTIAL
TREATMENT PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN.**

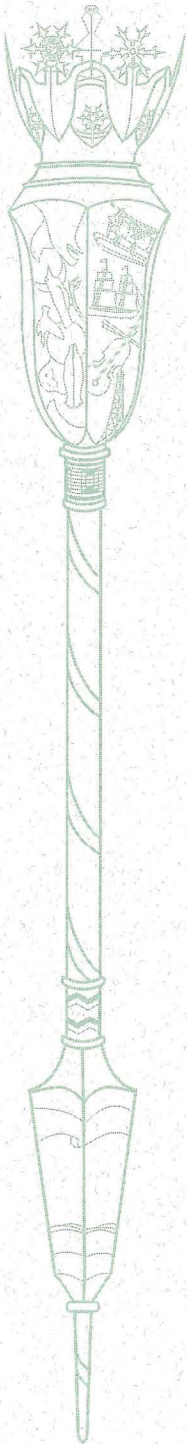
Name

Address

Signature

This petition will be tabled in the NWT Legislative Assembly in October 2005





For Immediate Release

**Appointments to the Independent Commission
to Review Members' Compensation and Benefits**

Yellowknife (July 12th) – The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly has appointed three individuals to the Independent Commission to Review Members' Compensation and Benefits.

Mr. Jake Ootes has been appointed Chair of the Commission tasked with assessing and reviewing the indemnities, allowances, expenses and benefits provided to Members.

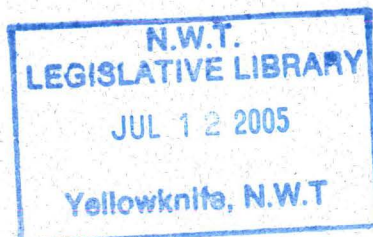
The establishment of this Commission addresses a legislated requirement of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* for a review within two years after a general election. The Commission will be seeking public input and soliciting Members' submissions in the preparation of its report to the Speaker.

"Each of the individuals appointed to this Commission are very well suited to undertake this review," said Mr. Delorey. "We look forward to reviewing their report and recommendations in about six months time."

The Independent Commission is made up of three individuals and also includes Mr. Sean Whelly of Fort Simpson and Mr. John Simpson of Yellowknife. Within six months of the establishment of the Commission, a report must be delivered to the Speaker that sets out recommendations for changes it determines should be made to the indemnities, reimbursement of expenditures, and all other benefits of Members.

For further information, contact:

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*Independent Commission
to Review Members' Compensation and Benefits*

JAKE OOTES (CHAIR) ◁ SEAN WHELLEY ◁ JOHN SIMPSON

Press Release
For Immediate Release

Yellowknife (July 22, 2005) – The first meeting of the Independent Commission to Review Members' Compensation and Benefits was held on Monday, July 18. Members of the Commission in attendance were Commission Chair, Mr. Jake Ootes and Commissioners Mr. Sean Whelley of Ft. Simpson and Mr. John Simpson of Yellowknife.

It is the Commission's wish to receive and encourage a wide range of public opinion and input. This will be done by establishing and encouraging the use of a website and/or online reference center. Traditional means of communications will also be encouraged.

"In order to enable the public to fully participate in this process we want them to have access to substantive information on the subject," said Commission Chair Ootes. Consultations are slated to commence in September.

The Commission reviewed the Terms of Reference set out by the Legislative Assembly and has drafted its own work plan for conducting research and consultation, leading to the drafting and delivery of a report to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in six months time.

The Commission also reinforced that, although appointed by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, they are an independent body mandated to review and make recommendations respecting the indemnities, expenditures, allowances, and all other benefits available to Members.

The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled in early August 2005 in Yellowknife.

A web address and further contact information will be available shortly.

Jake Ootes
Commission Chair
867-444-7272 (Cell)



For Immediate Release

New Member and Constituency Name for Former North Slave Riding

Yellowknife (August 11) – Mr. Jackson Lafferty was sworn in today as the newest Member of the 15th Legislative Assembly, by NWT Commissioner, Mr. Anthony Whitford. Mr. Lafferty is the MLA for the riding of Monfwi, the new name for the riding of North Slave. Mr. Lafferty was elected to the 15th Legislative Assembly in a by-election on July 18, 2005.

The Monfwi name for the riding came into effect on August 4, 2005, to coincide with the day the Tlicho Land Claim and Self-Government Agreement was implemented.

Prior to his election, Mr. Lafferty worked as a Superintendent of Participation Agreements with Diavik Diamond Mines Inc. He was also a Community Development and Empowerment Coordinator for the GNWT, Administrator for the Rae-Edzo School Society, Assistant Manager for the Rae-Edzo Dene Band Development Corporation, and Community Liaison for Diavik Diamond Mines Inc.

Mr. Lafferty has served on various boards and agencies including the Board of Governors for Aurora College, the Board of Directors for the Metis Dene Development Fund, Chairperson of the Dogrib Community Services Board, Chairperson of the Dogrib Post-Secondary Scholarship Fund and Band Councilor for the Dogrib Rae Band.

For more information, please contact:

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For Immediate Release

Standing Committee Completes First Pre-Budget Community Consultations

YELLOWKNIFE (September 7) – The 15th Legislative Assembly’s Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight has just completed the first pre-budget consultations conducted in the Northwest Territories. Committee members traveled to nine different communities to hear community leaders’ and residents’ thoughts on spending priorities for the upcoming 2006/2007 territorial government budget.

“As a Committee, we want to be able to give the government definitive direction from a community perspective on their budget planning and development for the next fiscal year,” said Mr. Kevin Menicoche, MLA for Nahendeh and Committee Chair.

“Our limited time and resources meant we were only able to visit a cross-section of NWT communities, but we hope to repeat this exercise annually, as we seek advice and input on government spending to better reflect residents’ priorities” said Mr. Robert Hawkins, MLA for Yellowknife Centre and Deputy Chair of the Committee.

The Committee Members split into two groups and visited Inuvik, Paulatuk, Fort Good Hope, Whati, Fort Simpson, Trout Lake, Hay River and Lutsel K’e, in addition to Yellowknife. Over 100 leaders and residents spoke to the Committee over the course of the consultations and a number of themes emerged.

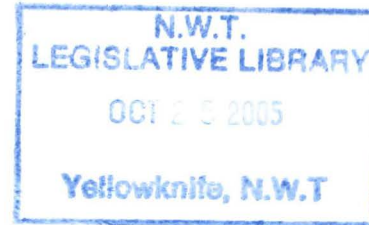
“We will meet as a Committee to talk about what we heard, and we will engage the government in some serious discussions about addressing community and territorial concerns as budget meetings with Ministers get underway later this month,” said Mr. Menicoche.

In addition, the Committee will provide a comprehensive report to the Legislative Assembly when the House reconvenes in mid-October.

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PRESS RELEASE

“Mr. Sahtu” is a one man machine seeking healing for survivors of residential schools

YELLOWKNIFE (October 21) - Norman Yakeleya, MLA for the Sahtu, received the full support of the Legislative Assembly on Thursday to have the GNWT recognize May 26th each year as the National Day of Healing and Reconciliation.

The Legislative Assembly is now the first legislature in Canada to join in this movement, which was started by the Nechi Institute in Edmonton under the leadership of Dr. Maggie Hodgson.

There was a warm and emotional discussion in the Assembly on Mr. Yakeleya's motion to have the day recognized by the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Yakeleya said, "The discussion by my colleagues was totally in support of my motion to recognize the day. Many of the people who spoke in favour of the motion are, like me, survivors of the residential school system."

In recognition of Mr. Yakeleya's dedication to his work, one member had a slip of the tongue and called Norman "Mr. Sahtu". Another followed up on that and suggested "Captain Sahtu" would be a good name for this MLA whose career before becoming an MLA, and to a large degree since, has been dedicated to healing.

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation, the Nechi Institute, Native Counselling Services of Alberta, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops and other Catholic Church affiliated groups have all joined together to promote the National Day of Healing and Reconciliation with the intention to educate Canadians about the need for healing. A dialogue leading to a shared understanding of the dark chapters in Canadian history, the residential schools, internment of citizens of various ancestry during wartime, and much more, is important.

Dr. Hodgson was pleased that this movement is gaining momentum. She said, "The NWT Legislative Assembly is in the lead once again. They were the first legislature in Canada to take the lead on what has become Addictions Awareness Week and now this. Norman deserves a big kiss for taking a leadership role on this."

Speaking about survivors Mr. Yakeleya stated in the Assembly, "...we are fighters, we are survivors. We take the bumps and grinds of life and we get back up and go at it again." Now for one day each year all NWT residents can, with a positive outlook, focus on this important issue.

There were over 10,000 students in total who attended the 23 residential schools in the NWT over a period of more than 130 years.

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For Immediate Release

Recommendations for Appointment of the Electoral Boundaries Commission

YELLOWKNIFE (October 24th) – A Motion was adopted in the Legislative Assembly today, recommending the appointment of three individuals to the 2005 Electoral Boundaries Commission.

The Honorable Justice John Z. Vertes has been recommended for appointment as the Chair of the Commission. Mr. Eddie Erasmus of Behchoko and Mr. Rod O'Brien of Hay River have also been recommended for appointment.

Once appointed by the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the Commission will be tasked with preparing a report that contains recommendations respecting the area, boundaries, and the name and representation of the electoral districts, for the 2007 general election.

The establishment of this Commission is a requirement of the *Electoral Boundaries Commission Act*. The Act stipulates that a Commission must be established within two years after the return of writs for the 2003 general election. The Commission will hold public hearings throughout the Northwest Territories, and will provide public information about the values and principles that underlie the determination of electoral boundaries and the process that leads to that determination.

"I am pleased with the recommended appointments and confident these individuals will provide us with a quality report," said the Honorable Paul Delorey, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. "We look forward to reviewing the important work of the Commission."

Within six months of the establishment of the Commission, a report setting out their recommendations must be delivered to the Speaker and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

For further information, contact:

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For Immediate Release

Recommended Appointment of Conflict of Interest Commissioner

YELLOWKNIFE (October 24) – A Motion was adopted in the Legislative Assembly today, recommending the appointment of Mr. Gerald Gerrand as Conflict of Interest Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, for a term of four years.

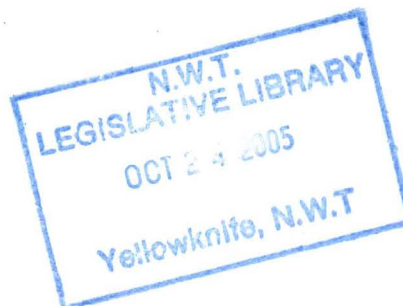
As an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly, the Commissioner reports to the Legislative Assembly and is responsible for being available for, and providing advice to, Members of the Legislative Assembly, on their obligations under the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act*. The Commissioner also prepares a public disclosure registry and makes it available for examination by the public; investigates and reports upon any complaints filed under the Act; and prepares an annual report to the Legislative Assembly on his or her activities over the previous year.

“Mr Gerrand comes highly recommended to the Legislative Assembly, said the Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. “I am confident that with his considerable legal background, knowledge, and experience in this area, Mr. Gerrand is quite capable of handling the responsibilities that this position entails.”

Mr. Gerrand is the Conflict of Interest Commissioner for the Province of Saskatchewan. He previously served on the Advisory Committee for the appointment of Federal Justices for the Province of Saskatchewan, and is a member of the Canadian Bar Association.

For further information, contact:

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GERALD LORNE GERRAND

Born 1931 at Melville, Saskatchewan

Graduated Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Law from the University of Saskatchewan, 1954

Admitted to the Bar, 1955

Appointed Queen's Counsel, 1971

Bencher of the Law Society of Saskatchewan, 1979 to 1983

President of the Law Society of Saskatchewan, 1981

Senior Counsel with the law firm of Gerrand Rath Johnson, #700 – 1914 Hamilton Street, Regina, Saskatchewan

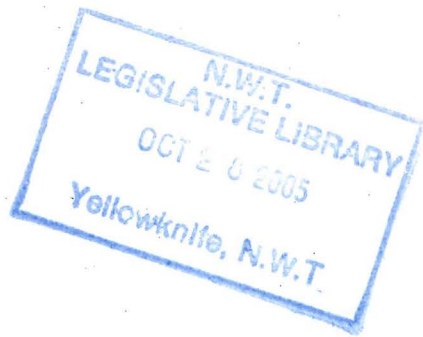
Member of the Law Society of Saskatchewan and The Canadian Bar Association

Elected a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers Association, 1982

Served as lecturer at the Bar Admission Course of the Law Society of Saskatchewan on "The Conduct of a Queen's Bench Trial"

Served on the Advisory Committee for the appointment of Federal Justices for the Province of Saskatchewan from 1992 to 1996, serving as Committee Chairman for the final three years of his appointment.

Appointed Conflict of Interest Commissioner for the Province of Saskatchewan in the spring of 2000 and reappointed to this position by the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan in April, 2005.



News Release

**Sandy Lee is pleased that the government will do more
to improve the Day Care program**

YELLOWKNIFE (October 28) – Sandy Lee, MLA for Range Lake, is pleased that after intense questioning in the Legislative Assembly, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, the Honourable Charles Dent, agreed to do more to improve day care programs for all of the NWT.

“For me, the debate about the latest day care closure in Ft. Smith has always been about one issue, improving the day care programs for the children and parents across the North, especially for those who are single parents or going to school,” said Ms. Lee. “Throughout the pre-budget tour in August, the NWT residents talked to us about the need for adequate resource and support for day care facilities and programs”.

In 1990, the GNWT received near failing grades on the Child Care Report Card from the Status of Women Council of the Northwest Territories. Except for the increase in subsidies in 2002, there has been very little improvement to the program. “We have witnessed many day cares close their doors in Inuvik, Yellowknife, Ft. Simpson, Hay River, and now in Ft. Smith, and we know from our recent visit that the day care centre in Lutselk’e is struggling”.

Minister Dent stated in the House on Thursday October 27th that he has directed that the funding cap on contracts be removed so as to make sure that day cares do not have to worry about exceeding a cap on their funding based on attendance. He further stated that he would look at other areas to make sure that we are properly supporting parents and children across the North. Ms. Lee says, “There are many more areas of the program that need an improvement, such as the need for more funding for start up costs, and for subsidy rates so that day care works are paid a competitive wage”. Ms. Lee also adds, “The government also needs to review the operating funding formula that punishes day care centres when the children are absent for whatever reason”.

As the Chair of the Social Programs Committee to which the Minister will bring the program changes for review, Ms. Lee looks forward to building on the Minister’s public commitment in the House to make sure he follows through on his promise. “I am hoping that the changes the Minister is proposing will help a day care centre like the one that is struggling in Lutselk’e as we speak, and many others like it in the NWT,” said Ms. Lee. “This will help them to not only survive but to prosper so that all of our children who need them can have a place to be taken care of in their parents’ absence”.

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News Release

Robert Hawkins Opposes Worker's Compensation Board Rezoning Application

YELLOWKNIFE (November 10) – Robert Hawkins, MLA for Yellowknife Centre, has conveyed to the City of Yellowknife his opposition to the Workers' Compensation Board's (WCB) rezoning application. He believes that it is of paramount importance that the Workers' Compensation Board's headquarters remain in the heart of the city of Yellowknife.

The WCB has submitted a rezoning application to the City of Yellowknife to relocate their office to a stand-alone building in the Range Lake area of Yellowknife. Mr. Hawkins does not oppose the WCB's need for their own building, but wonders why they are relocating out of the downtown core of the city.

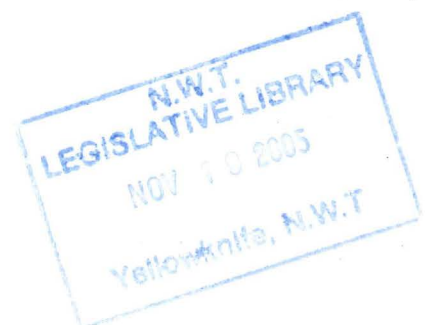
"I believe that if the WCB is allowed to build outside the city's core, it will contribute to the continued diminishment of the viability of our downtown," said Mr. Hawkins. "I believe that adequate space exists in government buildings downtown, or other buildings or other lots downtown, that could be utilized immediately."

Efforts to maintain the downtown core have become increasingly prevalent in recent years both in Yellowknife and across the country. Mr. Hawkins feels that a glorious opportunity currently exists for the city to make a positive move in that direction, and also lend a hand to the small community owned businesses that exist in this sector.

"We must continue to improve downtown enhancement as stated in the City of Yellowknife's goals," said Mr. Hawkins. "Re-zoning will do nothing but hamper this attempt and further set the City of Yellowknife back."

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For Immediate Release

ENERGY CONSERVATION INITIATIVES AT THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

YELLOWKNIFE (December 12) – The Legislative Assembly has initiated several energy conservation initiatives to aid in the reduction of energy costs and consumption. These efforts are in support of the Government of the Northwest Territories *Energy Conservation Action Plan*.

The Legislative Assembly will be extinguishing the building exterior dome lights from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. when the building is unoccupied. The Christmas Lights schedule has also been reduced to six hours per day.

The scheduled replacement of one of the Assembly's vehicles in 2006/2007 will include the purchase of a gas/electric hybrid vehicle.

One of the proposed initiatives is to lower the temperature set point to energize the reserved parking space plugs at the Assembly to minus 15 degrees Celsius. The plugs will only be on full time once the temperature sits at or below -30°C .

“The Members of the Legislative Assembly recognize that residents of the Northwest Territories face many challenges in dealing with high energy costs,” said the Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. “The Legislative Assembly is taking a proactive approach to supporting the government's *Action Plan* and to demonstrate our readiness to continue to reduce energy consumption.”

The announced initiatives are in addition to several conservation measures that have been ongoing for many years, including heating, ventilation and air conditioning scheduling, heating fuel consumption optimization, and light fixture conversions. The Legislative Assembly will continue to explore options for further reduction of energy consumption in current and future projects and initiatives.

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