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News Release

News Release

Review of the *Child and Family Services Act* Underway

(Yellowknife, NT) January 11, 2010 – The Standing Committee on Social Programs has begun its review of the *Child and Family Services Act* as defined by the Terms of Reference (copy attached) adopted by the Legislative Assembly on October 22, 2009. A Report is expected to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly during the fall 2010 session.

“The Northwest Territories must ensure that child protection legislation keeps pace with our constantly evolving society,” says Mr. Tom Beaulieu, Chair of the Standing Committee. “We in the North are only too aware that the well-being of our children is vital for a strong and vibrant future.”

The Committee appreciates the ongoing cooperation of the Department of Health and Social Services in the conduct of the review and recognizes this collaborative approach as an opportunity to work within the consensus government framework for the benefit of children and families of the Northwest Territories.

The review will consist of several components including an examination of child protection legislation in other jurisdictions. The Committee will coordinate several contractor-facilitated meetings and interviews which will take place in January and February 2010 with various stakeholder groups and will include parents and youth who receive child and family services. The Committee will be releasing a public discussion paper in newspapers throughout the NWT in late January 2010. The discussion paper will include information on the current *Act*, the review process, the opportunities that will be available for the public to participate, a schedule of the community meetings that will take place throughout the Northwest Territories in April 2010, and suggested discussion questions to promote public dialogue on this important issue. The public can expect a press conference announcing the release of the discussion paper in January.

“The Committee is eager to hear from as many individuals and organizations as possible on this important issue. We are committed to working with stakeholders, clients of the child protection system, the public and the Department of Health and Social Services in order to undertake a thorough and responsive review of the *Act*,” says Mr. Glen Abernethy, Deputy Chair of the Committee. In addition to the scheduled public meetings in April 2010, the Committee would be pleased to receive written or emailed submissions at any time.

The Terms of Reference can be found on the Assembly website at www.assembly.gov.nt.ca on the Home Page.

For more information or to inquire about making a written submission, please contact:

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Media Release

Canada's Northern House is officially open *Canada's territories play host to visitors for the 2010 Winter Games*

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (January 14, 2010)

Canada's Northern House opened its doors today in downtown Vancouver. A key feature of the plan to promote the three Northern territories at the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games, it will be the source for information about living, visiting and investing in the territories and a showcase for Northern arts and culture.

The premiers of Nunavut, the Northwest Territories and Yukon are celebrating today's official opening with an open invitation for all Canadians to visit the North on 602 West Hastings Street throughout the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games and into April 2010.

"Canada's Northern House is a beautiful venue that gives us an opportunity to showcase Canada's North to the world," said Nunavut Premier Eva Aariak. "All of our top performers will be there to bring our stories, unique culture and traditional games to people attending the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games."

"The North is rich in potential and opportunities for tourists, investors and new residents," said Northwest Territories Premier Floyd Roland. "We want to share that story with the world and Canada's Northern House is ideally situated to be the destination for anybody who wants to discover what the North has to offer."

Canada's Northern House has a media room, stage and simulated northern lights shining from the windows. A large inuksuk built by former Nunavut Commissioner Peter Irniq meets visitors at the entrance. Inside they will find information on living, visiting and investing in Canada's North.

"Yukon's participation in Canada's Northern House at the upcoming 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games is an extraordinary opportunity," said Yukon Premier Dennis Fentie. "This venue will allow Yukon and its pan-Northern partners to highlight Northern Canadian lifestyles, culture, travel, business and investment opportunities."

Canada's Northern House will feature and sell Northern arts and crafts to the public. There will be film, investment and tourism events held at the venue. The territories will also have





special entertainment during their Northern day celebrations on the weekend of February 19 to 21, 2010.

The governments of the three territories were represented at today's opening event in Vancouver by the Hon. Peter Taptuna, Nunavut Minister of Economic Development & Transportation and Deputy Premier, the Hon. Bob McLeod, NWT Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment and the Hon. Elaine Taylor, Yukon Minister of Tourism and Culture and Deputy Premier.

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Communiqué

Ouverture officielle de la Maison du Nord canadien *Les territoires du Canada accueillent les visiteurs à l'occasion des Jeux olympiques d'hiver de 2010*

VANCOUVER Colombie-Britannique (le 14 janvier 2010)

La Maison du Nord canadien a officiellement ouvert ses portes aujourd'hui au centre-ville de Vancouver. Ce lieu privilégié servira à promouvoir les trois territoires nordiques lors des Jeux olympiques d'hiver de 2010 à Vancouver en diffusant de l'information au sujet de la vie, des activités touristiques et des possibilités d'investissement dans les territoires. La Maison du Nord canadien servira également de vitrine pour les arts et la culture nordiques.

Les premiers ministres du Nunavut, des Territoires du Nord-Ouest et du Yukon célèbrent aujourd'hui l'ouverture officielle de la Maison du Nord canadien en invitant tous les Canadiens à découvrir le Nord en se rendant au 602 de la rue Hasting Ouest pendant toute la durée des Jeux olympiques et paralympiques d'hiver de 2010 à Vancouver et par la suite jusqu'au mois d'avril 2010.

« La Maison du Nord canadien est un lieu magnifique qui nous permet de présenter le Nord canadien à l'ensemble du monde, » a déclaré la première ministre du Nunavut, Eva Aariak. « Nos meilleurs artistes et athlètes seront présents pour partager nos récits, notre culture unique et nos jeux traditionnels avec les visiteurs venus participer aux Jeux olympiques et paralympiques de 2010 à Vancouver. »

« Le Nord offre un riche potentiel et de nombreuses possibilités aux touristes, aux investisseurs et aux nouveaux résidents, » a souligné le premier ministre des Territoires du Nord-Ouest, Floyd Roland. « Nous voulons partager notre histoire avec les gens du monde entier, et la Maison du Nord canadien est située à un endroit idéal pour accueillir toutes les personnes qui souhaitent découvrir les nombreuses facettes du Nord. »

La Maison du Nord canadien comprend une salle pour les médias, une scène et une simulation d'aurore boréale diffusant de la lumière scintillante à travers les fenêtres. Un imposant inuksuk, construit par l'ancien commissaire du Nunavut Peter Irniq, accueille les visiteurs qui pourront trouver à la Maison du Nord canadien de l'information au sujet de la vie, des activités touristiques et des possibilités d'investissement dans le Nord du Canada.





« La participation du Yukon aux activités de la Maison du Nord canadien dans le cadre des Jeux olympiques et paralympiques d'hiver de 2010 constitue une occasion sans pareil. » a indiqué le premier ministre du Yukon Dennis Fentie. « Cela permet au Yukon et à ses partenaires du Nord de mettre en valeur les modes de vie et la culture des résidents du Nord tout en faisant la promotion du tourisme, des occasions d'affaires et des possibilités d'investissement. »

Les visiteurs pourront profiter de leur passage à la Maison du Nord canadien pour admirer des œuvres d'art et d'artisanat qui seront également offertes en vente. Les activités de la Maison du Nord canadien comprennent des projections de films ainsi que des événements visant à promouvoir le tourisme et les possibilités d'investissement. Les territoires offriront également des spectacles hauts en couleur à l'occasion des journées consacrées au Nord qui auront lieu la fin de semaine du 19 au 21 février 2010.

Les gouvernements des trois territoires étaient représentés lors de l'ouverture officielle de la Maison du Nord canadien par l'honorable Peter Taptuna, vice-premier ministre et ministre du Développement économique et des Transports du Nunavut, l'honorable Bob McLeod ministre de l'Industrie, du Tourisme et de l'Investissement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest et par l'honorable Elaine Taylor, vice-première ministre et ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture du Yukon.

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New Member Appointed to the Independent Commission to Review Members' Compensation and Benefits

(Yellowknife, NT) February 9, 2010 – The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, has appointed a new member to the Independent Commission to Review Members' Compensation and Benefits.

Garth Malakoe of Yellowknife was appointed Chair of the Commission in September 2009, but has since been appointed as a Judge of the Territorial Court and has resigned from the Commission. The Speaker has appointed Mr. Edward W. Gullberg to fill the vacancy.

Mr. Gullberg was called to the bar in 1987 and has since practiced law in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Mr. Gullberg's areas of experience include: real estate transactions, incorporations, foreclosures, municipal issues, and acquisitions and sales of businesses. "Mr. Gullberg brings a lot of expertise to the table and the Commission is fortunate to have him as a member," says Speaker Delorey. "The Commission was to deliver a report to the House in March 2010, but since this resignation, the deadline for that report has been extended to May 5, 2010."

Mr. Gullberg joins the other two Commission members, Mr. Leon Lafferty of Behchokò and Marion Berls of Fort Smith.

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News Release News Release

Elders Parliament

(Yellowknife) February 12, 2010 – The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Paul Delorey, is pleased to announce a new program designed for all elders across the Northwest Territories.

“Elders Parliament is an outreach program designed to allow any NWT residents over the age of 50 to voice concerns on issues that affect them and also to showcase our unique form of consensus government here in the NWT,” says Speaker Delorey.

One elder will be chosen from each of the 19 constituencies in the Northwest Territories through an application process. The participants will convene in Yellowknife where they will get a chance to meet with their MLA and will be tasked with creating a Member’s or Minister’s statement. They will also have one day in the Legislative Assembly Chamber where they will conduct a “mock parliament”. Social activities will also be organized.

“This program gives all elders across the territory an opportunity to gain hands on knowledge about what an MLA does and a better understanding of what happens behind the scenes of the Legislative Assembly. It will also give MLAs a chance to hear the views and concerns of elders in the NWT,” says Speaker Delorey.

Elders Parliament is another positive outreach effort by the Speaker’s Office in keeping with the Legislative Assembly Building’s dedication which reads, “This Legislative Assembly building is dedicated to the people of the north, to the wisdom of their elders and to the vision of their children.”

Elders Parliament has been built on the success of the Legislative Assembly’s Youth Parliament program which has been offered for the past ten years. Elders Parliament and Youth Parliament will be held on alternating years with the first Elders Parliament being held May 2 – 7, 2010.

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MLA Yellowknife Centre Congratulates YACC's on Completion of Dementia Facility

(Yellowknife, NT) February 18, 2010 – Robert Hawkins, MLA Yellowknife Centre would like to congratulate the Yellowknife Association of Concerned Citizens for Seniors (YACC's) for the completion of the Aven Cottages Territorial Dementia Facility.

“I would like to personally acknowledge the hard work and dedication by the YACC's board, both current and past members. The vision and dedication brought forward by this board has been nothing short of amazing. From everything I've seen, this board relentlessly strives to offer the best services and modern care for seniors in many capacities. With the addition of the Territorial Dementia Facility, it will clearly raise the standard and quality of care for many seniors when they need it most,” says Mr. Hawkins.

“I would also like to acknowledge the remarkable partnership and efforts provided by Diavik Diamond Mine Inc. and Nahanni Construction. Without their excellent work and dedication, this project would still be a dream for many years to come. As well, there have been many supporting team members behind the scenes at the Department of Health & Social Services, their roles have been critical throughout this process,” Mr. Hawkins says.

“As a Yellowknife MLA, I have been proud to support this project since its inception and I understand the profound positive effect this will have on the quality of life for many people and their families who struggle with dementia and Alzheimer's disease,” says Mr. Hawkins.

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News Release News Release

Legislative Assembly Reconvenes in March

(YELLOWKNIFE) March 8, 2010 – The Fifth Session of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories will reconvene on March 23, 2010 at 1:30pm.

By the authority granted to him through a motion of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, has given notice that the Fifth Session of the 16th Legislative Assembly shall reconvene on Tuesday, March 23, 2010 at 1:30pm.

Motion 4-16(5), which was carried in the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories on March 4, 2010, adjourned the House to May 11, 2010 with a provision that if the Speaker was satisfied that the public interest required an earlier meeting of the House, he could give notice of such a meeting and the House would reconvene.

“The government has communicated to me that the public interest requires that important financial matters be dealt with prior to the planned reconvening on May 11, 2010,” said Mr. Delorey. Accordingly, after consultation with Members of the Legislative Assembly, the Speaker has given notice that the House shall reconvene on March 23, 2010.

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Legislative Assembly Welcomes Elder Parliamentarians

(Yellowknife, NT) April 29, 2010 – The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable Paul Delorey, will be hosting the first ever Elders Parliament the week of May 3 – 7, 2010. Through an application process, nineteen individuals over the age of 50 from across the North have been selected to take part in this exciting program. The participants will attend meetings and briefings during this week-long event in preparation for Elders Parliament session, in which they assume the role of a Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Elders Parliament follows on the heels of a very successful educational outreach program, Youth Parliament, which the Legislative Assembly has hosted for the past ten years. During Elders Parliament, the participants will have three opportunities to sit in the Chamber. The first opportunity will be on Tuesday, May 4 when the participants take part in a mock ‘Territorial Leadership Committee’ (TLC). Each participant who wishes to be part of the Executive Council will have the opportunity to make a short speech about what they would do if they were a Minister in the NWT. Once all participants have had the opportunity to speak, seven names will be picked by random draw and of those names chosen, six will become Ministers on the Elders Parliament Executive Council and one will become the Premier of Elders Parliament. The second opportunity to sit in the Chamber will be on the afternoon of Wednesday, May 5. The Premier of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable Floyd Roland, will address the Elders Parliament participants and will have a round table discussion on a common vision and roadmap for future political development in the NWT. On Thursday, May 6 the participants will sit in the Chamber for the Elders Parliament ‘session’ where they will read their statements and debate issues of their choice.

The participants, by constituency, are:

Deh Cho – Mrs. Margaret Field
Great Slave – Ms. Lena Pedersen
Hay River South – Mrs. Alvina Sibbeston
Inuvik Twin Lakes – Mr. Tom Wright
Mackenzie Delta – Mr. John Norbert
Nahendeh – Ms. Agnes McPherson
Range Lake – Mr. Blake Lyons
Thebacha – Mr. Michel Labine
Weledeh – Mr. Philip Liske
Yellowknife South – Ms. Catherine Doctor

Frame Lake – Mr. George Lessard
Hay River North – Mrs. Dawna O’Brien
Inuvik Boot Lake – Miss Marjorie Elanik
Kam Lake – Mrs. Esther Braden
Monfwi – Mr. Ted Blondin
Nunakput – Mrs. Georgina Jacobson-Masuzumi
Sahtu – Mrs. Cathy Pope
Tu Nedhe – Mrs. Therese Villeneuve
Yellowknife Centre – Mr. Felicito Domingo

Chamber sittings are at the following times:

- Mock ‘TLC’ - Tuesday, May 4, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.
- Round Table Discussion with Premier Roland – Wednesday, May 5, 2010 at 1:00 p.m.
- Elders Parliament session – Thursday, May 6, 2010 at 1:30 p.m.

The public is invited to come watch the Session from the Public Gallery and can also view proceedings on the Legislative Assembly’s broadcasting network. Media are encouraged to arrange interviews with the participants prior to the sitting day.

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Elders Parliament Motions

(Yellowknife, NT) May 5, 2010 – The Legislative Assembly’s Elder Parliamentarians have chosen the five motions that they will debate during the inaugural “mock” session to be held tomorrow in the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly building. The five topics were chosen during discussions in “Caucus” meetings involving all the elders.

The five motions that are scheduled to be discussed are:

1. The Establishment of an Elders Senate and Secretariat;
2. Supplementary Health Benefits Program;
3. Housing Programs and Services for Seniors;
4. Support for the Mackenzie Valley Highway;
5. Community-Based Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centers.

“I am very pleased with the efforts to date of the participants in this inaugural Elders Parliament. It has brought together so many wise and knowledgeable elders from all over the territory and I am looking forward to the debate tomorrow and to continue to hear the wisdom and the vision of our elders,” says Mr. Paul Delorey, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

The media and general public are invited to watch the proceedings from the public gallery of the Legislative Assembly building beginning at 1:30 p.m. with a break in the Great Hall at approximately 3:00 p.m. The session will also be broadcast live on the Legislative Assembly broadcasting network, and will continue to be re-broadcast over the coming months. Please visit the Legislative Assembly’s website at www.assembly.gov.nt.ca for a community channel listing.

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MLA for Nahendeh Pleased to Announce Response from Health Minister on Dentistry Petition

(Yellowknife, NT) May 14, 2010 – Kevin Menicoche, MLA for Nahendeh, is pleased to announce that The Minister for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee, provided a response to a petition he tabled in the House on March 3, 2010.

The response, “Dentistry Services in Nahendeh”, details the number of visits to the Nahendeh communities in 2008/09 and explains funding sources for dental services. In it, the Minister of Health and Social Services promises to raise the issue of federal funding for dentists with Federal Minister of Health and Social Services, Leona Aglukqaq.

“Regretfully, the Federal and Territorial Government do not staff dentists in the NWT. However, there was an increase in dental service days to the Nahendeh communities and the Minister has agreed that this is worth taking a look into,” says Mr. Menicoche.

“I would like to thank all of my constituents who signed the petition. Petitions are an important tool in getting our government to listen to our concerns and issues,” says Mr. Menicoche.

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MLA for Nahendeh Pleased with Announcement on Electricity Rates

(Yellowknife, NT) May 17, 2010 – Kevin Menicoche, MLA for Nahendeh, is pleased with the announcement made by the Honourable Bob McLeod, Minister for Industry, Tourism and Investment, on the Electricity and Northwest Territories Power Corporation Review.

“I am very happy with the support of our assembly with the electricity rate initiative. Since my election in 2003, I have been working towards a one-rate zone. This announcement of a seven-rate zone as opposed to a 33-rate zone brings us so much closer to obtaining this goal,” says Mr. Menicoche.

During the announcement, Minister Bob McLeod indicated that businesses in communities across the NWT will see significant changes in their electricity bills. “Jean Marie River and Nahanni Butte will see their bills reduced by 70 to 80 percent. This is a huge accomplishment for the GNWT and a very positive step for the people in my constituency,” says Mr. Menicoche.

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Sahtu MLA Applauds GNWT for Withdrawing Caribou Reference Question

(Yellowknife, NT) May 20, 2010 – The MLA for Sahtu, Norman Yakeleya, applauds the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) for withdrawing the Caribou reference question regarding the regulation of subsistence hunting of barren-caribou by Aboriginal people under the NWT Act.

“The decision to withdraw the question from the courts and as the Premier said, to put it back in the political arena, is a wise decision. I applaud the decision and the wisdom it shows. Cabinet decisions are often tough and that’s why we appoint tough people to Cabinet,” says Mr. Yakeleya.

Mr. Yakeleya went on to say, “This proves that Aboriginal governments and the GNWT can and will deal with significant matters between themselves. This way everyone will win. Because people elected to make decisions for their people will be making those decisions.”

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Great Slave MLA Presents Discussion Paper to Joint Working Group on Supplementary Health Benefits

(YELLOWKNIFE) July 9, 2010 - Glen Abernethy, MLA for Great Slave, presents discussion paper to Joint Working Group on Supplementary Health Benefits regarding alternatives for consideration.

Mr. Glen Abernethy delivered a presentation to the Joint Working Group on Supplementary Health Benefits on Thursday, June 17, 2010. The presentation was intended to convey what has been heard from his constituents, as well as to demonstrate that there are options worth considering beyond what the Minister is currently proposing.

"I understand that the Joint Working Group has made its final recommendation, and that the Department is preparing a document for review by Cabinet and by the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning, but no timeline has been provided regarding when this document will be available for review," says Mr. Abernethy.

A copy of the presentation is available at Mr. Abernethy's website at www.glenabernethy.ca for anyone who wishes to review it. It intended as a discussion document.

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**Northwest
Territories** Legislative Assembly
MLA - Yellowknife Centre

Robert Hawkins, MLA for Yellowknife Centre meets with Edmonton Mayor regarding the closing of the Edmonton Municipal Airport

YELLOWKNIFE (October 8th, 2010) – MLA Robert Hawkins has met with Edmonton Mayor Stephen Mandel to discuss Northern concerns regarding the closing of the Edmonton Municipal Airport.

With the pending closure of the Edmonton Municipal Airport, MLA Robert Hawkins took the occasion to reach out and discuss the importance of this issue, which could potentially affect the quality of emergency healthcare that our Northern residents deserve. “The most important issue at hand is that our residents continue to receive the highest quality of healthcare services possible especially when considering the nature of a Medevac to Edmonton during an emergency. The fear is quite simple, could a person’s care be compromised? That’s what’s at stake and certainly that is what we need to ensure is protected,” says YK Centre MLA Hawkins.

“I explained to the Edmonton Mayor that even though as Northern residents we are not Edmonton constituents, we are at the very least stakeholders considering the long standing relationship we have with his City,” said MLA Hawkins.

With many serious issues at stake, MLA Robert Hawkins took the occasion to invite Mayor Mandel to Yellowknife to discuss this issue with Northerners, which he had accepted. “I’m very pleased that Mayor Mandel has pledged that he would come north before the end of the year and meet with our Northern residents to discuss the plans the City of Edmonton has for the future along with the potential options that they see as solutions to ensure Northerner’s are kept safe,” said MLA Hawkins.

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Major Changes Recommended for *Child and Family Services Act*

(YELLOWKNIFE) October 21, 2010 – The Legislative Assembly’s Standing Committee on Social Programs, chaired by MLA Tom Beaulieu, today presented its “Report on the Review of the *Child and Family Services Act: Building Stronger Families*”, to the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Beaulieu says, “Basically, the Committee found that many objectives of the *Act* are simply not being met. However, Members also heard that there is hope, that the communities want to take responsibility for their children and that a new relationship can be built with the Department of Health and Social Services. It is in this spirit that the Committee offers its recommendations for change. The Committee hopes to continue the work that this report begins. We look forward to working with the Minister of Health and Social Services to build stronger families and stronger communities.”

Some of the recommendations that can be found in the report include:

- Focus on prevention and early intervention, helping families stay together and heal;
- Provide alcohol and drug treatment, which is readily accessible and convenient to all communities;
- Extend child and family services to youth aged 16-19, with provisions to assist young adults to age 23;
- Take the least intrusive measures possible to deliver child welfare services, with increased emphasis on collaborative processes to solve family problems; and
- Improve the administration of Child and Family Services Committees in every community, as set out in the *Act* and provide resources to communities to take more responsibility for child welfare.

“Although we are fully aware that some of these recommendations are quite large and will take time, the Committee believes that the recommendations are fully feasible and we think that we will see most of these changes take effect in the near future,” says Mr. Beaulieu.

The overview of the report was today presented in the House and the full report can be viewed on the Legislative Assembly website at www.assembly.gov.nt.ca.

For more information, please contact:

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Online ePetitions Now Available on the Legislative Assembly Website

YELLOWKNIFE (October 27, 2010) – The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Paul Delorey, has announced that the Legislative Assembly’s ePetitions site is now available to the public. The online ePetitions site can be found on the Legislative Assembly’s website under the ePetitions link.

A motion was adopted by the Legislative Assembly in May 2010 to implement an online ePetitions pilot project to begin during the October 2010 sitting and conclude in June 2011.

The Legislative Assembly hopes to make petitions more accessible to the people of the North. Online petitions do not replace the conventional paper approach to petitions, but create greater opportunities for Northerners to add and sign petitions. If Northerners wish to petition the Legislative Assembly on issues, they will still need the support of a Member of the Legislative Assembly for their petition to be presented in the House.

To view the e-Petitions site, to add a petition or to sign a petition, visit www.assembly.gov.nt.ca and click on the ePetitions link.

For further information on ePetitions, please contact:

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**Frame Lake MLA Dissatisfied with the Supplementary Health Benefits
Joint Working Group Report**

(YELLOWKNIFE) October 29, 2010 – Wendy Bisaro, MLA Frame Lake, is part of the Supplementary Health Benefits Joint Working Group that was established in May 2010. The working group was created to consider three main aspects of the proposed changes to the Supplementary Health Benefits Program:

- **Personal third party coverage responsibility;**
- **Approaches to limit employer and/or individuals from dropping third party insurance; and**
- **The issue of accumulated high costs and a capped threshold.**

The Joint Working Group (JWG), which consists of Minister Sandy Lee, Minister Michael Miltenberger, Minister Michael McLeod, MLA Jane Groenewegen, MLA Norman Yakeleya and MLA Wendy Bisaro, released its report today but Bisaro does not believe the recently released report is as in-depth as it could have been, or that it accurately represents her views.

“The report frequently states ‘...Members agreed...’ but it must be pointed out that agreement was not always unanimous and I cannot stand by everything that is recommended in this report.” says Ms. Bisaro.

During their meetings, the JWG identified a number of potential actions which will result in efficiencies and savings well beyond those expected from the government’s proposed program. “There is no need to implement an income-based or income-tested co-payment model to fund the proposed changes. Throughout the working group discussions, I did not and still cannot support using an income-based model to cover a portion of NWT residents’ supplementary health benefits costs,” says Ms. Bisaro.

Ms. Bisaro adds that, “The working group covered a lot of material and had some far-reaching discussions, but the recommendations made in this report are vague; the report does not indicate how the recommended changes will be implemented, and those details are of paramount importance to NWT residents.”

Prior to the public release the Joint Working Group shared its report with Cabinet and the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning for their consideration.

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Legislative Assembly Unveils Wood Pellet Boiler

YELLOWKNIFE (October 29, 2010) – The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Paul Delorey, has announced that the Legislative Assembly’s wood pellet boiler is now fully functional.

The wood pellet boiler was installed at the Legislative Assembly in June by a Yellowknife company called Arctic Green Energy. Arctic Green Energy has installed a number of wood pellet boilers within Yellowknife.

“In the past few years, the Legislative Assembly has been working on some green initiatives. We’ve dropped the pop, we’ve reduced the amount of paper consumed by the Assembly, we use low voltage lighting in the legislature and we’ve purchased a hybrid vehicle. Now we’re working on reducing our fuel consumption and our carbon footprint,” says Speaker Delorey.

The wood pellet boiler system will offset 90% of the annual fuel consumption in the Legislative Assembly building and will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 240 tonnes per year. It will also be able to handle 50% of the building’s maximum winter heating load.

For further information on the wood pellet boiler, please contact:

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Education in the NWT

YELLOWKNIFE (November 16, 2010) - "Education in Fort Good Hope took a big step forward today with the opening of the new Chief T'Selehye School," said Sahtu MLA Norman Yakeleya. "The old school was just worn out and I am glad to be a part of a government that sees the need to build new schools to serve the needs of our young population."

The 20 million dollar project took three years to build. "I know the people in Fort Good Hope have been looking forward to this day for quite a while," said Yakeleya.

He went on to say, "Although we should all be proud of this achievement, and I tip my hat to Education Minister Jackson Lafferty on this important day, we all have to work hard every day to improve educational outcomes for all the people of the NWT. We have accomplished a lot but we still have a long road ahead to realize the goal of a well educated population."

Yakeleya was born and raised in Tulita and attended residential school in Inuvik. He has been the MLA for the Sahtu for two terms, first being elected in 2003 after having served as a municipal councillor and Chief of the Tulita Dene Band. In 2007, he was acclaimed for a second term as the MLA for the Sahtu, which is comprised of five communities including Fort Good Hope.

For more information, contact:

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Sahtu MLA suffers minor heart attack

YELLOWKNIFE (November 29, 2010) – Sahtu MLA Norman Yakeleya is in good condition at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton after having what his doctors are calling a minor heart attack.

Last Thursday evening, Mr. Yakeleya experienced some chest pain and his wife Cheryl drove him to the Stanton Territorial Hospital in Yellowknife. The following day Mr. Yakeleya was sent to the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton where he had a stint put in.

Mr. Yakeleya says, “The medical care I have received at both hospitals has been first-class. Today, I am getting some instruction on diet and exercise. I feel pretty good.”

Mr. Yakeleya is now resting comfortably and expects to be released from hospital shortly.

For more information, contact:

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Nahendeh MLA Pleased with Changes to NWT Electricity System

(YELLOWKNIFE) December 8, 2010 – Nahendeh MLA, Kevin Menicoche, is happy with the recent changes to the NWT electricity rates. The Public Utilities Board recently decided to re-balance the NWT Power Corporations electricity rates and implement other changes to the electricity system.

“My focus has always been a one-rate zone, but these new changes, and lower rates, has four zones which is a definite step in the right direction,” says Mr. Menicoche.

Mr. Menicoche says, “The commercial rate changes downwards are huge. This is what businesses in my constituency have been asking for. Businesses will pass savings onto consumers. I am pleased with these changes as it will lower the cost of living for all Northerners.”

For more information, please contact:

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