

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Tony Akoak

(Gjoa Haven)

Hon. David Akeeagok

(Quttiktuq)

Minister of Economic Development and Transportation; Minister of Justice; Minister responsible for Labour

Hon. Jolie Kaerner

(Amittuq)

Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Languages; Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation

Karen Nutarak

(Tununiq)

Hon. Daniel Qavvik

(Hudson Bay)

Minister of Environment; Minister of Energy; Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok

(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguut)

Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister responsible for Immigration; Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs

Mary Killiktee

(Uqummiut)

Hon. Lorne Kusugak

(Rankin Inlet South)

Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial Management Board; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation

Joanna Quassa

(Aggu)

Bobby Anavilok

(Kugluktuk)

Janet Brewster

(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Hon. Pamela Gross

(Cambridge Bay)

Deputy Premier; Minister of Education; Minister responsible for Seniors

Adam Lightstone

(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Hon. John Main

(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

Minister of Health; Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention

Inagayuk Quqqiaq

(Netsilik)

Alexander Sammurtok

(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

Joe Savikataaq

(Arviat South)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

George Hickes

(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole

Solomon Malliki

(Aivilik)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Craig Simailak

(Baker Lake)

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk

(Pangnirtung)

Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for Homelessness; Minister of Human Resources; Minister responsible for the Status of Women; Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Friday, November 3, 2023**

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeeagok, Hon. P.J. Akeeagok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Mr. Bobby Anavilok, Ms. Janet Brewster, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Hon. Joelle Kaerner, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. Solomon Malliki, Hon. John Main, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Ms. Karen Nutarak, Hon. Daniel Qavvik, Ms. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Inagayuk Quqqiaq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Mr. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 10:00*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Tony Akoak)(interpretation): Good morning. Before we begin, Mr. Malliki, can you say the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good morning, my fellow Nunavummiut.

Speaker's Statement

Before we proceed, (interpretation ends) I have a special message for a special person this morning. She will be heading to work pretty soon, so I would like to put it out. This would be for November 5, but I would like to announce it today due to the fact that we are not sitting over the weekend.

This would be for a special lady that I met a long time ago and words are only what they mean, but my feeling for her isn't wrong and I love her very much. She has raised kids and we have grandchildren, and November 5 would be our 46th anniversary. I would like to wish her a happy anniversary for Sunday. Thank you.

>>*Applause*

(interpretation) If you are watching the proceedings, (interpretation ends) good morning.

Ministers' Statements. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 333 – 6(2): September/October Community Visits

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Good morning and thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Happy early anniversary on a very special day that happens to be my birthday coming up as well on November 5. Happy anniversary. It's a major milestone

that you're going through, so (interpretation) I'm proud of you both. (interpretation ends) *Ullaakkut*, my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, when I am invited to communities, I try to take every opportunity possible to engage in conversations with people I meet along the way. This is how I learn about the differences in each community.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge our colleagues who work hard for the communities I visited this fall: MLA for Kinngait and Kimmirut, Minister David Joanasi; MLAs for Rankin Inlet, both the Minister Lorne Kusugak as well as Alexander Sammurto; and MLA for Baker Lake, Craig Simailak.

Mr. Speaker, when in communities, I do my best to meet with hamlet mayors and councillors, with educators, with health care staff, and Government of Nunavut employees. I chat with people at the grocery stores as well as the coffee shops.

I was happy to meet with Rankin Inlet's Mayor, His Worship Harry Towtongie, Baker Lake's now former Mayor Richard Aksawnee, as well as Kimmirut's Mayor Maliktoo Lyta and the hamlet council there. Our talks focused on the highlights in each community and areas where improvements are needed.

I enjoyed chatting with students at Kimmirut's Qaqqalik School and Kinngait's Peter Pitseolak High School. These young people are the future of our territory.

Mr. Speaker, at Baker Lake's Nunavut Arctic College Community Learning Centre, I met with a few of teachers in training. I also spoke with young people with big dreams taking the Adult Basic Education Program, a solid step towards their future success.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to each community that welcomed me so warmly and shared their stories with me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

Minister's Statement 334 – 6(2): Nunavut Territorial Parks Awards

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the House of the 2022-23 Nunavut Territorial Parks Awards recipients. This is an incentive from the Department of Environment to provide \$500 grants.

This award is presented to high school students who have demonstrated academic excellence in courses such as Aulajaaqtut or Environmental Studies and have

demonstrated our government's *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* principle of Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq, respect and care for our environment.

Mr. Speaker, this award is a commitment stemming from the Nunavut Territorial Parks Inuit Impact and Benefits Agreement. My department is committed to providing an annual award to students who aspire to enter the environmental field.

Mr. Speaker, our territorial parks are unique. We as Nunavummiut take pride in our land and pass on our teachings of the importance of protecting, sharing, and enjoying our parks.

Mr. Speaker, the 2022-23 Nunavut Territorial Award recipients are:

- Tori Evalik of Cambridge Bay
- Paul MacDonald of Kugluktuk
- Dishita Rana of Rankin Inlet
- Ryan Stanley Arreak of Clyde River
- James Qaunaq of Grise Fiord
- Benjamin Alivaktuk of Pangnirtung
- Ayla Marie Mickiyuk of Sanikiluaq
- Cassidy Devereaux in Iqaluit
- Adam Judeau in Kimmirut
- Manumikalla Ashevak in Kinngait

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of these outstanding students and future leaders. I wish them all the luck and success in reaching their educational aspirations. I am incredibly proud of their interest in territorial parks and environment-related studies.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating these recipients. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Minister's Statement 335 – 6(2): Nunavut Housing Forum

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Good morning, Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, just over a year ago, our government announced Igluliuqatigiingniq, the Nunavut 3000 strategy for “building houses together.” Since then, the Nunavut Housing Corporation has been busy working towards the ambitious objectives we set out that day.

For me, a highlight from the past year was the Nunavut Housing Forum held in Iqaluit over two and half days in June. The objective of the housing forum was to bring together key stakeholders and other interested organizations to discuss strategies for improving housing in the communities and to share ideas for how we can collectively meet the target to create 3,000 new housing units across the territory by 2030.

Over 200 people participated in the forum. Delegates included representatives from the municipal, territorial and federal levels of government, the housing industry, local housing organizations, community organizations, and some Members of the Assembly. Participants discussed a wide variety of topics, including community housing priorities, building innovations, and training and employment, among others. The feedback that the Nunavut Housing Corporation received on policies and programs to improve housing conditions across the territory was invaluable and has helped to keep our work grounded in what matters most, which is supporting communities and Nunavummiut.

Through Igluliuqatigiingniq, our government seeks to expand Nunavut's housing continuum and create more autonomy for Nunavummiut in choosing how we live and work in our communities, but we cannot do this alone. As I have said all along, partnerships will be the key to our success. The housing forum was an important opportunity to come together to forge new relationships and to reinforce existing ones.

By building houses together, we can make significant strides towards our common goal of creating stronger, more resilient communities that Nunavummiut can call home for generations to come. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Minister's Statement 336 – 6(2): Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission – Nunavut Consultations

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Good morning, Mr. Speaker, and good morning to my fellow members and Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, back in April and May of this year, it was with great hope that I sent letters to the ministers of Canadian Heritage and of Innovation, Science and Industry, urging the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission to conduct a consultation session with Nunavummiut on the state of telecommunications.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to tell Nunavummiut that the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission has reopened consultations to improve telecommunications in northern communities. Recognizing that telecom services are critical for Inuit and Nunavummiut to fully participate in today's digital society, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission is committed to improving the coverage, quality, and affordability of telecom services in Nunavut and throughout Inuit Nunangat.

Inuit and Nunavummiut voices are critical for the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission to improve telecom services in Nunavut. Mr. Speaker, I am standing here today to encourage Nunavummiut to participate in the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission's invitation to share their thoughts on how to improve services in northern communities. Specifically, among the key focal points of the consultation, whether the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission should create a subsidy to make Internet services more affordable, how telecom providers should engage with Inuit and local communities, and how you believe competition in the telecom market can be improved.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I encourage Nunavummiut, organizations, and businesses across Nunavut to go to www.crtc.gc.ca/north, where a notice of consultation is available in all four of Nunavut's official languages to find more information, including how to submit your input online, by mail or fax. The deadline for submissions to the reopened consultations Canada's Far North is 8 p.m. EST, November 29, 2023. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister's Statement 337 – 6(2): Human Resources Learning Series

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, my colleagues and the people of Nunavut and Pangnirtung.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to share that the Department of Human Resources' Public Service Training Division partnered with the University of Alberta to run two cohorts of the Human Resources Learning Series.

The series consists of nine distance learning courses on human resources management and planning, occupational health and safety, financial management, recruitment, and

training. The series is ideal for Government of Nunavut employees who want to enhance or refresh their knowledge of current human resources trends and practices.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate 28 employees who completed the program. This reflects our government's commitment to providing training to develop and strengthen employees' skills, knowledge, and abilities under the Inuit societal value of Pilimmaksarniq. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Minister's Statement 338 – 6(2): Minimum Wage Increase

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends)
The Government of Nunavut is committed to making life more affordable for Nunavummiut.

We recognize Nunavummiut face the highest cost of living in Canada and that, during this time of increasing costs and high inflation, the financial pressure on Nunavummiut has increased. These pressures can be especially felt by our lowest income earners who make the territorial minimum wage.

With these issues in mind, over this past summer, the Department of Justice undertook a comprehensive review of Nunavut's minimum wage. The review included a survey and consultations with both employees and businesses, as well as a thorough financial and statistical review.

I thank the public from every community in Nunavut, as well of the Nunavut business community, who took the time to participate in the minimum wage review and to share valuable feedback on the impact of a change to the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, based on the results of the survey and analysis, I am announcing today that the Nunavut government will increase the minimum wage rate in the territory from \$16 to \$19 per hour effective January 1, 2024.

>>Applause

This increase means that Nunavut will once again have the highest minimum wage in Canada and we are confident will help address the impact of inflation and cost of living increases felt by Nunavut's minimum wage earners.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the increase in the current minimum wage, the department is also exploring options to index future minimum wage increases to a specific formula, such as the Consumer Price Index, to ensure more consistent and regular increases going forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Kaermerk.

Minister's Statement 339 – 6(2): QEC's New Baker Lake Head Office Community Celebration

Hon. Joelle Kaermerk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues. Good morning to Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, on September 27, 2023 the Qulliq Energy Corporation held an opening ceremony for the new head office in Baker Lake, speeches were held, and staff guided and tours were in the new building.

Unfortunately, fog prevented our flight from landing in Baker Lake. I was pleased to learn the corporation's staff and Premier Akeegok proceeded with the opening ceremony followed by a community feast serving caribou stew, burgers, and bannock.

I would like to thank the Premier, who was previously also serving as Minister for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, for stepping in to assist with this celebration. The Premier thanked and acknowledged three of the Qulliq Energy Corporation's longest-serving employees: Ruth Tapatai, Ruth Stoddart, and Rosie Iyago. I echo the Premier's sentiment and acknowledge and thank these individuals for their dedication to the corporation and the Baker Lake community.

The new Qulliq Energy Corporation building creates a stable hub where our team can serve our customers and partners more efficiently. The design and construction highlight the Qulliq Energy Corporation's commitment to adopting energy-saving technologies, pursue Energy Star certification, and protect the environment.

On behalf of the Qulliq Energy Corporation, I would like to say thank you to the residents of Qamani'tuaq, the Hamlet of Baker Lake, and Member of the Legislative Assembly for Qamani'tuaq, Craig Simailak. Strengthening [piliriqatigiinniq], working together, and collaborations enables the Qulliq Energy Corporation to serve all 25 communities as efficiently and affordably as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 446 – 6(2): Happy Birthday to Wendel Quassa

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to my fellow members and also Nunavummiut. Hopefully, you have a good anniversary.

This was a reminder for me, I started counting and it has been 26 years since we were given a child, a little boy. Today is his birthday and we hope he has a great day. Wendel Quassa, thank you for the help you provide. We love you and wish you a wonderful birthday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Member's Statement 447 – 6(2): Access to Prescription Medications

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to address a concern raised by a number of my constituents with respect to regular access to prescription medications and supplies. Even though such supplies as medication or hearing aids are supposed to be provided on a regular basis through the supplier out of Cambridge Bay, on many occasions they are late or do not arrive for some weeks.

Mr. Speaker, this creates hardships for those who need these medications or supplies. Individuals who suffer from arthritis or chronic pain should not have to bear the discomfort because the supplies are not available. Those who have difficulty hearing should not have to go through their day without their hearing aids because there are no batteries. From time to time, community residents even turn to social media to ask others if they can help with medication or hearing aid supplies. This should not be happening.

Mr. Speaker, I raise these issues in order that the appropriate authorities hear these concerns. My constituents feel desperate at times, and this creates personal hardships. Mr. Speaker, I hope the Minister of Health will hear these concerns and work with his department officials to ensure that service in this area can be improved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

Member's Statement 448 – 6(2): Invitation to Premier and Ministers

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to people in Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend an invitation to the Premier, the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, the Minister responsible for the

Nunavut Housing Corporation, and the Minister of Community and Government Services to visit Chesterfield Inlet at the earliest opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, Chesterfield Inlet is a non-decentralized community. During our fall sitting, I have spoken on many occasions about the community's priorities, which include new housing, a new power plant, improvements to existing water infrastructure, better access to reliable and high-quality granular supplies, and economic development opportunities from my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, the construction of Chesterfield Inlet's new airport terminal building is a good sign of progress. As a non-decentralized community, we are also hopeful that the 20 new public housing and affordable units that are included in the Nunavut 3000 strategy will become a reality in the near future, and that their construction will provide an opportunity to residents to gain skills and experience.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that our ministers have the opportunity to see how the government plans are impacting the communities. I know that the residents of Chesterfield Inlet will provide the warmest welcome to the Premier, and I look forward to hosting a visit in the very near future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Member's Statement 449 – 6(2): Happy Birthday to Aviaq Lightstone

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to start off by quoting a very old nursery rhyme "Remember, remember, the fifth of November." However, unrelated to this rhyme, it's clearly a very special day for many. Happy early anniversary and happy early birthday, Mr. Premier and Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, four years ago, I had to abruptly leave our Committee of the Whole proceedings and 12 hours later I was filled with joy as I brought home another beautiful baby boy.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very fortunate to rise in this House and share this announcement with all those watching on the worldwide web, as well as listening through radio and television. I would like to stand and say happy birthday, Aviaq Lightstone, and would like to extend an invitation for the Premier to come and join our celebration, have some cake and watch the toddlers run and have fun and play games.

Mr. Speaker, I've been very fortunate that November 5 has yet to conflict with our Saturday committee meetings, but I would note that this November 5 falls on daylight saving time. Another fortunate aspect will be that my boys will think they slept in when they inevitably wake me up at 7 in the morning.

Again, I just want to say happy birthday, Aviaq, and I hope that the Premier and all other members, including yourself, Mr. Speaker, will be able to join us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Member's Statement 450 – 6(2): Young Hunters Program in Baker Lake

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to my constituents in Baker Lake. I'm glad it's Friday. Hopefully, you'll have a good weekend.

(interpretation ends) I'm pleased to announce again that another young hunters' program has begun in Baker Lake. This is the second cohort, the first one was earlier this year that I spoke to. The Qamani'tuaq young hunters program is driven by the Baker Lake Hunters and Trappers Organization in partnership with Arctic Connexion, their management of the program. It is funded by the climate change and health adaptation program in climate change preparedness in the north until March 2025. It's a 10-weeklong program that goes on three times a year, fall, winter and spring.

Mr. Speaker, this program wouldn't be able to succeed if we didn't have such talented instructors. There are two main instructors; John Etegooyok and Peter Tiktaalaaq. Occasionally, they do invite elders to share their wealth of knowledge with the youth.

Mr. Speaker, the fishing and hunting they do depend on the season. Most days, they would be mostly hunting caribou. When they are not able to go out due to weather, they are in the community learning to make tools, and they have qamutik-making and cabin-building workshops. Mr. Speaker, I would like to quickly mention the names of the youth that are taking part. In group one, there are:

- Fernando Quinangnaq-Makayak
- Ryan Tapatai
- Marcus Tutanuaq
- Nolan Angotingoar
- Preston Lareau

In group two, there are:

- Chase Tiktaalaaq
- Johnson Narkyagik
- Amy Dawn Iqqaat
- Brooke Tagoona
- Kate Beth Etegooyok
- Darla Campbell Iksiktaaryuk

In the third group, Mr. Speaker there are:

- John Kingilik
- Koen Tapatai
- Marcus Tutanuaq
- Tyler Autut
- Sigurdson Nukik
- Jerry Aningaak
- Darcy Amaruq

I'm very glad this group of young hunters are learning as they prepare for when they become adults. I'm sure they will be able to provide for their future families. I hope they have a successful fall hunt. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Tununiq. Ms. Nutarak.

Member's Statement 451 – 6(2): Success of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Montessori

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to say 'happy anniversary' to you, and Premier have a happy birthday and your son.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak about a program that is very close to my heart, the Pirurvik Preschool Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Montessori curriculum.

Mr. Speaker, I stepped away from this program once I was elected to represent my constituents in this House. However, I have been monitoring the progress and I am very pleased to note it's an ongoing success.

Mr. Speaker, the Pirurvik Preschool Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Montessori curriculum is an early childhood education initiative that blends *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and *Inunnguiniq* traditional Inuit child rearing with Montessori methods.

Mr. Speaker, self-direction, observation, and hands-on learning are key principles of the Montessori methods and are very similar to traditional Inuit approaches to child rearing. I was very happy to receive very positive feedback from two teachers who deliver school classes to students who went through Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Montessori. The students are patient, respectful, and have great stamina for their studies.

Mr. Speaker, the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Montessori program is running in two communities, and I believe the benefits speak for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, with the introduction of the new full-time kindergarten pilot project, I would like to encourage the Department of Education to implement the Pirurvik

Preschool Inuit Qaujimaqatungit Montessori curriculum in more communities. At an appropriate time, I will have questions on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Member's Statement 452 – 6(2): Successful and Safe Weekend Hunting

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good day to people in Arviat.

Mr. Speaker, today is the fifth and tomorrow is the weekend. People of Arviat know that there are a lot of caribou coming your way and they will be doing a lot of caribou hunting. Please be careful.

There is not much snow yet and they will probably go by ATV. Whenever there is heavy snow, you can get stuck with an ATV. Just be aware of that. It's great that people in Arviat will be able to eat fresh caribou meat. So have a good day and good hunting tomorrow. After another weekend, I will be able to see you again and taste the fresh caribou meat. Have a good day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Member's Statement 453 – 6(2): Minimum Wage Increase

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to acknowledge the minimum wage increase. What I know is I have many constituency who are living in overcrowded houses and there are many young people who are just entering the workforce. To have a minimum wage that is increased from about \$33,000 a year to approximately \$39,000, I think will importantly go towards creating healthier homes by allowing families to be better able to afford healthy food baskets and the cost of living.

Sometimes it is really difficult to see the impact that we have as regular members in asking for change. Today, I feel really good, and I appreciate the increased minimum wage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Pangnirtung, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk.

Member's Statement 454 – 6(2): The Passing of Meeka Arnakak

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to bring this out. The husband agreed for me to do this. Many people have heard that Meeka Arnakak passed away October 30 at 3:30 in the morning at the Qikiqtani General Hospital. She was surrounded by her family.

Many people knew her with her help with *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*. She was a previous teacher, author and a singer. She was a social worker, councillor, elder, a mother, grandmother, a sister, and an aunt. She was a cousin, an older sister and to friend to many.

Nunavut has lost a very important person who has taught many people about having a good life, and she shared her wisdom. We will miss her wisdom. Many people will recognize her song that is called Butterfly. She sang that song. I have her family in my heart this morning. Many people know her and her husband. They have been counsellors and they have helped correctional inmates and elders.

The family wanted this to be announced because many people knew her. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Condolences to the family, the communities, and to Nunavut.

Members' Statements. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Member's Statement 455 – 6(2): Successful Organ Transplant

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, this is to advise that a family in Arviat, whom I want to speak on behalf of, hence my rising today, is the Kablutsiak family namely Francine and Quuqqut Kablutsiak, have a son, and his name is Hunter Kablutsiak, now 17 years old. He is a hunter, a hockey player, and a fox trapper.

Mr. Speaker, he's currently taking grade 12 classes. In September 2020, medical staff found that Hunter needed a new kidney or (interpretation ends) kidney transplant (interpretation) and they had to search for donor, since September 2020, when he was diagnosed, and his father Quuqqut, or Daniel wanted to donate his other kidney as a (interpretation ends) kidney donor (interpretation) so, for that reason, he had to do certain things through exercising for 30 months to lose weight.

The resulting effect was, that on June 29, 2023, the surgery transpired for Hunter in Winnipeg and it was successful and the donation went well. His father donated his kidney

to his son and everything worked out. The whole family is quite happy, (interpretation ends) and the family would like to thank the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg, the children's hospital and staff, and medical travel for the Government of Nunavut.

They would like thank Cayla Kablutsiak who was the escort for Daniel, Transplant Manitoba, Dr. Pinsk, Dr. Offerni, and Dr. Peterson. They would also like to thank Julie Strong, Jody Zawatski, residents of Arviat, John Arnalukjuak High School, DOT and Marnie, as well as Arctic Connexion.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Hunter and the Kablutsiak family, and thank all the people, organizations, and businesses that made this transplant possible. (interpretation) I share in your successful operation and I thank everyone who made this possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Never give up hope. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

Return to Oral Question 604 – 6(2): Country Food Initiatives

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a Return to Oral Question that was asked by Joanna Quassa, Member for Aggu. This is in response to 604 – 6(2). It was asked on October [30], 2023 in regard to country food initiatives.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to supplement an answer I gave during question period on October [30], 2023. The Member from Aggu requested more information regarding the Country Food Distribution Program.

I have confirmed with my officials that the policy update is drafted, but still in need of final review. We anticipate having the policy approved and circulated by the end of the fiscal year.

The annual reports for the country food distribution for 2020-21, and 2021-22 is just waiting for the translations to be finalized and I will commit to tabling the reports as soon as possible.

Under the *Katujjiluta* mandate we are committed to enabling elders to better access country food.

The member also pointed out the high electricity costs associated with the freezer program. We have received additional funding for green energy infrastructure upgrades and are working to ensure opportunities to shift to green energy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Pangnirtung, Ms. Nakashuk.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I was reminded that we should recognize some people in our society that are still here, especially before they pass. It's what I was told, and I think it has been very good to recognize people that are hardworking, and they commit to a lot of things.

Today, I want to recognize Ms. Laurel McCorrison, excuse my mistake there, Executive Director of the Uqutaq Society for the last four and a half years, Ms. McCorrison currently oversees a number of homelessness programs for the people in Iqaluit, including a 30-bed men's shelter, a 30-bed men's transitional housing facility, a 17-bed low-barrier shelter for men and women, and 11 affordable housing apartments.

Ms. McCorrison's hard work led to the opening of the city's first low-barrier shelter and the first day warming program. Ms. McCorrison is now in the process a new multi-service low-barrier facility and a new affordable single-room occupancy housing complex.

Please join me in welcoming Ms. McCorrison to the House. Her dedication to serving vulnerable populations in Iqaluit is admirable. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to your House and thank you very much for looking after people who are in need.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize Laurel McCorrison. Laurel and I met a few years ago. She came to work for Uqutaq after I left the society. However, we have developed a really good working relationship and I think it's a good friendship as well.

I have so much respect for Ms. McCorrison for everything that she does and all of the sacrifices that she makes to be here in Iqaluit to serve our homeless population, including being far away from her own family. Thank you for being here, Laurel. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to your House. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize Laurel McCorrison, as I first met Ms. McCorrison a number of years ago during the Iqaluit mayor's housing taskforce. At that time, I came to the realization that she's such a strong and fierce advocate for those vulnerable Iqalumiut. I would like to recognize the significant contribution that you provide to this community and I would like everyone to know that you have definitely made this community a better place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions.

Just before I start, I would like to remind the members to have a short preamble on both questions and answers. You did very well yesterday. Thank you very much. We even got one person to do a second round, so we can do that again.

Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 651 – 6(2): Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Montessori

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues will know from my statement earlier, I am a strong supporter of the Pirurvik Preschool Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Montessori curriculum. I am very proud that the curriculum is currently being followed in two communities.

Can the minister inform this House as to whether her department has been following the success of this program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. It was a pleasure to go to the member's constituency early on, almost a few years ago now, and visit the very exciting Montessori program. We have been working in the department with the Canada-wide early learning and child care funding that is very fortunate for Nunavummiut and all across Canada to have major advancements in this field.

In terms of looking and seeing the model, our department is aware of the model. We know that they have great programming through the Montessori program model. Our department has just completed the quality framework for early learning and child care, and we have it "Nunavutized," that emphasizes language and culture incorporated into

that framework. We don't fully have the model integrated in the framework, but there are components that are captured to have similarities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Testimonies from teachers who have students from the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Montessori program in their grade 1 class shows that the students are exceptionally well prepared for taking on a full day of studies.

Can the minister indicate whether she would support the implementation of the Pirurvik Preschool Inuit Montessori curriculum in other communities across Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* to the member for that question. It's a great program that is out there and as the Department of Education, we're not responsible and we can't force child care facilities to use that model. It is up to their direction. It's up to them to administer what they want as they are independent societies and often run through the hamlets. We can just encourage them to use that model and if there are other child care facilities or preschools that want to use that model, we can encourage them to speak with the Pond Inlet Montessori preschool and learn from them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to put it out there, there are two kindergarten classes in Nunavut that are offering this program, one in Iqaluit and one in Rankin Inlet, and it has had real success with these students.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education's full-day kindergarten pilot project has begun in five Nunavut communities. As this program expands across the territory, I would encourage the department to look at implementing the Pirurvik Preschool Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Montessori curriculum. This curriculum is not only made for daycares and preschools.

Can the minister indicate when she anticipates expanding the full-day kindergarten program to other communities and which communities are being considered for delivering the program in the near future? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the questions there. I'll try to answer the best I can. I think there were a few questions in there.

Mr. Speaker, we are aware of the great curriculum and we have incorporated the kindergarten curriculum with components of the Montessori style program and we are piloting that in the new curriculum for the full-day kindergarten classes that are in that pilot program. Once that pilot program is complete, we will have the assessment of how that's going. I anticipate that it will go well, hopefully, that we can get this into more of our schools, funding permitted through this House, Mr. Speaker.

We do want to expand the program and are just working and looking at the details of which communities would be next, but we do have capital funds that need to be looked into and that would need to come before the House. As to which ones are next, I can't fully say at this point, but when we do know, I can ensure that we let the members know. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Question 652 – 6(2): Qulliq Energy Corporation Positions

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation. It just happens to be good timing with his statement here. He spoke about the Baker Lake office. I, too, would like to congratulate Ruth Tapatai, Ruth Stoddard, and Rosie Iyago. I started with these three ladies way back in September 2000 when we first opened up this office.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, the Qulliq Energy Corporation suffered a cyber-attack earlier this year. One of the consequences of that attack was the decision to transfer lead responsibility from the corporation's information technology systems to the Department of Community and Government Services. Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that one or more positions at this corporation's Baker Lake office have been eliminated as a consequence of that decision.

I tried to enquire about this way back in June when I emailed the former Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Akeeagok, but I didn't receive a reply. I'll ask the new minister: can the new Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation confirm, if any, how many positions at the corporation's Baker Lake headquarters have been eliminated or transferred within the past six months and will he commit to ensuring that any position losses are balanced by moving new positions into Baker Lake? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Kaerner.

Hon. Joelle Kaerner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the member's questions on information technology and the employees that are affected. Apparently, the Qulliq Energy Corporation is reviewing this process at this time around and there were no customers affected when the cyber or ransomware was around last year, I believe. There was no one affected through that information technology, but the QEC is reviewing the

process of this ongoing process. At this time around, all I can say is that the Qulliq Energy Corporation is revising the process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. I'm hoping the review won't take too long so that we can move forward and hopefully it's for better operations in Baker Lake and that office with the proper support.

Mr. Speaker, the government's most recent quarterly employment report indicates that the Qulliq Energy Corporation had a total of 48 positions in Baker Lake as of March 31, 2023. Can the minister confirm how many positions are currently located in Baker Lake? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Kaernerck.

Hon. Joelle Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks again for the member's questions on the employee relations. At this time around, there are 45 positions in Baker Lake. The member is correct; there were a few technical difficulties, but at this time around, there are 45 employees at the Qamani'tuaq headquarters office. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It would be interesting to find out what happened to those three other positions since March 31, but I'll speak to the minister on that, in his office maybe.

Mr. Speaker, the government's most recent quarterly employment report indicates that the corporation had 13 vacant positions in Baker Lake as of March 31, 2023. Can the minister indicate what specific issues are preventing these positions from being filled? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Kaernerck.

Hon. Joelle Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks again for the member's questions on the employees affected on this. At this time around, the Qulliq Energy Corporation is revising the process and that they're working hard to fill those positions. It's a working process right now and they're having difficulty in recruiting people. That's one of the difficulties that they are having is to recruit people to be employed in the Qulliq Energy Corporation at the Baker Lake office. They are working hard to make this happen. It's unfortunate, but they are working hard to get those positions filled. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Question 653 – 6(2): Nunavut Housing Forum

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to question the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation on the minister's statement.

Mr. Speaker, on the first page at the bottom, about the Nunavut Housing Forum, it says, "The feedback that the Nunavut Housing Corporation received on policies and programs to improve housing conditions across the territory was invaluable and has helped to keep our work grounded in what matters most, which is supporting communities and Nunavummiut."

Mr. Speaker, my first question is: can the minister state which policies and which programs may be improved from the feedback? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for the question about that program. Mr. Speaker, this program under the housing initiative has never been changed for multiple years, especially the way the program is offered under the Nunavut Housing Corporation. During our last deliberations on construction of our infrastructure, we consider and comprehended the different issues, perhaps most importantly, the need to explore other avenues, related to how we construct buildings that are required to be built in our communities.

Alternatively, in renovating existing buildings so we should review the options as this was outlined to us, and further, the other programs currently administered by NAC, such as the HAP housing program, it used to be provided to people under the GNWT, before Nunavut, and clients were supported in building their own homes. Or, they would get assistance to pay for the contractor to construct their home.

We reviewed the application forms at that time. We heard many different suggestions at the forum on how we could improve the housing situation in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This was specifically to the policies about the construction of personal homes, as the minister outlined in his response, and I want to know if these will be amended, so would you happen to know the rough timeline for the changes and tabled into the House. Can the amended program or policies be submitted for our review? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is pleasing to hear this question with my colleague trying to get more information. There are several steps we

need to undertake prior to submitting any amended policies of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, and for any other departments under this government. We need to walk through this process to determine if the changes will be sufficient and in following the protocols used for amending existing policies.

At this time, the review is done by the committee, so prior to the document being sent to (interpretation ends) cabinet (interpretation) the sub-committee reviewing the policies are trying to ascertain if the changes are acceptable, and whether the changes align with the legislation. I believe by the end of this week the review will be completed. I am anticipating this document prior to the end of November, and approval shortly thereafter by the cabinet and we will announce it to all Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As this is my last question, earlier you stated there were over 200 delegates at that forum in Iqaluit, and we all know funding is the biggest challenge with never enough capital for all the projects and items we want.

With those 200 plus delegates, how much did the Nunavut Housing cover for this meeting's expenses? Perhaps you can respond with a total amount expended by the Nunavut Housing Corporation for this meeting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The participants paid their own way to Iqaluit for this meeting. The Nunavut Housing Corporation staff who were responsible attended, albeit not every staff member, nonetheless, the Nunavut Housing Corporation did pay for expenses and other miscellaneous fees.

At this time, I don't have the information on the actual cost. But, the majority of the 200 participants paid for their own travel, including looking after their own expenses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Question 654 – 6(2): Seasonal Time Changes

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Justice.

Mr. Speaker, the first Sunday in November arrives this weekend, which will be a very special day for many, but once again Nunavummiut will be required to change their clocks by an hour.

As the minister is well aware, I have been one of a number of Members of this Legislative Assembly who have been vocal about the need to end the outdated practice of seasonal time change.

Mr. Speaker, as I have previously noted, the Iqaluit City Council recently voted unanimously to adopt a motion calling on all Members of the Legislative Assembly to “Join the call and end the participation in Daylight Saving Time.”

Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to recently table a copy of correspondence of this issue that had been signed by the Mayor of Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to state, for the record, that I would like to see this year be the last and final year when Nunavummiut have to change their clocks.

I would like to ask: will the minister commit, in principle, today, to moving in the direction of ending seasonal time changes in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are closely monitoring what is being discussed throughout North America. I would prefer that North America changed their time. If they do, we have mechanisms to change our regulations in an expedient manner. So I am waiting for that to happen, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

Question 655 – 6(2): Support for Community Programs

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Good morning to Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

At this time, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

The Department of Health offers support and funding for suicide prevention and substance abuse prevention initiatives.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify how his department encourages community groups and individuals to get in touch with the department with their ideas on how to tackle these kinds of issues? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank my colleague for her question in regard to this issue. The funding is available through the committees or the municipality for various entities. They can apply for it, and it is called *Upigivatsi*, in English (interpretation ends) suicide prevention initiatives fund.

(interpretation) We try to inform the communities through various avenues, including the news media, and also through the committee. Once they know that it exists, they send information to the communities.

Also, using the community health representatives (CHRs), we go through them to make sure that the information goes to the local levels. At the local level, communities work with these, and they produce very interesting programs. We would even like to provide support to the municipalities in various ways. We will be working on this through different avenues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for informing us because in the past you acknowledged and recognized the individuals when the CHRs came here for the training. It was evident at the time and many times I have my comments in regard to Qikiqtarjuaq that does not have a community health representative. That was just a comment.

Mr. Speaker, quite often individuals or groups have ideas for activities or projects to address suicide prevention or substance abuse, but they struggle with the application process.

So that they can be provided support, as I know that they have difficulty going through the application process, can the minister describe what kind of support is available to help community-based organizations or individuals through the application process so that their ideas can become reality? If they give you ideas they can be very supportive and helpful and pay close attention to the values the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for her questions. Yes, we provide support to the committee entities, including support in writing for their application to the Department of Health officials. Mr. Speaker, to date, this winter, the funding for the fiscal year is \$3.345 million. To date, \$3.1 million has been approved and has been made available. We are always looking for ways to improve.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, very briefly, with some of the recent improvements to our program delivery; the application form was recently modified to make it more user friendly, we continue to listen to feedback from applicants, and we are also working with the Government of Nunavut social and cultural grants and contributions working group, led by Family Services. The purpose of that group is to coordinate work with the granting and looking at ways we can streamline things for the betterment of organizations.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: Your final supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You can tell me and stop me. I will speak in English, so I will be faster.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, recently there have been a number of announcements for scholarships for funding opportunities, but the deadlines to submit those applications are often very tight. It is not clear whether the funding available through his department's Inuusivut Division has specific deadlines.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm whether there are specific deadlines for the community groups to apply for funding to deliver programs and activities to tackle the serious issues? If so, what are they? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have not set a closing date for these funds. In the fiscal year from March, we opened invitations for proposals of the funds that we call *Upigivattigit*, and we inform them. In August, we also informed them of the funds available and to proceed and be open for proposals until the funds are gone. If that's understandable, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

Question 656 – 6(2): School Safety

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, and to my constituents.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Education.

Earlier in this sitting, I addressed serious concerns regarding the safety of the students in our schools. I would like to thank the Minister of Education for providing me with further information on steps that are being taken to address the situation at this Naujaat high school.

Can the minister provide an update on what initiatives are currently underway to address this situation? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana*, to the member for the question. In terms of the correspondence and acting on requests that do come forward, we do look into all of our requests. The Department of Education has been working with the member's constituency, and we are planning on visiting the community of Naujaat. The Department of Education will be going there, I hope in the next couple weeks, with the Nunavut Teachers' Association, if all goes ahead with schedule. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, since I raised this issue in this House, I have been advised that the district education authority will be hiring a security guard for the school. Earlier, the minister had advised me that school staff had asked the district education authority to employ a hall monitor to assist in supervision.

Can the minister confirm whether the district education authority has requested to hire two individuals to enhance security at the school; a hallway monitor, and a security guard? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. In terms of requests, the Department of Education does receive requests for security in schools, and they are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Often, our short-term solution for exceptional circumstances where they are requested, we do cover those costs if they are needed.

We have had one, to what the member's asking about; we haven't heard from the district education authority. They haven't reached out to us for the additional support, but we can. If they do want to speak to us about the request for security in the school or a hall monitor, we are happy to talk to them about that and work on solving the situation to get to a point where we don't need the security and a hall monitor in our schools.

We do have other mechanisms, as well to enhance safety in our schools. We have intrusion alarms, as well as closed circuit television, CCTV systems in our schools. We have implemented the violent incident reporting mechanism, which our school leaders are encouraged to use if there any incidents, so that we can directly track and work with the school on any incident. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, while I appreciate that additional staff may help to maintain secure and safe environments at our schools, I am concerned that the district education authority will not have enough resources to employ these individuals as well as other staff, such as cultural advisors.

Will the minister commit to ensuring that Naujaat district education will be provided with additional funding to hire security staff to ensure the safety of our children and students? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. Once we receive the request, we will review it and from there, we will have the decision for the special request. It would be covered through the Department of Education, but those are on exceptional circumstances that we do use funds from within. As I mentioned before, we have had district education authorities pay for hall monitors from budgets of their own and if they do need it, but for a special request in this circumstance, we will review once we receive it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

Question 657 – 6(2): Air Transportation in the Kitikmeot

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

I would like to follow up on questions that were asked yesterday by one of my Kitikmeot colleagues concerning air transportation services and infrastructure in our region.

As the minister is aware, the recent correspondence from the president of the Kitikmeot Inuit Association described the serious impact that the forest fires and mass community evacuations which occurred this past summer in the Northwest Territories had on air routes, medical travel, and supply chains in the Kitikmeot.

Can the minister describe what discussions he has had with Canadian North's senior management to develop contingency plans to respond to another disaster of this magnitude? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have ongoing dialogue with Canadian North. With this unfortunate event that took place in Northwest Territories, it was a very good example of everybody working together and I think that was a testament that both the airline, our government, and the Government of the Northwest Territories reacted in a way that helped everybody and helped realize how our airline and the road system to our territory can be shattered in just moments. That's something that we continue to monitor and work towards in making sure that we have contingency plans in any kind of event that occurs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response. (interpretation ends) The president of KIA's letter also addressed the importance of improving airport infrastructure in the region.

As the minister will recall, he recently made a statement in the Legislative Assembly concerning progress on constructing Kugluktuk's new airport terminal building. Can the minister confirm the current level of Inuit employment at the project? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the level of Inuit employment that is currently with that wonderful project, but I want to assure that the information is gathered and the project is coming along. I will be very happy to report to the member once I have that information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The president of KIA's letter also indicated that Canadian North's decision to replace its 737-200 jets with smaller ATR aircraft has resulted in a "backlog of air freight destined to the Kitikmeot region due to the ATR's lower cargo capacity."

Mr. Speaker, I have heard it suggested that we need to pave our runways so that the airlines can utilize larger aircraft with better cargo capacities.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the minister does not have an unlimited budget. Can the minister describe what discussions he has with the federal government and senior leaders in the private sector to explore funding sources for a runway paving program in the Kitikmeot? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My dialogues have been ongoing when it comes to paving the airstrips. I have communicated to some of my members that have requested to have their airstrips paved. It is a very costly initiative and with the operations and maintenance that come with it, it is higher than what we currently have. With that, I have been actively waiting and looking for any of the federal programs that come out that would help with that because, as my member acknowledged, we don't have unlimited budgets and this is one that will be on my radar, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

Question 658 – 6(2): Allocation of Technical Professional Scholarships

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to hear the recent announcement that the Department of Community and Government Services will again be offering technical and professional scholarships to Nunavummiut.

Can the minister provide an update on how many students have received these scholarships to date and what communities the successful students were from? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, the department's scholarship for technical and professional studies, we do get interest on it on a year-to-year basis. Mr. Speaker, as per the minister's statement that I provided, from 2022-23, we did have 25 students receive a total of \$76,000, of which 18 were Nunavut Inuit. As for background information from previous years, I could provide further details at an appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Supporting Nunavummiut who are studying in the fields of engineering, informatics, community planning, business, and land administration has the potential to greatly improve our home-grown labour force. I note that studies in fire prevention and firefighting can also be supported by these scholarships. Can the minister describe what specific areas of study have been supported through the awarding of these scholarships in recent years? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These scholarships in different fields, it's a good opportunity that post-secondary students can receive up to a \$5,000 scholarship through this program. Let me also point out and provide a public service announcement that we are soliciting applications at this time up until November 13. If any students out there are interested and eligible, we would like to support them further

Mr. Speaker, as for the details around which fields that have been allocated scholarships, we have a list of different areas that are eligible and depending on the courses that the students are in, we would be more than willing to support them in that. Mr. Speaker, further to that, depending on the year they are in, the level of scholarship does increase over time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I strongly believe that we need to give as much assistance as possible to Nunavummiut to help them succeed in their studies.

I note that the Department of Health has also recently announced a scholarship for Nunavut Inuit joining the pre-health program. It is important that potential candidates are informed and encouraged to apply for these scholarships.

Can the minister provide further information on how the availability of these scholarships is promoted and advertised to Nunavummiut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We want to promote these programs for the benefit of Nunavummiut as a whole. We do try to put information out and it would be great if my colleagues and anyone that is aware to get that information out and make sure that whoever is eligible to get your applications in.

Mr. Speaker, this policy for the technical professional studies, we are looking at reviewing it with the intention of, perhaps, making it more valuable for those that are seeking support in this area. I expect and would hope to see something looking at revising this policy going forward through the next year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickey.

Question 659 – 6(2): Nunavut Bureau of Statistics

Mr. Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question today to the Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what the current staffing status of the Nunavut Statistics Bureau is. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank my colleague for asking that question. Mr. Speaker, the current staffing position right now is we just put out the directorate position, but I do believe that we have one person right now in that division. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickey.

Mr. Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There have been many instances where not having access to recent accurate statistics has impacted many different reports and studies, such as the recent Office of the Auditor General reports and even recently, Elections Nunavut. What immediate steps has the Premier taken to fix this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I couldn't agree more with how important it is to have up-to-date information to build strong business cases and to make informed decisions. As such, in the last year, we have realigned the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs, specifically the Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, where we have really looked at the challenges that we faced.

Since then, we have moved the positions here to a central function within the EIA here to Iqaluit and have since really pushed to bring the job advertisements out to fill, especially the very important role of the director position. As such, the advertisement right now is out and I really encourage many interested individuals to apply. I believe that the deadline for that application is November 10. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you. I'm glad the Premier brought up the impact on funding.

For most third party or federal funding programs, various statistics are used to determine funding levels. I think it's safe to say that these statistical gaps have already cost Nunavummiut many thousands, if not millions of dollars.

What is the long-term plan for the bureau of statistics to make sure that this very important division is able to fulfill its mandated function? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I would like to thank my colleague for bringing this very important topic up. Again, I can't stress how important it is for the central function of having up-to-date and reliable statistics data that serves every department, from health all the way to the economic development department, but the importance behind it will be the steadfast focus on bringing employees there.

It has been a struggle in the last few years, well before we came here, to fill the very important positions of the six positions that fall within that division. As such, we have really put the emphasis on filling the director position. Once we have the lead member there, we very much look forward to filling the other positions, such as the survey manager, the senior analyst project manager, information officer, an analyst of economics, and then the statistical officer as well.

The primary focus at this point in time is to fill the director position and I look forward to filling that and look forward to updating the member once it closes on November 10, and then obviously going through the process of filling that position will take some time as well, but I look forward to updating the member across as it gets filled. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Question 660 – 6(2): Driver’s Licences

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, his department’s Motor Vehicles Division is responsible for the *Traffic Safety Act* and administering driver’s licence examinations.

Mr. Speaker, the department’s current business plan indicates that one of its current priorities is to increase driver examiner capacity in all regions, including the Kitikmeot.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, the department has faced challenges in this area in recent years following the Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s decision to stop providing this service in communities.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update today on how many qualified driver examiners are in Taloyoak and Kugaaruk? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There hasn’t been anyone trained to become a municipal examiner for those two communities. However, we do have a driver examiner in the Kitikmeot that travels on a regular basis to the communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Having a driver’s licence is absolutely necessary for many training and employment opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, the *Nunavut Driver’s Manual* informs applicants that they are “required to take the road test in an appropriate vehicle for the class of licence applied for.”

Mr. Speaker, a common concern that I hear from many of my constituents is that they simply do not own their own vehicle or have access to a vehicle for the road test. Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe how his department works to accommodate applicants in this situation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When our examiners do go to the communities, they do try to assist those that are trying for a road test. It’s one that having limited vehicles around the community does cause a barrier, but it’s also one that as

communities, they have been very fortunate to find solutions and I applaud the folks that have their own vehicles and providing that for road tests. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, his department's business plan indicates that one of its current priorities is to "Review the effectiveness of the Motor Vehicles Information System in advance of the contract expiration in November 2024." Mr. Speaker, that is a year from now. Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update on the status of this work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With regard to when we put out the business plans, we dedicate staff to examine these and that's exactly what I have been communicating to my staff to make sure that we work on the business plans and for the Motor Vehicles Information System, that it's up to date and current. It's one that we're going to continue to observe and as minister, I will continue to direct my staff to getting this work done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Question 661 – 6(2): Territorial Immigration Policy and Initiatives

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for Immigration.

Mr. Speaker, it was exactly one year ago today that I asked the minister a number of questions about the Government of Nunavut's initiatives in this area.

At that time, I lamented the heart-rending scenes of humanitarian crisis that we were all watching on a nightly basis in places like Ukraine and Afghanistan. It's now a year later and the suffering of the innocent seems to worsen by the week. Mr. Speaker, war is not healthy for children and other living things.

I am proud of what our country has done to welcome refugees and immigrants. I am proud to be an elected Member of the Legislative Assembly representing a constituency in our territory's most diverse community.

Mr. Speaker, when I asked the minister a year ago today about what his government was doing in this sphere, he told me that no funding and no staff had been allocated to the immigration file.

Since that exchange, the Legislative Assembly approved close to \$150,000 for a new immigration office in his department. Can the minister update us today on this office's priorities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for Immigration, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for bringing that very important issue forward again. I think it's no secret that as Canadians, we're very welcoming and in particular, as Nunavummiut, we're very welcoming. As such, I was very proud to be able to bring forward a business plan that, for the first time in Nunavut's history, where we brought in resources where we could start looking at what programs in territory we could provide for people who are less fortunate, even though we have our own challenges right here in Nunavut, as we have discussed many times here.

Mr. Speaker, right now the update I do have is we are hoping to continue to fill the position. We have yet to fill the position that I'm very fortunate the members here had approved, but the senior advisor in relation to immigration, we're looking at all options to ensure we expedite the hiring of that particular position. Once we have the individual, we look forward to looking at what programs we could bring in, in territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: On Wednesday of this week, the Government of Canada announced its new national immigration targets for the next three years.

The federal Minister of Immigration's announcement indicated that the Government of Canada will "work closely with the provinces and territories, employers, stakeholders and Indigenous peoples to help Canada adapt to the realities of immigration-driven population growth."

For the record, can the minister confirm what input and recommendations he made to his federal counterpart in the development of the new national immigration targets and plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Immigration, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I again thank the member for that very good question. Mr. Speaker, there are many different venues where we participate that address immigration. I have the pleasure and honour to be able to advocate for Nunavut in different forums.

I look at the Western Premiers' Conference where immigration is really at the forefront of the discussions that we've had, further to the discussions of our Council of the Federation, where we know that immigration has really a huge impact but also a huge opportunity to address a lot of the long-standing issues we see and the challenges of filling positions and the discussions around specifically health care, as an example, where we could really tap into the challenges but also the opportunities that are there.

Mr. Speaker, without really an individual, it's hard for us to be able to bring concrete examples where we could look at what types of programs. Hence, we really focus around hiring the individual who then will start looking at, from the lens of Nunavut, what programs we could bring in to address the immigration, such as the opportunity that I just mentioned with the health care shortages we see not only in Nunavut but across the country and around the world, how we could really play that role. Mr. Speaker, the primary focus has been to bring that employee in to start looking at that foundational opportunity for us to seize. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's common knowledge that Iqaluit is a fast-growing capital city, which is why investments in water infrastructure are so critical to accommodating population growth and the construction of new housing.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the minister's department is in the process of trying to rebuild its statistics bureau here in Iqaluit, but I believe that it is very important for the government to have a clear picture of the extent to which our city's population is increasing as a result of immigration from other Nunavut communities, other Canadian provinces and territories, and other countries.

Can the minister indicate approximately what percentage of Iqaluit's population is composed of residents who moved here within the past five years? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Immigration, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for bringing that question forward as well. Mr. Speaker, I think there is a lot of data that we could rely on to determine that. I don't have that level of detail. We could look at Stats Canada to see what numbers that they have in terms of the census numbers that they brought forward. As I've said here in the House, the stats bureau has been understaffed for many years, and we've made the hard decision as a central agency to bring that central function here to start looking at ways where we could bring employment to ensure we have people to start collecting data.

As such, without the individuals right now, I'm unable to provide the member specifically those numbers, but very much look forward to once we start bringing employees in the stats bureau division, to really start focusing on that basic statistic, which really is the basis of our applications for the funding that we are lobbying for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

Question 662 – 6(2): Water Infrastructure

Ms. Quassa: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services. I want to revisit the issue of water infrastructure, and I will begin by thanking the minister for the additional information that he provided to me earlier this week, which I subsequently tabled in the House for the benefit of all members.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, the government issued a boil water advisory reminder for Igloolik on Wednesday of this week. Igloolik has now been under a boil water advisory for over 100 consecutive days. Does the minister consider this situation to be acceptable? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for bringing this topic up again. Water infrastructure is one of the major pillars in our communities where we're trying to make good headway around such things as water turbidity and the quality of drinking water across the territory.

Mr. Speaker, given that the water treatment plants were built to the standards for when they were built, we do try to support municipalities on a seasonal basis when they experience such turbidity or otherwise.

Mr. Speaker, as for the question, it is a tough one to state, and it's an area that my department is trying to address with our capital planning process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Thank you, minister. We have to work on it in order to fix the problem. (interpretation ends) The minister's recent letter to me indicated that his department is "Proactively ensuring that all water treatment plants will be designed and constructed to meet the guidelines for Canadian drinking water quality, anticipating the new regulations."

Can the minister provide a timeline for when Igloolik's water treatment plant will be upgraded or replaced so that my constituents do not have to live under boil water orders for months at a time? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My department continues to support the municipality of Igloolik by working together to optimize filters and operations of the water treatment plant and is continuing to monitor the quality.

With regard to when Igloolik can expect to see when they would stop having boil water advisories, this is something that we'll have to get... . We don't have definitive plans around that, but I can say that, again we are dealing with multiple communities having challenges around their water treatment and trying to meet the standards.

Mr. Speaker, we will, once we have further details around Igloolik's and how to address the issues experienced there I'll be more than happy to share to with my colleague. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister and I look forward. I hope that it's fixed as soon as possible.

(interpretation ends) I appreciate, recognize and understand that the minister does not have an unlimited budget.

Earlier this year Canada's provinces and territories called on the federal government to start working with them on a new national infrastructure program and the federal government has stated that it wants to end long-term boil water advisories across the country.

Can the minister update the House on what discussions he has had with this federal counterpart concerning funding for water infrastructure? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I thank the member for raising infrastructure challenges in our territory.

Mr. Speaker, whenever my department and myself when we're engaging our federal counterparts, we always try to rely that critical infrastructure such as water, sewer. Those are pillars of our communities that are needed. It's a basic need.

Given that multiple communities that have experiencing aging infrastructure and it has impacted residents on multiple folds, but again we are trying to make headway on our capital plans and we would like to see more funding toward these types of local infrastructure needs.

Hamlets are right there with me stating that same song so I look forward to continuing our work within this area and working with our federal counterparts to address these. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Question 663 – 6(2): Individual Student Support Plans

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. Mr. Speaker, my second line of questioning is for the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, Part 6 of *Nunavut's Education Act* mandates the provision of inclusive education for Nunavut students. Section 43(5) of the Act provides that individual student support plans shall be made for students who are entitled to them.

Can the minister provide an update on how many Nunavut students currently have individual student support plans? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. We do have individual student support plans.

There are currently two types of individual student support plans with standardized templates. We have individual accommodation plan and a individual education plan and these types of plans are used to help students overcome barriers for achievement and these barriers maybe learning and/or behavioral and/or environmental. We have guidelines that we work with that were developed in 2022 and this is through a new handbook that reflects these changes with the new *2020 Education Act*.

In terms of the number of students on these individual student support plans, that's not a number that I have. It's a technical number, but I can look into seeing if I can get that detail to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for committing to get back to me with more information.

Mr. Speaker, in discussing the issue with educators in my community it seems that the number of students with individual support plans is increasing.

Can the minister describe how her department tracks and monitors the growing number of students with individual student support plans and provide an explanation as to why that number is increasing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the member again for the question. The individual support plans for students if they do have one, fluctuate in numbers because they are... . Some of them are quarterly and they're placed only on a

short-term basis. So, for that reason the numbers do fluctuate for the length of time and the number of students that are prescribed, or on an individual student plan.

We are incorporating a tracking mechanism into our student information system that will reflect the students and we will be able to track the students that are on those plans. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

Question 664 – 6(2): Testing Walrus for Trichinosis

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question will seemingly be for two areas, nonetheless, I am going to direct it to the minister responsible for health, and it revolves around trichinosis.

It is in regard to the testing of the walrus. The delayed responses to send the information to inform the community of the results from the test from the laboratory is the reason for this query.

Inuit prefer not spoiling the meat while it is awaiting the results, actually the hunters do not wish to give diseased meats to their fellow residents, which is why they send out the samples for testing, and I would like to ask if this testing process can be quicker?

I am asking if there is any way to speed up this process and delivering the results to the community a bit faster. That is my question to the minister of health. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to thank the member for his query. Yes, the member's comments for that process are supported by the Department of Health, specifically for the testing of meat, and we are working with the Nunavut Arctic College and the Department of Environment on that.

(interpretation ends here) The Department of Health encourages consumption of country food, but for walrus and polar bear recommends that harvesters have it tested for trichinella prior to eating it raw, undercooked, or fermented.

Mr. Speaker, samples are currently processed here in Iqaluit. Communities can obtain results in approximately three days, that's our timeline.

Prior to the current testing at the Nunavut Research Institute here in Iqaluit, samples were sent to northern Quebec and so the current testing arrangement has been set-up in order to enable quick turnaround for harvesters. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister has stated that there is only the laboratory in Iqaluit providing the testing. I wonder if the communities that conduct the most walrus hunting can be identified and provided sampling kits beforehand. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is now being done in Iqaluit and that initiative was created in partnership with Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., and the Department of Health to this day have been providing support to ensure that this is fully implemented and that the research labs have to be set up properly.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, any laboratory conducting testing for trichinella must have a quality assurance program as in accurate results can lead to serious illness.

They have to provide a sustainable and timely service including weekend testing and they also have to have a logistics chain in terms of getting samples from different locations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I also thank the minister for his responses. Can the minister provide an outline of the typical time period that it takes for the testing to be conducted on samples? Perhaps even the length of time it takes to inform the harvester of the test, who may not receive the information, or even the average estimate of time when a hunter gets informed of the results?

The time lag between when a hunter submits their sample for testing, mainly the walrus tongue for testing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. 12:06:43 According to the letter that I have, or documents that I have it would take approximately three days and sometime, but in regards to the lateness of the results being relayed to the harvesters, I will try and get that information from the staff.

Mr. Speaker, we appreciate the... (interpretation ends) Health supports hunters with preparing sample submissions and covers the costs for shipping. We encourage harvesters and community members to contact their local health and/or conservation officers to assist with testing, sending out samples. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Members, be aware that the time allotted for question period is now over. 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. Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation and Hon. Minister of Nunavut Development Corporation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 188 – 6(2): 2023-28 Fisheries and Sealing Division Strategic Plan

Tabled Document 189 – 6(2): Nunavut Development Corporation Annual Report 2022-23

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to table two documents:

- (interpretation ends) The 2023-28 Fisheries and Sealing Division Strategy. Strategic Plan; and
- The 2022-23 Annual Report of the Nunavut Development Corporation.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, the translations into Inuktitut are not complete. Once they're completed, I will provide them to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Tabled Document 190 – 6(2): 2022-23 Annual Report on the Operation of the Medical Care Plan

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am pleased to table the 2022-23 Annual Report on the Operation of the Medical Care Plan. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Tabled Document 191 – 6(2): Interim Financial Report of the Government of Nunavut March 31, 2023

Tabled Document 192 – 6(2): 2022-23 Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission's Annual Report

Tabled Document 193 – 6(2): 2022-23 Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Board's Annual Report

Tabled Document 194 – 6(2): 2023-24 Letters of Expectation

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table four reports:

- The Intern Financial Report of the Government of Nunavut for the year end of March 31, 2023;
- The 2022-23 Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Annual Report;

No, there are no samples?

- The 2022-23 Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Board's Annual Report; and
- The Nunavut 2023-24 Letter of Expectation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Tabled Document 195 – 6(2): Ethics Officer for the Nunavut Public Service's 2022-23 Annual Report

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am pleased to table the Ethics Officer for the Nunavut Public Service's 2022-23 Annual Report. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Languages, Mr. Kaerner.

Tabled Document 196 – 6(2): Minister of Languages 2021-22 Annual Report

Hon. Jolie Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am also pleased to table to the House the Minister of Languages 2021-22 Annual Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 14. Notices of Motions. 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. Bills 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, and 34 and Tabled Documents 1 – 6(2), 120 – 6(2), 163 – 6(2), and 174 – 6(2) with Mr. Malliki in the Chair.

In accordance to the authority provided to me by Motion 22 – 6(2), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out.

Before we proceed with the Committee of the Whole, we will break for lunch and report back at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 12:12 and Committee resumed at 13:30*

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

Chairman (Mr. Malliki): I would like to call this committee to order. In Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bills 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, and 34; also Tabled Documents 1 – 6(2), 120 – 6(2), 163 – 6(2), and 174 – 6(2). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, we wish to commence with Minister Kusugak and the review of Bill 32 along with the budgetary documents, Bill 33 along with the budgetary documents, and Bill 30 and Bill 34, followed by Minister Main on Bill 23, and then with Minister David Akeeagok for Bill 26, 28, and 29, and finally finishing off with Minister Joanase for Bill 27. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 32?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 32 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2022-2023 – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: I would like to ask Minister Kusugak: do you have officials that you would like to appear before this committee?

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: I do, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials in.

For the record, Minister Kusugak, please introduce your officials and then proceed to your opening comments. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is Deputy Minister of Finance Jeff Chown and to my left is Megan Hunt, Deputy Minister of Health.

Mr. Chairman, I appear before you today to present Bill 32, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2022-23*.

Through this bill, the government is seeking to increase its overall operation by \$35,735,000 in 2022-23 for four departments: Health, Environment, Community and Government Services, and Family Services.

The Department of Health is seeking the bulk of this appropriation, requiring \$31.7 million to cover overspending. The department requires \$5.6 million to cover a shortfall in compensation and benefits; \$8 million for agency nurses and paramedic services, which are used to backfill vacant positions and keep health centres open; \$8.6 million for travel, mostly relocations of employees; \$5.7 million to cover medical travel expenses which were not reimbursed by Canada because they are ineligible under Canada's Non-Insured Health Benefits program; and \$6 million for out-of-territory physicians and hospitals. The department was able to offset some of these overages with small amounts of underspending in other areas.

The Department of Environment is requesting a supplementary appropriation of \$780,000. Environment overspent in two program areas: Renewable Energy Support programs and the Nunavut Trapper Education Program. The department was able to offset some of the overspending in these areas by re-profiling funds from other items.

The Department of Community and Government Services is seeking \$382,000 to cover shortfalls related to several items, mainly energy rate increases affecting Government of Nunavut operations and corresponding grants given to municipalities to cover their increased electrical costs. This request represents less than 0.14 percent of the total Community and Government Services budget for 2022-23.

The Department of Family Services requires \$2,941,000 to cover overspending in compensation and benefits and other program areas, such as travel, residential care, and purchased services. Adjustments were made in the department's 2023-24 budget to attempt to avoid this overspending in future years.

Mr. Chairman, this is the second and final operations and maintenance supplementary funding request submitted for the 2022-23 fiscal year. If departments did not have to absorb the added and unforeseen costs of covering additional expenses related to various union agreements in 2022-23, supplementary appropriation requests for operations and maintenance budgets would have been reduced. Even after including this request, the Government of Nunavut will end the 2022-23 fiscal year with a surplus.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Do members have any general comments? I don't have any names on my list. Bill 32 on the fourth tab, (interpretation ends) Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) No. 2, 2022-2023. Department of Health. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department Expenditure. \$31,664,000. Questions? Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to get some clarification. I know that a few years ago, there was a year-by-year agreement with Non-Insured Health Benefits that, for the first time in probably recorded history or at least in my history, Health actually had surpluses for a year or two and then, understandably and I think

correctly, took the budgeted amount that was being provided by Non-Insured Health Benefits over and above the original funding.

I know these are year-by-year agreements that are discontinuing and the Department of Finance decided to take that budgetary amount and reallocate it out of the Department of Health, where they were continuously overspending before, and then now we're back in the same boat. If I recall correctly, it was about something like \$33 million of that money was given back to Health for different programs and priorities. I'm wondering why that amount might have been chosen now that we're back into the same boat of these traditional overages in the Department of Health, where we were looking at previously of doing actual-related budgeting, taking actual expenses from the previous years.

There is always some incremental growth in some things and I know medical travel is a very difficult budget line to be able to accurately predict. That being said, there is still quite a significant amount of money that's coming back to the Government of Nunavut through Non-Insured Health Benefits. I'm just wondering how that allocation was decided and if there are going to be any future adjustments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was good to see, as my colleague said, finding some top-up or offer funding in some sectors from Non-Insured Health and my colleague was the minister of the department and me also at the time.

In terms of the details around those parameters, if I could have Mr. Chown respond through you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chown, please proceed.

Mr. Chown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct; there was quite a significant savings within the department and the intent was to flow the majority of those funds back into Health to help realign the departmental budget.

In the first year after that change in the departmental budget as a result of the NIHB, I think we did fund... I don't have the exact information in front of me, but I believe we funded almost all of the department's funding requests or a very significant portion of them that first year, not to the tune of the full amount that the member mentioned, but by the second year, I believe we have actually increased the department's budget quite significantly over the last couple of years and Health could probably talk to it better than myself.

We have also seen significant increase in spending in those cost areas above and beyond the incremental funding we got. We know there was quite a lag in a buildup of demand during the COVID years as a result of a lot of health care not being able to be provided. I think that we have seen the growth in the budgets as a result of that and I do think that

with such a large departmental budget and inflation and whatnot, we have seen growth just exceeding those additional funds. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Are there any more questions? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the issues identified in the Department of Health's supplementary appropriation request is the cost associated to paramedic services. The Minister of Health has previously indicated that paramedics are utilized to prevent health centre closures. I'm wondering if the committee would be able to get some more information on how and when the Department of Health started utilizing paramedic services to reduce the amount of health centre closures. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Paramedic services are a vital part of the services that provide health care for those communities where otherwise they would not be able to be serviced other than remotely. If I could have more details provided by Deputy Minister Hunt through you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Ms. Hunt, please proceed.

Ms. Hunt (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) *Qujannamiik* to the member for the question. I don't have the specific date that our paramedics started, but what I can tell you and it will build on some of the questions that we had when we met as cabinet committee, from April 2023 to September 2023, we had 314 advanced care paramedics and we also had 30 primary care paramedics, so a total of 344 working across all of our communities in the territory, with only one community not requiring that being Chesterfield Inlet. The full-time equivalent to all of those paramedics providing advanced care and supporting our nurses on the ground is roughly 66 PYs, so a significant area of support on the ground with our primary care teams and supporting our nurses and after-hour responses. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do applaud the Department of Health for coming up with a creative solution to reduce the number of health centre closures, but it does come at quite an expense, \$16 million, for those 66 full-time equivalents. Understanding that the short-term solution is necessary, my last question is: does the Department of Health have any longer-term solutions to utilize paramedics to prevent health centre closures at a more reasonable cost? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Hunt.

Ms. Hunt (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) *Qujannamiik*, member, for the question. That's a really great question. If we think about the nursing roadmap and the critical workforce measures package, those two areas are really meant to

assist the territory in creating healthier workspaces for health care staff, to addressing tools and training, orientation, recruitment, and retention. That's a big area that we're working on, as well as being able to look at different models and alternatives like our paraprofessionals.

How are we utilizing and upscaling those individuals in territory that are such an important and complementary part of health care service delivery? It is expensive, but we also know it's necessary. It helps to keep our health centres open. It helps to give breaks to our important and valued health staff in the communities. It's one that we hope, as we increase retention and recruitment in the territory, that we continue to build on our partnerships to train, hire, and recruit Nunavummiut and Inuit in the territory that will be able to reduce our reliance on other contracting services, but I do want to say that we are very grateful to our paramedics who have been a real complement to the broader health care system. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I have no more names on my list. Are there any more questions? There doesn't appear to be any more questions. (interpretation ends) Total Department Expenditures. \$31,664,000. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to the next page, page 5. Department of Environment. Operations and Maintenance. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$748,000. Questions? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's unusual for the Department of Environment to ask for a sup. bill. They normally lapse the funds, so I'm just curious. One of the expenditures talks about the \$748,000 being requested. A good portion of it, it says \$676,000, was spent from the renewable energy home grant and the renewable energy cabin grant. They went over by \$176,000. My question is: can the minister break it down as to how much was overspent in the energy home grant and how much in the renewable energy cabin program? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. In terms of the renewable energy program, they were budgeted \$500,000 and \$676,038 was spent, so they were over by about \$176,000 plus, Mr. Chairman. I don't have the over-expenditure on the other one, Mr. Chairman. What we're requesting is mainly for the increase to the department's salary and payroll adjustments, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: *Ma'na*, Mr. Chairman. I was not asking about how much was spent overage here and I don't know if the Minister of Finance would have this because it would be under the Department of Environment, but I was just curious as to where the

over-expenditure occurred mostly. Was it mostly in the renewable energy cabin program or was it mostly in the Renewable Energy Homeowner Grant Program? It would give us a better picture of which program is being used more. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Because my Deputy Minister of Health would not have that information, I would like to substitute the Deputy Minister of Economic Development through your permission, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry; the Deputy Minister of Environment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: The Deputy Minister of Environment is not here, minister. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I realize that. Sorry for misspeaking.

I don't have that detail of information before you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize, but I'll give the opportunity through you if the minister responsible would happen to have that information, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon. Within the \$500,000, \$375,000 was put towards the Cabin Renewable Energy Support Program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The program was \$500,000 and \$375,000 went to the cabin, so that left \$125,000 from the \$500,000 plus \$176,000 for the renewable energy homeownership program, which leaves roughly \$300,000 for the homeownership program and, if I remember correctly, it's a \$30,000 limit on that grant. I know that the minister may not have that either, but is it fair to say that at least ten people tapped into the Renewable Energy Homeowner Grant Program? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will assume that would be around the ballpark, but I commit the department responsible to have more details in those parameters available to all the regular members, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that each department probably took a good hit in compensation and benefits with the new collective agreement. Roughly what amount of the over-expenditure is from the new collective agreement? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The net impact is about \$4.7 million, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's for the whole of government, I take it. I'm not sure if the minister would have that. What is it for the Department of Environment on this ask? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sorry about not being clear about it, but that was the net impact on the department, \$4.7 million. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you. Another expenditure was the Nunavut Trapper Education Program, and the Minister of Environment might have to speak for the Minister of Finance, but there was an over-expenditure on that too. What was the budget for it and the over-expenditure? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our reading glasses are not working too well. In my previous response of \$4.7 million, in fact, that was the wrong department. It's actually \$1.46 million. We read the wrong line, Mr. Chairman, so I would like to make the correction on that error. The total net impact is, for the record, \$1.46 million plus.

On the second question, if I could have Mr. Savikataaq repeat the question, as I was trying to correct my glasses at the time. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Savikataaq, please repeat your question. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the Nunavut Trapper Education Program, what was the budgeted amount and how much was the overage on that one? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The budgeted amount for the Nunavut Trapper Education was \$165,000 and \$90,700 was expended. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Next person on my list is Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You might have to get the Minister of Environment involved again, but I would like to know whether any applications were denied under the Renewable Energy Support Program because of budgetary reasons. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the best of my knowledge, there were none that were denied, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's good to hear because I know that when this program was brought in, there wasn't really a lot of certainty around the budget that was established for it and it was stated at the time that that was just a deposit, that it's such a good program that we hoped at that time that the uptake would do exactly this, is put that pressure on that budget. I don't have any issue with that.

I do have a bit of a question on when we look at the two programs, the Nunavut Trapper Education Program and the Renewable Energy Support Program, those were funded internally. Again, I don't have an issue, but I would just like to get clarification from Mr. Savikataaq's question on the Nunavut Trapper Education Program. From what I thought I heard, the budget was approximately \$160,000 but \$90,000 was expended. Can I just get a clarification of that? I might have misheard it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These programs that the department put out, they go out hoping they're going to get maximum application and that really helps us in terms of setting up future budgets and ask to get that idea and I think the same too was with the Trapper Education Program. Yes, the budget was \$165,000 and to date, as of this report, \$90,700 has been spent on that budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Maybe I'm misinterpreting something or maybe it's the wrong fiscal year that we're talking about. To me, it sounds like there's a surplus in that fund. I'm kind of curious as to why it's even mentioned in the supplementary appropriation if that budget hasn't been fully expended. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you. I believe Mr. Chown would like to respond to that comment, Mr. Chairman, through you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chown, please proceed.

Mr. Chown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct; the trapper education budget itself was not overspent. However, the whole original budget itself was “directioned” to fund within internal to the department. The department has pointed out that any spending on that was a pressure on their budget for the year because they were not given incremental funding for that initial budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you for that explanation. That clears it up very well for me.

The one concern I have, and I know we do this with a number of initiatives and like Minister Kusugak just mentioned, it gives us a starting point of what type of budgetary needs are for projects like this, but typically, when something is funded from within, there is available money, that there is typically not a need to come back for a supplementary appropriation. Otherwise, there should have been a budget requested for it at the time if the knowledge was there that there were going to be budget pressures put on the department by introducing two new programs with a direction to fund from within.

I would just like to get a little bit of clarification on what other pressures within the department caused. As Mr. Savikataaq mentioned, Environment is typically a surplus department. It typically doesn't run that tight of a margin on its overall budget. I am a little curious as to what other factors created this budgetary pressure? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These programs are very important. In my initial response with my conversation with Mr. Hickes, we said that nobody was turned away on the Energy Support Program. In fact, there is a wait list. That list will just keep going up, so as not to turn people away.

Yes, the key major factor in this whole issue is the union agreement. It had a big impact on the budgets and therefore we saw this happening. That would be the key factor in terms of not being able to fund this program within. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that. I do remember we had approved increased to some departments, obviously the larger staff departments that had quite a major impact with the union agreement. The impact on its budget and a number of departments, we didn't make those adjustments with the direction of funds from within.

I'd just like to go back with the Energy Support Program. I really enjoyed the bringing forward that program, I think it's a fantastic idea and I haven't taken advantage of it myself yet, but I do plan to. Out of curiosity, how many out of the \$676,000 that was expended, how many approvals did that support? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really would love to provide that information, but I don't have that information with me. I will ensure the department will bring that forward as with the other follow-ups that we will do. I will commit the department to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, for that commitment. Like I said, I really do think this is a great program I would just like to know how many people benefited from it? Thank you. (interpretation) I'm finished.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you. I do too, Mr. Hickes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I have no more names on my list. Are there any other questions? Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies, Mr. Chairman. Another question just came to mind. The minister mentioned there's a wait list. In the correspondence that the minister provided to the committee, I'd be curious to know how many people are on that wait list and under which program category? The home, or cabin? If the minister could commit to provide that information as well. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will commit the department to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. We will look forward to that. I have no other names. Any further questions? I don't believe so.

Total department expenditure, \$748,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Okay. Next page. Community and Government Services. Operations and Maintenance, Not Previously Authorized. Total department. \$382,000. Questions? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one that one of the bullets says, the Qulliq Energy Corporation implemented new territorial-wide electrical rates for its customers to minimize the financial impact of this rate change on non-government, residential, and commercial customers.

Government electricity rates have increased to lower rates for non-government customers. Part of the reason for this sub bill is there, and we just heard the earlier this fall, that Qulliq Energy Corporation is increasing all user rates by nine percent.

Can we expect another sub bill, or in the operations and maintenance, will they calculate for the increase that Qulliq Energy Corporation is going to implement, or has implemented? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could have Mr. Chown respond to that through you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chown, please proceed.

Mr. Chown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The potential increases is coming from Qulliq Energy Corporation would have an impact on the budgets of Community and Government Services.

We do not currently have a supplementary appropriation request from the department, but between now and the winter sitting we will be looking at all the different potential impacts on their budget and we will identify whether a supplementary appropriation request is required depending on whether they think they can fund from within their appropriation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Following my list of names, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you. I'm sorry I thought you said Mr. Hickes. My apologies.

The materials provided in the briefing notes and the supplementary correspondence I was provided this morning does not indicate how much that Community and Government Services has paid Qulliq Energy Corporation for electricity bills in Government of Nunavut facilities in the fiscal year 2022-23.

So I would like to ask how much was actually spent on the electricity bills? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have the complete number, but based on estimates calculated by the department, the financial management board

approved \$3.6 million in additional utility funding on December 2022. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister has been able to make several commitments so far. I was wondering if the minister would commit to providing that information to the committee as well your today's actuals in the current year compared to the budget in the same time period. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Of course, we will do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I have no more names on my list. Total Department Expenditure. \$382,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to page 7. Department of Family Services. Operations and Maintenance, Not Previously Authorized. Total Department, \$2,941,000. Are there any questions? I don't see any. Total Department. Oh, Mr. Savikataaq. Sorry.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is not on Family Services. Since we appear to be done on opening comments, just so the minister can enlighten us and Nunavummiut that are listening because it seems odd that they're asking for a sup. bill of \$35.7 million, then the last question is, even after including this request, the Government of Nunavut will end with the 2022-23 fiscal year with a surplus; just so the viewing audience will have an understanding how can you request for money, when you still have a surplus and how much is the surplus? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chown is chomping at the bit to respond to that question through you, Mr. Chairman.

>>*Laughter*

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chown, please proceed.

Mr. Chown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When it comes to departmental appropriation, the appropriations are specific to those individual departments and a surplus in one department cannot be spent by another department without the authority of the Legislative Assembly approving an appropriation be moved between departments.

If all government departments have... . If the net impact of government departments is being underspent, that doesn't help if an individual department is overspent. That individual department still needs to come back for an appropriation.

With respect to the surplus itself, the surplus comes down to the difference between overall revenues and expenditures, which can vary throughout the year. We haven't got the final surplus yet. The audit is still being completed, but I expect it could be in the \$20 to \$30 million range possibility, but books are still being finalized. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Questions? Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the Department of Family Services (interpretation ends) The increase of the expense above the revised budget in fiscal 2022-23 due to increased expenses in casual wages, travel and transportation. (interpretation) For casual employees and for permanent employees, my question is whether the casual employees get paid more than permanent employees? That's my question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The casual employees' wages are the same as full-time employees. We usually fill the position with a casual while we are looking for a permanent employee. They get equal pay whether they are a casual or indeterminate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your response. If there's going to be a surplus, what do you have any plans for the surplus? That's my question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If there is a surplus within the government departments, they are forwarded to next year's budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Next person on my list is Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to follow up on Ms. Killiktee's question. She brought up a good point regarding casuals.

Typically, when a casual employee is hired, it is to fill an existing PY, or person year, position, yet it says casual wages cost the department \$4.2 million. To me, that money

would have been part of the compensation and benefits budget anyway. I'm just curious as to how casual wages could have such an impact on the compensation and benefits. The only thing I can think of is unfunded positions, so part two of that question is how many unfunded positions exist in the Department of Family Services? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the Deputy Minister of Family Services is here; if I could do a switch at the witness table, Mr. Chairman, through you.

Chairman: Do the committee members agree to have the witnesses change?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness in, escort the deputy in.

For the record, Minister Kusugak, please reintroduce your official. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to welcome Jonathan Ellsworth, Deputy Minister of Family Services, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Hickes asked a question. If you remember the question, Ellsworth, please proceed.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not have those details with me right now, but I can commit to bringing that information to this committee. You're quite right; I do believe there were unfunded positions that were filled by CSA, or casuals, as it were, which I believe is some of the reason is attributed to the expense overage in the pay and benefits. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you. While we have Mr. Ellsworth at the table, I might as well get one more question in. When I look at the budget transfer that was done, taking \$6 million away from grants and contributions and putting it to other, was there a budget adjustment within those categories for the '23-24 budget? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Deputy Minister Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I believe, for '23-24, the budgets have been adjusted to reflect those expenses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I have no more names on my list. (interpretation ends) Does the committee agree, \$2,941,000? Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to Bill 32 in your legislative binder. I'll give the members a few moments.

Bill 32, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2022-2023*. Clause 1. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to the Schedule on page 2. Schedule. Supplementary Amounts Appropriated for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2023. Total supplementary Appropriation. \$35,735,000. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to page 1. Clause 4. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 7. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 32?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 32 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak, do you have closing remarks?

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the members for their patience and understanding. We will ensure that we follow back with the members with the questions asked. It will be done as quick as possible and I'll leave it at that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Since you're there, Minister Kusugak, we're going to proceed to Bill 33. Please introduce your officials and proceed to your opening comments.

Bill 33 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 3, 2023-2024 – Consideration in Committee

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, if you can, I would like to change my witnesses before I begin. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to change witnesses?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the official out and bring the witness in.

Welcome back, Ms. Hunt. Minister Kusugak, please proceed to your opening comments.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me introduce first, reintroduce Jeff Chown, Deputy Minister of Finance, and Ms. Hunt, Deputy Minister of Health. Mr. Chairman, not too often you have a whole crew of deputy ministers waiting to bat. It's nice to see.

Mr. Chairman and members, I am here to review Bill 33, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 3, 2023-2024*.

Through this bill, we are seeking \$27,748,000 in capital funding for six departments. This funding, if approved, will be used to continue with 25 existing projects, begin planning two new projects, and expedite two already approved projects.

In the winter sitting of the Legislative Assembly, departments carried forward capital funding from 2022-23 to 2023-24 based on estimates of what they believed they would spend in 2022-23. Now that the final invoices have been paid for the 2022-23 fiscal year, we need to adjust some of the amounts previously carried forward to reflect actual spending in the year. These adjustments total \$17.66 million across 25 projects.

Through this bill, we are seeking new funding of \$1.25 million for the Department of Health to begin planning and design work for two regional long-term care facilities, one in Kitikmeot and one in Qikiqtani. These important facilities are a priority under *Katujjiluta* and an important step towards bringing our elders home to Nunavut.

The Department of Economic Development and Transportation is seeking an appropriation of \$8.84 million to expedite the construction of two already approved airport terminals in Kugluktuk and Kimmirut. Funding has already been approved for both of these projects, but the department's contractors are able to build them sooner than originally anticipated. This appropriation in 2023-24 will not cost the government any additional money because it will reduce the appropriation that the department seeks in 2024-25 by the same amount.

We are prepared to answer any questions you may have at this time, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Department of Justice. Capital. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$247,000. Any questions? (interpretation) Seeing none, (interpretation ends) \$247,000. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to page 5. Department of Education. Capital. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$4,740,000. Questions? I don't see any. \$4,740,000. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Department of Health. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$1,250,000. Questions? Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Earlier in a previous response, Mr. Chown mentioned that when there are budgetary transfers, the regular members are notified.

Mr. Chairman, I find it extremely concerning that a flagrant, flagrant, totally going against the last Assembly's wishes... . When I look at the briefing note that we are provided, it is saying that there are already expenses incurred in the '23-24 fiscal year on the design of the Cambridge Bay facility and the Iqaluit facility.

Mr. Chairman, in the last Assembly, while there wasn't a lot of debate, but there was a motion to delete the planning dollars for these two facilities. The absolute disregard for the last Assembly's wishes and instruction, without bringing forward an actual appropriation to bring forward an amount, as they are doing now, two years later, I find very insulting to the whole process that we are doing in here.

When we look at providing funds for planning dollars, we ask for a list of projects from the Department of Community and Government Services. The last Assembly spoke very

clearly that the government was not to pursue preplanning on these two projects. I would like to get an answer of how and who authorized this expenditure. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Bear with me for a moment.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The previous government voted on the actual planning and design funds as opposed to these funds which are preplanning. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that response. It just adds even more credence to a circumvention of the process and we are now delayed probably at least five years in the completion of these projects. It should have been approved previously or at least a debate should have occurred on it.

Chairman: Minister Main, what is your point of order?

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The member is seeking to reopen debates on matters that were already decided in the House. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main, no rules have been broken. Mr. Hickes, you can proceed with your questioning.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you. I don't really have a question; I was going to leave that as a statement. I just find it extremely ironic that the individual that proceeded with this plan to do the preplanning led an initiative to remove these projects from the budget.

Chairman: Minister Main, what is your point of order?

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I believe the individual is referring to me and I believe the motion in question that he is referring to was actually moved by the Member for Gjoa Haven, and so I would like him to correct his remarks and retract his remarks and then proceed. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Hickes, please.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will acknowledge that and I will replace "led" to "participated and supported," and I will leave that as a comment. I just think that we have now delayed four to five years in these projects because...we don't know why. I will leave it at that and I am absolutely supporting this bill. I think it should have happened long ago. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Elders in Nunavut are key to our success and our key to our future, and we have to do whatever we can to ensure that our elders age with dignity in Nunavut. I think that is the main priority that we should look at and from there, work towards ensuring that they age with dignity in their home community and location of their choice.

I believe this government is headed down that path and I really am appreciative of Mr. Hickes bringing his support for this. It is one support that was from the previous government and to today. I really hope that the support is united from every member in this House that our elders should be at home. The funding for this is a big step towards that and we appreciate the support of all members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> *Applause*

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have questions; I would just like to make a comment. Somewhat opposite to positions expressed by Member Hickes, I am very glad to see the supplementary appropriation come forward. I have been in full support of the commencement of the planning work for the Iqaluit long-term care facility as well as any other elder care facilities or elder-related purpose-built infrastructure. I strongly support this and would like to thank the ministers for bringing this forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: That was just a comment. Are there any more questions from the members? If not, \$1,250,000. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to the next page. Department of Environment. Capital. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$104,000. Questions? I see none. \$104,000. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to the next page. Page 8. Department of Community and Government Services. Capital. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$11,137,000. Are there any questions? I see none. \$11,137,000. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Page 9. Department of Economic Development and Transportation. Capital. Not Previously Authorized. Total Department. \$10,270,000. Questions? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is on the Iqaluit marine infrastructure. It's not so much on the amount itself. It has been used this summer and it pertains to this bill, but it's not completely on this bill. The Minister of Economic Development and Transportation is in the building. To date, can we get an idea of how many ships have used to deep sea port for the amount of money that has been spent? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since the port has been opened, we don't have that information, but I'm sure that the minister responsible will find it and share it with the colleagues, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Are there any more questions from the members? If not, \$10,270,000. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to Bill 33 in your legislative binder. I'll give the members a few moments.

I'll just give the members a few more moments. (interpretation) Please be patient.

Thank you for waiting patiently. (interpretation ends) Bill 33, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 3, 2023-2024*. Clause 1. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to the Schedule on page 2. Schedule. Supplementary Amounts Appropriated for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2024. Total Supplementary Appropriation. \$27,748,000. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 7. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 33?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 33 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak, do you have brief closing comments? Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you very much. I really appreciate the frank discussion we had on this matter and I look forward to the departments providing the detailed information that was requested at an appropriate time.

With that, I would like to thank Ms. Hunt for her support during the passage of that bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>Applause

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Before we go on to the next bill, we're going to take a 10-minute break.

>>Committee recessed at 14:38 and resumed at 14:52

Bill 30 – An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: I would like to call this committee back to order to review Bill 30. I would like to ask Minister Kusugak: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee? Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in.

For the record, Minister Kusugak, please introduce your officials and then proceed to your opening comments. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Kyle Seeley, Deputy Minister of Community and Government Services, and to my right is Jeff Chown, Deputy Minister of Finance.

Mr. Chairman, if I can, just to correct the record, during the discussion of Bill 32, Minister Qavvik made a response to the [Member] for Arviat South regarding the funding for the Renewable Energy Support Program. Mr. Qavvik responded that the program funding was \$375,000 when, in fact, the amount was \$327,500. It was just an error, Mr. Chairman. I just want to put that on the record.

Mr. Chairman, on to Bill 30, I am here to present Bill 30, *An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act*.

The bill proposes a single amendment to increase the authorized limit of the Petroleum Products Revolving Fund from \$250 million to \$350 million.

The Petroleum Products Revolving Fund is what allows the Government of Nunavut to buy, sell, and distribute fuel across Nunavut without having to request funds from the Legislative Assembly for each transaction.

In 2019 the authorized limit for the revolving fund was increased to \$250 million to enable the government to manage the annual fuel purchases. As a result of growing fuel demand and increased costs, however, this limit is no longer adequate to meet Nunavut's ongoing fuel purchasing requirements.

Under the existing authorized limit, the Government of Nunavut is no longer able to secure a year's worth of fuel purchases through futures contracts while also carrying current fuel inventory. This creates a situation where we must delay future fuel purchases until the existing fuel inventory is sold so that those revenues can replenish its fund balance.

Our capacity to secure fuel supply purchases for the 2023 resupply season has already been impacted by this constraint. Notably, the Revolving Fund's existing low limit, combined with staffing shortages at the division, inadvertently led to the PPD exceeding the Revolving Fund's authorized limit. This situation not only places us out of compliance with the *Revolving Funds Act* but also endangers the continuity of fuel supply in Nunavut.

Raising the authorized limit to \$350 million will allow the Government of Nunavut the purchasing power needed to secure our annual fuel supply and ensure the PPD remains in compliance with the *Revolving Funds Act*, thereby allowing us to purchase fuel when market conditions are favourable and avoid unnecessary cost increases to Nunavummiut.

We appreciate the committee's consideration of our request to increase this limit to \$350 million. I along with officials from the Department of Finance and the Department of Community and Government Services are prepared to answer any questions members may have regarding Bill 30. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Please proceed, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 30, *An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act*.

The standing committee recognizes the overall purpose of the bill, which the minister described in his opening comments. The standing committee notes that the 2021-22 Annual Report of the Petroleum Products Division of the Department of Community and Government Services was recently tabled in the House at its sitting of October 23, 2022. The standing committee looks forward to the timely tabling of the 2022-23 and 2023-24 annual reports.

On June 28, 2022 the Department of Community and Government Services issued *Request for Proposals 2022-05: Executive Oversight and Corporate Services of the Petroleum Products Division*. The scope of work included an "assessment...of the Petroleum Products Division's existing organizational structure." The standing committee encourages the responsible minister to table the final report from this review at the earliest opportunity.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Do members have any general comments before we proceed to detailed questions? I see none. Go to Bill 30 in your legislation binder. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Sorry, Mr. Chairman. I actually have a question in relation to the clause. Sorry; I put my hand up to soon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: We will get there. Bill 30, *An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act*. Any questions? Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This issue of not having a high enough limit in the Revolving Fund has been known for a few years and, in fact, there was a bill that died on the order paper from the last Assembly. Why has it taken two years to come forward with this bill? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The circumstances have changed from two years ago and it required us to increase the Revolving Fund amount, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the correspondence we received from the sponsoring minister, it doesn't have a page number, but it's on the second page, at the second-last paragraph, it states that "Historically, the Petroleum Products Division has been successful in navigating this purchase resupply cost recovery cycle. However, the division's existing authorized limit has restricted the division's agility in responding to favourable global markets."

I know the fuel prices that were a couple of years ago and the fuel prices now. Does the minister have an idea of how much this two-year wait has cost Nunavummiut in fuel prices? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's hard to and it wouldn't be fair to speculate how much the cost would have cost us, but I could assure my colleague that had this happened a couple of years ago, it would have had an impact on the amount of fuel that would have been purchased at a cheaper amount or at a lesser price and hence, bring that cheaper cost forward to today and we would not be here looking for what we are asking for now, which is to increase to the Revolving Fund, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think "better late than never" quite quantifies it, but I just wanted to make note that I am fully supportive of this bill, as again, like a previous one, it should have come ahead sooner. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) It's just a comment. Do you want to comment? Okay. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just start off with a very quick question. As this bill is in relation to increasing the authorized limit of the Petroleum Products

Revolving Fund, I would like to ask if the minister would be able to provide a definition of what exactly “authorized limit” is. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just one moment, please.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am just taking a look at the authorized limit. The authorized limit of the public storage Revolving Fund is currently... . That’s a different fund; I’m just trying to navigate through the authorized limit. Just give me a second, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The current limit is \$250 million, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In your correspondence that was provided to the committee this morning, on page 2, it notes that the authorized limit, as defined within the *Revolving Funds Act*, establishes the minimum amount by which the assets may exceed the liabilities within the fund.

I did look this up in the *Revolving Funds Act* and that was included in the definitions in section 1 of the *Revolving Funds Act*. I’m a bit confused about the interpretation of an authorized limit because it appears that it’s used in relation to expenditures, but then the definitions in the Act itself state something completely differently. I just want to get some more information about what exactly an authorized limit is. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If Mr. Chown could define that through you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chown, please proceed.

Mr. Chown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The intent of the authorized limit is to set a maximum amount of government funds and resources that could be drawn on by the PPD at any one point in time to manage their operation. In our financial system, we manage that through what we call the due to/from account.

Every time the government purchases fuel through the PPD, that’s taking money out of our government’s bank account. We have set this fund limit so that at no point in time should the net amount of money coming out of our coffers be in excess of the \$250 million limit. That way, we as a government can manage our financial cash flows because we know that the PPD will never be withdrawing more than \$250 million out. With the Revolving Fund, when money comes in, it reduces the amount of money that has been drawn out of our coffers and when they buy fuel, it has the opposite effect. That all essentially flows through to the government’s balance sheet.

The authorized limit basically looks at the difference between our assets and our current liabilities and those assets are the accounts receivable from fuel that has been sold but not paid for yet, and then the fuel that's actually in inventory and then the amount of liabilities for amounts where we owe on our end but haven't paid offset against that. That is the definition that we work with. It's the assets, receivables, and inventories, less outstanding payables for amounts that we haven't paid and the difference between those is how we calculate that difference in the limit.

It's a bit of a complicated accounting term, but I hope that helps a little bit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chown, for that somewhat lengthy and confusing explanation.

As I indicated, it's still unclear, the interpretation of the authorized limit. On one hand, it's expenditures and then on the other hand, the actual definition in the *Revolving Funds Act* is the amount of assets that it can have in excess of liabilities, which is something very much different.

Mr. Chown had indicated the government's definition of the authorized limit and the operationalization of it is setting control on the amount that Revolving Fund can spend, but the actual definition in the Act itself is quite different and again, it states that "authorized limit" is the maximum amount which assets may exceed liabilities within the fund.

Looking at the most recent statement of the financial position of the Petroleum Products Revolving Fund, the financial assets are \$246 million and the liabilities are \$250 million. It's unclear if...how to I phrase this? Maybe the first question is: is the definition in the *Revolving Funds Act* correct? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Chown.

Mr. Chown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the definition in the Act is correct. It's maybe not as clear as it could be.

I don't have the financial statements in front of me here, but if I was to recall correctly, if you look at the financial statements, one of the liabilities, I believe in those statements is the due-to-the-government amount. We do not count that amount when we are doing the assets-less-liability calculation. That amount is essentially the due-to-from amount that we have from monies coming in and out of the funds.

So we look at look their actual operating liabilities, not that due-to-from-government amount because we've started producing these financial statements for Petroleum

Products Division and we do put that in there. For the purposes of the revolving fund calculation, that number doesn't get included.

It is the liabilities for amounts owed to the people they buy fuel from, the liabilities for their payroll, and other operating expenses that we look at. Not that due-to-from number to the Government of Nunavut. That one particular item isn't part of the calculation that's used and that's been the consistent calculation since the beginning of Nunavut to my knowledge.

Perhaps just one other point of clarity, so, the government isn't limited to spending \$250 million on fuel during the year. They could spend half a billion dollars on fuel during year as long as they sell it before they buy the additional fuel. It is a revolving thing, so you can buy as much as you want, you just can't have more than \$250 million at any one point in time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate Deputy Minister Chown's comments, but coming from the accounting perspective, that does make sense. I do understand that's how the Government of Nunavut does, I guess, define this authorized limit.

From a legal perspective, I was wondering if the minister may provide or allow maybe a representative from the Department of Justice to speak to the actual definition of the authorized limit, as we are dealing with legislation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have Mr. Ellsworth here. I don't know if Mr. Ellsworth would be able to... Mr. Ahlfors sorry, if he would be able to provide us with a response. To do that we would need to do a substitution, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to have a different witness?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness out and escort the other in.

>>*Laughter*

Minister Kusugak, please introduce your new official.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thomas Ahlfors is the Director of Legislation Division and I'd like him to respond to the question by Mr. Lightstone. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Please proceed, Mr. Ahlfors.

Mr. Ahlfors: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Looking at the definition in the Act, it does talk about assets and liability as that was mentioned, and as the Deputy Minister of Finance also indicated.

So you know, there is definitely a link there to expenditures because every time you spend money to buy fuel, you're getting an asset and so that's where that link comes from. It's that as you spend money, you make assets and therefore that increases the amount of assets that you have.

So that's, you know, every time that you spend money you're getting more assets so you're getting closer to, you know for example the \$250 million limit, but then if you are getting money from selling that fuel, well then you are getting rid of assets.

Say Qulliq Energy Corporation buys a bunch a fuel, you're getting rid of assets and that money's coming and so you're losing assets and so that's how the authorized limit is calculated.

With respect to the liabilities, the monies that are sort of payable within the government of Nunavut, I mean this is all government funds and so when we're talking about liabilities, that would have to be the sort of liabilities external to the Government of Nunavut, which could include the territorial corporations, but not the government itself. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Ahlfors.

I'm not a designated accountant as Mr. Chown is, but my understanding is when a transaction occurs such as a sale, inventory isn't reduced so your assets do go down, but once you receive the payment that's an asset, so your assets increase so it's actually a zero net gain, or loss there.

I would just like to ask again for further elaboration on the actual definition of the authorized limit being assets cannot exceed liabilities by \$250 million. I would just like to ask for another example, if Mr. Ahlfors would be able to provide another example of, or explain a bit better, the definition. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ahlfors.

Mr. Ahlfors: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I personally do not know exactly how the Department of Finance does the accounting. However, with this, it could be done sort of in two ways. As you said, you could say that well if you sell the fuel well then you get an asset which is cash and if that's the case, then if that's the case, then you could use that

cash to buy new fuel and then get more fuel. Then you're using cash to buy fuel, so your assets are staying the same. That's one way of doing the math and calculating it.

The other way would be that if you sell that asset and then therefore you're getting money and you're giving that money to the consolidated revenue fund to the government and then you sort of have room to take more out of consolidated revenue fund later on to buy fuel.

Those are the two ways that accounting could be done. I'm not sure how they do it at Department of Finance, but this legislation would allow you to sort of calculate it either way and then the end result would be exactly the same. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to follow-up, looking at the most recent statement of financial position in the liabilities being \$250 million and the assets being bellow that, by definition in the Revolving Fund Act, there is over \$250 million in room available within the authorized limit. Would the minister agree with that comment? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe I would like to ask Mr. Ahlfors if he would be able to indicate whether or not he agrees with my comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, I don't think its right to be going around the room to see who agrees and who doesn't agree with the comment. Maybe we could get to the root of where Mr. Lightstone is going on this item, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Directly to my point, by definition, the most recent financial statements indicate that there is over \$250 million available in the authorized limit. I guess the question is: is the definition of an authorized limit incorrect in the *Revolving Funds Act*? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe it is correct and the interpretation may be different than how Mr. Lightstone is interpreting it, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Lightstone, the questions are being repetitive. If you have other questions, please ask your questions. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sorry for holding up the committee and the proceedings, but I'm satisfied with the principle of the bill and I'm in support of it and I would like to thank the minister and the officials for their comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Next person on my list is Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To start off, I fully state that I support this bill. It's too bad an almost identical bill died on the order paper in the last government and we would not be here, as the minister stated, but I do have some questions. They're not about the authorized limit because we're not talking about that; we just want to increase it. That's a debate for another day.

On the legislative proposal on page 3, it says near the bottom, "Surpassing the upper limits of the funds was an unintentional oversight by the PPD." My first question is: if you can surpass the limits, whether it's intentional or unintentional, what's the purpose of having a limit? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On that, I would like to have Mr. Chown respond, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chown, please proceed.

Mr. Chown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The limit in question is a limit put in place by legislation that is not intended to be exceeded. I guess the difference between intentionally and unintentionally exceeding that limit is the matter at hand here.

If it was done unintentionally, the act of doing that happened inadvertently, the question at hand, I think, is more about what the controls were to avoid you from exceeding that limit. In the case of the government's situation, those controls are individuals within the department managing and monitoring those transactions to ensure the limit isn't exceeded. Our financial system isn't set up in such a way as to flag when that limit is exceeded and that's in part because of the way the revolving fund works. There is not a set dollar amount for which the PPD can spend on fuel, which is how our accounting system is set up with an appropriation.

When I give a department an appropriation, they're set at, let's say, \$50 million they can spend and when they exceed that \$50 million, our system would flag that they were exceeding the \$50 million, but with the PPD, because they can buy and sell as often as they want, there is not a set dollar amount for which the system would flag, "Hey, you're over that dollar amount." Our system is just not designed to flag that and because so much of the accounting is outside of our core financial system, it's difficult to flag that within our system. It is a matter of human effort to manage and monitor to ensure we don't exceed that limit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When my credit card hits the limit, it stops working and this is more or less like a credit card of up to \$250 million. I could understand if you went over a bit and Mr. Chown just explained, but it was over for three-quarters of the year, about nine months, and it's steadily going up. What measures will be in place?

If approved, the bill, and I hope the bill is approved because we buy more fuel now to meet the demands of Nunavummiut and the fuel is generally going up, so I completely support the bill, but I would just like to be reassured that there are different steps in place now so that the limit is not exceeded again. Are there any new steps that are in place to prevent the limit from being exceeded for nine months? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the underlying issues within Petroleum Products was a human resource issue. There was a void in that department and lack of human resources to be able to flag and catch the situation. I have been assured by the Department of Community and Government Services and, in particular, Petroleum Products that they have worked to rectify that problem and they are looking to see if they can draft some other policies and flags to ensure that this does not happen again. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will be my last question. As I stated earlier, I fully support this bill and I hope everyone votes for it as it is needed.

The legislative proposal too is one of the reasons why the limit was exceeded was the PPD's accounts receivable balance is higher than in previous years. Can the minister inform us and Nunavummiut what the receivables were at? I know it changes daily, but the latest figure that they have and that's my final question. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The receivables at the end of 2023 is \$99,910,000. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I have no more names on my list. (interpretation ends) Bill 30, *An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act*. Clause 1. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 30?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 30 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister, do you have brief closing comments?

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the colleagues for the in-depth questioning and the department will strive to do better. I would like to thank the witnesses that appeared before us today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Bill 34 – Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 2022-2023 – Consideration in Committee

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) We're going to continue on to Bill 34. I would like to ask Minister Kusugak: do you want to change your officials? Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: I do, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the official in.

For the record, Minister Kusugak, please introduce your officials and then proceed to your opening comments.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to introduce Kyle Seeley, Deputy Minister of Community and Government Services, to my left and to my right, Jeff Chown, Deputy Minister of Finance.

Mr. Chairman and members, I am here to discuss Bill 34, *Write-Off of Assets and Debts Act, 2022-2023*.

When an event occurs that reduces the value of the Government of Nunavut's financial or tangible assets, we must record those changes in the Public Accounts. These changes can be in the form of a write-down when the asset's value decreases or a write-off when the asset no longer has any value to the government.

Through this bill we are seeking authority to reduce the financial value of government assets by about \$1,041,613 by recording the following adjustments:

- The Nunavut Business Credit Corporation has written off about \$260,000 in debt that it deems uncollectible;
- The Government of Nunavut has reduced the value of the fuel in its petroleum products inventory by about \$76,000 to account for inventory lost due to shrinkage; and
- The Nunavut Housing Corporation has reduced the value of its assets by about \$705,000. This total includes a write-down of 64 housing units damaged by fire and mould (about \$670,000) and a write-off of three public housing units which were badly damaged and could not be economically repaired (about \$35,000).

The bill before you shows the specific amounts of each adjustment which will be recorded in the 2022-23 Public Accounts.

Mr. Chairman and members, this completes my comments. We are prepared to answer any questions the committee has about this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Please proceed, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 34, *Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 2022-2023*.

The standing committee recognizes the overall purpose of the bill, which the minister described in his opening comments.

The standing committee notes that a detailed discussion of the write-off process and relevant provisions of the *Financial Administration Act* took place during the recent televised hearings on the 2021-22 territorial Public Accounts. At that time, Government of Nunavut witnesses indicated that the Department of Finance is considering pursuing amendments to the legislation in this area. The standing committee looks forward to giving careful consideration to any such bill that is introduced in the House.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Do members have any general comments before we proceed to detailed questions? I don't see any. Bill 34. Go to Bill 34 in your legislative binders. Bill 34, *Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 2022-2023*. Are there any questions? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just really only have one as everything is self-explanatory. The write-off of the Petroleum Products Division of fuel shrinkage, regardless of the amount, which by the way appears to be lower than most years this year, how does that fit into the revolving funds? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is the second time that Mr. Seeley sat here. I'll give him an opportunity to answer that question, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Seeley, please proceed.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The shrinkage is just a standard piece of our inventory management that we meet every year on. The inventory management, the fuel is treated as an asset when we buy it and then after we sell it, we make the profit back from that. That's the two sides of the ledger. The shrinkage that we're seeing within the inventory is being written off of our asset list, so it's on that side of the ledger on the balance sheet of the revolving fund. I hope that answers the question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarity then, it's treated no differently. Once it's written off, once this Act is passed that \$74,478 will be treated as, it will be entered into the financial records just the same way as if the fuel were sold. Other than it's been written off. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sort of, Mr. Chairman. I'll have Mr. Chown clarify sort of, Mr. Chairman, through you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, (interpretation ends) Minister. Mr. Chown, Please proceed.

Mr. Chown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not batting a thousand today on clarity, but I'll try and be clearer on this one. Thank you. When the fuel sold the accounting entry is to record revenue because there's cash coming the door and you inventory balance goes down. In this case, because there is no incoming cash associated with this, the accounting entry is to record an expense, and then the other side is to reduce the inventory. The only difference is one records a revenue and then as a reduction; the other records an expense and an asset reduction. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just one last comment. Thank goodness it's a Friday. Thank you.

>>*Laughter*

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I have no more names on my list. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to pose a question under (interpretation ends) debt write offs, (interpretation) specifically the \$260,163.12 amount listed. What is the status and how much is in your financial documents? How do these amounts get inserted into the House working papers for approval of the write offs?

These are for debts that are uncollectable, and what is the length of the years listed where these uncollectable debts are then added to be written off? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): This \$260,000 you alluded to, was a loan that the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation was trying to collect, and the business that received this loan is no longer operating as a business. The business also made it clear that they were not in a position to reopen. The collection process can take many years to complete, and they try every avenue to collect, but in the end when they know it is unpayable, and following the legislation, they have to list it as being uncollectable, and written off as there is no possibility to collect it.

They need to write it off as a bad debt, and fix their books. This bad debt is written off from the accounts receivable category, and it allows accountants to fix it in the account payables, receivables, operating funds so that it can be removed from their financial statements, and this is why they are asking for approval to write off this debt as it is uncollectable. I hope I am clear. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to return to my question, as I had asked if there is a number of years listed in the legislation or policies of how many years that the business was sent prior to it being unable to pay the debt and closing down?

When a business is failing, and cannot pay their debts, when is it sent to the Legislative Assembly to be identified as a bad debt, and submitted for a financial write off? When does the department know of the uncollectable debt and deals with the bad debt in following a protocol or process?

My question was about (interpretation ends) the length of time (interpretation) or the number of years before the debt is listed as a bad debt? What is written in the policies or regulations about the number of years, or is it a set number? Yes, fifteen years I am just throwing out there as an example. It has been this long, so a department sends the bad

debt to the Legislative Assembly to request a write off. I was asking about the length of years earlier. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is no set policy as to how many years it has to be uncollectible, and they can vary. They have various reasons why their debts are uncollectible, but we have a process of how we can collect the debt. There is no set time within the government as to how many years the debt has to be in order for it to be written off. We don't have a number of years as to how long the debt has to be, but we have a process of how it will be dealt with. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for explaining that to me. Now, to try to get further answers related to this process, and I want to ask another question, for example, if the debt is deemed uncollectable or as a bad debt, if we are going to approve in the Legislative Assembly the write of this \$260, 163, then what happens after?

I want the listening public to hear the process so we are all on the same page, and if I have a debt knowing that, I would just not bother paying the debt knowing the government will forgive the debt via the write off process. I do not want people to turn to that and have a bad debt, as the amounts written off here could conceivably be returned from their assets under payables.

The business whose bad debt is written off here, where does this debt go? Where is it after, is it still deemed alive? Does the debt remain on the books in your department? If a business reopens is why I question this process of writing off such large amounts? What happens after this so the listening public can understand this process, which is why I am asking the question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Entities or businesses, if they are no longer operating and if they're bankrupt, it's impossible to collect their debt because this entity or business has gone bankrupt. If your question was whether they can apply for funding again, the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation, all of them, if this occurs, it's evident that the businesses would have more stringent rules to try and apply for loans.

They know that these entities or businesses were not successful when they had debt, so that's how the system works. I would not like to see any uncollectible debts because when you have uncollectible debts and they've been written off, it's impossible to get another loan from business credit corporations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I have no more names on my list. (interpretation ends) Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister and officials. I only have a couple of questions. Following along on Ms. Killiktee's lines of questioning on the \$260,000 write-off which has been requested. I'm wondering if the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation, is it possible for them to take ownership of assets, let's say, if the bankrupted business had a building or vehicles that could possibly be auctioned off to lower this write-down that's being requested? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Most definitely, they could take ownership of assets and they have in this particular case. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for the response. Does that mean they already collected some portion of it and if they didn't, the amount would have been more than \$260,000 being asked to write down or write off? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's correct. All other attempts were exhausted and that's correct, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for the verification and clarification on how things work over there with the business credit corporation.

Moving on to the Petroleum Products Division and inventory loss, we do seem to be facing this every year. Is there anything that can be done to mitigate or minimize shrinkage so that we don't have to lose money? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Shrinkage and evaporation do occur. It's very hard to mitigate that, but where there is human error, Petroleum Products is working. As I said, they increased their staff. They have been short of staff lately. They rectified those issues and they're working within the department to find ways to mitigate the human error factor of shrinkage. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I have no more names on my list. We will go back to (interpretation ends) Bill 34. Clause 1 on page 2. Part 1. Debts Written Off.

Nunavut Business [Credit] Corporation uncollectable debt owed by Akhaliak Promotional Products & Printing Services. Total. \$260,163.12. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2, Part 2 Schedule on page 2. Community and Government Services – Petroleum Products Division inventory lost due to fuel shrinkage. Total. \$76,478. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3, Part 3 Schedule on page 2. Nunavut Housing Corporation – three physical assets. Total. \$34,544. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4, Part 4 on page 3. Assets Written Down. Nunavut Housing Corporation – 64 physical assets. Total. \$670,428. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 34?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 34 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister, brief closing comments.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have taken up everybody's time today. I appreciate your patience and understanding. I appreciate the departments for being helpful in the passage of all of these bills. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses. We will take a 20-minute break. After the break, we will begin reviewing Bill 23.

>>*Committee recessed at 15:50 and resumed at 16:15*

Bill 23 – Nursing Professions Act – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: I would like to call this committee back to order. We're going to be dealing with Bill 23, *Nursing Professions Act*. I would like to ask Minister Main: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee? Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, with your permission. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials in.

Minister Main, for the record, please introduce your officials and then proceed with your opening comments.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sitting with me is Deputy Minister Megan Hunt (interpretation ends) and also with me is Carlin Twomey, Senior Legislative and Policy Analyst for the Department of Health.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members. Thank you for the time to consider Bill 23, *Nursing Professions Act*.

(interpretation ends) The new *Nursing Professions Act* is an umbrella statute which establishes a common regulatory system for nursing in Nunavut. There is a trend in Canada moving toward one nursing regulator per jurisdiction for all classes of licensed nurses. One nursing regulator provides an enhanced, consistent, efficient and collaborative approach to nursing regulation.

The Northwest Territories' new *Nursing Profession Act* will establish the College and Association of Nurses of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, currently the Registered Nurses Association of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. The association provides oversight and regulation over two jurisdictions: Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. Nunavut's current *Nursing Act* refers to the Northwest Territories' *Nursing Profession Act*, as the Government of Nunavut adopted the Act from the Northwest Territories at separation. For the college to regulate the nursing professions in both Nunavut and the Northwest Territories, the Government of Nunavut needs to replace the *Nursing Act*, and the Government of the Northwest Territories needed to amend the *Nursing Profession Act* to ensure consistency as much as possible between the two Acts. The college is ultimately responsible for operationalizing both Acts.

There are three main objectives in replacing the legislation:

- First, to ensure any references in the Act to the nursing profession includes licensed practical nurses and registered psychiatric nurses, as appropriate, and ensures numbering of cross references to additional parts or sections of the Act are changed as needed.
- Second, the legislation introduces registered nurse and registered psychiatric nurse authorized prescribers, allowing registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses to

become certified to prescribe certain drugs and order certain diagnostic and screening tests; and

- Third, it allows for a broader complaints process, expanding the means in which a complaint can be made, creation of a Fitness to Practise Committee, and allowing for alternative dispute resolution methods.

Regulation helps to protect the public by ensuring that professional care or services received are competent, ethical, and meets the established standards. Currently, licensed practical nurses are registered through the Department of Health and are regulated under the *Licensed Practical Nurses Act*. Registered psychiatric nurses practising in Nunavut are registered in other jurisdictions in Canada. The preferred approach is to have licensed practical nurses and registered psychiatric nurses registered in the north by the college.

Each category of nurse will remain distinct as they are now with their own respective roles within the nursing professions, but one nursing regulator means that registered nurses, nurse practitioners, licensed practical nurses, and registered psychiatric nurses will all be regulated by the college.

Iksivautaaq amma katimajit, the Department of Health has worked to embed Inuit societal values into the bill with the addition of Nunavut-specific provisions and requirements. Of note is that the Northwest Territories' new *Nursing Profession Act* will require the appointment of Nunavummiut members on certain boards and committees. This was done in collaboration with the Government of the Northwest Territories and based on Health's recommendation, informed through consultations and feedback.

The work on this legislation began in 2019, and I am pleased to see this bill being considered today.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your consideration of the (interpretation ends) *Nursing Professions Act*. (interpretation) I look forward to you questions and comments.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Please proceed, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 23, *Nursing Professions Act*.

The standing committee recognizes the overall purpose of the bill, which the minister described in his opening comments.

The standing committee notes that the legislation is linked to matching legislation brought forward by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

I note for the record that seven motions to amend the bill were adopted during the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee.

These motions related to by-law and regulation-making powers, clarified a provision respecting the process to address complaints of unprofessional conduct, and addressed the timing of the legislation coming into force.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Do members have any general comments before we proceed to detailed questions? I'm seeing none. We will now proceed to the clause-by-clause review of Bill 23. Go to your legislative binder, Bill 23. I'll give the members a few moments.

(interpretation) I think everyone is ready. (interpretation ends) Bill 23, *Nursing Professions Act*. Clause 1. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 7. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 8. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 9. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 10. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 11. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 12. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 13. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 14. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 15. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 16. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 17. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 18. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 19. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 20. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 21. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 22. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 23. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 24. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 25. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 26. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 27. Agree? Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister and to your officials.

I'm looking for clarification here. Clause 27, I believe, is application for a temporary certificate while a person is pursuing the requirements to qualify or requalify. Over the years I keep hearing of people saying that they don't want to be used as guinea pigs for people that are looking for temporary work in Nunavut. Just to alleviate some concerns, while these persons are looking to qualify or requalify, they are supervised stringently while they're trying to get through the certification. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Further down in the clause in 27(3) (a) through (d) it outlines the requirements that would be in place for an applicant to be given a temporary certificate. As I understand it, it

wouldn't just be anyone is eligible for a temporary certificate; they would have to meet those qualifications, which would govern the temporary certificate holder. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Are there any more questions? Clause 27. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 28. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 29. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 30. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 31. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 32. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 33. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 34. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 35. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 36. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 37. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 38. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 39. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 40. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 41. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 42. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 43. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 44. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 45. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 46. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 47. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 48. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 49. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 50. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 51. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 52. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 53. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 54. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 55. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 56. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 57. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 58. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 59. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 60. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 61. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 62. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 63. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 64. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 64. 1. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 65. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 66. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 67. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 68. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 69. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 70. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 71. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 72. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 73. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 74. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 75. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 76. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 77. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 78. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 79. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 80. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 81. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 82. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 83. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 84. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 85. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 86. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 87. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 88. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 89. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 90. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 91. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 92. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 93. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 94. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 95. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 96. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 97. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 98. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 99. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 100. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 101. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 102. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 103. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 104. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 105. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 106. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 107. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 108. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 109. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 110. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 111. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 112. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 113. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 114. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 115. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 116. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 117. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 118. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 119. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 120. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 121. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 122. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 123. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 124. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 23?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 23 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Any closing comments, Minister Main?

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank all committee members. I thank my officials with the Department of Justice for all their help and the committee for their proper review and the written questions that you gave us and thank you for approving it. Thank you. Have a good day.

>> *Applause*

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials out.

We will be dealing with Bill 26, *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act*.

(interpretation) Please wait a moment as the minister gets ready.

>> *Committee recessed and resumed at 16:35*

Bill 26 – Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: I would like to call this committee back to order. I would like to ask Minister David Akeeagok: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee? Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in.

For the record, Minister David Akeeagok, please introduce your officials and then proceed to your opening comments. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Stephen Mansell, to my right is Thomas Ahlfors, Director of Legislation Division, and if we are unable to answer a question, we have another assistant who we might invite to the witness table, Daniel Mount, (interpretation ends) Legislative Counsel.

Merci El Presidente. I am here today to present Bill 26, *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act*.

This technical bill amends various Nunavut statutes to correct French language errors and inconsistencies that have been identified by the government's Legislation Division.

Since the English and French versions of a statute are equally authoritative, making the proposed corrections to the French versions will result in more legal certainty about the state of the law in Nunavut.

The most important correction is in the new *Mental Health Act*, where it was discovered that two provisions were missing in the French language version as passed by the legislature.

The other proposed corrections are from a running list maintained by the Legislation Division of minor errors and inconsistencies discovered in the French version of legislation and that should be corrected when there is an opportunity to do so. This bill is an opportunity to make those corrections. *Merci El Presidente*.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Please proceed, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some very brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 26, *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act*.

The standing committee recognizes the overall purpose of the bill, which the minister described in his opening comments.

Members look forward to ongoing updates from the government concerning the implementation of the new *Mental Health Act*.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Do members have any general comments before we proceed to detailed questions? I see none. We will now proceed to the clause-by-clause review of Bill 26. Bill 26, *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act*. Any questions? I see none. Clause 1. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to the Schedule on page 2. Schedule. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 26?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 26 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister, closing comments.

Hon. David Akeeagok: *Merci El Presidente.* I am very thankful for the work that our Legislation Division does in making sure everything is correct. I thank the entire staff, the award-winning Legislation Division. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Bill 28 – Opioid Damages and Health Care Cost Recovery Act – Consideration in Committee

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I would like to ask the minister: do you have ministers appear before you?

Hon. David Akeeagok: Mr. Chairman, if I may, could I switch witnesses? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Does the committee agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the official in.

For the record, Minister David Akeeagok, please introduce your officials and then proceed to your opening comments.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Deputy Minister Stephen Mansell, to my right is Daniel Mount, (interpretation ends) Legislative Counsel.

(interpretation) I am here today to present Bill 28, *Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*.

Currently, the Government of Nunavut, along with the other provinces and territories, is in negotiations with drug companies for the recovery of past and future health care costs arising from the drug companies' negligence and predatory marketing of opioid products.

The purpose of Bill 28 is to preserve Nunavut's ability to file a lawsuit against the drug companies to recover damages and health care costs arising from opioid-related illnesses and deaths. Without the bill, certain claims could be barred by the expiry of limitation periods under the *Limitation of Actions Act*.

The bill is similar to the Nunavut law enacted to recover health care costs related to tobacco use.

The bill also allows Nunavut to join the national class action lawsuit started by British Columbia on behalf of provincial and territorial governments, which is currently before the courts. Without this legislation, Nunavut risks being excluded from the class action. It is important for Nunavut's law to be in force when the British Columbia Supreme Court is scheduled to hold its class action certification hearing on November 27, 2023.

This bill is virtually identical to the laws passed in at least eight common law provinces in Canada and most recently by the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories on June 1, 2023.

Finally, preserving the right to sue the drug companies is also necessary to allow Nunavut to continue negotiations with the drug companies to try to reach an out-of-court settlement. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Please proceed, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some very brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 28, *Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*.

The standing committee recognizes the overall purpose of the bill, which the minister described in his opening comments.

The standing committee encourages the minister to provide regular updates to the Legislative Assembly on the status of the class action lawsuit, as well as actions undertaken under the *Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*, which was passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2010.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Do members have any general comments before we proceed to detailed questions? Seeing none, we will now proceed to the clause-by-clause review of Bill 28. Go to your legislative binders. Bill 28, *Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*. Clause 1. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to the Schedule on page 13. Schedule. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 7. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 8. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 9. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 10. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 11. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 12. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 13. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 28?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 28 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister, do you have closing comments?

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for passing this legislation. It's much needed as we are a small jurisdiction and relying on our big sisters from the provinces and territories to assist us through this. This Act will allow to be in sync with other jurisdictions.

I want to thank your standing committee for making us aware of this and allowing us to present it, and I really appreciate the regular members for highlighting this as an important legislation that was required for our government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Bill 29 – An Act to Amend the Engineers and Geoscientists Act – Consideration in Committee

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Now we will proceed to Bill 29. I would like to ask the minister: do you want to change your officials? Okay. For the record, Minister David Akeegok, please introduce your officials and proceed to your opening comments.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is Stephen Mansell, Deputy Minister, and our Legislative Counsel, Daniel Mount.

(interpretation ends) I am here today to discuss Bill 29, *An Act to Amend the Engineers and Geoscientists Act*.

This technical bill will update Nunavut's *Engineers and Geoscientists Act* to ensure its terminology and definitions match those used in the Northwest Territories' legislation and by the regulatory body.

Nunavut and the Northwest Territories share one regulatory body, the Northwest Territories Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists, to regulate the practices of engineering and geoscience in both territories. The Northwest Territories' Act, the *Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act*, creates the regulatory body and gives it the power to act in Nunavut, subject to Nunavut's laws. Nunavut's *Engineers and Geoscientists Act* [details] how the regulatory body operates in our territory.

The Northwest Territories is repealing and replacing their current Act with Bill 93, the *Practice of Engineering, Geoscience and Applied Science Technology Act*, which received assent in early October.

The Northwest Territories' new Act will make substantive changes to how engineering and geoscience professionals are regulated in the Northwest Territories and potentially Nunavut. It also makes many technical changes to the terminology used in the Act, which may come into force much sooner than the substantive changes.

In response, the Department of Justice has introduced Bill 29 to update Nunavut's *Engineers and Geoscientists Act's* terminology, definitions, and references. These changes are necessary to ensure our Act's terminology and definitions align with those used in the Northwest Territories' new statute.

The purpose of Bill 29 is to maintain the status quo for how engineering and geoscience professionals are regulated in Nunavut once the Northwest Territories' new legislation comes into force. It is meant to be an interim measure while the department completes additional policy and legal work necessary to respond to the substantive changes in Bill 93.

Bill 29 provides clarity and certainty for engineering and geoscience professionals practising in Nunavut and promotes a smooth transition alongside the Northwest Territories' revised regulatory regime. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Please proceed, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some very brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 29, *An Act to Amend the Engineers and Geoscientists Act*.

The standing committee recognizes the overall purpose of the bill, which the minister described in his opening comments.

The standing committee notes its appreciation to the Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment, which shared information concerning their review of Bill 93.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Does the committee have general comments before we proceed to detailed questions? Seeing none, I will proceed to the clause-by-clause review of Bill 29. Bill 29, *An Act to Amend the Engineers and Geoscientists Act*. Clause 1. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 5. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 6. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 7. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 8. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 9. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 29?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 29 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister David Akeeagok, brief closing comments.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you very much, my fellow members, for passing this bill.

I again want to thank the Government of the Northwest Territories for providing information on the amendment to the legislation. We received correspondence from their standing committee concerning the need to make an amendment to the legislation. There

has to be consistency between the Northwest Territories and Nunavut if they have one regulatory body for both jurisdictions.

I thank you once again and I look forward to the immediate implementation of this bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials out. (interpretation) Please wait patiently as we will proceed as soon as the minister is ready.

>>*Committee recessed at 16:54 and resumed at 16:55*

Bill 27 – An Act to Repeal the Area Development Act – Consideration in Committee

Chairman (interpretation): We will now be dealing with Bill 27. (interpretation ends) I would like to ask Minister Joanasie: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee?

Hon. David Joanasie: If you will allow, Mr. Chairman, I do. Thank you.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in.

For the record, Minister Joanasie, please introduce your officials and then proceed to your opening comments. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon. Members, I am here to appear before and with me are Deputy Minister Kyle Seeley as well as Legislative Counsel Daniel Mount.

I am pleased to appear before you to discuss Bill 27, *An Act to Repeal the Area Development Act*.

Mr. Chairman, the *Area Development Act* allows the Government of Nunavut to establish "development areas" to control development in the territory. Given legislative changes that have occurred since the Act was first introduced by the Government of Northwest Territories in 1956, the Act is no longer functional and contravenes more recent overriding legislation.

Since the creation of Nunavut, no new development areas have been established nor have any development officers been appointed to enforce development regulations.

The two existing development areas in Nunavut, Resolute Bay Development Area and Strathcona Sound Development Area, were created in the 1970s.

Other mechanisms to control development in these areas now exist. For instance, the municipalities of Resolute Bay and Arctic Bay have been established, and development in the portions of the municipal boundaries that overlap with a development area would follow other territorial legislation.

Furthermore, the federal *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act* came into force in 2015, and an [attempt] could be made to use the Act to introduce regulations that, in effect, add conditions or prohibitions on a project approved by the Nunavut Impact Review Board without going through the Nunavut Impact Review Board process. Such an action would be in contravention to the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act* and the *Nunavut Agreement*.

Mr. Chairman, the repeal of the *Area Development Act* and its regulations will remove outdated legislation that is no longer functional and will maintain the integrity of and the Government of Nunavut's compliance with the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act* and *Nunavut Agreement*.

I thank the members for their consideration of this bill, and I welcome questions from the committee. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Mr. Savikataaq, please proceed.

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make some very brief opening comments as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of Bill 27, *An Act to Repeal the Area Development Act*.

The standing committee recognizes the overall purpose of the bill, which the minister described in his opening comments.

I am pleased to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the Nunavut Impact Review Board and other institutions of public government (IPGs) which serve our territory very well.

This concludes my opening comments. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Do members have any general comments before we proceed to detailed questions? I'm seeing none. We will now proceed to the clause-by-clause review of Bill 27. Go to your legislative binder, Bill 27, *Bill 27, An Act to Repeal the Area Development Act*. Questions? Clause 1. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 27?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 27 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister David Joanasié, closing remarks.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the members for their consideration of this bill, which is pretty straightforward in our view, and I'm glad that the committee agrees and I look forward to concluding our day today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness out.

As this concludes all the business before the Committee of the Whole, I will now rise to report progress.

Speaker: Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Malliki.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Your committee has been considering Bills 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, and 34 and would like to report that Bills 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, and 34 are immediately ready for third reading, pursuant to Rule 37. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Ms. Brewster. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. Hon. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Item 21: Third Reading of Bills

Bill 32 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2022-2023 – Third Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 32, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No. 2, 2022-2023*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and the bill is ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Bill 33 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 3, 2023-2024 – Third Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 33, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 3, 2023-2024*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and the bill is ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Bill 30 – An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act – Third Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 30, *An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and the bill is ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Bill 34 – Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 2022-2023 – Third Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And yet again, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 34, *Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 2022-2023*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and the bill is ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Bill 26 – Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2023 – Third Reading

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 26, *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2023*, be read for the third time. *Merci El Presidente.*

>>Laughter

Speaker: The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and the bill is ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Bill 28 – Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act – Third Reading

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 28, *Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and the bill is ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Bill 29 – An Act to Amend the Engineers and Geoscientists Act – Third Reading

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you once again, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 29, *An Act to Amend the Engineers and Geoscientists Act*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and the bill is ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Bill 23 – Nursing Professions Act – Third Reading

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Amittuq, that Bill 23, *Nursing Professions Act*, be read for the third time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and the bill is ready for assent.

Third Reading of Bills. Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Bill 27 – An Act to Repeal the Area Development Act – Third Reading

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 27, *An Act to Repeal the Area Development Act*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and the bill is ready for assent.

Item 22. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A reminder that there is a meeting of the Full Caucus at nine o'clock tomorrow morning in the Nanuq Boardroom, followed by a meeting of the Management and Services Board.

Orders of the Day for November 6:

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
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills

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

- Tabled Document 1 – 6(2)
- Tabled Document 120 – 6(2)
- Tabled Document 163 – 6(2)
- Tabled Document 174 – 6(2)

20. Report of the Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: This House stands adjourned until Monday, November 6, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:11*

