



Nunavut Canada

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NUNAVUT

2nd Session

5th Assembly

HANSARD

Official Report

DAY 59

Monday, October 21, 2019

Pages 3794 – 3853

Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Simeon Mikkungwak, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)

Hon. Patterk Netser
(Aivilik)
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Arctic College; Minister responsible
for the Nunavut Housing
Corporation*

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)
*Government House Leader; Minister
of Family Services; Minister
responsible for Homelessness; Minister
responsible for Immigration; Minister
responsible for the Status of Women*

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(South Baffin)
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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Monday, October 21, 2019**

Members Present:

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

>>House commenced at 13:31

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Simeon Mikkungwak) (interpretation): I ask Member Quassa to say the opening prayer, please.

>>Prayer

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the people of Baker Lake and Nunavut who are listening to and watching the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly today, October 21, 2019.

Let us proceed with the orders of the day. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

**Minister's Statement 281 – 5(2):
Nunavut Polar Bear Co-
Management Plan Status**

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to the people of Arviat. It is

election day in Arviat, so please go vote.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that I have accepted the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's final decision for the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan. Within this plan is a change in the harvest sex ratio, which was requested by many Nunavummiut. A harvest sex ratio of up to 50 percent females will now be adopted...

>>Applause

...for all polar bear subpopulations in the Nunavut Settlement Area. This will mean that communities will be able to use up to 50 percent of their allocated tags to harvest females.

Mr. Speaker, by implementing the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan, the Department of Environment is demonstrating a commitment to supporting the harvesters now and assurance to preserve our wildlife for future generations of Nunavummiut.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in this process. The suggestions from hunters and trappers organizations, harvesters, elders, and community members were vital to the development of this plan. The department also thanks the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and all co-management partners for their help in crafting this important plan to guide polar bear management in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for

Community and Government Services,
Minister Kusugak.

**Minister's Statement 282 – 5(2): Inuit
Employment**

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation):
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good
day” to the people of Rankin Inlet and
our fellow Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise
today to inform members on Community
and Government Services' remarkable
success in promoting Inuit employment.
Last year you all know that we hired a
new deputy minister for the department
and in our first meeting I challenged her
to increase our Inuit staff. Today I want
to highlight four very positive
achievements.

First, CGS has increased the number of
Inuit in our workforce by 36...

>> *Applause*

...from 108 to 144. Over the last four
months CGS has been able to
accomplish this with the support of my
cabinet colleagues by appointing 22
Inuit who were on casual service
agreements into full-time indeterminate
positions across the territory.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: The department
will continue to monitor and move
forward on this initiative.

In addition, this past summer CGS hired
the second largest number of summer
students across the Government of
Nunavut with 81 percent of those
students being Inuit. This is an excellent

way to introduce our Inuit youth to the
government and get them to consider a
career with us in the future. All students
received an individual welcome letter
from the deputy minister and pictures of
our Inuit students appeared in CGS'
summer newsletter showcasing their
contributions to the department.

Second, to supplement the GN
Sivuliqtiksat intern program, we have
created an internal intern and
development program for Inuit and
committed to 14 intern positions in
addition to the two staff already
participating in the Sivuliqtiksat intern
program. I am particularly pleased to
note that the positions identified are
either specialized positions, supervisory
or management positions.

Thirdly is that CGS has recently
increased our Inuit numbers in our senior
management team by one. One of our
own competed in a job competition for
director of capital projects and was the
successful candidate. This individual has
been with the department for 18 years
and has continually educated themselves
to advance in the ranks.

Finally, another major step in promoting
Inuit employment is the allocation of a
staff position as a dedicated Inuit
employment and outreach program
officer. This position will actively
continue the work set out by the
department to increase Inuit employment
as well as launch, actively engage, and
monitor the concrete actions laid out in
CGS' Inuit Employment Plan once
approved.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this work is very
promising and I will create more
opportunities for Inuit within CGS and

support all of Nunavummiut to rely better on its own human resources. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for Justice, Minister Ehaloak.

**Minister's Statement 283 – 5(2):
Qikiqtani Correctional Healing
Centre Update on Construction**

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am pleased to rise today to update the House on the developments in the construction of the Qikiqtani Correctional Healing Centre. Work began on this project last March and is expected to be fully completed by June 2022.

Mr. Speaker, I am particularly pleased to announce that Inuit employment for this project is currently at 24 percent, which is higher than the minimum 20 percent required under the contract.

Additionally, eight men from the Makigiarvik facility were hired to work on the initial stages of this construction project. When construction resumes this winter, inmates will once again be provided with employment opportunities. This work experience provides valuable training and skill development, which will help with their reintegration back into their communities once they leave custody. These inmates are being paid for their work, which enables them to help support their families while they are incarcerated.

This project supports the commitments made under the *Turaaqtavut* mandate principle [Pivaallirutivut], to develop our infrastructure and economy in ways that support a positive future for our people, our communities, and our land. The new facility will improve the access to programs and services for offenders in Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister of Family Services, Minister Sheutiapik.

**Minister's Statement 284 – 5(2):
National Foster Family Week**

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am happy that the members who were ill are now in the House.

(interpretation ends) *Uqaqtitsijii*, every year the Department of Family Services celebrates National Foster Family Week during the third week of October. This week provides an opportunity to recognize and thank foster families across the territory for their love and commitment to children and youth in care. To celebrate National Foster Family Week in Nunavut, the department works with community members to host appreciation events across the territory.

Mr. Speaker, there are roughly 135 foster families in Nunavut who continue to play critical roles in the delivery of our services, providing safe and nurturing homes for children and youth. This includes extended family members who are the first choice for children

requiring foster parent services.

On behalf of my department, I would like to thank Nunavut's foster families for their invaluable contributions and encourage other Nunavummiut to consider fostering a child today. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Minister Netser.

**Minister's Statement 285 – 5(2):
Groundbreaking Ceremony for
the Kitikmeot Campus Facility**

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to the people of Naujaat and Coral Harbour. They have been going out fishing and I hope that I get to eat delicious fish today from Naujaat and Coral Harbour.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to discuss the development of Nunavut Arctic College's Kitikmeot Campus facility. On October 2 I was joined by our Premier and Minister Ehaloak, Member for Cambridge Bay, as well as NAC representatives Fiona Buchan-Corey and Agnes Olowokere for a groundbreaking ceremony in Cambridge Bay. This was a joyous occasion. I thank them for accompanying me for this event, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, this facility represents an almost \$18.5 million investment in the region and for the territory as a whole. The anticipated completion date of this facility is winter

2021. Staff at the college will be working closely with their partners at the Department of Community and Government Services and the Department of Finance to ensure that this project stays on time and on budget.

Mr. Speaker, this facility will transform the delivery of post-secondary programs in the region. The new structure will be able to host many college programs. While the Kitikmeot Campus is base funded to offer adult basic education, the Social Services Worker Program, and the Nunavut Teacher Education Program, additional programs that have been offered at the campus include Culinary Arts/Camp Cook Program, office administration, college foundations, and others. These additional programs are offered when funding and partnerships are secured. I can assure Members of the House that my staff at the college are continuously looking at ways to offer more programs more consistently in our campuses.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the elders and people of Iqaluktuuttiaq plus the learners who were there for welcoming us to their community and for joining us for the important day. I would also like to acknowledge the support the Kitikmeot Inuit Association has given us for this work. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister of Education, Minister Joanasie.

**Minister's Statement 286 – 5(2):
Education Week**

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, every fall the Department of Education celebrates Education Week, a week of activities recognized across Canada that celebrate the essential role education plays in the lives of communities. This year it is being observed in Nunavut beginning today, October 21, throughout the week to October 25, 2019.

Mr. Speaker, this year's theme is "Ajunngittuq/Ajunnginniq." This is because a future focused on capability is vital to Nunavut's education goals. Mr. Speaker, with 2019 being Nunavut's 20th anniversary, many of the activities taking place throughout the week will ask students and educators to think about how education in Nunavut will be in 10 years while reflecting on what has been accomplished over the previous 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, my department has launched the goals of Bill 25 for the future of (interpretation ends) capable (interpretation) or "ajunngittut" Nunavummiut. Students will be encouraged to share how they feel capable and what they view as a source of pride within themselves and within their schools.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as well, Education Week's theme fits with the 2019 World Teacher Day theme, which is also focused on bright, capable futures, "Young teachers: the future of the profession."

Mr. Speaker, Education Week is an annual event that not only promotes what can be achieved through positive, engaging activities and celebrations but it is also a week where students, educators, and the community can gather around an important educational theme. The department has offered grants to every district education authority in the territory to help fund their Education Week activities.

Mr. Speaker, by being focused on a capable future, students, educators and their communities can see the many potential paths that they can take. I am excited to see how students and school staff share their sources of pride and capabilities. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): I have no more names for Ministers' Statements. Before we proceed, I wish to inform my colleagues that Member Kamingoak, Member for Kugluktuk, will be absent from the House today. Going to the orders of the day. As well, the Member for Uqqummiut, Member Keyootak, is also absent from the House. I wanted to inform the members of that.

Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, Member Qirngnuq.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 428 – 5(2): Inuit Employment

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to say that it is my grandson's birthday. His name is John Paul. I am

happy.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the issue raised by the Premier during his statement, specifically the second item he mentioned that made me happy to hear about. I will speak about how it can be strengthened, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concern about the issue of high unemployment in our territory.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke last week about the challenges involved in achieving the government's goal in meeting its Article 23 requirements with respect to Inuit employment in the public service.

I want to talk about the need for the government to meet its Article 24 requirements with respect to contracting and Inuit employment on construction projects, both big and small.

Mr. Speaker, the government's tenders and requests for proposals for construction projects often include minimum Inuit labour and training requirements. I support those requirements and strongly encourage the government to enforce them firmly.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to building a skilled Inuit workforce in Nunavut, we must do more to support trades training and apprenticeship opportunities so that we can reduce our reliance on imported labour.

>> *Applause*

I also believe that we need to lead by example when it comes to Inuit employment on construction projects,

and that includes the federal government and Inuit organizations.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Speaker, unemployment is a root cause of many social problems. Reducing unemployment will help our communities in many ways and it should be a focus of our government.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Aggu, Member Quassa.

**Member's Statement 429 – 5(2):
Committing to Inuit Societal
Values**

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to the residents of my community, the people of Nunavut, and my colleagues. I will be making my statement in English as I also learned how to speak English.

>> *Laughter*

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise again to address our government's failure to abide by its own guiding principles which are based on Inuit societal values and *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*. This is not the first time that I bring this issue forward and, until our government truly refocuses its approach, it will not be the last.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Family Services is still following legislation from the NWT days. The Nunavut government may have amended the NWT's *Child and Family Services Act* to

state that the law shall be interpreted and administered in accordance with Inuit societal values, but the fact of the matter is that it is not working out that way.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many young delinquents causing havoc in our communities, vandalizing and burning buildings, breaking personal belongings, and having no respect for others. Families are breaking up. Children are being taken away. Children no longer know the safety of a home.

Mr. Speaker, our legislation needs to fully embrace Inuit societal values. Elders and relatives must be full partners when dealing with family matters. Instead we see matters being conducted in secret, without keeping elders and family members informed about how the authorities are dealing with children. This approach is eroding our families and weakening our communities.

Mr. Speaker, when will our government truly focus on how best to keep our children from living a sad future that we would not want for them at all? We need to teach our children... .

Mr. Speaker, I request to finish my statement. (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Member Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, when will our government truly focus on how best to keep our children from living a

sad future that we would not want for them at all?

We need to teach our children how to live a good life, with a government that puts respect and pride in being an Inuk as a priority in all of its activities and laws. Without that we are failing our youth and our children. We are robbing them of a healthy and proud future.

We must truly commit to following Inuit societal values and *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* in Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Member Lightstone.

Member's Statement 430 – 5(2): Upcoming Birth of New Child

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to mention that today is the first day of my wife's maternity leave in advance of our due date. I would just like to give notice to my colleagues here as well as my constituents that at any point during the fall sitting where I might have to get up and leave abruptly, it will be to grab my own hospital bag and join my wife at the hospital to welcome our newest addition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you for that advance notice. Members' Statements. I would first like to announce before proceeding that the Member for Uqummiut is now present in the House.

>> *Applause*

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

**Member's Statement 431 – 5(2):
Encouraging Constituents to Vote
in the 2019 Federal Election**

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you,
Mr. Speaker. Good day, colleagues.
Today I have a statement to make
regarding election day.

We know that all Canadians have a right
to go to the polls and vote today, and
when we wake up tomorrow morning,
we will find out which party will lead
the federal government tomorrow.

I'm not going to say which federal
candidate you should vote for in
Nunavut, but I urge my constituents in
Whale Cove and Arviat as well as those
elsewhere to go to the polls and vote.
Democracy is our foundation. If the
government doesn't have a solid
foundation, I don't know how we would
have good governance as Canadians.

Looking at (interpretation ends) politics
(interpretation) worldwide, there are
major concerns right now. For example,
social media platforms such as
Facebook, which I'm unsure of the
Inuktitut term, is widely used
everywhere. There is misinformation
posted online. They're giving you false
information because they don't want you
to vote for a particular party. I would
like Nunavummiut to be aware that there
is misinformation being spread out there.

In Whale Cove the youth held mock
elections at school. I thank their teachers

for putting these mock elections
together, as this is an important matter.

Today I am being told often as a
Member of the Legislative Assembly,
"Work on this. Work on that."
(interpretation ends) Do your job."
(interpretation) I have no choice but to
agree because they are my constituents.
While I have the opportunity, I can say
to Nunavut voters out there,
(interpretation ends) "Do your job today.
Go and vote."

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

>> *Applause*

Mr. Main (interpretation): That's my
statement. Please go and vote,
Nunavummiut. I'm sure that my
colleagues agree with me on that. Thank
you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members'
Statements. Member for Amittuq,
Member Kaernerck.

**Member's Statement 432 – 5(2):
Making Traditional Food
Available in Boarding Homes**

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank
you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my fellow
residents of Amittuq, ministers, and my
fellow members.

I rise today to talk about the people of
Amittuq and Nunavummiut in general
who go south for medical travel. We
always talk about healthy food, not only
down in Ottawa but also in Edmonton
and Winnipeg. These are Inuit who are
sent south by the Government of

Nunavut. I will be asking the Minister of Health about healthy food at the appropriate time. I still hear of many people who can't eat the food provided at the facilities down south. I will have questions for the minister during question period.

When we held our retreat in Pond Inlet, through *Turaaqtavut*, the government indicated that they would provide the best services to the people of Nunavut. Therefore I will be asking for an update on healthy food from the minister at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Tununig, Member Qamaniq.

**Member's Statement 433 – 5(2):
Addressing Nunavut's Housing
Crisis**

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to my fellow residents of Tununig. To my colleagues, I also say "good afternoon" to you.

I rise today to pose questions to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, in 2016 the federal government pledged \$76.7 million, which was to be spent over two years for Nunavut housing; an additional \$240 million over a decade announced in 2017, which would end in the year 2027.

Research has shown and it has been reiterated many times by many experts over the years that the impacts of

housing crisis are far-reaching and devastating.

More than 56 percent of Nunavummiut live in overcrowding homes, some of them severely overcrowded with multiple families sharing small residences. This affects their health, allowing germs to spread readily. It has been cited in the surge of tuberculosis that has plagued our territory for several decades. Mould in poorly designed and poorly maintained houses can trigger allergies, asthma, and so on.

Mr. Speaker, in the 2019 budget, the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development refers to a \$240 million commitment made in 2017 that averages about \$24 million per year.

Desperate for funding help, Nunavut Housing Minister Patterk Netser made a plea in June for the Inuit land claims organization, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, to help pay for new housing. This \$1.8 billion Nunavut Trust is meant for future generations of Inuit, but the territory is facing a housing crisis now affecting future generations.

(interpretation) I will have questions on this issue that I will be directing to the Minister of Housing during question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Member Towntongie.

**Member's Statement 434 – 5(2):
Traditional Inuit Dogsledding in
Sports**

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the people of Rankin Inlet and Chesterfield Inlet. I am remembering my brother, Akerolik, and the Ipiksaut and Dion families.

I was very happy when the Arctic Winter Games were held where ulu medals were handed out for winter sports. I had heard that dog team racing would be included in the Games. I want to point out that what Nunavummiut consider as dog team racing is not what is allowed and we Inuit have to forcefully point out that Inuit huskies were not bred for sprints but for marathons, so we need an Inuit-specific category with huskies as they are bred for arctic conditions and their claws, body structure, and thickness are unique.

Further, the style in which the dogs are hitched are completely different as Inuit have fan-style dog teams and Inuit have both a lead dog and a lieutenant as they mush along spread out. Over in the forests, their dog team style is single line with dogs set side by side and there are two dogs in the lead when they mush. If our Nunavut youth who race their dogs fan style try this technique, they will lose because this technique is far too different.

I want to voice my pride and want them to realize this difference and to consider how to incorporate the Inuit style and to acknowledge these differences there. I want them to try that out this winter if dog racing is going ahead. Otherwise, with the forested region dogsledding

style, Nunavut youth won't have a chance at winning any ulu medals.

For this reason, I want to state that it has been 30 years and the Minister of Community and Government Services, Lorne Kusugak, is very familiar with this, as he has worked for CBC. He would interview participants and I want him to recall those occasions while deliberating on this matter. I also remember the two others with whom I started dogsled racing, David Oolooyuk and Hugh Ungungai.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to stand and speak to this. If we don't want to lose our traditional Inuit dogsledding culture, we have to let it proceed at the Games. Thank you.

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

**Member's Statement 435 – 5(2):
Grandson's First Walrus**

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the people of Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq who are watching and listening to the proceedings.

Mr. Speaker, I also rise today to voice my pride, as my colleague expressed his pride, as we should voice our pride in our youth when they make accomplishments. We should voice our pride in every way possible and support them. We should encourage them by instilling confidence in what they do. We have to let them know that we are leaders.

I want you to join me in expressing pride

at this time. The main reason that I rise is to congratulate my grandson, who is barely over four years old, for catching his first walrus on Saturday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

An Hon. Member: Wow!
(interpretation) He's very capable.

Speaker (interpretation): We celebrate with you. Members' Statements. Member for Pangnirtung, Member Nakashuk.

**Member's Statement 436 – 5(2):
Pangnirtung Students Hold Mock
Elections**

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues. I say "good day" to the people of Pangnirtung.

I also want to provide an example such as the one our colleague shared earlier. With the election taking place today, the students at the schools in Pangnirtung, especially students in the higher grades, also conducted mock elections. Seeing the actual photos of them filled me with pride. It shows the importance of voting.

The voter turnout hasn't been very high, so this is to encourage voting and we understand its importance. I wanted to mention the mock elections that were held at the schools in Pangnirtung. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Member Ehaloak.

**Member's Statement 437 – 5(2):
Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk
Participants at the 2019 AWG
Trials for Table Tennis**

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I went to the school and saw some youth playing at the (interpretation ends) Arctic Winter Games trials for table tennis.

(interpretation) The youth from Cambridge Bay are Rhea Ekpakohak, Kiana Ekpakohak, Joshua Kaosoni, David Komak, Nicky Ekpakohalok, Anisia Otokiak, Rylan Angohiatok, Mika Angohiatok, their coach Paula Cziranka (interpretation ends) and Errol Nicolas, (interpretation) and my grandchildren from Kugluktuk who are participating at the Games, (interpretation ends) Clayton and Mariah Kadlun. Alice Anablak was selected as one of Team Nunavut's players.

(interpretation) I just want to state to you all that I did vote today, so you should vote as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Quttiktuq, Member Akeeagok.

**Member's Statement 438 – 5(2):
Encourage Voter Turnout in the
2019 Federal Election**

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is election day and I wanted to repeat that fact since voting is extremely important. Canada is a very large country and even Nunavut as a territory has to go through

different time zones before the election is over.

I want to reiterate that as our citizens were urged to vote earlier, let us remember that some communities face adverse weather conditions. Up in Resolute Bay they are having a blizzard. Nonetheless, the polling station will remain open. From what I heard, voters are continuing to vote during this blizzard.

When people want to elect their representative, they aren't just waiting and even the weather is not enough to stop them. I wanted to voice my pride in them and encourage all eligible voters to cast their vote. I am proud of every voter who casts their vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list. Continuing on. Returns to Oral Questions. Minister Akeeagok.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

Return to Oral Question 566 – 5(2): Problems with Air Travel Routes

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to clarify the answer I provided on October 17, 2019 to Mr. Pauloosie Keyootak, Member for Uqqummiut, who asked for details on airline schedule changes between his constituency communities of Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq.

As the members know, the Government of Nunavut does not make the routing decisions for the airlines. Our primary

influence is through our contracts, where we prioritize travel times between the communities and the nearest hospital.

During my response to the member's question, I spoke of a once-per-week option to fly from Clyde River to Qikiqtarjuaq. I would like to clarify that the Sunday connection still stops in Iqaluit but no longer requires an overnight stay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you very much. Continuing on with the orders of the day. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member Netser.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to welcome everyone who just entered the House. My dear wife is currently in town teaching a kamik-making course and I welcome all the students who are visiting.

(interpretation ends) First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome to the House my dear wife. We will be celebrating our 40th anniversary next February. I can honestly say that we will be happily married for five years.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, (interpretation) I wish to welcome my dear wife, Mona Netser, who is teaching a kamik-making course here in Iqaluit. We are always welcomed by her students. Lourie Nakashuk is on her right and Eeta Nukiruaq. Welcome to you both. She will be teaching them skills and they will definitely become adept at making kamiks.

Since I am constantly observing my wife making kamiit, perhaps I can stitch together a pair.

>> *Laughter*

I welcome them today, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Please feel welcome in your Legislative Assembly. Always feel welcome. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Pangnirtung, Member Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to recognize a student who recently moved here, my relative, Lourie Nakashuk. She is from Pangnirtung. Welcome to the gallery. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. I have no more names on my list. Continuing on. Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Member Qirngnuq.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 584 – 5(2): Contracting Practices and Trades Training

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to begin by saying I am very happy to be going first today, both with my statement and question.

>> *Laughter*

I say “good day” to the people from Kugaaruk and Taloyoak.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, in my member’s statement I spoke about of the issues of high unemployment in our communities and the need for both large and small government construction projects to maximize the number of Inuit workers.

Can the minister clarify which department of the government is responsible for determining Inuit labour and training requirements on construction projects, especially for the larger projects? I would like to get some clarification on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Community and Government Services, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for his question. Whenever the government has a construction project to undertake, we ask Nunavut businesses to submit bids to be screened for viability. Sometimes the lowest bids are selected, but bid adjustments are made when there are tangible benefits for Nunavummiut. With that being the case, we also look for companies that have the highest percentage and number of Inuit in their proposals.

In following these protocols, we work with the successful bidder and the government’s contracting authorities so that the maximum number of Inuit can

be employed. Further, we are working on maximizing the number of apprentices on these projects. Mr. Speaker, I hope I was understandable. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Member Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for that clarification. My supplementary question is how the government's process for issuing requests for proposals can be improved. When they were constructing Kugaaruk's new school, they had a 30 percent Inuit labour requirement. It states in the RFP that there is a 30 percent Inuit labour requirement. (interpretation ends) Can the minister explain how this level was determined and can he indicate if it was achieved? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In using Kugaaruk as an example, as per his question, I will try to be as accurate as I can. When a project of that nature comes up in the community, such as the school being built in Kugaaruk, they have used previous records to determine the Inuit labour pool and how many Inuit wish to work on the project. In assessing how many workers will be required during the construction of a project, we work with the contractor and our contracting authorities as well as the community to come up with the minimum requirements.

For example, if the Inuit labour requirement for the project in Kugaaruk

was set at 30 percent, it can go beyond that. It would be ideal if it was at 100 percent, but we must understand that it cannot go lower than the minimum requirement of 30 percent. I can tell my colleague what I have heard, which is that the 30 percent requirement was surpassed for the construction of that school. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for that very good response, that the minimum Inuit labour requirement was surpassed.

For my final question, in my member's statement today I spoke about the need to increase the number of skilled tradespeople in Nunavut so that we can reduce our reliance on imported labour. Can the minister describe how his department works with Nunavut Arctic College in the area of trades training for Inuit? I hope that was understandable, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for asking that question, as it will give me an opportunity to say part of what I really wanted to say. I have heard repeatedly during our sittings here as well as from outside venues that the percentage of Inuit employment can be much higher since the government is using public funds. This is something we no longer wish to hear. Well, it's something I no longer wish to hear.

We have created a new body that will be

responsible for promoting higher Inuit employment rates, according to your advocacy. The contracting authorities within our departments will work with the Department of Family Services and Arctic College, as well as other organizations such as the Nunavummi Nangminiqagtunik Ikajuuti Secretariat within the Department of Economic Development. These organizations will now be working together whenever a new project comes up, such as a school. We will be reviewing jointly before a project begins.

Even before a project is announced, we will figure out how many apprentices we can train as electricians, carpenters, plumbers, and in other trades that may be required to construct a building such as a school. Once we have that information, either through Arctic College or the Department of Family Services, we would engage with prospective apprentices to see if they want to work on the project. Perhaps if there are RFPs outside of the school project, they can start their training at the beginning of the project, not at the end. I'm pleased with our forward-thinking in that regard and I'll update my colleagues as it progresses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Member Rumbolt.

Question 585 – 5(2): Banking and Financial Services in Smaller Communities

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to the people of Sanikiluaq.

Mr. Speaker, today my questions are for the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, I want to raise the issue of banking and financial services in smaller communities, which the minister addressed in his statement to the House last Thursday.

Mr. Speaker, the government's 2016 Request for Proposals for Banking Services asked potential service providers to "outline the details of a community banking program" that would "expand and maximize the level of banking services available to residents of Nunavut, especially in communities where physical banking operations do not exist."

Mr. Speaker, as the MLA for Hudson Bay, I know that the lack of on-the-ground banking and financial services in Sanikiluaq poses challenges to both individuals and businesses in the community.

Can the minister indicate what specific commitments and/or contractual requirements concerning community banking services are in place between the government and the Royal Bank of Canada, which won the contract to provide banking services? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Finance, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, it was with a lot of celebration that Pangnirtung welcomed the banking services in Pangnirtung, especially being able to open before the turbot season begins to

help the fishermen there with their banking services.

Mr. Speaker, specifically to the member's question, the member is correct that in December 2016 an agreement was signed to provide increased banking services in the territory. They started off with Arviat and then now in Pangnirtung. The agreement at that time, the Royal Bank of Canada had agreed to open three sites during the three years of the term. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the minister's statement, the minister spoke about the opening of the Royal Bank's new agency outlet in Pangnirtung, which is good news and I'm sure it will make life easier for the people in that community. Can the minister clarify the extent to which his department was involved in the bank's decision to open an outlet in that community, and can he clarify the process by which other communities can request similar services? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the calendar has proven, it's a fairly lengthy process to actually open up an institution to provide banking services in a community and it's a lot of work with partners. To get the office open in Arviat, there was an agreement with Eskimo Point Lumber Supply; in

Pangnirtung the Uqqurmiut Arts and Crafts Society. Again, it was engagement from Finance, Economic Development and Transportation, discussions with the Nunavut Housing Corporation as its action item No. 18 in their blueprint for action to increase banking services across the territory.

There are a number of different partners to participate and the path to take is to communicate with my office if there are any entities in your communities that want to partner with the RBC. Contact my office or contact the Department of Finance and we will help guide you to the proper path. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the information that the minister provided.

One of the problems that the lack of on-the-ground banking and financial services creates for residents of smaller communities is an overreliance on non-traditional sources of credit like online payday loan providers. Mr. Speaker, these outfits charge outrageous interest rates to people who can often least afford it. For example, information provided by the Government of Nunavut concerning payday loan providers states that "annual interest rates may go as high as 652%."

Can the minister describe what plans he has to work with the minister responsible for consumer affairs to introduce legislation to protect Nunavummiut from predatory loan providers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a former banker in the north, I can totally understand the member's question and concern. I remember part of my job in the morning was going through all the envelopes with all the deposits and financial transactions at the branch I worked at because there were no banking services available in the NWT at that time, which is now Nunavut. I can personally attest to the complexity of it.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to specific legislation brought forward, that's something I'll have to discuss with my officials and obviously with my cabinet colleagues and with members on legislative proposals to bring forward changes. There are a number of different avenues that people have to access banking services. Unfortunately, again, most of them are online, where you can now deposit through pictures of your cheques.

There are some avenues available. Is it all-encompassing? No. Mr. Speaker, I can acknowledge that and I will have a further discussion to get an update on where we are with our discussions with Consumer Affairs on how to either legislate or regulate financial services in the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 586 – 5(2): Income Assistance Appeal Process

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to direct my question

to the Minister of Family Services regarding income assistance.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, it's unfortunate, along with my colleague from Kugaaruk, Arviligjuaq, there are thousands of Nunavummiut who are currently unemployed, not because they want to be; because there are no jobs in many of our communities or not enough. When it comes to the thousands of Nunavummiut who rely on income assistance, I have some questions regarding suspension of that income assistance and the appeal process.

Mr. Speaker, I was reading the most recent Representative for Children and Youth annual report and on page 24 of this report it mentions the suspension of income assistance, food allowance, and I'm going to paraphrase here to get to my question quicker. It says here that a new social assistance suspension policy was put in place in July 2018, and that under this new policy, clients can receive 50 percent of their basic allowance for two calendar months. This is rather than being cut off completely. They're now allowed to get up to 50 percent of their basic allowance. This was in response to a situation where a child was encountering food insecurity as a result of this policy.

My first question for the minister is: does this new policy apply to all income assistance recipients or just those with children? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Family Services, Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. (interpretation ends) Every application obviously is by the parent coming for income support, so under that in the file includes children. Yes, when there is a suspension, it would include children. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister. (interpretation ends) Thank you for clarifying that. I had asked questions in this House regarding the appeals process for income assistance. In her letter of June 5, the minister had indicated that regarding the appeals process, I'm going quote from the letter, "I am committed to making this information more readily available to constituents." It mentions updating the department's website.

Mr. Speaker, I checked the website before we came in to session here and information on the appeals process still isn't on the website. My next question is: when will this information be provided to the public on the department's website? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you. (interpretation ends) Unfortunately we just got a communications person recently, but we do have a fact sheet. I'm sure they are watching and it will be on the website sooner than later. (interpretation) Thank

you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. I hope that the appeal form itself will also be on the website. Under the current arrangement, this form, my understanding is that an income assistance recipient has to ask the worker who just denied them their income assistance, "Oh, do you have the form where I can appeal your decision?" That sounds like a very awkward conversation and maybe one that could be made easier.

The minister, in her correspondence, also indicated that the average timeline for an appeal is 16 days. My last question for the minister is: is the department actively working to bring down that average timeline or is the department satisfied that 16 days is a short enough time for income assistance appeals? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The status quo, they meet every two weeks to review, this is the committee, and if the client wants to continue on and go to the next level, which is through the board appeal, that happens within 30 days. (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Member Angnakak.

**Question 587 – 5(2): Cannabis
Distribution in Nunavut**

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to everybody.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister responsible for Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission.

Mr. Speaker, since today is the day of the federal general election, I think it's a good time to recall that it was the decision of the federal government to legalize cannabis in Canada and it's a decision that has had significant impacts on all provinces and territories, just like Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, Statistics Canada's most recent National Cannabis Survey reports that over 40 percent of cannabis consumers in Canada "...reported purchasing at least some of their cannabis from illegal sources, such as a drug dealer..."

Mr. Speaker, I have to assume that the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission has been working closely with law enforcement to address the issue of black market cannabis sales in the territory. Can the minister provide any estimates as to the extent to which the illegal black market sale of cannabis continues to occur in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for the Liquor and Cannabis Commission, Minister Hickey.

>> *Laughter*

>> *Applause*

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. People wonder why the font on my business cards is so small.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, it's a good question and it's something that we're following very closely. As recently as this Saturday, all members were invited by the Minister of Justice to speak to RCMP members. One of the questions that came up was: have they noticed any type of impact on the black market sales? Anecdotally, we don't have tracking numbers for illicit sales, but I can say with all honesty that I don't believe we're making much of a dent at all right now.

The online sales is the only option right now to purchase cannabis legally in the territory, and until such time as we get retail sales outlets so that people can walk in and purchase as they want, immediate, I don't anticipate we're going to make a dramatic dent into the illegal sales. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Member Angnakak

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the minister for his response. His response leads me into my next question. Here in Nunavut the only legal way, of course, to purchase cannabis is from two government-approved online vendors. In November 2018 the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission issued a request for expressions of interest for entities that want to engage in the retail sale of cannabis in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, the deadline for submitting applications closes next week, on

October 31. Can the minister indicate if the government's goal is to allow retail sales of cannabis to take place in all 25 communities and, if so, can he also indicate what the timeline is for reviewing submissions and issuing approvals? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't answer the [entire] question. We're still finalizing our regulations on exactly how the retail sales are going to work on a community basis. In the Act it does give the communities options or it gives us instruction to make sure that we consult with communities on exactly how and who would be approved. There is a community engagement part of that as well too.

I don't have a specific timeline. I have been following this very closely with my department for the simple fact that we do need to make an impact on the illegal sales. We need to make sure that people are buying safe products that we know are not contaminated with any other pharmaceuticals or any other product.

I don't have a definitive timeline with regard to how long it will take to analyze. Again, the community engagement part of that will play a role into how long it actually takes on a case-by-case basis, but I can assure all members that as it is legal to distribute, we want to make sure that we provide that option to our residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his response. Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission describes its retail operation here in Iqaluit as a "pilot project," and I'm going to have questions for the minister at another time concerning the extent to which the government is measuring and evaluating the impact that increased access to alcohol has had on the people of Iqaluit and neighbouring communities such as Pangnirtung.

Mr. Speaker, cannabis is a substance that is not without health risks. Can the minister describe what work the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission is undertaking with its partners, including the Department of Health, to ensure that the public has clear information about the health risks of cannabis consumption? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like our "Let's Be Aware" campaign for alcohol, we are in the process of finalizing all of our materials to be distributed to community health centres in communities so that all people are aware of the risks associated. There are discussions with the Department of Health on how to utilize the funding that we have allowed through our Liquor and Cannabis Revolving Fund on how to maximize the impact of those dollars, as the two departments are engaged. I thank the member for raising the issue and it's something that we're actively working on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Before we proceed, I would like to welcome to the

Legislative Assembly Katherine Peterson, (interpretation ends) Integrity Commissioner.

>>*Applause*

(interpretation) Oral Questions. Member for Aggu, Member Quassa.

Question 588 – 5(2): Funds for Inuktut in Nunavut

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Languages.

Mr. Speaker, in early September the federal department of Canadian Heritage announced that it would commit up to \$42 million over a five-year period to support, revitalize, and strengthen Inuktut in Nunavut under the Nunavut Partnership Table on Language and Education. Can the minister provide an update on the status of this partnership? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Languages, Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the question. Mr. Speaker, on September 8 we issued a joint news release with the federal government and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. We want to introduce a five-year program to train Inuktut educators and deliver Inuktut language instruction. That's the main reason the funding was announced. I can say that we don't really have any updates on that joint news release, but the work is ongoing to date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Member Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll switch to English.

>>*Laughter*

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that it takes time to finalize agreements, especially those which commit to spending significant amounts of public funds. However, I am confident that there are plans already in place on how best to allocate these funds when they are finally committed, although the minister said otherwise.

Can the minister provide further detail on what types of initiatives, programs, and resources will be supported through this funding and who will decide on the amounts to be allocated? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) In the announcement that we made, it identified that there are different areas that we want to spend this money on specifically. We said that we finalized a partnership table on language and education, and this table would work with all the different parties on the different initiatives, especially the five-year pilot project that we're dealing with here.

We're working very closely with Nunavut Arctic College on the Nunavut Teacher Education Program to ensure that there's a new ladder approach. There are different ways that people can obtain certification. In the announcement

we said that we would look at a Nunavummi Inuktitut Uqariuqsatittijunirmut Ilinniarniq certificate, a language specialist diploma, or Bachelor of Education degree. Those are some of the certifications we're looking at and there could be others if this partnership goes forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, we are aware that there is a lack of proper Inuktitut language instruction in our schools at this time, there is scarcity of Inuit language resources, and we have continually stated that our goal is to have a bilingual education system since Nunavut was created, which hasn't really come to fruition. We know that our government requires whatever support it can leverage so that the Inuit language can be revitalized and strengthened.

My final question to the minister is: will you commit to providing a comprehensive and detailed report on the financial commitments, some of which you have mentioned? This is a large amount of funding for language instruction in our schools. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the question. Mr. Speaker, this funding was announced after the federal government introduced indigenous language legislation. I stated that we're continually working on it to date, but I

can't table a comprehensive and detailed report at this time. I can also say that we haven't determined which communities will receive language instructors, but I do look forward to updating my colleagues once I have more details, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Question 589 – 5(2): Making Traditional Food Available in Boarding Homes

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated earlier, my question is directed to the Minister of Health regarding medical patients who are sent to Ottawa, especially our elders and mothers who are breastfeeding.

Have there been any improvements to healthy food being provided down south at the boarding homes, such as country food? My first question is if there has been an improvement or if it remains status quo. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Health, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All of our contracts with our boarding homes have a clause in there regarding country food availability. Some, it is available seven days a week; others a few times a week. It does vary on access and it also has to do with which jurisdiction the facility is in. An example, in Ottawa we have to follow the Ontario Food Guide guidelines on country food, so it has to be inspected. It does limit some of the availability of country food, but that being said, I do

know that the boarding homes work very hard to provide country food as often as possible. Like I said, some are seven or eight times a week; others are at least a few times a week. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Member Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that clarification. It leads me to my next question. Perhaps this applies more in Ontario where the Nutrition North Program bases the pricing of nutritious foods on, but what Inuit country food provides is entirely different from agrarian nutritional needs. Can you work closer with them to ensure good foodstuffs aren't made ineligible, especially where territorial agencies declare it as nutritious?

It states here that when our elders finally have a bite of their precious country food, it provides a jolt of health into their bodies like a shot of nutrients. Can't your department provide a better explanation to the southern program managers about the health benefits of country food? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I fully agree. Mr. Speaker, country food is a staple for a large part of our population and it's what helps people not just feel better but actually get better. There is a lot of nutritional value. An example is the country food pilot project here in Iqaluit at the QGH. We have worked very closely with the staff to have country food available. I had one member just recently thank me.

One of his constituents who gave birth here in Iqaluit was given a frozen char when she was done. There are great examples. There is a lot of progress being worked on.

The availability, I think, is the biggest challenge. A recent example, again I'll use the QGH because we are working very hard in the territory to provide country food. We made some changes just even so that they can purchase with cash from suppliers instead of people having to wait for a cheque to come in. We have listened to the people and we're working to make whatever arrangements are necessary and needed to help provide country food to as many residents in our facilities as we can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's great to hear that. Now, I want the minister's commitment regarding our policy on nutritious food. You did agree. Can the minister inform this House and our constituents if he can commit to strengthening the policy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Hickey.

Hon. George Hickey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I had mentioned, this is a renewed focus, or maybe not renewed, but emphasized focus of country food and how important it is. We've had our dietitians going to, for example, the boarding home here in Iqaluit and help them with their menu planning. We want to make sure that if we're providing a service to anybody, especially our residents, they're getting fed properly.

and treated properly, and country food is a part of that. I can assure the member that this is a concerted focus of the department. Thank you.

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

Question 590 – 5(2): Local Housing Organizations

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues. A big “hello” to Gjoa Havenmiut, (interpretation) all of them.

(interpretation ends) First of all, I would like to say a big “thank you” to the staff of the hospital that looked after me very well over the weekend.

>> *Applause*

Thank you. The only problem they had was they had no television...

>> *Laughter*

...so I was not able to watch a very good hockey team with a very good outcome.

>> *Applause*

>> *Laughter*

An Hon. Member: Boo.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

As the minister is very much aware, public housing programs are delivered at the local level by our local housing

organizations, and I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the hard-working employees and board members at the Gjoa Haven Local Housing Organization.

Mr. Speaker, the current business plan of the Nunavut Housing Corporation indicates that one of its current priorities has been to finalize and implement a new “Master Management Agreement” between the corporation and the local housing organizations. Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that this agreement would cover everything from budgetary issues to how local housing organizations should make decisions about public housing unit allocations.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister inform the House when the new master management agreement will be finalized and tabled in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The new management agreement will help clarify and define the relationship we have with the authorities and the local housing organizations and help them to ensure that the Nunavut housing programs are delivered consistently throughout the territory. As for tabling the document, I believe this is still an ongoing process before we would be able to table the agreement. (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Member Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I frequently receive concerns from constituents about the process by which public housing units are allocated. I can give you an example where a young person is told that he has been given a unit, and people at that age would be very happy to get a unit there. Their mind gets settled, their body feels better, and they're happy they're getting a unit, but then a few days later they are told they are not getting that unit. Being told as a young person you're getting a unit and not getting a unit a few days later will upset you and will play with your mind.

Mr. Speaker, although I recognize the need for a fair and transparent system of allocating units, I do not think that the general public is always clearly aware of what the rules are. Can the minister clarify if the new master management agreement between the Nunavut Housing Corporation and the local housing organizations has changed the point rating system for public housing unit allocations and can he clarify how LHOs are supposed to explain this system to the public? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to his question, we work with the local housing organizations. We're not responsible for who gets a housing unit and who moves where. If they're not pleased about the fact that they were going to get a housing unit and they don't get that unit, (interpretation ends) I believe there's a mechanism where they can challenge the decision. We leave the allocation of the units to the LHOs, but I

believe there's a mechanism to challenge the decision. This new agreement will definitely clarify the relationships we have with the LHOs. (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the minister for the clarification. The manual for local housing organization board members states that "The application of policies and systems is meant to assist the Board in making fair and open decisions. However, it may feel to the Board that their authority to make decisions has been limited by these systems. The Board has the authority to make a different decision than the policy would suggest, but the Directors must document the basis for the decision in the minutes and forward the documentation to the District Office. In other words, the Board has the authority in exceptional circumstances to use their best judgement based on local knowledge and insight..." They're the ones that know their own people. "...but these decisions must be fair, rational, defensible and documented."

Mr. Speaker, I agree completely with this statement, but I am concerned that it is not actually happening in practice. Will the minister commit to having the Nunavut Housing Corporation's district offices discuss this process with the LHOs so that all parties have a clear understanding of how to approach unusual or exceptional situations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) We have a good working relationship with all LHOs in terms of delivering the policies of the agreement between the NHC and LHOs. If there are any discrepancies or wrongdoings on behalf of the LHOs, we encourage the constituents to work with their MLAs so that it can be brought to our attention and we can address it from our end. We ensure that all policies are adhered to by everyone on board. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Chesterfield Inlet, Member Towtongie.

Question 591 – 5(2): Public Housing Rent Scale

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's Rankin Inlet North. My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation.

An issue that I have been raising is the public housing rent scale in the territory, which is \$1,466 a month for a one-bedroom unit, \$1,792 a month for a three-bedroom unit, \$2,118 a month for a four-bedroom unit, and \$2,444 for a five-bedroom unit. In looking at the rent scale, it has been 10 years since it was introduced and it will be reviewed again to help reduce poverty and eliminate barriers to employment.

These days I am being told that people don't want to work because when they start working, their rent will increase dramatically. When the government introduced the rent scale 10 years ago, they said that housing units will be inspected to ensure they are in good

condition or to make sure that people are not living in overcrowded situations. I have noticed tenants paying high rents for units that are in poor condition.

My question for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation is: since it has been over 10 years now, when will the public housing rent scale be reviewed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): I apologize to the Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet. Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to our colleague's question on the rent scale that she said was introduced 10 years ago, what I can say is that according to the briefing notes that have been provided to me, the rent scale was introduced in February 2014. I don't think 10 years have passed since it was introduced in 2014, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Member Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is half a decade, (interpretation ends) five years. (interpretation) I wanted to clarify that. I apologize for my oversight and I don't want to entertain any comments on that while I have time to ask questions.

I would now like to ask about the rents that were increased in 2018. The government stated that the changes would "make the administration of the public housing program more manageable..." Can the minister indicate

to the House if they are operating smoothly and how the housing corporation has been obtaining feedback from the local housing organizations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. She started by stating ten years and now she is stating five years. I wonder where she got that information.

Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) the rental public housing program is based on the public housing rent scale. It's a rent-geared-to-income sliding scale designed to ensure that the public housing rental scale remains fair and affordable.

(interpretation) I can state that when I was informed of housing units that were too old or in poor condition, we recently decreased the rent for our tenants. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary question, Member Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Minister, I corrected what I stated. It was 2015, so for four years. The ministers should read their own materials. It says in (interpretation ends) Action 12 (interpretation) that the minister will initiate a review on how the housing model will be developed.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the minister is aware that Action 12 of the Nunavut Housing Corporation's *Blueprint for Action on Housing* indicates that the NHC will "review

possible development of a fixed-rent subsidized housing model targeting high-income public housing tenants; particularly those currently paying maximum rent in public housing." It's right in the blueprint of housing corporation footprints.

Can the minister update the House today on what specific actions the Nunavut Housing Corporation has taken to accomplish this goal? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The blueprint on housing action plan takes years to implement. It's a work in progress and I can say today that we are working on the 60 action items of the action on housing. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Tununig, Member Qamaniq.

Question 592 – 5(2): Federally Announced Funding for Social Housing

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated in my member's statement, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation.

In 2017 the federal government identified \$240 million in funding to the Government of Nunavut to assist with housing construction. As it is federal election day, if the government of the day that set aside \$240 million is defeated, is there a possibility that the

funding will be cut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the question regarding the \$240 million agreement we have with the federal government over ten years. This past summer in August the Prime Minister of Canada came here to sign the agreement. I can say today that the agreement will not change regardless of which government is voted into power. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Member Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation for that very good response. It was also thought that with the \$240 million to be spent over ten years, there are about eight years remaining. Will the housing corporation be spending \$24 million a year for ten years or will that change annually? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are happy about the \$240 million that the federal government allocated to us, but it's still not enough. As this is slated for ten years, we can plan. I think there are nine years left and that's still a bit of money. We can plan for the next ten years. I can state that the Government of Nunavut gives us an additional \$17.5 million for

housing. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for his very good response. In June, as the minister, you identified Inuit organizations and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated as a source for assistance to help the government address the housing shortage in Nunavut. Have they indicated whether they will be able to provide financial assistance to the Government of Nunavut to address the housing shortage? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We still haven't heard from the Inuit organizations on their willingness to provide assistance to us on housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Members, please note that the time for question period has expired. Member for Amittuq, Member Kaernerck.

Motion 048 – 5(2): Extension of Question Period

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Rule 39(7), I move, seconded by the Member for Arviat North-Taloyoak...Whale Cove, that the time for question period be extended. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you very much. The motion is in order, except that it was the Member for Arviat

North-Whale Cove, and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is carried and question period is extended for an additional 30 minutes.

Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung, Member Nakashuk.

Question 593 – 5(2): Airline Merger

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This afternoon my questions are for the (interpretation ends) Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

On June 19 of this year the federal Minister of Transport announced the approval of an airline merger between First Air and Canadian North. On June 20 our government's Minister of Economic Development and Transportation issued a public statement concerning the merger in which he indicated that the Government of Nunavut has "...requested comprehensive monitoring of operations after the merger, to ensure all terms and conditions are met."

Mr. Speaker, the federal announcement indicated that a "Confidential Implementation and Monitoring Agreement" would be signed between the federal Minister of Transport and the parent companies of the two airlines. My question for the minister is this: has the Government of Nunavut been provided with a copy of this agreement, yes or no? (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I understood, the member asked if we have signed an agreement. I have not signed any agreement on the merger, but if I understood the question properly, if that was the question, whether we signed an agreement or not, at this point we have not signed an agreement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Please clarify your question, Member Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was trying to ask the minister if he has been provided with a copy of the agreement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The terms that the Minister of Transport put out was put out to all the public and that's how we learned about it and those are the terms that we had. I've had meetings with the Minister of Transport regarding this and one of the conditions is that there is going to be an oversight advisory body which our government is to appoint an individual as a part of this advisory board for the Minister for Transport Canada. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Member Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for clarifying that. He touched on my next question. The federal government indicated that an advisory would be required to monitor compliance of the agreement with the airlines. I would like

to ask a question about that.
 (interpretation ends) Like the minister had stated, to “create an independent advisory board that shall ensure representation of stakeholders in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories.” Can the minister confirm who has been appointed to this “advisory board”?
 (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government has appointed or has identified to Canadian North that our representative will be our very own Associate Deputy Minister, Jimi Onalik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Member Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The Minister of Economic Development and Transportation’s announcement of June 20 indicated that the Government of Nunavut “will not hesitate to voice our concerns if we see deterioration in service to our communities.”

Mr. Speaker, complaining is not enough. Can the minister describe what actual tools the government has available to use in the event that service to our communities does suffer under the airline merger? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I could ask for a little bit of patience from my member colleagues, I am planning to table the terms and conditions that our government had

asked for, and you will see in those terms and conditions that the Minister of Transport Canada put out at least six of the seven that we have asked for are there. We’re not just going to complain; we are monitoring. I have indicated that to the Canadian North chairperson and also to the president, along with giving strong directions to our appointed advisory board to make sure that these are reviewed. I want to assure members too that our advisory group that consists of different departments will continue to monitor this for us for the technicality version. For myself, I’m still committed and will continue to engage with the federal minister and also the president of Canadian North. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 594 – 5(2): Overcrowding at Tammaativvik Boarding Home

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, one of my colleagues was concerned about medical patients travelling to another jurisdiction for treatment, but my question is regarding the Tammaativvik Boarding Home here in Iqaluit. We know that the Tammaativvik Boarding Home is very well utilized by Baffin medical travel patients, but I think we all know that it’s at full capacity every single day.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate if the Department of Health has made any plans to use a larger facility or another building to provide accommodations for

medical travel patients? Is he working on addressing the constant capacity issue with the boarding home for medical travel patients? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Health, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The majority of our boarding homes are under a lot of pressure with the increased volumes, increased parameters of eligible escorts with maternal travel; decisions like that that were outside our control. That being said, we do work regularly with all of our boarding homes. There are site visits and ongoing communications.

It is up to the contractor, in this case Nova Group, whether they would decide to expand their existing infrastructure in the community. There are a number of hotels being built right now that hopefully offsets some of the challenges of finding space. Like I said, we do work with the boarding homes on any challenges, but ultimately it is up to them to find appropriate accommodations.

If the Speaker will indulge me a little bit, I'll take this time again to bring up billeting. If people are travelling for medical travel and if you're coming to Iqaluit, as an example, and you've got friends or family here, talk to them to see if they would be interested in billeting. We do pay quite well for people who are billeting health patients. I just wanted to put that plug out there to the population. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Member Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for clarifying that. Mr. Speaker, can we be provided with some numbers on how often Tammaativvik is at full capacity on an annual basis or is it too onerous to get that information? Even though the patients are supposed to have room at the Tammaativvik Boarding Board, they're placed at hotels instead and the hotels are usually fully booked. Is it possible for the minister to provide us with the information on how many patients have to be placed outside the boarding home due to overcapacity on an annual basis? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I had that information at my fingertips, I would gladly share it with the member. I'll have to look to get the exact number on an annual basis or see what level of detail could be provided by the boarding home contractor to see how many people do have to use other, offsite accommodations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary question, Member Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for indicating that. If we have the numbers, it will give us an indication of whether we need a larger facility or another building. We all know that there are escorts required for pregnant women, and I do know that is one of the factors and I believe it is funded by Health Canada. With that policy, I think that is when the boarding home became too

small, which is very nice for pregnant women to have escorts, but the only problem is overcapacity at the boarding home.

Some of us have noticed that due to overcapacity, patients are even staying in laundry rooms, utility rooms, living rooms, and so on. Those rooms are all occupied. It's heartbreaking to see some of the elders who are put in that situation. They are put in rooms that have no beds where they can sleep and they are just provided mattresses. These are people on medical travel. It must be tiring, especially for elders who have mobility issues, when they're put in that situation.

Keeping that in mind, I believe the Department of Health needs to plan further on its contracting. If the contract expires, can they find another contractor? Once they know the contract is about to expire, can the Department of Health plan for other alternatives? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the member. Capacity is a challenge and they do run at a very tight capacity. Just one community going weather-out and a plane not leaving the community when they're expecting people to leave can create a very challenging backlog.

We do work very closely on a very regular basis with all the boarding homes. One of the things that we discuss in our scheduling are specialist visits and working with appointments at the QGH here when people are here for medical travel. We work very closely with our

scheduling to make sure that we're taking into account space at the boarding homes when we do these endeavours.

I do note the member's comments and I'll continue to raise these with my officials. Thank you.

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

Question 595 – 5(2): School Breakfast Programs

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Education and are a follow-up to questions I asked almost a year ago today, last year's fall sitting, regarding the desperate need for government funding of food programs in our schools.

Mr. Speaker, an article recently published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* found that food insecurity continues to worsen in the territory. No one suffers more than a child who requires nutritious meals to fuel their development. Further, as many as seven out of ten children in this territory go to school hungry.

Mr. Speaker, studies have proven that hunger greatly impacts a child's performance and behaviour in school. Mr. Speaker, this is not acceptable. Our children are our future, and I believe that the minister should be doing everything necessary to ensure that students have the essentials to achieve success.

I would like to ask, since the beginning of the academic school year, if the minister has provided any additional funding or additional support for those

invaluable volunteers that currently provide the school breakfast programs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Education, Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. Mr. Speaker, we do support the *Makimaniq Plan*. There's a table that deals with food insecurity and tackling poverty in the territory. We are a part of different working groups to ensure that our students are coming to school with food security. With that, we are collaborating with different agencies to ensure students are succeeding in their learning. However, at this point we are looking at some ways where we can enhance some of the breakfast programming that's currently in place. I have to emphasize that.

Of course the current arrangement or funding agreement is through the Department of Health and it's under the Community Wellness Fund. This all trickles down to the local level and at the local school level, these volunteers or educators and other school staff play a large role in delivering these food programs on top of their regular duties to educate the students. I commend them for that.

However, at this point we haven't added any budgets or any more PYs or staff to address food programming in schools. We're at that right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Member Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask next the minister... Well, sorry. The minister had indicated that the Department of Health does provide some funding for our crucial volunteers that do provide the programming. I would like to ask if the minister is aware: how many pots of funding do our teachers and other volunteers currently dip into to access support to provide these food programs in our schools? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank him for the question. Under the community wellness funding this is probably the biggest spending on food programs in schools that is spent. Right now for 2018-19, it was at \$3.5 million. However, on top of that we know that some schools also get funding through a third party, either the private sector or other sources of funds. There are different organizations outside of Nunavut that are across Canada in nature, so some schools do participate in those types of programs as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary question, Member Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So far over the last two years the Committee of the Whole has approved funding for Department of Education for two fiscal years. Last year during the fall sitting, I asked the minister if he had put forward any requests for additional funding to provide financial or administrative support for the food programs in our schools, and at that time the minister had

indicated that he had not done so.

I would like to ask again, as we are currently in another budget development cycle for the 2020-21 fiscal year, I would like to ask if the Minister of Education has put forward a request for any additional funding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the question for its member.

>> *Laughter*

I'm sorry. I thank the member for his question. We haven't requested any additional funds through our budget cycle, but we will consider that for 2020-21 and like I said, we are trying to find ways on finding efficiencies right now on how we can better support food programming in schools across the territory. There are many players at the table for this, right from our level and at the local level. I commend the member for pushing on this and I look forward to progress on it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. I'll recognize for the second time the Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Member Towtongie.

Question 596 – 5(2): Public Housing Rent Scale

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. I asked this question to the Minister responsible for Housing Corporation. With regard to the reference to (interpretation ends) half a

decade, (interpretation) he shifted it. I would like to ask about it again because I want an appropriate response.

There is a public review of the increasing rent scale because it's causing many people to be unemployed. That's evident. They are able to work. It clearly says here in the (interpretation ends) blueprint (interpretation) that there are 60 action items for the housing corporation, which is obvious, but at the top grouping is Action 12, one of the priorities is their review of the increasing rent scale, including overcrowding, earned income, and whether the housing unit is in good condition.

It says here in English, (interpretation ends) "Rent deductions for overcrowding, Cost of Living Allowances (COLA) and Unit Condition Ratings will still apply." I would like to ask the Minister of the Nunavut Housing Corporation: can the minister update the House on the Nunavut Housing Corporation's timetable for reviewing the public housing rent scale? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In our colleague's first line of questioning, she was asking about what is happening in ten years. However, with respect to her question about those who are employed, I said that we reduced the rent for some tenants because their housing units were too badly damaged. That's what we work on, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Member Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Mr. Speaker, that's not the answer I was seeking. I said in my first question "half a decade." There should be a five-year review. A five-year review has been completed. I would like to know before; we only have two years left. Can the minister indicate a timetable for reviewing the public housing rent scale? I'm not talking about a fixed rent, subsidized housing model according to Action 12 of high-income public housing tenants. I'm talking about all the tenants across Nunavut. It's my final question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) We don't have a five-year review program, but what we do is when a tenant rents a home and the house is too badly damaged, then we assess the renter. In cases, we have done it once this year, that we reduce the rent of the tenant for the amount the person was paying because his/her home was quite badly damaged, that's how we reduce the rents on homes.

Obviously we would like to give every person a home, but everyone knows we have a severe housing crisis here and we've got to make do with what we've got. We are now an open and transparent government, and I encourage the members, if they have a constituent that is renting a house that seems to be very badly damaged, then I want to know because we make adjustments.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Aggu, Member Quassa.

Question 597 – 5(2): Partnering with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated to Fund Social Housing

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. My question will be for our Premier.

We keep hearing about the housing shortage and that nothing can be done about it. It caught our attention recently when our Premier and the president of NTI spoke about this issue when they were being interviewed by CBC. They were asked what more they can do about the housing shortage. The only response our Premier gave was that no, it's impossible to do anything about it unless we get funding.

Meanwhile the president of Nunavut Tunngavik keeps saying that they want to enter into a partnership. Now I'll ask the Premier if the president of Nunavut Tunngavik stated that they would like to enter into a partnership to address the housing shortage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Our Premier of Nunavut, Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank him for that question. Earlier when the housing minister was being questioned, Member Quassa should have heard the minister's response that he still hasn't received a response from the Inuit organizations on how they can provide funding. We still haven't heard as to how they can provide support, including

NTI.

However, I do say that we're not doing anything, but if we were to build more houses, we could only do it with more funding. Currently, if we're going to construct more buildings, we would have to get the funding from somewhere. The funding that the government receives is too small to construct more buildings, but if we receive more funding from the Canadian government, yes, we can construct more buildings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary, Member Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are aware that the Inuit organizations have constructed many buildings and offices. They are quite capable of building infrastructure. It seems like our government is just waiting and they will just sit there until they are told otherwise. That's how it seems.

Now, I will ask our Premier: can he approach the Inuit organizations to see if we can work with us in finding solutions? They have constructed buildings and many offices, and we know that they are quite capable. They're just waiting to be asked to be involved. I'm asking the Premier if he can genuinely ask the Inuit organizations if they want to come up with solutions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the Inuit organizations want to build

infrastructure, it's up to them. They can build infrastructure. Yes, they build offices. If they want to construct buildings for their Inuit, they can build them. We're not just waiting. The funding we receive for housing is used up. We would be pleased if the Inuit organizations wanted to build infrastructure because there is a severe infrastructure deficit in Nunavut. If they want to build public housing units, we would be very happy if the Inuit organizations build infrastructure in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary question, Member Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Lastly, we are aware, for example, the building we are in right now and the offices in 11 of our communities were built by the Inuit organizations and they have a 20-year agreement with the Government of Nunavut. There is already a (interpretation ends) lease-to-own (interpretation) agreement. Mr. Speaker, I think they can come up with those kinds of agreements, instead of just waiting and maybe even try to come up with an agreement. The government leased this building for 20 years. That can also be done for housing. We shouldn't just be waiting, as our fellow Inuit are just waiting to get houses. They're experiencing hardship. Our government should be more compassionate and not just be waiting. (interpretation ends) Be proactive. (interpretation) That's what they should be doing. I again ask the minister if they can look at that type of agreement with the Inuit organizations over 20 years where they will construct the buildings

and we will lease them. Can they come up with that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member's statement about (interpretation ends) lease to own (interpretation) would still require funding. Everything requires funding. This infrastructure here, yes, we leased it for 20 years. We changed it to a (interpretation ends) lease-to-own (interpretation) agreement a year ago, but we're leasing this building we're in for 20 years.

How can I make this clear? We have limited funding. Before it is increased, we're unable to construct more buildings. If we sign a (interpretation ends) lease-to-own (interpretation) agreement, the money will have to come out of somewhere. Perhaps we won't be able to construct more buildings because that money will be earmarked for the (interpretation ends) lease-to-own (interpretation) agreement. That's the way it is.

The member used to sit with the government and he knows that (interpretation ends) lease-to-own (interpretation) agreements are considered capital projects and it would be placed on the (interpretation ends) debt cap. (interpretation) He is fully aware of that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Member, please note that the time for question period has expired. Continuing on with the orders of the day. Written Questions. Member Lightstone.

Item 7: Written Questions

Written Question 049 – 5(2): Cost of Lunch Hour Transportation

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Education and are in relation to the cost of transportation of students.

Mr. Speaker, on numerous occasions I have voiced my concern over the number of children in Nunavut facing food insecurity. I have also stated that far too many children are going home to empty fridges, which means the schools are sending the children home for "lunch hour" and not necessarily for a meal.

Most jurisdictions in Canada provide accommodations for students to stay on the premises for the entire day, including lunch hour. I would like to enquire how much our government pays for the transportation of our students, as well as the specific costs associated with lunch hour transportation.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are detailed and I ask that they be entered into the *Hansard* as read.

1. How many communities do the Department of Education or district education authorities provide contracted transportation services of students between home and school from the private sector?
 - a. What is the total number of busing contracts?
 - b. What is the total cost of the contracts?
 - c. What is the average cost of the contracts per student?

2. How many communities do the Department of Education or district education authorities provide busing services internally for transportation of students between home and school?
 - a. What is the total cost of providing this service internally?
 - b. What is the average cost of providing the service per student?

3. Of these busing services, how many provide lunch hour transportation:
 - a. Private sector contract services
 - b. Internally run by the Department of Education or district education authority

4. What is the cost associated with lunch hour transportation:
 - a. Private sector contract services
 - b. Internally run by the Department of Education or DEA

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The member is asking that his written question be entered into the record as read. Members, do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker (interpretation): There is agreement. The written question will be entered into the record as read.

Continuing on. Returns to Written Questions. Continuing on. Replies to Opening Address. Continuing on. Petitions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Member Lightstone.

Item 10: Petitions

Petition 005 – 5(2): Institute Full-day Two-year Kindergarten as well as Food Programs in our Education System

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with great honour that I present this petition to the Assembly, this petition which is calling on the Government of Nunavut to increase support for children and youth in three key areas:

- Two-year full-day kindergarten;
- Universal breakfast and lunch programs in all schools; and
- Increasing support for after school programming.

The petition has been signed by over a hundred individuals and has my full endorsement. Ensuring children have all the necessities to ensure their success is the only way to guarantee a brighter future for Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I do look forward to the government's response, but as a member of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I will be referencing this petition.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all the members to review this item with care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The petition will tabled in the House. Continuing on. Responses to Petitions. Continuing on. (interpretation ends) Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. (interpretation) There are none. Continuing on. Tabling of Documents.

Member for Amittuq, Member Kaernerck.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

**Tabled Document 198 – 5(2):
Correspondence to the Minister of
Crown-Indigenous Relations
Concerning Hall Beach Grave
Relocations**

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table in the House today a copy of my recent correspondence to the federal Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations concerning the legacy of the Hall Beach graves relocation.

As I noted in my correspondence, I welcomed the recent apology that was offered to Qikiqtani Inuit concerning federal actions that were taken during the time period in which the Hall Beach incident occurred, and I strongly encourage the Government of Canada and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association to ensure that addressing the legacy of this tragic incident is part of the important work that both parties have committed to undertaking.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my fellow members to review the document with care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you very much. Tabling of Documents. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Minister Ehaloak.

Tabled Document 199 – 5(2): Qulliq Energy Corporation’s Response to the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts on the Report of the Review of the 2016-17 Annual Report and the 2017-2021 Corporate Plan of the Qulliq Energy Corporation

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am tabling the Qulliq Energy Corporation’s response to the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts on the Report of the Review of the 2016-17 Annual Report and the 2017-2021 Corporate Plan of the Qulliq Energy Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Minister responsible for Justice, Minister Ehaloak.

Tabled Document 200 – 5(2): Nunavut Law Foundation Annual Report 2017

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Today I am tabling the annual report for the year ending December 31, 2017 for the Nunavut Law Foundation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Continuing on with the orders of the day. Notices of Motions. Continuing on. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Minister of Health, Minister Hickey.

Item 15: Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills

Bill 35 – Medical Profession Act – Notice

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Tuesday, October 22, 2019, that Bill 35, *Medical Profession Act*, will be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Continuing on. Motions. Continuing on. First Reading of Bills. Continuing on. Second Reading of Bills. Continuing on. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 30, 31, 32, and 33 with Ms. Angnakak in the Chair.

Before we proceed to the Committee of the Whole, we will take a 20-minute break.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>> *House recessed at 16:03 and Committee resumed at 16:25*

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

Chairperson (Ms. Angnakak): Thank you, everybody. Welcome back to the House. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 30, 31, 32, and 33. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We wish to continue with the review of the 2020-21 capital appropriation for the Nunavut Housing

Corporation. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 30?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 30 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2020-2021 – Nunavut Housing Corporation – Consideration in Committee

Chairperson: I would now like to ask Minister Netser: do you have officials that you would like to appear with you before the committee? Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I most certainly would love to have my staff over here. Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Netser. Does the committee agree to let the minister and his officials go to the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses in.

For the record, Mr. Netser, please introduce your officials. Thank you.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. To my right is Terry Audla, President of the Housing Corporation, and to my left is Chief Financial Officer Ji Liu, and sitting over there (interpretation ends) in the other corner is Mike Murdoch, policy (interpretation) division. (interpretation ends) Oh, I'm sorry, Mike

Murphy. My apologies. (interpretation)
Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Netser. We're on page L-3 of the Nunavut Housing Corporation. If you have this document, we're on page L-3. The next person on the list is Mr. Qirngnuq. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Welcome, minister and your officials.

I haven't written my questions down for the last several days, but I did remember as I wrote them down. I'm happy with myself and I'm smiling.

My first question is on the first page of the minister's opening comments regarding M&I for housing units, including the Heating Oil Tank Replacement Program and the Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Preventative Maintenance Program. I would like to ask for clarification. To my understanding, once a person turns 65, they are considered a senior. Is the senior's income taken into account for the program? I hope that's clear, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qirngnuq. Mr. Netser, can you respond to that question? Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. If I understood the question, I believe he is asking about seniors paying rent. Is that your question, Mr. Qirngnuq? Thank you. Is that it? Once they become a senior, they don't pay rent anymore on their housing unit. Thank you. I believe it starts when they turn 60 years old, if

I'm not mistaken. Once they turn 60 years old, our public housing tenants don't pay rent on their units. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Netser. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I also thank the minister for his response. What I am trying to say is yes, your response clarified the rental issue. If senior homeowners want to renovate their home under M&I, what is the income threshold? I hope that was clear, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qirngnuq, for that clarification. Minister Netser, is that clear now?

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The M&I program that he is asking about is for public housing, but we also set funding aside to assist seniors who are private homeowners. We set funding aside for seniors (interpretation ends) under the homeownership program. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, it is clear now. What is the income threshold even if a senior is not employed and they receive income from other sources? If they need work done on their own home, what is the income threshold? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qirngnuq. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. When homeowners apply for funding and the (interpretation ends) income threshold (interpretation) that he's asking about, as there are 25 communities in Nunavut, they all have separate income thresholds in order for work to be done on their homes. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, I'm asking about that because we know how many homeowners there are in the smaller communities. Some of them sell their homes when they can't afford to maintain them anymore. Keeping that in mind, I'm trying to understand the income threshold for seniors to be eligible for funding.

Secondly, I would like to get clarification on page 2. The budget for fire-damaged housing units decreased from \$3.7 million to \$1 million in 2020-21. I would like to know why the budget was decreased. That's my question for the minister, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qirngnuq. Minister Netser, can you try to respond to that?

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Can you hear me? I don't know the new equipment. I think it is this button. One moment, please. I think this is malfunctioning. Oh, I'm wrong. (interpretation ends) Was that this one? Yes, that's the one I'm pressing, but it's malfunctioning.

(interpretation) Our finance person can respond to that, (interpretation ends) Madam Chairperson. (interpretation) Thank you. It's Ji Liu.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Netser. Mr. Liu.

Mr. Liu: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Regarding the fire damage fund, we decreased it to \$1 million. It's at a practice with the Department of Finance. The reason why is that, from the previous records, it seemingly looked like we're building a big surplus that we cannot use for the fire-damaged house and the reason why is that the methodology we were using is to allocate the fund specifically to the damaged unit. However, due to the availability of the lot and the construction plan in the communities, it's causing a lot of delay.

The new approach is going to say that we are going to use that pool funding money instead of, let's say, specified for each damaged unit. What we're currently doing is that in the community where we have the construction plan and have the lots available, we're just going to apply the existing pool money to build or replace the damaged units or repair the damaged units.

When we're going to reach our threshold, then we're going to come back with our new update of the list of the housing we're going to replace and approach the Department of Finance to apply for the new funding for the future plan. In summary it is just a better usage or more efficient usage of the funding. Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Liu.

Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you for clarifying that. Going to another topic, my third question is on page 2 of the minister's opening comments. The last paragraph mentions the maintenance and repair of local housing organization warehouse facilities and housing units. It's obvious that some of the buildings are very old and the warehouses are aging.

I wonder if the minister can provide clarification. In my constituency communities they also have issues with their local housing organizations' warehouse facilities. How old do those facilities in the smaller communities have to be before they can request funding from the housing corporation? I hope that made sense, Madam Chairperson. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qirngnuq. Minister Netser, can you try to respond to that?

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Our buildings throughout Nunavut are really aging and due to the small populations of some communities, it's regretful that some of them will not receive housing units, but we're reviewing what the member was talking about regarding aging buildings. As we assess the age of buildings in the communities, our goal is to replace them. I can't state when that would begin, but we are considering it. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. Ms. Nakashuk, do you have a question? Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. I also thank the minister (interpretation ends) and staff. (interpretation) If I understood correctly, I believe we can ask questions on any page. Okay.

I would first like to ask about a government building in Pangnirtung that was provided last year and they're currently constructing a five-plex building for public housing. My first question is if they have other plans to construct housing in Pangnirtung. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Nakashuk. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): I keep pressing the wrong button. Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I also thank you for your question. We don't have any other plans for public housing but we're planning to build a staff housing unit in our colleague's community. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I want to ask this question. (interpretation ends) My question is: how does the department determine which one is more of a priority in the community? Public housing or staff housing, how does the department determine which one is most needed? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Nakashuk. Is that clear? Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I will refer this question to the president. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you for that question. The public housing allocation methodology is based on a collection of the number applicants from the community. It's a different process altogether for staff housing in making the determination as to where staff housing is going to be built. That is done in collaboration with the newly created Department of Human Resources. Previous to that it was the Department of Finance.

On an annual basis we get about \$5 million towards new construction for staff housing and then based on the number of vacancies within the community for GN positions and how many may be hired for that year, the Nunavut Housing Corporation along with the Department of Human Resources now make the determination as to where the most need might be for staff housing purposes, whereas the public housing allocation is done with the LHOs as well as the districts and headquarters to determine which community is in most need for public housing. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Audla. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I guess my question to that and

with Pagnirtung being one of the decentralized communities, we have experienced and I have mentioned it in the House in terms of the issues that we face with empty staff housing units. I know a couple that has been waiting seven or eight years for a house.

I'm just trying to understand. I know we have talked about this as well in the House on how the process works with staff housing and there are different processes to allocate housing, and that's with the housing corporation, LHOs, and HR. With \$5 million that's being used, what is the government trying to do differently that is most effective to ensure that proper housing is allocated to the community appropriately? (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Ms. Nakashuk. Minister Netser, can you try to respond to that?

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. As my deputy indicated, we work with the local housing organizations and the (interpretation ends) regional district offices (interpretation) to figure out which communities will be allocated public housing units.

(interpretation ends) The Minister of HR (interpretation) can respond to the question when they're discussing (interpretation ends) rental staff housing. (interpretation) It's not the responsibility of the housing corporation anymore. We do build the housing units, but the allocation of staff housing units is now under the responsibility of the Department of Human Resources. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. While we're debating the approval of the budget, you said that it would be better if I ask a question to HR. Considering that Pangnirtung hasn't had a conservation officer for nearly three years now, the staff housing unit allocated to that position is just sitting there vacant. The government is paying for this unit and now the housing corporation is requesting approval for staff housing units being planned for 2020-21.

How are you working together to redefine the allocation of housing units? When you're making capital requests, it still doesn't seem to be changing. I also think about the community's needs according to the housing wait-list because their prioritization changes. If they're a single person, some of them wait a very long time. If the applicant has children, then they're placed as a higher priority on the waiting list.

(interpretation ends) My question in terms of that also is: has the department looked at what the percentage is like within Nunavut on how many single people are actually waiting to get a house in the territory? That could really also include in how the government looks at budgeting. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Ms. Nakashuk. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The communities make a request for

additional housing. (interpretation ends) Madam Chairperson, we look at the needs per community and that's how we decide which community has the most needs, and then with the limited funding that we have, some communities don't get public housing. That's the unfortunate truth and I wish we can address housing. I wish we had money to build houses in every community because every community needs homes.

I can ask Mr. Audla to elaborate a bit more on that if you don't mind, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. As the minister said, we only have so much money to build public housing units and we try to make the determination as to which community will be allocated new construction based on the actual number of applicants and based on the actual need, taking into consideration the number of public housing units within that community.

As for the separate process of staff housing allocations, considering it's only \$5 million per year, it's something that we will want to look at as well. If you look at the community of Pangnirtung, currently there are 54 vacant GN positions and there are a total of 13 vacant units and all 13 of those are currently assigned to a position that eventually will be occupied once they go through the screening process and the HR process.

As for determining and looking at how many singles are applying on the

majority for public housing, a lot of them, I can say, across Nunavut are single. We're looking at maybe about close to 54 percent of individuals who are single with no kids that have put in applications for public housing.

I will say when we do determine allocation for new builds within the communities of these five-plexes, we leave it to the local housing organization to determine within that five-plex design how many of those five units will have a single bedroom. In most cases the LHOs usually make a determination of two or three bedrooms just to try to accommodate as many as they can within each of their respective communities. Thank you Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Audla. I think Ms. Nakashuk also asked about your working relationship with the Minister of HR and how you determine staff housing, if you can answer her question on that. Thank you. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Mr. Audla can respond to that again. I believe he responded to it (interpretation ends) earlier. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On a per annum basis where we do receive the \$5 million, we look at where the community is in most need for increased staff housing. Considering the \$5 million doesn't really go that far, we try to address the communities that have the most number of vacancies of GN positions.

The methodology with which HR uses for determining whether or not this position will be allocated staff housing is again all dependent on the type of position and in some cases the actual individuals that apply. Then our senior management works alongside HR senior management and tries to make a determination based on the number of vacant positions and based on available units, and actually looking at what units have already been allotted to positions, and then they try to make the determination as to where best to build new staff housing. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Audla, for that response. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I am just getting... . (interpretation) I don't understand some of it. (interpretation ends) I'm just going to keep saying that we're trying to... . Small capital projects, capital projects in general, the view of how the prioritization of the government needs, the government wants versus what the community needs; 54 percent of single people waiting for a house and the government spending money on 13 current vacant units in Pangnirtung. It makes me wonder for how many years those have been paid for. (interpretation) It's evident that the allocation methodology for housing units in communities needs to be reviewed further.

My question is also (interpretation ends) on page 3 of the substantiation sheets. (interpretation) There are different numbers for applicants to homeownership programs. In 2016-17,

529 homeowners applied for home renovation programs, whether or not they were seniors. In 2017-18 there were 418 applicants. During part of this year there were 461 applicants.

My question is: with the number of applicants to the housing corporation, do they know how... ? It looks like there were fewer applicants. (interpretation ends) I'm just curious to know why the numbers of applications have decreased. Is it because of lack of construction companies in the smaller communities or has that been an issue? I'm just curious. I know the government is trying to push people to get their own house and I'm curious to know, first, if they know the reasons why it's like that. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Nakashuk. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The funding we set aside for homeownership programs (interpretation ends) is on a first-come, first-served basis, and I think the reason why the numbers are going down in terms of homeowners getting the renovation package is because there are less people applying because their system is working, but that's what I can say.

For the 2019-2020 fiscal year, 56 households for emergency repairs; 22 homeowners for the home repair and renovation program, which is HRP; 33 homeowners for heating oil tank replacement; 19 homeowners for down-payment assistance to buy or build a new home; 9 senior citizens for homeowners; 10 senior or disabled homeowners for preventative maintenance; there were

zero public housing tenants to owners program; zero new construction to interim financing; and zero senior and persons with disabilities housing options.

(interpretation) Compared to last year, there are fewer applicants this year. The numbers fluctuate up and down, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. Ms. Nakashuk, do you have another question?

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. This will be my last question. Trying to get people to become homeowners is geared toward capital. I wonder what the government's plans are to provide more support to homeowners. There are always barriers as a homeowner, such as finding construction companies to do the work. The government keeps saying that they want people to become homeowners while the homeowners can't get assistance. Does the government have any other plans to provide assistance to homeowners aside from the funding that they already provide? Thank you. That's my final question.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Nakashuk. That's a very good question. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): I was speaking with my colleague. Can she repeat the question, please? I completely forgot it. However, homeownership is very important and I fully support it. In the past it was running well before Nunavut was created. I'm personally pushing for it.

Perhaps she can repeat her question, as I really can't remember it. I do apologize. Oh, I just remembered now. Okay.

>> *Laughter*

(interpretation ends) I have been in the hot seat today.

Madam Chairperson, we're doing a comprehensive review of the homeownership programs all across the board and when that review is done, we hope to do more and we need to do more to encourage homeownership programs throughout Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. We are in agreement. (interpretation ends) Yes, we need to do more. The next person on the list is Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I also thank you for the opportunity to ask a question. In the information that was given to us, I'll state what it says in English. (interpretation ends) "...working towards developing a new policy to address the rebuild of fire-damaged units and how new construction may be addressed to meet the needs of communities."

In my home community there have been a number of buildings that burned and they had to be demolished. One unit was a two-storey duplex and the location where that duplex burned down still sits empty. There have been a couple of single-family dwellings that have been burned and have been demolished. Those two lots are still sitting empty. There was recent fire damage and it was

demolished not too long ago this year.

Is the housing corporation considering to replace those units that were damaged by fire and demolished on the lots that those houses were on? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qamaniq. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. In short, yes. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. It says here on page 3 that "The Homeownership Program Income Eligibility limits have not been updated since October 2014." It goes on to say that "...Program Income Eligibility limits to reflect the high cost of living in Nunavut's isolated communities."

Since 2014 up to today, there is a possibility of a payroll tax increase and the federal government had introduced the gas tax this year. My question to the minister is: when is the department going to review these eligibility limits that have not been updated since 2014? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Qamaniq. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Before I can answer his question, Pond Inlet will be receiving 15 units in 2020-21 and we hope to start construction next summer or the year after, rather, give or take. It depends on sealift arriving to the communities. We

all depend on that.

His question on the income eligibility criteria, that is under the homeownership program review and we will see all of that sometime. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. You have mentioned the homeownership review a number of times in the House this afternoon. I was wondering if you could just tell us when you expect that review to be completed. Thank you.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) It's going to come before cabinet before this session is over and I hope to table it by then. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: We're playing with mics here. Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation) The Member for Pangnirtung stated that there are vacant government staff housing units. In our community there are teachers who have applied for government staff housing units, but a few of them were denied. If those applicants can be approved, the vacant units that the government is paying for can be put to good use. How can the applicants who were denied appeal the decision? I would like to know where they can submit their appeal. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qamaniq. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We deal with (interpretation ends) staff housing (interpretation) construction. The Department of Human Resources would identify the communities where they're going to be built. We have an annual budget of \$5 million and we try to use it in the best possible way.

The Department of Human Resources will now be dealing with government employees who need staff housing. (interpretation ends) I understand that there is no appeal process in terms of challenging the decision by whoever is awarding the staff house. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you as well, Minister Netser. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Now, there are seniors who are homeowners and some of them are getting quite old. They can sell their house and move into a public housing unit, but they have to wait a whole year after they sell their house. If a senior suddenly decided to sell their house, do they have to wait for an entire year before they're finally eligible for a public housing unit? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qamaniq. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. If a senior who is a homeowner is unable to maintain their house, the housing corporation can purchase the house and they can stay as a tenant, but if they want to sell their own house, then the housing

corporation will appraise the value of the house and be able to purchase it if the senior is unable to maintain it. I hope that was understandable. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Qamaniq, are you done? Okay. Mr. Rumbolt, it's your turn now.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. My first question, back in October of last year the housing corporation said that they were going to build a hundred new public housing units this year in Arviat, Cambridge Bay, Gjoa Haven, Igloolik, Iqaluit, Kugaaruk, and Rankin Inlet. I know it's early in the season construction-wise, but I wonder if you can just give us an update today on whether this year's construction is on schedule and if there are any anticipated delays in the construction. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) It's true that we're planning to build a hundred units across the territory, but I don't get into the minute details. I'll get Mr. Audla to elaborate on that. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. So far as I can see, most of the public housing construction in the Kitikmeot is at 99 percent complete, with one in Kugluktuk at 50 percent and 70 percent complete, with Gjoa Haven at

30 percent and more to come for two more five-plexes where more groundwork is needed; Cambridge Bay, we're looking at lots right now. That's the Kitikmeot total. For 110 construction projects for Qikiqtaaluk, there's 21 percent completion in Pond Inlet, 63 percent in Pond Inlet; most are at 99 percent complete and most are occupiable; Igloolik, 70 percent and four at 9 percent in Igloolik; Sanikiluaq at 99 percent and occupiable. Kivalliq, we have Naujaat 99 percent complete and occupiable; Whale Cove, 99 percent complete and occupiable; Rankin Inlet at 55 percent; Arviat, we're looking at establishing the land and putting space frames on; Rankin Inlet, two five-plexes at steel pile stage, preparing the land; Arviat, we have 65 percent, 60, 50 percent, 80, and 75 percent; and Naujaat at 70 percent. That's for a total of 282 units. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Audla. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I thank Mr. Audla for the information. He gave me the previous year's information and I was asking about the 100 units that were slated to be constructed this year. Like I stated, it's early in the season and I just want to get a feel of whether or not the construction for these units are on time and whether there were any delays foreseen for this year's construction. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Most are on target,

but here in Iqaluit 20 of them are deferred and Kimmirut, five are deferred due to land availability. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. My next topic of discussion, it has come up many times over the past several years and I think it's worth bringing up again because it means a lot to our smaller communities. Several years ago there were always two separate contracts, one for supplying the material and another contract for supplying the labour to build the public housing and staff housing or whatnot in our communities.

The housing corporation moved to a ship, supply and erect policy where one contractor was responsible for everything. My understanding of their reasoning for that was streamline and make life easier for the people in the Nunavut Housing Corporation administering your contracts, which you may have done. One thing that you also accomplished is you're hurting our local contractors.

I can use my community for an example. He has done very little work when it comes to labour work in the community for construction over the past five to seven years because he can't afford to bid on \$5 million contracts, but he was about to do the labour-only. In these contracts, the labour-only back in the day, they were achieving 50 percent and greater Inuit content in their contracts and now we are lucky if we get 25 and 30 percent in our contacts.

You may have made life easier for people in the housing corporation, but you have created headaches for people in our communities. I have been talking to other members and I think it's safe to say that it's happening in other communities as well.

I will ask: will the housing corporation ever consider doing separate contracts in the future for labour-only and supplying the materials and, if not, why not? Thank you, Madam Chairperson

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I thank the member for raising that issue. I can certainly say that I have witnessed it myself. My two communities, Naujaat and Coral Harbour, were very successful in terms of constructing the house when we had the methodology of labour-only. I can say to the House here that we can look at that again. I commit to doing that to the communities that can do it.

Historically there are a few communities in Nunavut that can deliver that type of construction. It really helps the local economy and really boosts the morale of our constituents. Under the *Turaaqtavut* mandate, our mandate says to train our local workforce so that we are less reliant on imported labour, so I'm really open to that idea. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I thank the minister for his willingness to relook at this very

important type of construction for our communities and look forward to updates in the near future on it.

Earlier back in September of this year the housing corporation provided us with a copy of the Nunavut Housing Corporation's updated public housing construction allocation and methodology backgrounder. In the past you tabled this same document, but this year you only provided it to members. I wonder if the minister is willing to table this document so that the general public and others get to see the process in which the Nunavut Housing Corporation decides where construction will happen in our communities. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Yes, I'm willing to table the documents pending cabinet approval. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Next person on my list is Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Good evening. Before I get into the specifics, I would just like to refer to the response that I received to my written question on capital carryovers of the Nunavut Housing Corporation. I would like to point out that in the years that were provided, the NHC's capital carryovers started at \$74 million, then increased to \$100 million, and capped at \$126 million before dropping down to \$106 million just recently.

When I look at other information, specifically the actual expenditures ranging from \$50 million up to \$80 million, it's clear that there is a mismatch of budgets and expenditures. With that being said, as of April 1, the housing corporation carried over, over a hundred million dollars and is again requesting a substantial amount of GN funds, not to mention the federal funds that will be received as well. My first question is: realistically, how much will the Nunavut Housing Corporation be able to expend in the 2020-21 fiscal year? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) As I stated before, the construction season is too short. Sometimes we have to carry over projects due to the construction season and the sealift arriving on time, but I would like Mr. Ji Liu to elaborate on the question to Mr. Lightstone. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Liu.

Mr. Liu: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you for the question. For the planning of all the capital spending, actually, every year we get our approved allocation through the budget process. Let's say for example, I have this variance report right in front of me, our approved allocation is \$136 million. However, again, due to the sealift missing a variety of components, sometimes projects get delayed. What we're doing right now is we are trying to build a better monitoring process and

even with the approved allocation, so we are opening up to a certain percentage, let's say for example, a year that a budget we have, let's say, before that we're approved \$136 million, so what we're looking at is probably jack it up another 10 percent so that we are prepared or buffered for these kinds of delays.

However, we're providing the budget request from the GN. It's actually the matching piece for the CMHC funding. Again, the methodology per person, let's say, in the written explanation or letter it states that it's because in the past five years our funding model or funding formula from the feds has a big fluctuation. As a kind of conservative, cautious expenditure management, we want to smooth out this kind of fluctuation. In the low time we would still have enough or more than that budget level of funding available so that we can smooth out the yearly operation, but again, because it's such a large fluctuation in the past five years, it's a little bit hard for us to keep it at an excessive level. That's why we're being very cautious to do careful financial management.

Also, for the housing purpose, what we have been talking about in this session is that we have old stocks and aged inventory, and the delivery regarding the fire damage, so there is kind of a little bit of money saved for the unexpected emergencies as well. Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Liu. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I just want to point out that, I believe, the clock was still ticking after

I stopped asking my question. Would it be possible to add that time back on?
Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. We recognize the error we made and we're just going to keep it off your time until you finish your question. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'll jump right into my questions then.

On the first substantiation sheet that's provided, I'm going to go in order. The first project is the fire damage replacement in which, in response to one of the previous questions, I believe it was to Mr. Qirngnuq's question, the minister responded by saying that the current funds are actually being allocated to burned units. When I look at the actual amount of carryover funds in that fire damage replacement, there was almost \$13 million in that project fund. I would like to ask: what specifically is that \$13 million being allocated to? Would you be able to provide us with a breakdown of specific burned units in communities that that \$13 million is allocated to? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Netser, you're indicating that you would like Mr. Liu to answer the question? Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Please. Thank you.

Chairperson: Mr. Liu.

Mr. Liu: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Thank you for the question.

I actually have a long list of all the units available for the fire-damaged units. Actually our estimated damage cost is roughly about \$20 million.

The \$13 million as a carryover, like I said, before the practice was that once we have a report on the fire-damaged unit, then we ask for the money from the Department of Finance, and then the methodology of allocation of that funding was specifically saved for that specific unit. Therefore it looks like we're building up this huge pool of money but are not able to use them because, again, due to the lot availability and because of the construction plan.

Sometimes, let's say, if there are only one or two units in one small community, from our previous practice, we can see that it's not very cost effective to just build one unit or two units in the small community. Therefore the money from previous practice was kept in the pool. That's why this year we changed or adjusted our strategy or our plan and instead of, let's say, all the money is allocated to a specific unit, we have this pool of money.

Let's say for example, Pond Inlet, this year what happened is "Oh, okay, we have all these units available, then we have the pool money," and actually even on the sheet that I have, Pond Inlet, one extra unit replacement was added on but not in our previous ask, which means that we're going to use these surplus funds to replace the units first, then later on to replenish the funding for all the other units. Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Liu. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Looking at the actual expenditures in the Fire Damage Replacement Fund, last year there was \$800,000. The year before that it was \$500,000. Now you're sitting on over \$13 million and you're asking for another million. I would like to ask: how much of that will be spent in the fiscal year that you're requesting it, in '20-21? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) It all depends on which community we will be building the damaged units. Madam Chairperson, I have a complete list and the fire damage does include all the community, if the member wants me to read them out. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I doubt we will be able to complete the review of the NHC this evening, so I would like to ask the minister if he would be able to provide that information to us tomorrow. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. We have 30 minutes right now, but I think I can get into that. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On the last page of the fire damage replacement project it indicates that the NHC is working towards developing a new policy to address the rebuild of fire-damaged units and how new construction may be addressed to meet the needs of the communities. I was wondering if the minister may be able to provide an update on this policy as well as when it will be completed and we will be able to see it. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: *Qujannamiik*, Madam Chairperson. My staff on the left has already answered that question, I believe. It has already been applied. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'll move on to my next question and it's in relation to the next project, the homeownership programs. The minister had previously indicated that he is in support of homeownership programs, although I do find that very hard to believe considering that there has been no increase to this line item. When I look at the actual expenditures, homeownership programs have always been overspent, which means that there is more demand for homeownership programs than there are funds available to the projects.

Yet again, the minister has indicated or alluded to a homeownership review that is supposed to be tabled in this fall Assembly. When I look at the budget

and there is no increase, I assume that there is going to be no additional support or encouragement for Nunavummiut to become homeowners. I would like to ask: if the minister does in fact support homeownership, why is there no increase to the homeownership budget? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. For the member to say that I don't support homeownership, I think, is not true. I'm a pro homeowners' program minister and I believe we need to do more for our homeowners across the territory and I'm really working hard on introducing a HAP program for Nunavummiut. I believe it happened before and it can happen again. For him to say that I do not support homeownership programs is not true. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I just want to clarify my previous statement. I said that if the minister does support homeownership, why is there no increase to the budget. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) We're looking at, again, like the member alluded to, what I have been saying, the complete, comprehensive review on the homeownership program. In that review

we're going to address how we can further make improvements on the homeownership program in terms of increasing the budget. For him to say that I do not support the homeownership program prior to seeing the report is premature. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. On the topic of homeownership, I would like to mirror what my colleagues have been stating previously. The income thresholds are not realistic with the actual cost of homeownership in our communities.

I do not feel comfortable voting on this proposed line item without knowing that the income threshold is going to be adjusted to make this program more accessible to Nunavummiut, including the 320 individuals in public housing that currently have a salary or an income of over a hundred thousand and also the thousands of public servants that are presumably in staff housing that could be potential homeowners.

I would like to ask to the minister: when exactly can we expect to see an increase into these income eligibility requirements? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) As I said earlier, the comprehensive homeownership program review, that income threshold is part of the review. I would like to challenge the

member there. If you want to delete the line item we have earmarked for the homeownership program, he can introduce the review and let the people decide that he doesn't support the homeownership program. Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'm not in favour of deleting the line item. I said I feel uncomfortable with voting on it without knowing that there's going to be an improvement made. That's why I asked: when can we expect to see an adjustment to these homeownership eligibility requirements? Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Let me repeat myself: we are doing a comprehensive review of the homeownership program and certainly income eligibility is part of the process of the review. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Remaining on this topic, the minister's response to one of my colleague's questions on the eligibility requirement was that the review is complete and waiting for cabinet approval before it is to be tabled. My question is: when is the minister going to put this to cabinet to seek approval to table it during this fall sitting? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: I can say before the session is over, it's any day now, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I'll move on to my next question and it's project No. 5, the modernization and improvement of public housing units. When I look at this line item, there is \$10 million being requested, which seems to be far below what previous or historical expenditures are. I would like to ask if the minister believes that this \$10 million request is insufficient. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) Everyone knows that we have a severe housing crisis and the limited funds that we receive from the federal government and the \$17.5 million received from the House is insufficient to address our housing needs. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I'll move on to my next question and it's project No. 6, construction of new staff housing units. There were some questions about how the allocation is determined. On page 2 it

identifies that there are four factors, one of which is existing vacant units versus vacant positions in a community. I would like to ask if it would be possible to share that with the committee. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: I'm sorry. We cannot share that information. It's an internal document between the Department of Finance, HR, and the Nunavut Housing Corporation. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Netser. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I would also like to request that going forward, that internal document is also included in the substantiation sheets. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) We will work with the departments to see if that's possible and, if it is, then we will share it. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Netser. Mr. Lightstone, you're out of time. The next person on my list is Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. The (interpretation ends) substantiation sheet... (interpretation) First of all, thank you to the minister for the house

being built, as we have a severe housing shortage in Rankin Inlet. I thank you for that.

With the substantiation sheet on (interpretation ends) capital projects, page 4 of 4, (interpretation) it states that (interpretation ends) “The public housing M&I budget seeks to maintain and renew the existing public housing stock...” That means that the public housing stock, no matter how old, maintenance will kept updated on it. “...as it is not meant to replace existing units.” The issue of the condition of existing assets is not relevant. What is that telling me?

On one hand there are units that were units that were built in the 1970s that are in need of extensive repairs and retrofits, demolition, or replacement. Reading this, it’s telling me that the Nunavut Housing Corporation cannot afford to decommission these homes due to the dire needs of housing in communities, yet I read in another section that conditions of houses will be used to analyze the public rent scale. Is this telling me that these units built in the 1970s are not going for repairs? Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Towtongie. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Madam Chairperson. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the question. Each year as our stock gets older and older it gets costlier and costlier to repair them. What we’re doing now, as I said earlier, is to the communities that do not have the numbers for public housing allocations we’re looking at the old stock in terms of

how we can replace them in communities that have not been eligible for public housing construction. (interpretation) Thank you. I hope I answered the question.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I thank the minister for that answer. My other question is, and it’s my last question, information published by the federal government indicates that a bilateral agreement under the new National Housing Strategy was signed with the Government of Nunavut on August 2, 2019. My question is: is this the same agreement that was originally made as of April 1, 2018? It’s my final question, Madam Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you, Ms. Towtongie. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. Yes, it was and the signing of the agreement back in August was just a formality. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Minister Netser. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I would like to make a motion to report progress, please. Thank you.

Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of this motion. Opposed. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials from

the witness table.

Speaker (interpretation): Going back to the orders of the day. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Member Angnakak.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 30 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. Is there a seconder? Member Keyootak. The motion is in order. All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is carried.

Continuing on. Third Reading of Bills. Continuing on. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a reminder that the Standing Committee on Legislation meets at nine o'clock tomorrow in the Nanuq Boardroom.

Orders of the Day for October 22:

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
 - Bill 35
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 30
 - Bill 31
 - Bill 32
 - Bill 33
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): This House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, October 22, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:50*

