

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Joe Enook
(Tununiq)

Hon. David Akeegok
(Quttiktuq)

Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial Management Board; Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

Tony Akoak
(Gjoa Haven)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Hon. Pat Angnakak
(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)

Minister of Health; Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak
(Cambridge Bay)

Minister of Justice; Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation; Minister responsible for the Status of Women; Minister responsible for Labour

George Hickes
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

Hon. David Joanasic
(South Baffin)

Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Education; Minister of Languages; Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College

Joelie Kaernerik
(Amittuq)

Mila Kamingoak
(Kugluktuk)

Pauloosie Keyootak
(Uqqummiut)

Hon. Lorne Kusugak
(Rankin Inlet South)
Minister of Community and Government Services; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation

Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

Simeon Mikkungwak
(Baker Lake)
Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole

Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)

Patterk Netser
(Aivilik)

Emiliano Qirngnuq
(Netsilik)

Hon. Paul Quassa
(Aggu)

Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council

Allan Rumbolt
(Hudson Bay)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Hon. Joe Savikataaq
(Arviat South)

Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for Homelessness; Minister responsible for Immigration

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Government House Leader; Minister of Economic Development and Transportation; Minister of Energy; Minister of Environment

Cathy Towtongie
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Friday, March 9, 2018**

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeagok, Mr. Tony Akoak, Hon. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak, Hon. Joe Enook, Mr. George Hickers, Hon. David Joanasié, Mr. Joëlie Kaerner, Ms. Mila Kamingoak, Mr. Pauloosie Keyootak, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. John Main, Mr. Simeon Mikkungwak, Ms. Margaret Nakashuk, Mr. Patterk Netser, Mr. Emiliano Qirngnuq, Hon. Paul Quassa, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik, Ms. Cathy Towtongie.

>>*House commenced at 9:01*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Joe Enook)(interpretation): Ms. Towtongie, can you say the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good morning, Premier and members. Good morning, Nunavummiut who are listening to the radio broadcast and watching the televised proceedings. Welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

Particularly at this time, my fellow residents of Pond Inlet, as you're going through a difficult time, you are in our thoughts.

We will now proceed with the orders of the day. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Premier of Nunavut, Premier Quassa.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 012 – 5(1): Turaaqtavut Mandate Development

Hon. Paul Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My thoughts are with you and your community. I say "good morning" to the residents of my community and Nunavummiut.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to extend my gratitude to my fellow Members of the Assembly for their assistance, insight, and feedback on the development of our new government mandate, *Turaaqtavut*.

While in Pond Inlet for our Full Caucus Retreat, each member had an opportunity to review the mandate and provide valuable input on our priorities.

Our goal was to develop a mandate that reflects what we have heard from the many people we serve, including those whose voices may be difficult to hear. This was a

collaborative exercise and I am pleased with the productive, positive, and constructive discussions we had as a caucus at our retreat. Thank you.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, our government has listened carefully to their comments and captured their feedback in our mandate. Although the final document will be released in full following the Throne Speech, we have outlined five priority areas for government action over the next four years. (interpretation) They are:

1. We will work towards the well-being and self-reliance of our people and our communities through *Inuusivut*.
2. We will develop our infrastructure and economy in ways that support a positive future for our people, our communities, and our land through *Pivaallirutivut*.
3. We will provide education and training that prepares children, youth, and adults for positive contributions to society and for meaningful employment through *Sivummuaqpalliajjutivut*.
4. We will strengthen Nunavut as a distinct territory in Canada and the world through *Inuunivut*.
5. We will work in partnership to advance the goals and aspirations of Nunavummiut through *Katujiqatigiinnivut*.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to sharing our mandate with this House and with all Nunavummiut in the coming weeks. Moreover, I look forward to continuing a constructive and collaborative relationship with all Members of this House over the lifetime of this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Family Services, Minister Savikataaq.

Minister's Statement 013 – 5(1): Reminder to File Income Tax

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's that time of the year again and my statement will remind us what time of the year it is.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Family Services has been working diligently over the last two years to implement the reforms proposed in the *Report on the Review and Reform of Income Assistance and Economic Development*. As a result, I would like to remind Nunavummiut to file their income tax return. That's the time of the year it is. It's time to file your income tax. As a result, I would like to remind Nunavummiut to file their income tax return to ensure they receive the benefits they are entitled to, such as the:

- Canada Child Benefit;

- Guaranteed Income Supplement;
- Senior Citizens Supplementary Benefit; and
- Good and Services Tax.

The amount of the Canada Child Benefit depends on the number of children and the family's income.

The Department of Family Services exempts payments of the Canada Child Benefit when calculating income assistance benefits. However, in order to qualify for the benefit, Nunavummiut need to file their income tax return.

Mr. Speaker, in February the Department of Family Services sent T5s in the mail to all recipients of income assistance for the year 2017. It is important that clients use the T5s when having their income tax prepared, and clients are encouraged to work with their local income assistance workers to identify opportunities in their community to have their income tax prepared. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Minister Ehaloak.

Minister's Statement 014 – 5(1): 2018 Laura Ulluriaq Gauthier Annual Scholarship Announcement

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, condolences to the members of your community.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that Qulliq Energy is once again offering their annual scholarship to Nunavut students enrolled in post-secondary education. This scholarship is in memory of Laura Ulluriaq Gauthier, a respected government leader who played an instrumental role in establishing the utility now known as the QEC.

\$5,000 will be awarded to a promising student based on their leadership qualities, career goals, and academic achievements. Dedication to volunteer services and contributions to their community will also be considered. Students are encouraged to apply for the scholarship by June 30, 2018. Application forms and further information can be found on the QEC's website or by contacting the corporation's customer care division.

Mr. Speaker, the QEC and I are proud to support Nunavummiut in furthering their education. We admire all students who are determined to complete their studies and commend their efforts to find opportunities for meaningful employment within their communities across the territory. In fact I am pleased to say that previous scholarship recipients have gone on to find employment with the QEC following graduation in the fields of engineering and health, safety, and environment.

The QEC has supported Nunavummiut students with financial aid for over a decade in efforts to lessen the burden of tuition costs so that students can focus on what's more important: their education. With this scholarship we hope to help a deserving student pursue their goals of completing post-secondary studies.

Please join me in wishing all scholarship applicants the best of luck. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Education, Minister Joanasié.

Minister's Statement 015 – 5(1): Kivalliq DEA Chairs and Principals Conference

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Good morning, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker and fellow members, I'm proud to announce that Kivalliq school leaders and my departmental staff met in Rankin Inlet this past week, March 3 to March 8. District education authority representatives, school principals, and vice-principals along with representatives from the regional school operations and the department's divisions engaged in formative operational and governance discussions.

Mr. Speaker, sessions at the conference included presentations on conflict management and resolution, cultural awareness, and strategies to revisit *Inuuqatigiitsiarniq* policies. I would like to recognize and thank my fellow Minister of Health for the additional participation by her department in leading the two-day Indigenous Cultural Competency segment of the conference. The inclusion of the Indigenous Cultural Competency course was an integral part of the week and lends to the positive school environment theme of the conference. Additionally I would like to thank the Minister of Finance for the involvement of his Finance staff in leading discussions on the conflict resolution session of the conference.

Mr. Speaker, the sessions of the conference addressed the need to develop collaborative relationships, positive communication, and to empower our school and community leaders to lead and support positive school environments guided by *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* and supported by *Inuuqatigiitsiarniq* policies. By connecting peers with purpose, we continue to demonstrate that learning is our work.

Mr. Speaker, conferences such as this Kivalliq gathering is one of the ways by which my department supports, empowers, and encourages positive school environments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Health, Minister Angnakak.

Minister's Statement 016 – 5(1): Respiratory Illness is on the Rise this Flue Season

Hon. Pat Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to everybody.

Mr. Speaker, influenza, also referred to as the flu, is upon us. Already the Department of Health has issued public service announcements advising Nunavummiut on the steps they can take to protect themselves.

To date our health centres and the Qikiqtani General Hospital are seeing a rise in respiratory illness. When respiratory illness is in a community, health centres and the hospital become very busy. A higher volume of patients means that there will be delays in services as health staff triage our patients to ensure those with priority are seen first.

Mr. Speaker, antibiotics do not work against these viruses; our best defence is letting our bodies fight them off. It is important to stay home if you're sick. We had a very good example today in the House where one of our members was absent because he was sick. That was a very good thing to be doing. You stay home if you're sick.

>> *Applause*

Rest and drink lots of water, juice, or soup.

Symptoms of respiratory illness can include fever and cough, runny nose, sore throat, body aches, feeling tired, and loss of appetite. People should consult a health care provider if they have difficulty breathing or are getting worse after a few days.

Mr. Speaker, as stated in our PSA, I would like to reiterate that frequent handwashing with warm, soapy water, covering your cough, and staying home to rest are just some of the ways that we can protect ourselves and prevent spreading the flu.

The influenza campaign launched by the Department of Health this past October encouraged Nunavummiut to get the flu shot to protect elders, babies, family members, and themselves from the flu. The flu shot is still available for free; it's not too late. Everybody who hasn't got their flu shot should go out and get it. Nunavummiut can find more information and helpful resources at www.flunu.ca. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Health... Minister of Culture and Heritage, Minister Joanasie.

Minister's Statement 017 – 5(1): Tenth Year Anniversary of the Inuit Language Protection Act

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I don't want to be the Minister of Health.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, as a young student, I was inspired by our Inuit leadership who led the negotiations to create our Nunavut territory. They made many personal sacrifices while gaining so much for their children and grandchildren. As we work together to achieve true results through this mandate, it is my sincere hope that we will lead again by making Nunavut a better place for those that will follow in our footsteps.

Mr. Speaker, it has already been 10 years since Nunavut passed a legislative package to promote and protect Inuktitut in the most significant way within our territory. The *Official Languages Act* and *Inuit Language Protection Act* are a true testament to what can be accomplished when we work together in furthering Inuit goals and aspirations.

Mr. Speaker, September 2018 will mark the tenth anniversary when the *Inuit Language Protection Act* was unanimously adopted in this House. To celebrate this achievement and take stock of what has been accomplished, I will convene our Inuit leadership and Nunavummiut to a second edition of the Inuugatta Language Conference this fall. It will be an opportunity to map the way forward to strengthen the linkage between our language, our culture, and who we are as a people.

Mr. Speaker, in my capacity as Minister of Languages, I will also be available to work with the Assembly as it conducts its review of this legislation during our mandate. The department will be happy to provide any assistance required by my colleagues to identify how we can deliver our promises and ensure that Inuktitut continues to thrive in Nunavut, as it is a foundation to the socio-economic and cultural well-being of our children and their children. This is a key element that makes our territory truly distinct in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) *koana, ma'na, qujannamiik, and nakurmiik.*

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. We will proceed with the orders of the day. Members' Statements. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Ms. Towtongie.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 054 – 5(1): Recognition of Dr. Donna May Kimmaliardjuk

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The family in Pond Inlet who are going through a difficult time are in our thoughts first of all.

Mr. Speaker, I am extremely proud to be able to rise today to recognize and congratulate Dr. Donna May Kimmaliardjuk on her accomplishments.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday was International Women's Day.

As we celebrate the accomplishments of women around the world, I am particularly proud to say that Dr. Kimmaliardjuk is a young woman who is working hard to earn her place in history as Canada's first Inuk heart surgeon.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Kimmaliardjuk family roots are in the Kivalliq. I have known the Kimmaliardjuk family in Chesterfield Inlet for many years, and I know that they are all very proud of her accomplishments. Her maternal grandfather is Eli Kimmaliardjuk, her godmother Hilarie Makpah is in Rankin Inlet, and her mother, Julia Kimmaliardjuk, is in Ottawa, Albert Kimmaliardjuk, and her paternal uncle is Jayko Kimmaliardjuk.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Kimmaliardjuk recently received an Indspire Award, and I know that she herself has acted as a mentor to youth.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Kimmaliardjuk's accomplishments show our youth that anything is possible with hard work, study, and determination.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues and ministers to join me in congratulating a young Inuk woman who makes all of us very proud as she will become one of Canada's heart surgeons. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Keyootak.

Member's Statement 055 – 5(1): Recognition of Ranger Levi Palituq of Clyde River

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good morning" to the people of Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq.

Also, Mr. Speaker, my thoughts are with the people in Pond Inlet.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to say that we know a lot of people who do volunteer in the communities, especially the rangers who participate in all activities, including search and rescue operations.

This individual has been working for a very long time as a volunteer and I would like to recognize him in this House. He has been with the Clyde River rangers for the last 22 years and he was recognized by the Governor General in Ottawa just recently. We have to recognize those individuals who provide their time and save people through the search and rescue operations.

I congratulate Levi for having been with the rangers for the last 22 years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak.

Member's Statement 056 – 5(1): Recent Deaths in Gjoa Haven

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues, Nunavummiut, and the community of Gjoa Haven.

This morning I stand to send my condolences to the community of Gjoa Haven, who have just lost an elder yesterday who was respected. I send my condolences to the family and to the community of Gjoa Haven.

Within the last two and half weeks we have lost two elders already. I also send my condolences to the people who have lost two and a half weeks ago, to the family, to the community of Gjoa Haven.

Also, my wife was a very good friend of the two elders and I wish I was there to console her, but I can only say it in words. I'm thinking of you today and I thank you for always recognizing elders and she has always done that.

Mr. Speaker, we always say "rest in peace" to our dearly departed. I say today for the people who are here on earth, we should also live in peace. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Moving on. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery.

>>*Power outage at 9:29*

>>*House resumed at 9:47*

Speaker (interpretation): Good morning. We are now back. Nunavummiut and fellow members, I apologize. I know that Mr. Kusugak was about to make a comment and I'll

give him another opportunity to do so. Going back to the orders of the day. We will proceed. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Kusugak.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't trying to turn all the power off...

>>*Laughter*

...only some of it.

(interpretation ends) I understand I was frozen on your TV screens at home for a few minutes. I thank you.

>>*Laughter*

And my mic was on for a minute and a half, so it seems how it was supposed to be a happy Friday with comedy and stuff. I didn't mean it to turn into a dark Friday.

>>*Laughter*

Anyway that was a shot in the dark.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to take this opportunity to recognize my ex-colleague, Mr. Dan Shewchuck. Welcome to the gallery, Mr. Shewchuck. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome, Mr. Shewchuck. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Thank you. I would like to recognize my fellow residents of Arviat who are here, Joe Jr. Savikataaq and Lillian Savikataaq. Yes, he may be the minister's son, but he resides within my constituency, so I wish to recognize them. I would like to welcome them to the gallery. Joe Jr. was a fellow student of mine throughout high school. It's great that you are here. Welcome. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. I don't see any more hands up. Moving on. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Rumbolt.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 037 – 5(1): Fuel Prices

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services, whose department is responsible for the Petroleum Products Division. I want to revisit the issue of fuel prices in Nunavut.

As my colleague from Arviat North-Whale Cove noted earlier this week, the government last announced changes to our fuel prices on January 27, 2017, almost 14 months ago. At that time all Nunavut communities received a reduction in fuel prices with the exception of Sanikiluaq where the price actually went up.

Is the minister now in the position to tell us when the government will be making this year's announcement concerning fuel prices? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just waiting for the power to go back off.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, our department has to weigh in the costs of the fuel that is purchased at the time it is purchased and then the cost of shipping and then all the other parameters in terms of finalizing the costs of the fuel. Once that is complete, we will be able to find if we have to keep the costs the same or of course decrease it if we can or increase it if we need to. At this point we don't have the mathematics done. I anticipate sometime in the new fiscal year we will have a better idea once some of those calculations have been completed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware that there are a lot of parameters in calculating new prices and usually it's after all the supplies are delivered to the communities, then you're in a position to do so, which usually happens in January or February. We're now at that point, which is why I asked that question, and I look forward to the information coming forward as soon as possible.

My next question, the government's 2017 announcement on fuel prices also indicated that it made the decision to adopt a "uniform pricing structure for all fuel consumer groups in Nunavut." Can the minister indicate what impact this change has had on the operations and the bottom line of the PPD? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The prices are set to treat everyone the same and to try not to increase them. That is our goal. Therefore my colleague's question on that matter means that the operations can be improved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A few years ago the GN started pre-purchasing fuel in order to mitigate cost variances and high summer fuel prices. Can the minister confirm whether this approach will continue for the upcoming 2018 fuel resupply? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It will continue as long as it will be cheaper to go that route, which it normally is. I see it continuing in that process, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

Question 038 – 5(1): General Rate Application Report

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to travel back in time to Tuesday when I asked the Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council a couple of questions that he wasn't able to respond to that day.

In my initial question I stated that on October 27, 2017 the URRC received the Qulliq Energy Corporation's general rate application. The proposed changes to the power rates are charged to all residents and all business customers across Nunavut, including a proposed change from a community-based rate structure to a territory-wide rate structure. The QEC has indicated that it wants the new power rates and rate structure to come into effect on April 1 of this year, a little over three weeks from now, Mr. Speaker.

Can the minister confirm at what stage of the regulatory process he and his cabinet colleagues are at with respect to reviewing the URRC's report and recommendations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council, Minister Quassa.

Hon. Paul Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for bringing that up again. I will speak in English because he spoke in English.

(interpretation ends) The URRC, our GRA report is due and will be submitted to the responsible minister for the QEC on March 26. The report is currently being finalized by the council as we speak. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If it's coming out of March 26, I can only assume that it will be made public at that time as well. That is only five days before the new rates are supposed to be coming into effect. Again I would ask the minister last time why the QEC has submitted the rate process during the general election period, and I was wondering if, in his meeting with the chair of the URRC, that information was provided to him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Quassa.

Hon. Paul Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is an ongoing process and they have to proceed, even if there is a general election. Everything else proceeds. It's just the same thing. It doesn't really affect the general election because our duties are carried on an ongoing basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In that submission there is a proposed change from a community-based rate structure to a territory-wide rate structure. As my constituents here in Iqaluit can attest, it's a fairly substantial increase in rates that Iqaluit will get hit harder than the majority of other communities, some of which will actually drop. What is this government's position on moving from a community-based rate structure to a territory-wide rate structure? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Quassa.

Hon. Paul Quassa: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's a good question, but again, we haven't really gone to the point where we're going to decide either way. Again I cannot really answer that particular question because we haven't really decided yet as to how we're going to deal with it. As I said earlier, the report will be going to the Minister of the QEC on March 26 and we will go from there. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Netser.

Question 039 – 5(1): Federal Budget on Infrastructure Funding

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My question is directed to the Minister of Finance in relation to the federal budget that was released last month.

The other day I asked the Premier to speak to the recent announcement in the federal budget related to the *Nunavut Act*. Today I would like to raise a question related to the recent article I read on CBC News on March 1, which is related to the infrastructure budgets for our territories, Mr. Speaker.

The article stated that the Liberal government is putting a freeze to the territorial infrastructure budget until after the 2019 federal election, which means Nunavut will not receive any federal money until 2020.

The federal \$450 million infrastructure budget was approved in 2017, is my understanding, and in this article there were zero good reasons given for this unacceptable decision, which is true it will only hurt us, Mr. Speaker.

Can the minister tell me if the federal government consulted the Government of Nunavut on this decision, and what was the rationale given by the federal government to take such drastic measures to penalize our territory? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Finance, Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that good question. (interpretation ends) The budget that indicated the delay for the infrastructure for \$450 million is one that we're trying to find exactly which projects those are. There are a number of infrastructure dollars that the federal government and this is one component of it and something that we're trying to find as the information to determine what infrastructures would be delayed.

It is one that we did not have fulsome consultations with the federal government. It is their budgets and when we do discover these things, we try to find out and our officials are working to find out and I'm also trying to communicate with my counterpart down there to determine what exactly that is. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The federal government continues to slash the budget for capacity building in Nunavut related to the housing predicaments we face. This results in increasing TB cases due to severe overcrowding and many units are mouldy. These require remediation, yet we only receive a pittance for that, Mr. Speaker.

This is the question I wish to ask (interpretation ends) the finance minister. It's very concerning to watch how the federal government is treating its' northern citizens. (interpretation) Our government articulates flowery language insinuating their pride in indigenous people. Nonetheless, this so-called pride results in slashing our budgets that are supposed to benefit us. What is the tangible support or benefits they want to provide to Nunavut?

(interpretation ends) The federal government made cuts to the territorial transfer payments in education, health, and other social programs. Now in this 2018 budget the federal government is freezing \$450 million for the territories. The federal government says that the most important relationship is with the aboriginal people and Inuit.

I want to know who in the Government of Nunavut or in any Nunavut-based Inuit organizations was consulted and I want to know what this government is going to do to stand up to the federal government's actions. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Finance, Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) With the federal government, the part I was pleased with was that they are putting Inuit-specific; they have been mentioning Inuit-specific. There are four regions within the Inuit. Oftentimes we were lumped as First Nations or aboriginals and it took a while to determine how much of the portions that are going to the Inuit were. I was pleased on that front.

I, too, was expecting more on the housing and there is more on the Inuit housing, but within that budget it still committed the federal government of continuing the housing commitment that they had done in the previous budget to proceed with that.

We are hopeful and we will continue to engage with our federal counterparts. Each of the cabinet colleagues of ours is very engaged with our federal counterparts. The arctic policy that the Liberal government is trying to develop hasn't been completed yet. Our Premier is working very hard with our pan-territorial governments and I'm working with him in terms of trying to get more commitments through these policies. We will continue to do that with our government-to-government relations.

I am also pleased that there is a Crown to Crown with Inuit with the federal government. With that front I think we will continue to collaborate and tell what Nunavut needs are for this territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Netsier.

Mr. Netsier (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I really appreciate the minister voicing our concerns to Ottawa. I wish you all the best and with your colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, would the Government of Nunavut be prepared to make a statement in this House on what infrastructure projects in Nunavut are impacted by the unilateral action by the federal government? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once I get the details and once we know the details, we will be able to table a report in the House. At this time I cannot table a report in the House, but once we know all the details, we will inform you and we will have to work closely together. That way we can work together to approach the federal government as unified members and work with Inuit entities. We have to consult with each other. I'm very glad that you asked that very good question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet...I'm sorry. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Question 040 – 5(1): Foster Parents in Nunavut

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would like to direct my question today to the Minister of Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, in January the minister attended a federal, provincial and territorial meeting on improving outcomes for indigenous children, youth, and families. I understand that one of the issues discussed was the over-representation of indigenous children and youth in care.

Can the minister please explain how agreements reached and discussions had in the meeting held in January will have an impact on the role that Family Services plays in providing foster care, including residential foster care, to children and youth in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Family Services, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There were lots of discussions there and we heard some heart-wrenching stories from youth that have gone through the foster parent and group home system down there. The federal government has made some commitments to rectify that.

For us here in Nunavut financially, there has not been much movement in that area, but our government, the federal government, and all the provinces all agreed that the way the system is right now is not working very well at all. The goal of everyone that was at the meeting was to drop the number of children that are apprehended and taken into foster care. We want to work with parents and guardians to minimize taking kids away from their home family environment.

We are all aware, though, at times we don't have a choice because the priority first is the child. A child cannot defend themselves, so therefore we have to do it for them. There are some circumstances where there is no way around it, but we would like to work with the parents and the guardians to keep the child at home and work with the situation to make the home environment better and safer for the children. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his response. I would also like to thank the minister for his correspondence of February 21 in which he provided details regarding his department's services to children and youth in care.

I noted that there are currently 245 approved foster homes in Nunavut and that any potential new foster homes must undergo a screening process. Can the minister clearly describe the requirements that are in place for a person or family who may be interested in fostering children? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have that level of detail that is operational, but just common sense would say that you would have to have a criminal record check. I would know that that would be a requirement. You have to be able to be financially able to make sure that you can take care of these kids. The environment the kids are going to would have to be safe.

I don't know the particulars, but just common sense would tell you that it would have to be a good, safe, steady home that the child would have to go to. It does not make any sense to take a child from an unhealthy household and put them into another unhealthy household. The bottom line is that you would make sure that the household is healthy mentally, physically, and financially and that it will be a good place for the child to stay for a period of time.

The goal is to take the child away from an unsafe house and work with the parents or the guardians to make sure it becomes a safe house to return the kids. Family Services is not there just to take kids away; we want to work with the parents to make it a nice, safe home. Our goal is to have the children grow up with their parents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister's correspondence indicated that there are currently 439 children and youth currently supported by the Department of Family Services, with over half of them receiving foster care services.

It does not seem that there are enough foster homes to go around with the figures that were spoken about. Can the minister describe what steps his department is taking to increase the number of foster homes in Nunavut? What is the department going to do in regard to this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We would always welcome more foster parents that are willing to foster these vulnerable children. The numbers that the member's talking about don't quite match; 51 percent of the children are in foster care.

We work with parents to keep their kids too. Some kids might have behavioural or mental issues, but they're still with their parents and we work with the parents to help them out. Not all children are apprehended. Sometimes parents or guardians or grandparents come and say, "Look, I'm having trouble with my child. There are issues here that I need help with." Therefore that child and that family becomes a client of Family Services. The child is not in foster care, but we're working with the child with their parents so that the child can stay at home. That's why the difference in numbers between the number of children in our care and the number of children in foster care.

We're there for more than just fostering kids; we want to work with the parents and the kids to make sure that they have a safe environment. Each case is case by case. We don't have a cookie-cutter program saying, "Okay, this is the program for every kid that comes in." Each individual case is quite unique and we want to work with them. Like I said, the bottom line is we want children to grow up in their own home but in a safe environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Keyootak.

Question 041 – 5(1): Enforcement of the Inuit Language Protection Act

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Languages.

Mr. Speaker, under section 24 of the Act, the minister is responsible for administering the *Inuit Language Protection Act* and coordinating its implementation within the government.

Under section 4 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, all third party contractors that are providing public services on behalf of the government are required to provide those services in the Inuit language.

Can the minister clarify how the government ensures that its third party contractors are providing their services in the Inuit language? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Languages, Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank him for the question. This government has internal plans for ensuring service provision is provided in all Inuit languages as well as the other official languages and whether it is sufficiently provided in all languages.

Perhaps my colleague is expecting a response now. I do have a prepared minister's statement on this subject, which I have planned to speak to next week. Nonetheless, we always try to work with various contractors working within government, especially related to any language requirements within the services, and whether this is being made available in the Inuit languages as well as the official languages. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under section 27 of the Act, the minister is required to submit an annual report on the administration of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

The minister's most recent annual report was tabled in March 2017 and covers the 2013-14 fiscal year. Can the minister tell us when we can expect his 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 annual reports to be tabled in the House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for enquiring further about that. I seem to remember there was a certain MLA that asked questions about this in the past. The report is still being worked on and once it is ready, we will be able to table it in the House as soon as it is ready. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under section 25 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, the minister is responsible for developing and monitoring the government's formal plan to implement the Act. The government's most recent plan was tabled in the House in October 2012 and covers the period from 2012 to 2016.

In its most recent plan, the Government of Nunavut states that it is "committed to ensuring that its laws and other legal instruments are available in the three official languages" and that one of its priorities is to "boost legal translation and terminology development capacity in Inuktitut."

However, when I went to the Government of Nunavut website this morning, only six pieces of legislation were available in Inuktitut. Can the minister clarify if the government is still committed to ensuring that its laws are available in the three official languages? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for bringing up this matter. I believe it is just an indication of the fact that we need more interpreters in Nunavut.

So much more work can be done in terms of the language in Nunavut. There is the Inuktitut language and the Inuinnaqtun language that have been recognized like English and French. We wanted to promote all of them within the government. If it's a document or legislation, we want to make sure they are all available in Inuktitut. We have capacity issues where we have a lack of staff that can do that kind of work.

Sometimes we tend to rush, but I would like to encourage people out there that if they are interested in becoming interpreters or language professionals, please come to our department so that more work can be done on this matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Question 042 – 5(1): Renewal of the Municipal Funding Program Policy

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our thoughts are with your community.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

As the minister is well aware, municipalities receive their core funding through the government's Municipal Funding Program. This program and therefore the core funding that is allocated to municipalities are administered by the department according to the *Municipal Funding Program Policy*.

Mr. Speaker, the department's existing *Municipal Funding Program Policy* expires on April 30, 2018. Can the minister indicate if his department is currently developing a new policy for its Municipal Funding Program and, if so, when will that new policy be made publicly available? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are currently developing and working on a new funding agreement for the municipalities, Mr. Speaker, he is correct there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister clarify if his department is planning to make any significant changes to its Municipal Funding Program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this point I don't know what significant changes there would be. We're still trying to finalize the document and work on it with the municipalities association, but if there are any significant changes or any changes, I would be more than happy to share it with my colleague. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. According to the department's existing policy, each municipality receives its core funding according to a combination of its population size, "community uniqueness factor," and forced growth. The policy also states that "community uniqueness factors will be reviewed every five years to determine if there are any changes in community circumstances that require an adjustment."

Mr. Speaker, "community uniqueness factors" include such things as road length, municipal cost indexes, and settlement allowances.

Can the minister tell us today: when was the last time that his department reviewed Taloyoak and Kugaaruk's "community uniqueness factors"? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our department tries to keep on top of all the communities and their uniqueness factors. There are some obvious ones that are taken note as they proceed in terms of developing new subdivisions or new roads in the community. If there's a population growth, it's always being watched.

We also work with the municipalities, looking at their audited financial statements and such that keep us in tabs to see if the community is able to proceed with the current funding formula that is in place. There are many things that help our department staff to keep on top the uniqueness factors of his communities and all of our communities. We're always trying to improve that situation.

I don't think it's the department's wish to not fund the communities adequately enough. We're trying to find ways to be even more helpful, but as for uniqueness factors, it's always ongoing, Mr. Speaker. If he has any other ideas towards how we can do that, I would sure appreciate some ideas from my colleague. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerck.

Question 043 – 5(1): Medical Travel Policy

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The residents of your community are also in my thoughts.

Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) my questions are related to the health minister regarding medical travel.

There have been ongoing issues in my communities from both Hall Beach and Igloolik regarding medical travel. I would like to have the minister clarify what's the normal procedure for medical travel. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Minister Angnakak.

Hon. Pat Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if I can ask the member just to clarify a bit in what he is seeking. Is it approval to get an escort or approval to... ? I'm not really sure. If he can just clarify a little bit better what he is asking of me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Kaernerck, please clarify your question. Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) It's regarding: when do they get their itinerary if they're going to travel for medical travel? That was my question. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Minister Angnakak. Perhaps that clarified it.

Ms. Pat Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the clarification. I know that this has been a concern voiced by many people. I understand that there are times when patients who are going to travel get their notice very late, either the same day sometimes or the day before. Obviously it's a process we don't want to work that. We want it to work in a much better way. We do have processes in place that are supposed to work so that people get advance notice.

The thing would be a doctor would come to your community. If the doctor says that you have to travel south for an appointment, your health care centre would work with the hospital here. We have caseworkers. Caseworkers would work with people wherever. If you're from the Qikiqtaaluk region, then they would work with Ottawa. Appointments would be decided upon when you would be seen in that appointment, and then that information would come back to the health centre, to the nurse, to the people who are working on medical travel.

They would say, "This is when the appointment is," and then the patient would be informed, "Your appointment is for next month" on whatever date, and then as the appointment gets closer, the medical travel people within the health care system would inform the people of their community who has an appointment on when their appointment would be and when their travel date would be.

Sometimes things don't always work the way we want them to work. Sometimes information can be missed, but I think everybody tries their best. I acknowledge that there are improvements to be made. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. My next question is: your department will have a two-year review on your department's review. Can you clarify the actual date the review will be submitted? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Angnakak.

Hon. Pat Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Actually I don't have an exact date, but I would expect it to be about January or February of next year, 2019. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the clarification on that, minister. Also on the review, will Hall Beach and Igloolik be consulted on the review and also for Nunavummiut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Angnakak.

Hon. Pat Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, people who use the Medical Travel Policy, the program, anybody who uses it, there's a survey that we would like to give people, for example, if you were at the boarding home or any part of the Medical Travel Policy or program. If you have been involved in it, then you're going to be consulted. People in the community would be consulted. Patients will be consulted. Boarding homes will be consulted. There is a whole range of people who use the program at certain times that will be consulted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Mikkungwak.

Question 044 – 5(1): Safe Shelter for Baker Lake

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, at the present time the community of Baker Lake does not have a safe shelter. Sadly, from time to time, conditions at home become dangerous for family members and they need a place to go. The Department of Family Services is responsible for providing funding and support for shelters across Nunavut.

Can the minister inform this House what steps should be followed to establish a safe shelter in a community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Family Services, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is correct. It is sad and unfortunate that we have to have safe shelters for women and children, but we do.

Right now we have five safe shelters in Nunavut. The member is correct that there is not a government-run one in Baker Lake. I don't know if there are any private dwellings there that may qualify as a safe shelter.

Right now the current process is that if a woman and her children need to be put into a safe place, then there is a process in place through the RCMP and through the social workers where they are sent to one of the five in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that some communities form societies to coordinate the operation of safe shelters. In other communities, national organizations like the YWCA provide support for local chapters to open safe shelters.

Can the minister clarify whether his department would support a private business to open a safe shelter in a community which does not have one currently? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We as Family Services are willing to work with any community that has concerns and want to get a safe shelter in their community. There are different models that are used in Nunavut as to who owns the facility, who runs the facility, how the facility is run, and I can't give the member exactly which process is correct for his community. If there is a society in his community that wants to set up a safe shelter, we can definitely look into it and work with them in that matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is an opportunity to access a two-storey building in Baker Lake with support from the private sector to open it as a safe shelter.

Will the minister commit to considering the possibility of supporting a private business in opening a safe shelter in Baker Lake and provide me with a definite response before the end of the sitting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated earlier, we are willing to work with people, hear suggestions, and listen to ideas and work with their communities and their societies to set up safe shelters where they are needed. If there is a society in Baker Lake, they can contact our department and they can come up with a proposal with how they think it should run or how the safe shelter in Baker Lake would run. We're open to work with them and talk with them. I'm not saying it will happen, but we're open to ideas to help his community with safe shelters. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak.

Question 045 – 5(1): Homelessness Survey

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for Homelessness.

Last week the minister's department announced that it would be conducting a door-to-door survey of homelessness in the community of Pond Inlet.

Mr. Speaker, in order to make solid, evidence-based decisions, we need solid, evidence-based information. I applaud the minister for taking this initiative. Today being a Friday, it should also be a "yes" day.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, will the minister commit to tabling the results of the Pond Inlet homelessness survey when the Legislative Assembly reconvenes for its spring sitting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for Homelessness, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for the question. There is a hidden homelessness survey going on in Pond but also in three other communities, and I cannot commit to tabling it in its entirety as there are confidential issues involved in terms of people's names and whether they want to be in there or how many homelessness, but for the most part of it, the results should be given to the House here.

The reason we need to do stuff like this is... I'm responsible for poverty reduction. If we don't have baseline information on the all the factors about poverty, then we can't judge ourselves, whether we're doing a good job or a bad job, and if things are getting better or worse. This is part of getting a baseline study. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for the response. As the minister is very much aware, Gjoa Haven has been near the top of the Nunavut Housing Corporation's needs list for new housing units due to the ongoing and severe housing shortage in the community. I have seen the pain of people who do not have permanent homes of their own.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister commit to undertaking a similar homelessness survey in Gjoa Haven? Yes? Mr. Speaker.

>> *Laughter*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let's just deal with this one survey first and then we can go from there. Yes, I'm aware that there is a big housing shortage in Gjoa Haven and I'm glad that this past summer they got 20 units to help them out on their crowded housing situation. We will deal with this situation after we finish these four communities, then we will go from there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government's bureau of statistics falls under the responsibility of the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. Can the minister clarify how his department has been working with the bureau of statistics to conduct this survey? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that this initiative is strictly by Family Services. It's a survey that was felt that was needed to get baseline data, and of course it could be shared with the bureau of statistics as long as there are no confidentiality issues. This survey is being organized, conducted, and the results are for Family Services under poverty reduction. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Question 046 – 5(1): Public Service Management

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Finance, who is responsible for the *Public Service Act*.

During the proceedings or our recent leadership forum, the Premier clearly indicated that we should give serious consideration into establishing a new public service commission.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly agree with the Premier, as the idea of establishing an arm's-length public service commission is something that I also have been raising.

Can the Minister of Finance indicate how he will be executing the Premier's direction to look at this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Finance, Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Through the leadership exercise there were a number of comments that were made in terms of what needs to be reviewed. There were at least four of our members that were trying for premiership and each of them had their own comments.

Through that election of ourselves, we were able to select our Premier and select our cabinet and within that as cabinet members, and I appreciate each and every one of the members for giving us the confidence. Each of us has been busy developing a mandate based on the Premier's statements, on the mandate itself. It is through those processes that we will be looking at various topics.

It is one that I do want to say that is the one we will be using to initiate a number of the initiatives that we want to see, but I just want to be clear that the Premier in his comments were during his leadership review, and there were four of them and we selected one. Through that process we go through and develop the mandate with all the elected officials. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did ask how the minister of finance will be executing the Premier's direction, but as I didn't get an answer on that, explicitly I'll be hoping to get an answer on this.

On June 1, 2017 the Legislative Assembly was informed by the minister's predecessor that the government had, and I quote, "engaged in a consultant who is also looking at public service commissions or how to tailor our own existing public service into a delivery model that would accommodate all the concerns that we're hearing across Nunavut."

Will the minister commit to tabling a copy of the consultant's findings and recommendations so that all Members of the Legislative Assembly have the opportunity to review the options that are open to us in the new government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I do want to state that the Premier was not the Premier when he was making those

statements. I just wanted to put this on the record, as you quoted that the Premier made that statement. When he was making those statements, he was an equal member of all of us trying to vie for premiership, and I just wanted to quote that.

For that particular study, there are a number of studies along with a number of discussions that have taken place in the Fourth Assembly and in the Third Assembly in terms of how best to deal with human resources. I need to take all of that information and work with my cabinet colleagues and determine how best to go forward.

I will not rely solely on any of the consultants' recommendations or options. We hire consultants to make some of these options and recommendations, but as governments, when we are making a decision and when we make that decision, we will inform the House and we will inform what information that we use. I don't want to go back to old consultants if us 22 members have not had an opportunity to be part of, but I will commit that whatever decision is made by this government, we will be happy to provide any kind of information. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to clarify on the minister's remarks that the minister will not be sharing the consultant's report and further that the Premier is not going to be held accountable to his promises during the leadership forum.

Further, as a former public servant, I strongly believe that we need a public service management model that deals effectively and fairly with employees who raise grievances and concerns, but also one which demands performance and accountability on the part of the workforce.

For example, while I have heard many concerns from my constituents about workplace bullying and other unacceptable behaviours, I have also heard many concerns from my constituents about the need to deal with such issues as workplace absenteeism and a lack of consequences for non-performance.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that we all keep in mind that we all serve the public and it's not the other way around. Can the minister indicate what his approach will be to these issues? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I need to remind members that you have to be clear on what question you're asking. That was a loaded statement with several implied questions. I'm going to allow the minister to answer the way he wants to answer it, but be careful. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that very good reminder. Several questions were asked.

I can only say, with respect to what the (interpretation ends) Premier (interpretation) stated, I can't speak to that myself. If he would like to speak to what he stated and if that's what he would like to work on, then that's what he will do. I alone can't speak for the (interpretation ends) Premier (interpretation) as to what he stated when he was vying for premiership. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The time for question period has expired. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Rumbolt.

Motion 011 – 5(1): Extension of Question Period

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Rule 39(7), I move, seconded by the Hon. Member from beautiful Baker Lake, that the time allotted for Oral Questions be extended. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. Can you try again, please?

>>*Laughter*

(interpretation) There is a motion on the floor and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion, please raise your hand. Thank you. All those opposed. Abstentions. The motion is carried and the question period has been extended for another 30 minutes. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

Question 047 – 5(1): New Language Incentive Policy

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question today to the Minister of Finance.

Earlier today Mr. Joanasie made a statement on the 10-year anniversary of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* and it led me to recall a policy that came into effect in the government on October 2, 2017, the *Inuit Language Incentive Policy*.

Mr. Speaker, this policy is a tiered level of allowance to recognize the different levels of proficiency in the Inuktitut language. Anyone who was receiving the language bonus policy before was grandfathered into the first level at \$1,500 a year and this new policy goes up to \$5,000 a year. It's quite a substantial difference in the language proficiency incentives.

My first question for the minister today is: how many people have formally requested an assessment under this policy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Finance, Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is a good question. Currently there are 426 requests that have been received. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, or IUT, in the policy it stated, is acting as the assessor to determine the Inuit language proficiency of GN employees. How many of those 426 employees have been tested? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To date there are less than a hundred that have been assessed; it was delayed a bit. It's set up properly now and the people who are surveyed do community visits now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know it's probably an evolving number, but under a hundred could mean 2 or 99. In the policy it states that the incentive would be applied retroactively from the date formally requested. How are those requests tracked and verified? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) When we receive applications, each of the applications have a date that we received, we track it through that. I have to verify whether that's tracking by my department or by the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Ms. Kamingoak.

Question 048 – 5(1): Future of Long-term Care in Nunavut

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My thoughts are with your community.

Good morning, Kugluktuk and the rest of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this week on March 6 I asked for an update on the Department of Health's efforts to address the need for long-term care across Nunavut. At the time the minister responded, and I quote, "There has been quite a bit of work that we're doing in looking at long-term care."

I would like to give the minister an opportunity to provide a more comprehensive answer. Can the minister tell this House more specifically what the government is doing overall to address long-term care needs across Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health, Minister Angnakak.

Hon. Pat Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. There are several different angles that we're using. Every day we are dealing with families that are in need for their elders. We recognize the fact that we don't have all of the resources available in a community that a family may need for their elder.

Every day we're dealing with things and we're trying to find ways in where we can help the elder in their community. For example, it's not always about long-term care when we talk about elders; it's also about home care and how we can provide more services to keep elders in their homes.

When it comes to long-term care, as I stated before, we have five long-term care facilities in Nunavut and we use Embassy West outside of Nunavut for elders who require more complex care. We're also working with those entities on a daily basis. We work with the people who run those entities. We meet regularly with them. We assess what kind of needs they need to improve in or what kind of help we can give them so that they could provide their care for our elders.

Long-term care is definitely on the radar. It is a priority. It is a priority even within our business plan for this year. We want to look at continuing care centres. We're always trying to improve our services and trying to find where we could improve them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister has indicated that there are long-term care facilities in Gjoa Haven, Igloolik, Arviat, and Baker Lake. I would note that there are also facilities in Iqaluit and Cambridge Bay. The minister has acknowledged, and again I quote from the March 6 *Blues*, "we really need to do something." Can the minister clarify whether or not the government is planning to invest in more long-term care facilities in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Angnakak.

Hon. Pat Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Health's business plan priorities are to assess population needs and to develop a long-term care plan. We need to expand our continuing care centres, so you're absolutely right. We need to do that. How we go about in doing this, I think we need to go forward in addressing this need as a Nunavut-wide initiative. I can't just look at one community; I think we need to look at all of Nunavut and see what it is that we need.

I expect that when it comes to more complex care needs of our elders, such as dementia care, we're going to need regional long-term care facilities in Nunavut, but I don't have all the details right now. That's something we really need to develop. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister is aware that two proposals have been brought forward to build long-term care facilities in the communities of Kugluktuk and Iqaluit. Can the minister clarify the status of the government's response to these two proposals and indicate whether any other Nunavut communities are being considered for long-term care facilities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Angnakak.

Hon. Pat Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that my department has met with the Kugluktuk people a number of times. I know that the mayor of Kugluktuk has requested a meeting with me and I have agreed to that meeting, and I understand that the long-term care centre in Kugluktuk is on the agenda. At this time there are no real details that are set. If any other communities are being considered, I can't say that right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Question 049 – 5(1): Northern Lights Trade Show Attendance

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question this morning is for the Premier. I would like to refer back to his Minister's Statement from March 7 of this week.

Regarding the Northern Lights trade show, I'll just quote from the Premier's statement. "There was a strong Government of Nunavut contingent to promote economic development, tourism, environment and industry developments."

My first question is my understanding is that the entire Nunavut cabinet attended this event. Who made the decision that the whole cabinet should attend? That's my first question, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Premier of Nunavut, Premier Quassa.

Hon. Paul Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for your good question. I know it's good to want to know the details as cabinet members. I wanted to speak or discuss this and it was a very good idea.

We agreed to introduce ourselves so that the public can see us, so that they can meet the people who they will be meeting with in the future, so that they can get to know their clients or the people that they will be meeting. We all agreed to go down for introduction services so that they will know as to whom they will be working with. It was appropriate at the time because various federal government members attended too. The cabinet

members met with the federal ministers. It was an opportune time to do that and it was a very good way to begin with new cabinet members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Premier for his good answer. With respect to when they met with the federal government counterparts or the ministers of the federal government, can the Premier table a document stating as to which cabinet members met with the federal government ministers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Premier Quassa.

Hon. Paul Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for his interest. Of course we need to be transparent because the Members of the Legislative Assembly are open to Nunavummiut. Therefore I can agree to the member's questions as to which members of the cabinet met with the federal government. They also met with the entities of Inuit organizations and they met with various different officials, not just the federal government ministers. It was very good and appropriate. Yes, I'll be able to table that document to you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Premier. As we're aware, as the Nunavut government, the funding is insufficient every fiscal year. Constituents are waiting for more housing and infrastructure. We lack all of it. When we come here to represent the people in our constituencies in the Legislative Assembly, this is our very concern to make sure we're managing our funds properly. In there it stated that "Nunavut Night in Ottawa"... (interpretation ends) I'll switch to English, Mr. Speaker.

A Nunavut Night in Ottawa, I'll quote from the Premier's statement. "Inuit artists exhibiting their designs and country food to complement the evening, the evening was well received by the 600 plus attendees."

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that this was a very beneficial event and it was very well received, but I have to speak on behalf of my constituents. There are hungry people in my communities and to feed 600 people in Ottawa on the government dime, I think, needs to be well justified. All of our expenditures need to be well justified.

In this line I would like to request the Premier to commit to tabling all the expenses associated with the Government of Nunavut's attendance at the Northern Lights trade show, including the Nunavut Night Event, and including all staff travel, accommodations, and hospitality costs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Premier Quassa.

Hon. Paul Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although I did not quite hear a question, maybe I did not quite understand. I want the member to know that not just the Nunavut territory was there. There were also Labrador and Nunavik organizations there. They took part in the Northern Lights trade show. It's not just for Nunavut territory; it's also for Labrador, Nunatsiavut, and Nunavik. They also take part in the Northern Lights trade show. The Nunavut government didn't pay solely for the 600 meals.

I just want you to know that with respect to the caribou, arts and crafts, the cooks, we weren't the only ones who paid for it. There were other entities like Labrador and Nunavimmiut that also took part because the Northern Lights trade show is not just operated by the Government of Nunavut; it is run by various entities. For the first time this year, we were new members and they were very proud of Nunavimmiut for being able to showcase all of that.

Let us be aware that there is a Northern Lights trade show every two years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Netser.

Question 050 – 5(1): School Bus Request from Naujaat

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Education.

Yesterday during the proceedings of the Committee of the Whole, there was a question in regard to busing services in Naujaat. As I stated, we have a very small bus in Naujaat. Perhaps the Department of Education can work with Naujaat's DEA in regard to their proposal to get a larger bus for their community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Education, Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for his question. I can say that our department has been informed and updated according to the member's request in regard to Naujaat's school buses. We have been updated continually and we will consider other communities' requests as well. We have to consider all of those aspects. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for his response. The small bus in Naujaat is getting too small. Is that busing service contracted out and who is it contracted out to? Who is it contracted for the school buses? Maybe you speak to the proponent to see if they can get a bigger bus and they can amend the contract if they need to, to get a bigger bus. Perhaps they can negotiate or talk with the DEA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. The busing service in Naujaat is contracted out through the local DEA. We also have capital projects people within our department, and the project managers will now start discussing this matter with the DEA. That bus provides busing serviced for the two schools and they cannot keep up with the number of students. Yes, they have initiated the talks with the capital infrastructure project manager and the DEA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response. We have heard that there's just going to be a very few communities getting new school buses this summer. Maybe the Department of Education can request money from the Department of Economic Development and Transportation if the Department of Education doesn't have enough money. Can the two departments of Education and Economic Development and Transportation together to get more school buses? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This was mentioned by the Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove. There was some talk as to whether private businesses can deal with this matter, but we're just leaving the matter open. If there are people interested in running school buses on contract, the Department of Education is always waiting for people to show their interest, which includes the DEAs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Mikkungwak.

Question 051 – 5(1): Upcoming Inuugatta Conference

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Culture and Heritage.

The minister produced some documents and I was very glad to see that ten years have passed since the *Inuit Language Protection Act* was passed. We have to protect our Inuktitut language more. The *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act* can be used to protect the languages more.

My question about the document is with respect to the upcoming fall Inuugatta Conference. Will all the communities of Nunavut be participating in this conference? Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague from Baker Lake. Apparently he is very interested in languages as well. The concert last night was very well attended and it was good to hear all the great music.

We have been looking at the Inuugatta Language Conference and there will be many language professionals and leaders that we would like to attend and we would like to hold this conference as much as we possibly can. There was an initial conference held by Culture and Heritage which was very well attended, not just from the people of Nunavut. We had very good attendance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for his response. My next question pertains to another item listed in the report which speaks to strengthening our language, culture, traditions, and identity as Inuit. With that statement, I now want to ask this question about the proposed conference being planned for this purpose. In light of many Inuit being functionally bilingual in Inuktitut and English, I want to know if the facilitators for this conference will have to be fluent in all official languages. Nonetheless, I want to know if the main topics will be discussed in the Inuit language or if it will mainly be in Inuktitut. That is my question. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank him for asking for further details on this subject. On this subject of languages, my personal viewpoint is that every person who can speak in any of the Inuit languages has a role to play in verbalizing, preserving, and strengthening our language. I can make that statement.

Further, the Department of Culture and Heritage is responsible for languages. As an example, February is Language Month and they hold linguistic activities throughout the entire month. We are currently planning another language conference. There is also the Qilaut music contest. Various programs are offered to promote languages and they serve to strengthen our language.

I would further encourage the public, as I imagine these issues will be brought up at the conference related to the usage of our languages within Nunavut, and ways to repatriate the usage of the languages in our communities. This shouldn't just be left to the schools but at our offices and workplaces throughout Nunavut, and to use our language in our daily lives every day. My expectations are that the discussions will be fascinating to listen in on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your final supplementary, Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Yes, one can only support this type of conference being held within Nunavut, and obviously, many participants will be invited to attend.

This essential language protection initiative is required to protect our language, and we have to be diligent in speaking and promoting our language. With that being the case, there is another matter listed in the report concerning the fact that many children need linguistic support to ensure their future is bright, and to preserve our language in the future, our culture, our traditions.

In the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, I wonder if this policy will actually be followed, and whether they will be relevant policies enabling that, which is what everyone has to understand. That is my final question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These highlight the fact that the *Inuit Language Protection Act* should be understood as it applies to schools and throughout Nunavut. These are our rights, and when people's rights are misunderstood, usually people don't exercise their rights.

This is what the public has to understand more generally and through my department's role within Culture and Heritage... . Our children are the ones for whom we are preparing these rights so that they may exercise them and retain their language while speaking it fluently. This will be a priority in our schools due to its importance. As I am wearing my other hat or portfolio, that is what I can state at this time.

However, I appreciate my colleague's question as I can speak to this matter using our language, and I welcome any suggestions to strengthen our language. We have a very unique language, not just in Canada but even outside of our nation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Members, please note that time for question period has expired and cannot be extended further. Going back to the orders of the day. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Responses to Petitions. Item 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Member for Arviat North and Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Item 14: Notices of Motions

Motion 012 – 5(1): Extended Sitting Hours and Days – Notice

Mr. Main: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Ma'na*. I give notice that on Monday March 12, I will move the following motion:

I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting hours and days as the Speaker deems fit to assist with the business before the House during the winter 2018 sitting of the legislative assembly.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Main. We will proceed with the orders of the day. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bill 1, Bill 2, Bill 3, and Bill 4 with Mr. Akoak in the Chair.

Before we proceed to the Committee of the Whole, I ask that you to remain at your desks as we will start as soon as the paperwork has been handed out.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

Item 19: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairman (Mr. Akoak): Good morning, colleagues and Nunavummiut.

I would like to call the committee meeting to order. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning. Mr. Chairman, we wish to continue with Bill 1 and commence with the review of the capital appropriation for the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. Are we in agreement that we first deal with the Nunavut Housing Corporation?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 01 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 2, 2018-2019 – Nunavut Housing Corporation – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, please proceed with your opening comments. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank my colleagues. (interpretation ends) The corporation's capital plan for 2018-19 consists of \$40,302,000 from the Government of Nunavut and funding of \$5,745,000 from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) comprised of \$4.29 million under the Social Housing Agreement and \$1,455,000 through the Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement. These funding sources bring the total NHC capital budget for 2018-19 to \$46,047,000.

An additional \$46.7 million of previously allocated CMHC social infrastructure funding will be combined with GN capital funding to increase the number of public housing units built in 2018-19.

NHC capital funding remains at approximately the same level as last year for modernization and improvement, also known as M&I, for the corporation-owned public housing and staff housing units and homeownership programs, including the Heating Oil Tank Replacement Program and the Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Preventative Maintenance Program.

Mr. Chairman, as a territorial corporation, the NHC is legislated to carry over funds from one year to the next to ensure that all funds designated for housing remain committed to that objective. To that end, we currently hold a carry-forward balance of over \$13 million in the public housing M&I budget. A centralized M&I fund has been established which will allow the housing corporation to address pressing M&I concerns without reallocating community-based funds.

Mr. Chairman, the NHC's funding for the Fire Damage and Replacement Fund will increase by \$1,342,000 to \$3.9 million in 2018-19. This funding includes \$1 million in base funding for repairs and \$2.9 million to demolish and rebuild the six-plex in Iqaluit that was damaged beyond repair last February.

The NHC's Mobile Equipment Fund will increase by \$15,000. This increase is to allow the NHC and local housing organizations (LHOs) to keep up with the increase in public and staff housing units in our inventory across the territory.

LHO warehouse facilities in Nunavut are an average age of between 21 and 23 years, and some require significant maintenance and repairs. In addition there has been substantial growth in the number of housing units to be maintained and the sheer size of some warehousing facilities can no longer accommodate current demands.

There has been a decrease in the LHO warehousing budget from \$4.9 million to \$1.3 million. This decrease comes because the NHC will be in the planning phase for construction of new facilities following completion of the new warehouse in Baker Lake. These funds will be used to conduct condition assessment of warehousing in other communities and develop designs for use in future years.

Beginning in 2019-2020, \$7.3 million will be requested annually to meet LHO warehousing needs across the territory.

Mr. Chairman, there is no change from last year in staff housing construction funding. The NHC is anticipating to construct 23 new staff housing units across the territory with \$5 million in 2018-19 GN capital funding for staff housing construction, combined with savings and carryovers from previous years. Several factors are considered when allocating new staff housing construction. These units will be critical to meeting the GN's recruitment and retention needs.

The NHC anticipates an increase in public housing construction funding by \$2.5 million, from \$15 million to \$17.5 million, to gradually and steadily address Nunavut's growing public housing need.

Mr. Chairman, in March 2016 the NHC welcomed the announcement of new federal funding over two years for housing through the federal Social Infrastructure Fund. The Social Infrastructure Fund money included \$76.7 million dedicated over two years for construction of new public housing. With the \$46.7 million earmarked for 2018-19, the NHC was able to already plan for and allocate 95 units in 2018-19. This allocation was approved in the fall of 2016.

The \$17.5 million of GN funding will allow for construction of 35 additional new units across seven communities. Like all public housing construction, the allocation of these 35 units is based on the NHC's needs-based public housing construction allocation methodology.

With this construction as well as new funding that will be coming to the NHC from the federal government through the National Housing Strategy, we are steadily working to address Nunavut's severe housing crisis.

Mr. Chairman and committee members, I thank you and I look forward to a meaningful discussion with my officials. I will be pleased to hear your comments and answer any questions that you may have at the appropriate time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Quassa. I will ask Member Towtongie, please proceed with your opening comments. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Regular Members' Caucus concerning its review of the proposed 2018-19 Capital Estimates of the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

The housing corporation's proposed capital estimates for 2018-19 are \$40,302,000. The corporation's capital estimates were \$39,965,000 for the 2017-18 fiscal year and \$38,060,000 for the 2016-17 fiscal year.

Mr. Chairman, the ongoing shortage of public housing in all of Nunavut's communities is an issue of significant concern to all Members of the Legislative Assembly. The housing corporation's proposed capital estimates for 2018-19 include \$17.5 million in Government of Nunavut funding for the construction of new public housing units.

Although the 2017 federal budget announced \$240.0 million in funding over 11 years towards meeting housing needs in Nunavut, the 2018 federal budget contained no new Nunavut-specific housing funding. Members note that the Government of Nunavut's official reaction to the federal budget did not specifically address this issue.

Mr. Chairman, the housing corporation's current methodology for determining new public housing construction allocations is formula-driven and based on relative need. Members emphasize the importance of ensuring that local housing organizations and Nunavut residents have confidence in the accuracy of the Nunavut Housing Corporation's approach, including its process for verifying wait-list numbers. Members urge the minister to table on an annual basis the housing corporation's updated allocation methodology.

The housing corporation's proposed capital estimates for 2018-19 include \$5.0 million in funding for the construction of new staff housing units. Members note that the housing corporation's *Blueprint for Action on Housing* indicates that one of its priorities is to work with the Department of Finance to "review and revise the current GN Staff Housing Policy."

Members also note that the housing corporation has previously indicated that "factors such as student-to-educator ratios, and addressing the ongoing issue of forced shared units, as well as a review of longstanding vacant positions, will impact each community's staff housing needs assessment."

The housing corporation has also indicated that it will "continue to explore other options, such as construction of larger multiplexes in communities with greater need, and purchasing existing buildings to be added to the staff housing inventory." (interpretation ends) Members further note that on February 23, 2018 the NHC issued a *Request for Proposals for the Lease of Public and Staff Housing Units in all Nunavut Communities*. Members also note that the NHC has recently announced the launch of a renewed staff condominium program in Iqaluit.

Members encourage the NHC to work closely with such entities as the Qulliq Energy Corporation and the Energy Secretariat to identify practicable and affordable ways of enhancing the energy efficiency of new public and staff housing units, including the installation of solar panels.

Mr. Chairman, the NHC administers a significant number of different programs to assist homeowners and potential homeowners in Nunavut. Members note that the NHC is proposing a total allocation of \$4,616,000 for its various homeownership programs in its 2018-19 capital estimates. (interpretation) The housing corporation's budget for homeownership programs has not changed since the introduction of the 2011-12 capital estimates.

The housing corporation's 2016-17 annual report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on September 19, 2017. This report provides important information concerning the administration of the Nunavut Housing Corporation's homeownership programs. Members note significant improvements in the level of detail contained in the housing corporation's most recent annual reports concerning the administration of its homeownership programs. This information will help all Members of the Legislative

Assembly to better evaluate the extent to which the housing corporation's homeownership programs are being accessed in small, medium and large communities.

On November 2, 2016 the government announced the reinstatement of a residency requirement for the Nunavut Downpayment Assistance Program. The housing corporation's most recent annual report indicates that approximately \$1,360,000 was expended under this program during the 2016-17 fiscal year. Members are of the view that the Nunavut Housing Corporation's homeownership programs should benefit long-term residents of the territory. Members strongly support stringent residency requirements for all of the housing corporation's homeownership programs. Members also emphasize the importance of ensuring ease of access to information concerning the housing corporation's homeownership programs.

Two specific issues that have been raised in the Legislative Assembly in recent years concern the availability of certified contractors and tradespeople in smaller communities and the housing corporation's income thresholds for its homeownership programs.

(interpretation ends) Members are pleased to note that the NHC's most recent annual report indicates that "In some communities, the lack of available local contractors has limited the NHC's ability to deliver its homeownership programs. Much of the work designed to be supported through NHC's homeownership programs requires specific skilled labour and the costs of flying in contractors to do renovation and repair work significantly adds to the costs. (interpretation) For this reason, a new clause was added to home repair and maintenance program guidelines to allow additional program funding to include travel costs of bringing a contractor in to complete the job."

Members encourage the housing corporation to regularly review its Homeownership Program Income Eligibility Limits to reflect the high cost of living in Nunavut's isolated communities.

\$1.38 million is included in the housing corporation's proposed 2018-19 capital estimates to complete construction of the new Baker Lake LHO complex. Information provided by the Nunavut Housing Corporation indicates that work will be undertaken during the 2018-19 fiscal year to "complete LHO complex condition assessment and construction prioritization and three LHO complex designs."

The housing corporation's proposed 2018-19 capital estimates include \$1,064,000 for the purpose of providing an annual contribution to local housing organizations for the creation of a vehicle reserve fund. Members (interpretation ends) recommend that the NHC's annual reports include a detailed listing of vehicle acquisitions undertaken by LHOs.

The NHC's 2016-17 annual report indicates that, "Access to federal and GN funding has allowed the NHC to complete a mould assessment project to address Nunavut's most affected units. Where mould was found, it will be remediated either by Local Housing Organizations, or, where necessary, contracted to companies specializing in mould

remediation...subsequent to year-end, the corporation committed \$5.0 million to remediate units affected by mould in five communities. (interpretation) The corporation is in the process of assessing the remediation costs of units (interpretation ends) affected by mould in other communities.”

Given the significant threat that mould poses to the health and well-being of our territory’s residents, members strongly urge the minister to regularly update the Legislative Assembly on the status of the NHC’s efforts to combat mould infestation across the territory.

(interpretation) Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2018-19 Capital Estimates of the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Towntongie. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I move that you report progress to the Speaker. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Sergeant-at-Arms. Going back to the orders of the day. Item 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Akoak.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 1 and would like to report progress. Also, Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Member for Uqqummiut, thank you, Mr. Keyootak.

>>*Laughter*

All those in favour of the motion, please raise your hand. Thank you. All those opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. Item 22. *Orders of the Day*. (interpretation ends) Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a reminder that commencing at half past one this afternoon, standing committee members will meet in the Nanuq Committee Room.

Orders of the Day for March 12:

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. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
 - Motion 10 – 5(1)
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 1
 - Bill 2
 - Bill 3
 - Bill 4
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Clerk. (interpretation) Before we adjourn after meeting this week, I would like to thank all our staff in the Legislative Assembly. Interpreters, I thank all of you. I thank all of our pages.

>>*Applause*

I wish everyone a safe weekend.

This House stands adjourned until Monday, March 12, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 12:00*

