

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Baker Lake)

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(Quttiktuq)

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(Gjoa Haven)

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Allan Rumbolt
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(Arviat South)

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Tuesday, February 25, 2020

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeeagok, Mr. Tony Akoak, Ms. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Joeline Kaerner, Ms. Mila Kamingoak, 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 13:30*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Simeon Mikkungwak)(interpretation): Before we proceed and this being my last day, I will say the opening prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): To the people of Baker Lake and Nunavut who are following the proceedings, Nunavut beneficiaries, the members will now proceed with their session.

Continuing on with the orders of the day. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 373 – 5(2): Meeting on Bathurst and Blue-Nose East Caribou

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the people of Arviat. Before I begin my statement, my son Joe Jr., enjoy your day. Happy birthday, son.

>>*Applause*

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to report on a meeting I recently had with the Hon. Shane Thompson, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources for the Northwest Territories, on February 22. We met to discuss shared concerns on the Bathurst and Blue-Nose East caribou herds. Barren-ground caribou are currently a subject of much discussion due to their population decline, resulting in some harvest restrictions to address conservation concerns.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of my department's collaborative relationship with our co-management partners in the Northwest Territories, and I know Minister Thompson feels the same way.

During our meeting, we discussed the potential listing of barren-ground caribou as threatened under the federal *Species at Risk Act* and how it may affect harvesters of those caribou in both territories. I also raised this issue when I met with the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change in early February.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Environment will continue to work with all of our co-management partners to sustainably manage caribou. We are firmly committed to our shared work and are dedicated to preserving all wildlife in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Minister's Statement 374 – 5(2): Inuktut Titiqqiriniq Conference and Literacy Training

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Good day, Mr. Speaker. Esteemed Speaker, have a good day, as well as Nunavummiut and my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, improving the literacy skills of Nunavummiut in all official languages has always been a priority for the Department of Education. Today I'm proud to announce that 64 educators from across Nunavut are in Iqaluit from February 25 to 27 for literacy training focused on the use of our Inuktut Titiqqiriniq program resources.

Mr. Speaker, Inuktut Titiqqiriniq is a made-in-Nunavut holistic Inuktut literacy program, which provides instructional tools and resources to help students develop strong Inuktut skills. This program was developed by Nunavut educators, linguists, and language consultants, with input and testing from Nunavut teachers. More than 600 books have been published in Inuktitut and 250 in Inuinnaqtun as part of this program.

Mr. Speaker, a key focus at this conference is the Nipittivait Inuktitut program. This phonics and word study program developed in Nunavut teaches students the relationship between the symbols of written language and the sounds of spoken language. As students master phonics skills, instruction branches into an understanding of spelling patterns and high-frequency words. Phonics and word study are the building blocks for learning to read.

(interpretation) Esteemed Speaker, educators will also be learning about the elements of reading instructional strategies, such as read alouds, shared reading, and guided reading. They will be introduced to new resources, such as the Inuutsiarniq and Tuliniliara reading series, and social-emotional learning resources.

Esteemed Speaker, I would like to thank our educators for their dedication. The knowledge that will be taken to our schools and communities from this conference will have long-lasting benefits for our students' literacy skills and for our educators' ability to teach and share these skills. *Koana, ma'na, qujannamiik*, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Akeeagok.

Minister's Statement 375 – 5(2): Workplace Online Training for Community Airport Maintainers

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. Before I begin my statement, people of Arctic Bay, I send you my condolences and you are in my thoughts. I wish I was up there with you during this difficult time.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to share some information on Nunavut Airports operations with the Members of this Assembly.

Over the past year the Nunavut Airports Division introduced workplace online training for community airport maintainers, its own staff, and other users of our airports. They have developed a multi-module online training platform that facilitates workplace training. This will ensure that all our airport maintainers, airport staff, and other airport users are able to complete modules in key areas, such as safety management, radio communications, airside vehicle operations, and runway condition reporting.

Along with helping to ensure compliance with regulatory training requirements, the online training platform benefits all Nunavummiut by elevating safety at our airports with properly trained staff. The move towards online training has significantly reduced the cost associated with training airport personnel. Whereas before, individuals would be required to physically travel to a central site to receive airport training, the same training is now being effectively delivered online for a fraction of the cost.

Mr. Speaker, (interpretation) since the introduction of online workplace training, over a hundred individuals have registered and successfully completed modules within the Nunavut Airports Division online training platform. Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister of Health, Minister Hickey.

Minister's Statement 376 – 5(2): RSV in Nunavut

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Health is committed to protecting the health and well-being of all Nunavummiut. We do this through a number of approaches; through medical treatment and prevention, but also through social programming, community initiatives, and of course through education. That is why I would like to take this opportunity to address some recent misinformation that has been circulating regarding the department's efforts to treat and prevent respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, in our infants.

Mr. Speaker, respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, is one of many viruses that can cause respiratory infections in children. RSV infection is very common in children across the country and it usually causes cold symptoms, such as a stuffy nose, a cough, or a low-grade fever. However, in some cases RSV can develop into a severe lung infection, especially when the virus is coupled with risk factors, such as premature birth and exposure to second-hand smoke. Due to exposure to these risk factors, some infants are more susceptible to all lung infections. This includes those caused by RSV but also by the many other viruses that can result in infection.

Mr. Speaker and members, in the case of RSV, information is being spread that suggests that the Department of Health is not in line with best practice for the use of a monthly injection called palivizumab, which contains antibodies to the virus. Mr. Speaker, the department does indeed run a palivizumab program for high-risk infants, with some of the most inclusive criteria of all the programs of this type in the country. Nunavut's palivizumab program was created based on guidelines published by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization and the Canadian Paediatric Society. Mr. Speaker and members, the program aligns with best practice and research evidence. The health department continuously monitors emerging research to ensure our policies and approach align with the most up-to-date information. Mr. Speaker, current research evidence does not support changes to Nunavut's palivizumab program.

The Department of Health has also been working on other initiatives aimed at reducing the spread of all respiratory infections, including instances of RSV, among infants in Nunavut. These initiatives include public education around handwashing and respiratory hygiene, awareness campaigns for increasing influenza immunization coverage, strong tobacco reduction programs, and more.

Mr. Speaker, we are disappointed that incomplete and misleading information is currently being circulated about the issue. This type of irresponsible messaging can be damaging for so many who want to see the best outcomes for our children in the territory. I want to strongly emphasize that the health and well-being of our children is of paramount importance to this Government and this department. The Department of Health is committed to preserving, promoting, and protecting the health and well-being of all Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Minister Joanasié.

Minister's Statement 377 – 5(2): Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq 2020

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you again, esteemed Speaker. I rise today to invite Nunavummiut to celebrate *attiiniq*. The practice of naming customs and Inuit names is the theme of this year's Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq - Inuktit Language Month, which is celebrated annually in February.

Very good Speaker, the practice of naming remains today a powerful expression of who we are as individuals and as a collectivity. Passed on for countless generations, Inuit names ground us in our families and communities while keeping the knowledge of our history, culture, and language alive and strong.

Very good Speaker, earlier this year elders from various Nunavut communities shared their knowledge on *attiiniq*, including from Arviat and Kitikmeot communities. My Department of Culture and Heritage collected their testimonies and prepared a poster that was distributed to all communities.

Very good Speaker, we all have a shared responsibility to nurture our language and ensure it will thrive for the many generations ahead of us. I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the important contributions of many of our teachers, elders, parents, and youth who are contributing countless hours in teaching, learning and speaking Inuktit in their homes and communities.

Very good Speaker, many organizations contribute positively to support the use of Inuktit in all our regions and communities. This year the Department of Culture and Heritage also awarded financial support to 240 community-led initiatives, such as language revitalization in the Kitikmeot, creating content in Inuktit, including music, radio, video and books, and holding literacy, arts and cultural programs involving hundreds of community members, including elders, adults, and youth throughout the territory.

Very good Speaker, as we come to the closing of Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq, I invite all Nunavummiut to use Inuktit daily, share stories on naming and learning, and participate in the conversation on how they are promoting Inuktit.

With naming, I am Siurjuk and I say "good day" to my fellow Siurjuks in Nunavut. (interpretation ends) *Ma'na, koana, nakurmiik*.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Premier of Nunavut, Premier Savikataaq.

Minister's Statement 378 – 5(2): Recognizing the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: (interpretation) Thank you, esteemed Speaker. (interpretation ends) I rise today on behalf of our cabinet to recognize the accomplishment of you, our dear friend.

>>*Applause*

Mr. Speaker, it is with a lot of emotion that I make this statement. I know I speak for everyone when I express my sadness at your announcement last night.

In the year you have shown us all how a fair, impartial, strong and effective Speaker helps to shape the proceedings of this House. You have navigated your role with enormous respect and we all admire how you have taken on these great responsibilities.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

>>*Applause*

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Mr. Speaker, at the same time you have also remained a strong leader and an advocate for beautiful Baker Lake...

>>*Laughter*

>>*Applause*

...in your role as their Member of this Legislative Assembly. You have always given your all to help your constituents and it has been a great privilege to see you in action over the years.

Mr. Speaker, we fully understand and support your decision to step back from public life and focus on your family. You are doing what is best for them, and once again you are showing how dedicated you are to your family and your community.

We wish you all the very best in this next chapter and are always here for you. You leave big shoes and a big role to fill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you very much. I love my family and the people of Baker Lake. I had to make this great decision. To all MLAs, you all supported me and I know that you will keep Baker Lake in your minds. Thank you very much.

Continuing on. Members' Statements. Member for Gjoa Haven, Member Akoak.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 580 – 5(2): Tribute to Speaker Mikkungwak

Mr. Akoak (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I say “good day” to the people of Gjoa Haven who are watching the proceedings. First of all, today is my brother-in-law Casimir Tungilik’s birthday. (interpretation ends) Happy 60th birthday.

Mr. Speaker, I want to personally and publicly say “thank you” for being a good friend. We have helped each other throughout the years when we became politicians back in 2013. I would like to say “thank you very much” for being there and we helped each other out in many ways.

I hope your future is filled with prosperity and all the good things you have always done in the past, and I will miss all of those good old hockey games we watched between Boston and Toronto.

>>*Laughter*

I would like to thank you again for being a good friend. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu, Member Angnakak.

Member's Statement 581 – 5(2): Remembering Nick Newbery

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to voice my appreciation for the time that we have worked together. I have learned a lot from you and there is one thing about Mr. Speaker, he can always bring a smile to your face. No matter how you are feeling, he always has a joke somewhere or some kind of comment that just makes your day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, on a different topic, it is with a very sad heart that I rise today to remember Nick Newbery who passed away last Wednesday at the age of 75.

Mr. Speaker, Nick Newbery lived in Iqaluit for almost two decades with his wife, Terry, a nurse, who he married in Taloyoak shortly after moving to the north in the mid '70s.

Mr. Speaker, Nick Newbery was a man of many interests and many talents. He was a skilled photographer. He was fascinated by the Inuit culture. His best-selling coffee table book called *Iqaluit*, published with the support of our local Royal Canadian Legion, is filled with wonderful photographs of the northern life and scenes depicting Nunavut's history.

Nick was a long-time teacher at the Inukshuk High School where he developed and ran the Terry Fox program for at-risk Inuit teenagers. Over the years he wrote a number of junior high school resource manuals and in 2004 was sent to every community across Nunavut to provide in-services at schools on his material and methodology.

Mr. Speaker, after retiring, Nick and Terry moved to Nova Scotia where he taught courses on the north at Mount St. Vincent University. Nick also raised funds for students interested in teaching in Nunavut to get a northern orientation.

Mr. Speaker, my family have known Nick and Terry for over 30 years. Even after moving to Halifax, Nick continued to visit Baffin Island every year, visiting and catching up with people he had gotten to know so well. Nick always said that every day of the 30 years he lived in the Arctic was an adventure and he felt privileged to have lived and worked here.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that it was a privilege to have known Nick. He will be remembered well by the people of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 582 – 5(2): Tribute to Speaker Mikkungwak

Mr. Kaernerik (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. On behalf of my constituents, we say "goodbye" to you through me. You were able to become a good friend of mine and you were able to discipline me too. I'll never forget that and you gave me a lot of things to remember.

It was highly unexpected yesterday when you stated what you stated. We really felt it when you said that you wanted to make family first. Even though your family is going through a very difficult time, we want to encourage you. You also encouraged me to keep going and not give up. Yes, life will become hard and please don't give up. I will remember you all the time.

I rise to say "goodbye" to you. I don't know what words to say to you. I just want to say "thank you" and that you were a very good Speaker. Thank you, our esteemed Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you very much. Members' Statements. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

Member's Statement 583 – 5(2): Basic Income Program for Nunavut

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I know today that we have an esteemed Speaker, and starting tomorrow I don't know what's going to happen. As a regular member and as the Chairman of the Regular Members' Caucus, you were a member as well and I want to recognize all the hard work that you did over the years as a regular member on behalf of the people of Baker Lake. Know you will be missed; your strength.

Esteemed Speaker, I rise today to talk about income support. In Nunavut there are around 15,000 people who receive income support, and compared to the rest of Canada, we have the highest percentage of income support recipients. That is extremely concerning and I want to get more information.

I had a written question for the Minister of Family Services during the last session asking how the program can be improved in Nunavut, and I thank the minister for the very clear response I received. They are apparently updating the Income Support Program. We support that. We want to eventually get away from our current policy for income support and come up with something new in Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I'll read a brief excerpt from a 2013 report prepared by the Caledon Institute of Social Policy, I think it's called the Caledon report, regarding the concept of basic income. I'll quote, "Reform must go farther. Welfare itself must be dismantled and replaced with a modern program, which we will simply call Basic Income." Further on it mentions on pages 22 and 23, "...a Basic Income would use a simple income test that delivered benefits on a sliding scale to person's with low or modest incomes. Unlike welfare, a basic income program would not require applicants and recipients to divest themselves..."

Mr. Speaker, I apologize. I do require a little bit more time to read this quote out.
(interpretation) I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement, esteemed Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Member Main, please continue with your statement. Member Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker and my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) I will read that quote again. "Unlike welfare, a Basic Income program would not require applicants and recipients to divest themselves of most of their assets – effectively becoming desperately poor – in order to qualify for income assistance. Unlike welfare, a Basic Income could be delivered at low cost and with administrative ease through the income tax system – the key delivery vehicle for income security programs in Canada."

Mr. Speaker, later on in the report it mentions that the basic income concept could prevent and reduce poverty in Nunavut. For this reason, I am very interested in this idea and I will have questions to the appropriate minister at the appropriate time.
(interpretation) Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

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

Member's Statement 584 – 5(2): Tribute to Speaker Mikkungwak

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I say “good day” to the residents of my community. First of all, my constituents are from Aggu, but we all know that Aggu is on Baffin Island but Igloolik is an island in and of itself. On behalf of the people of Aggu, I would like to thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What I really wanted to say, esteemed Speaker, was when you were a Member of the Legislative Assembly, as you still are, you represented the people of Baker Lake and I'm sure that they felt it and so did we. Whether you are sitting on this side or not, you were a true representative of your community of Baker Lake. I just wanted to emphasize that.

Esteemed Speaker, I'm sure that you will be hard to replace, but we will keep you in mind. We know that you will be taking the true road. Your love for your family is very huge. We thank you very much, esteemed Speaker. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk, Member Kamingoak.

Member's Statement 585 – 5(2): Food Insecurity in Nunavut

Ms. Kamingoak: *Koana*, Mr. Speaker. First of all I would like to say “good afternoon” to my constituents and my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank you for your hard work and commitment that you contributed to our territory. I also commend you for putting your family first. Again *koana*.

Mr. Speaker, a recent story in the news noted that 57 percent of people living in Nunavut are food insecure, which is four times the national average. Mr. Speaker, this sad situation is not new to many Nunavut parents, those who are single and those with partners, who have been struggling day to day to feed their children and to make sure there is enough food for tomorrow, not to mention for the rest of the week.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly believe that addressing food insecurity is critical to addressing poverty across Nunavut. Many of those parents and individuals who struggle with food

insecurity are low-income earners. Even though I recognize that income assistance benefits have been increased in recent years, the high cost of food makes it extremely difficult to buy adequate and nutritious food.

Mr. Speaker, the impact of food insecurity is far reaching, especially for our children. Statistics show that over half of Nunavut's children are living in food insecure households. Studies have shown that food insecurity can lead to long-term physical and mental health issues. These factors can greatly affect an individual's ability to learn, to train for a job, or even keep a job.

Mr. Speaker, I am very grateful that the Department of Health provides funding so that our schools can offer breakfast programs. Our children cannot succeed in their education on empty stomachs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge our government to make food security a priority of its Poverty Reduction Strategy. Many communities, including my own constituency of Kugluktuk, do not have food banks to help those in need. We must address the fundamental issues of the right to adequate, nutritious food if we want the children... .

Sorry.

Speaker (interpretation): Member, you must seek unanimous consent to conclude your statement. Member Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: *Koana*, colleagues. I'm going to start over.

Mr. Speaker, I urge our government to make food security a priority of its Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Sorry, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Member Kamingoak, please proceed with your statement. Member Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: *Koana*, Mr. Speaker.

As I was saying, I urge our government to make food security a key priority of its Poverty Reduction Strategy. Many communities, including my own constituency of Kugluktuk, do not have food banks to help those in need. We must address the fundamental issues of the right to adequate, nutritious food if we want the children of Nunavut to grow into healthy and strong adults. *Koana*, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, Member Qirngnuq.

Member's Statement 586 – 5(2): Tribute to Speaker Mikkungwak

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I say “good day” to my fellow residents of Netsilik.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of my constituents and myself to make this statement. (interpretation ends) Most of all, I will say this: you are a man of your words. When you say you will support your constituency and people, you did that. When you say you love your family, you did that.

You went through a lot of stress and pressure in your time as MLA and Speaker. You love your role as a politician and you love your family. Like we say, family comes first. You stick to your word.

It took a lot of courage to say what you said yesterday about you stepping down as MLA and Speaker. The love of your family took the top in your decision, but with your courage and your word, you went through that. In honour of your service and your love of your family, your courage and your stress, in respect about you.

Mr. Speaker, people will learn from your experience. (interpretation) Our esteemed Speaker, thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Thank you very much. As the elder of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut, I truly appreciate your statement. Thank you very much.

>> *Applause*

Members' Statements. Member for Pangnirtung, Member Nakashuk.

Member's Statement 587 – 5(2): Tribute to Speaker Mikkungwak

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, our esteemed Speaker. First of all, I would like to say “happy birthday” to Hazel Aida Qappik. Today is her birthday. Please give her a happy day.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to say “thank you” in your role as Speaker of the House and for disciplining me, which helped me very much. We've had meetings together here, we have gone on travels together, and it seems like you're always happy and feeling free to discipline us in our role. For that, I thank you and when you go home, we wish you the best.

I am very proud that you have accepted the matter and you do have our full support. Thank you.

>>*Applause*

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

Member's Statement 588 – 5(2): Tribute to Speaker Mikkungwak

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, our esteemed Speaker. I am quite appreciative of the assistance you provided when I was first elected. You came to my office and told me to be resilient and that each day during sessions would be different and to be aware of that. I am grateful for that advice you gave and I will continue to be thankful.

However, another matter I am appreciative of that the general public may not be aware of and that was your educational path that went through your community, Rankin Inlet and the Kivalliq residential school system. I remember that you were one of the first applicants for the residential school court case and you assisted with that court case which resulted in that payment to survivors. Thank you, our esteemed Speaker.

Now I know you will be successful in your next career, and I sometimes have called you qallunaaq, as that is also the name of that movie and I will remember that. I thank you very much for providing advice and the people of Rankin Inlet and Chesterfield Inlet were quite happy when you toured our community.

Lastly, I went to your office one time and Tony was wearing Toronto hockey attire and you were wearing Boston hockey attire, and the next day Tony ended up wearing Boston attire because he had lost the game. You proved that you were a winner then, and I know that due to your winning attitude, your wife and children will have a good life. Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

>>*Applause*

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

Member's Statement 589 – 5(2): Tribute to Speaker Mikkungwak

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I also thank you and wish you a brighter future. I have only been a Member of the Legislative Assembly for four months, but I have learned a lot from you and what type of model we should be to the people out there. On behalf of the people of Tununiq, I thank you for truly representing the people of Nunavut as the Speaker.

Esteemed Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be asking questions to the appropriate minister about Baffin caribou and I wanted to let the minister know ahead of time. Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Rankin Inlet South, Member Kusugak.

Member's Statement 590 – 5(2): Tribute to Speaker Mikkungwak

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I knew you before you started going to high school in Rankin Inlet. Sports takes you places and you make new friends and when we played basketball, I think you were just a little kid when I first met you. Today your smile has never changed, your friendliness has never changed nor your desire to help the people of Nunavut. I am proud of you, Mr. Speaker. I think we all learned something from you in your role.

Mr. Speaker, as Members of the Legislative Assembly, I know that you not only supported Baker Lake but also all of Nunavut. Usually when question period came around, I used to wonder what kind of questions you would be asking me, not only for Baker Lake but for Nunavut as a whole. That is commendable.

I think we talked to each other on a daily basis and also emailed each other when the garage burned down in Baker Lake last year. I thank you very much for representing the people of Baker Lake to the end. When there was a search and rescue required in Baker Lake, you would be a part of the rescue team and you would keep me updated on what was happening.

You will be missed dearly in the Legislative Assembly and Baker Lake was truly represented by you. We also realize now what types of burdens or hardships the members encounter, as well as leaving our family, our grandchildren, and our children. That can take a toll on you physically and mentally. I thank you for showing that today. I know in the upcoming days and years we will see you and I am sure you will be giving me phone calls. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you very much. Members' Statements. Member for South Baffin, Member Joanasie.

Member's Statement 591 – 5(2): Tribute to Speaker Mikkungwak

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): I again thank you, esteemed Speaker. I rise today on your behalf. I would like to recognize you, esteemed Speaker. We are thinking of you

as a friendly person and someone who does things on time and is always welcoming. We feel the work that we have done together in the House. I rise today to thank you and humble myself. Esteemed Speaker, as I stated earlier, it is language celebration month. I think you will be a good speaker for life, not just in the House. It will be something to smile about.

However, I would like to remember that we have lost two Speakers within a year, but you will still be on earth. We will be thinking of you as an esteemed Speaker and as a regular member and the service you provided to Nunavummiut. I also remember our late Speaker, Mr. Enook. He and his wife and family are in our thoughts.

In closing, I would like to say “thank you” on behalf of the relatives you left behind, your wife, and all your children. You have left them to serve Nunavummiut. I thank you. *Qujannamiik, koana, nakurmiik.*

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you very much. Members’ Statements. Member for Uqqummiut, Member Keyootak.

Member’s Statement 592 – 5(2): Tribute to Speaker Mikkungwak

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, excellent Speaker. I rise today to thank you and express my pride in you.

Before I go on, on behalf of the people of Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq, I would like to thank you, Mr. Speaker. You are aware that we worked well together. I would especially like to thank you again. We’re all aware that you go on the land, and I live on the ocean. We both brought meat; I brought marine mammals and you brought terrestrial animals and we would eat very well together. We had different foods. You brought good meat from the land and I brought good meat from the ocean. We ate things that we don’t eat every day. I thank you very much for that.

You have helped me tremendously and when I was recently elected, you helped me greatly. I will never forget that. I’m proud of you and I appreciate the fact that I know we both have represented our people. We have left our relatives for long periods of time. However, we always put our families first, and I’m proud of that because you have made your family first. I thank you immensely and I will never forget you. Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Members’ Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Member Sheutiapik.

Member's Statement 593 – 5(2): Tribute to Speaker Mikkungwak

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I would like to say a big “thank you.” We all know that even though we don’t always agree all the time, we are always happy together. Even as Speaker, you have written me letters and I appreciate that it went well. I would like to say a big “thank you” for reminding us, even though I like to say good jokes too, and that’s important.

(interpretation ends) I have to say it’s not an easy decision to walk away. I have been there 10 years ago. When I was mayor in my third term, I walked away halfway because of family illness, so I know how hard that is, but it’s a decision you had to make.

I will say that I was proud to sit here today and share a tear. We laughed a lot, but we shared a tear today. I will see you in April when I’m doing my community visits.

(interpretation) Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 594 – 5(2): Tribute to Speaker Mikkungwak

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I first met you when we were both mayors of our communities. We were also members of the Nunavut Association of Municipalities, and your dedication to your community showed and it still does today, but our love for our families is very strong.

I wish you and your wife and family good health and I wish you the best in your future endeavours. It is not goodbye, but we will see you again. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 595 – 5(2): Tribute to Speaker Mikkungwak

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I would also like to thank you as well. This is the first time I have been elected, but I have worked for the government for a long time. We knew each other before you were an MLA, then as MLAs, and then you became Speaker. I am proud of the work that you do and you urge us to work, and as a servant and as an elected person, when you look at people working hard, it makes you try harder.

When I go to your community of Baker Lake, they show their pride in you as you continually voice the needs of the community. Further, our important elders have a facility that is near the stores, the RCMP, and the health centre as it was planned out. When you were a hamlet councillor, you were part of the planning team. Now, as a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut, you helped to develop the infrastructure that was needed in your community capital plan and I thank you for showing how a plan can be done.

I am especially appreciative of your efforts and I am very proud of your commitment to your wife. I empathize as my wife almost died, but she was never at the level. However, if I too had to resign for that, I totally understand your reasoning. Having almost been in that situation, I completely understand why you are resigning, but I know you will not stop working as you always want to finish the work started, especially legislation.

Many people approached you and that too had some dangers as others will try to disagree with you at your home. Because of your commitment and dedication, I am quite proud of you and thank you. Enjoy your time with your family. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Member Hickes.

Member's Statement 596 – 5(2): Tribute to Speaker Mikkungwak

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is no secret that the role of the Speaker holds special elevation and respect in my opinion. My father was a long-time former Speaker in the Manitoba legislature and he personally asked me to pass on his best wishes to you in your future endeavours.

Mr. Speaker, we got elected together in the Fourth Assembly, and as you well know, we worked together for the first couple of years as colleagues within the Regular Members' Caucus and worked very well tandemly. We worked together on planning strategies and looking at outcomes.

I know there is a whole branch of my family tree that are constituents of yours and I know they are very proud of the efforts that you have put forward to represent beautiful Baker Lake. I think, from your words, they will always come to mind. Whenever Baker Lake is mentioned, it is going to be beautiful Baker Lake.

I know you took over this role under very sudden and sad circumstances, and again, sudden and sad circumstances that we are going to be left without your presence in this House, Mr. Speaker. I have nothing but admiration for how we have worked together over the years.

I know for a fact, since I have been a member of cabinet, you worked very diligently with regard to your community, and in some respects even more so since you have been elected Speaker. The amount of correspondence and the amount of dialogue that we've had about issues that are going on in your community, I wish nothing but the best for your successor, and I hope that whoever that person will be knows what big shoes that they have to fill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list. Continuing on. Returns to Oral Questions. There are none. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Member Hickee.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. George Hickee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's very fitting today of all days to recognize a former Speaker of this House. I spoke just a few moments ago on the prestige that I hold the Speaker's office in, in my own heart due to my father being a former Speaker but also a cousin of mine, Mr. Speaker. He was also a former Speaker of the Nunavut legislature. I would like to welcome once again to this House, who is obviously no stranger, Hunter Tootoo to this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. As a former Speaker, it's obvious that you understand exactly what I'm going through today.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Member Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A number of years ago I was sitting in the Assembly but on the other side in the visitors' gallery. At that time I had the opportunity for my first and only recognition of visitors in the gallery. It was none other than the former Speaker at the time, Mr. Tootoo. I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to return the favour and formally recognize Mr. Tootoo. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to the gallery for being recognized again. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. (interpretation) Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Member Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I say "good day" to the people of Rankin Inlet North and Chesterfield Inlet.

There is a visitor in the gallery who happens to be one of my dearest friends and I am also proud of her ancestors who happen to be the late Talirug and Winnie Owingayak's daughter, so she is a descendant. When I go to Baker Lake, I billet at her place, Mary Owingayak, as she is my good friend, so welcome her. Thank you, esteemed Speaker, and I think she is your CA.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you very much. Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery.

I, too, would like to recognize our pages, Tanya Kenalogak, to my right.

>>Applause

And to my left is Sheila Nattar.

>>Applause

Also my assistant who chaperoned these pages, Mary Owingayak. As this is my last day, please feel welcome in the Legislative Assembly.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. I have no more names on my list. Continuing on. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 797 – 5(2): Basic Income Program for Nunavut

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I rise to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services.

Now, within the last five years work has commenced on reforming the territorial income support system within Nunavut. According to my understanding, there needs to be a divergence from just income support funding by looking at all the different pots of funding.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, it's clear that the department had invested a lot of time implementing reforms to the Income Assistance Program. When will the department take the next step and start working on developing basic income for Nunavummiut?

(interpretation) Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

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

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I also thank you for the question. You mentioned we have reviewed the (interpretation ends)

guaranteed basic income (interpretation) since 2005. (interpretation ends) We have done 9 of the 15 reforms and we continue to look at how we can reform based on what we have heard during community consultations. (interpretation) Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am aware that the department has been working on reforming the Income Assistance Program. What I was asking about was taking the next step and developing a new program, as outlined in this report, which would replace income assistance. I will ask the same question again: when will the department take the next step and start working on developing basic income for Nunavummiut? (interpretation) Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Family Services, Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. (interpretation ends) As I stated, the department since 2005 was focused on reform. However, our department is open for discussions with stakeholders pertaining to the delivery of income assistance. (interpretation) Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am glad to hear that the department is open to discussing, as it mentions here in the return to the written question, that the department is open to discussion. I thank the minister for reiterating what is in the response to written question.

The response to written question also says, “There have not been any recent, within the last three years, consultations with any organizations in Nunavut regarding the concept of guaranteed basic income.” Mr. Speaker, this gives me the impression that this is a dead idea and I’m trying to breathe some new life into it.

I’ll ask the same question for the third time: when will the department take the next step and start developing basic income for Nunavummiut? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Sheutiapik.

Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) There is no timeline. I have to say and be honest that the only one that has enquired about such a thing is you. Maybe you and I will start that dialogue within the department because the reforms we have been going through are because of community consultations. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 798 – 5(2): Implementing Departmental Priorities

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, one of the ongoing priorities listed under the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs' business plan is to "Ensure that the government structures, processes, and programs operate in a fiscally responsible manner." My first question is: how is it that the department ensures that this priority is being accomplished? Is there a section or positions within the department who are assigned to accomplish this priority or does the responsibility lie solely on the Premier? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Each minister and deputy heads of corporations are responsible for their budgets and to make sure that the work gets done in a responsible, fiscal manner. In the mandate letters to the deputy ministers and to the corporation heads, their responsibilities are spelled out and within the mandate letter is to make sure stuff is done in a fiscal and responsible manner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll take it that no individual or section is assigned the responsibility. Mr. Speaker, I'll move on.

Last year I tabled a section of the Procurement Activity Report listing 65 contracts with 22 job descriptions totalling \$7 million. Yesterday I tabled updated figures showing that the Department of Community and Government Services had increased the contracts to a total of 114 with 31 job descriptions and over \$12 million. Mr. Speaker, I did so to share with the Assembly and the public the extent to which the Department of Community and Government Services is using contracts to perform work intended for employees.

Mr. Speaker, I have been highlighting the fact that the Department of Community and Government Services is spending millions of dollars on IT contracts, a function that all other jurisdictions seem to be able to do with full-time employees. Mr. Speaker, I can understand when a contract would be required to perform a special project, but the contracts under Community and Government Services continue year over year and continue to grow.

As the department is responsible for ensuring our government operates in a fiscally responsible manner, I would like to ask the Premier: what is the position of the Department of EIA on CGS' dependence on contract resources to staff full-time positions, and particularly is this a fiscally responsible use of our limited resources? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had a couple of messages coming out here. Can the member please state the last part of his question again so I can make sure I understand it fully? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Member, please rephrase your question. Member Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Department of EIA is responsible for ensuring our government operates in a fiscally responsible manner, I would like to ask: what is the position of the Department of EIA on CGS' dependence on contract resources to staff full-time positions, and particularly is this a fiscally responsible use of our limited resources? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't comment on behalf of the previous government, but this government here, sometimes we have to do what needs to do get done to get the work done. One of the examples might be the ransomware that we had. If we don't have the capabilities, then we have to hire on extra capabilities to get the job done.

As the members should be aware, we have been having issues in filling some of the IT positions within CGS. When we can't fill the position but you've got to get the work done, well, you have to weigh your options. Do we get the work done and bite the bullet and just might have to cough up some more? It's those decisions that we have to make here.

As for the member's comments saying that no one is in charge of fiscally being responsible in a way for all the departments, it is untrue. I just explained to the member that each deputy head has a mandate and each minister is responsible to make sure that the mandate letter and I are fulfilled.

Mr. Speaker, where one person is absolutely and totally in charge of a government, sometimes those positions are called dictators, and we don't have one of those here. We work as a team and we solve problems as a team, and we will move forward. Mr. Speaker, there are times when you have to provide the services that are needed and expected by Nunavummiut, and in those circumstances sometimes we have to rely on contracts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Premier for reiterating what the Minister of Community and Government Services had indicated yesterday, that these are hard-to-fill positions. I would just like to regurgitate what I said yesterday: the fact that

these positions are hard to fill because they have never actually been advertised. Regardless, I'll move on.

Strong internal control is an essential to ensure public funds are administered appropriately. For this reason, the Government of Nunavut's *Financial Administration Manual* has placed much emphasis on the largest portion, section 8, the Control of Expenditures. One particular directive, FAM No. 808-4, government contracts pertaining to standing offer agreements, indicates that standing offer agreements are intended to increase service to users and reduce the overall costs with regard low-cost, frequently required goods and services. Further, contract regulations state that for service requests greater than \$250,000, the GN must engage in a public RFP process.

It's apparent that the Department of Community and Government Services has limited the duration of these individual contracts under the standing offer agreement to six-month periods in order to ensure that the amounts are below the RFP threshold. I would like to ask: what is the position of the Department of EIA on Community and Government Services' use of standing offer agreements and the practice of artificially reducing the contract duration to ensure that it is below the RFP threshold? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't comment on the member's statement there about having contracts less than six months to get under the \$250,000. If he wants better answers, I guess might be the word, he can ask the finance minister for FAM. If it's simply about contracts with CGS, he can ask the Minister of CGS.

Mr. Speaker, I trust my ministers to run their departments as best as they can, responsibly and fiscally, and to make sure services are provided. I have full trust in my cabinet to get the jobs done that they need to get done for Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: A point of clarification, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: To the point of clarification, Minister Kusugak.

Point of Order

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to clarify that the questions our colleague is asking in the House today were part and parcel of the written questions that our colleague tabled yesterday. They are lengthy and I will not get into them, but it encompasses the questions that he is asking today. I assure my colleague that those will be responded to in a timely fashion, as he had put them into written form yesterday. Thanks you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Members should be cautious as to asking questions when such questions have been posed as a written question.

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

Question 799 – 5(2): Evaluating Inuktitut Language Initiatives

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Culture and Heritage, who is also the Minister of Languages.

Esteemed Speaker, I have brought this up many times in our sittings here ever since Nunavut got created. People still believe that the Inuit language is going to be used, that it has to be used within the government's operations and by all Nunavummiut.

There is a great amount of money used every year on *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*. Aside from the thousands and thousands of dollars being spent every year on events to promote *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*, can the minister tell us what specific initiatives have been put in place to promote the use of the Inuktitut language and how his department evaluates these initiatives to determine if they are working successfully? Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Culture and Heritage, Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I also thank the Member for Aggu for his question. Esteemed Speaker, through *Uqausivut 2.0* that we have initiated, we have stated we want all Nunavummiut to be bilingual within schools and in the workplace, through services and everything else so that all the communities will preserve their language, and we want them to.

Esteemed Speaker, the *Uqausivut 2.0* plan has implementation plans working with different departments and other groups. Last year, it was the Inuit organizations. Money was set aside for businesses so that they can help on whatever initiatives associated with the language, so please make requests for funding.

Esteemed Speaker, through a part of this program, the Government of staff can be assessed. There is money available for government staff where 552 GN staff have been assessed in their Inuktitut proficiency and there is a three-tiered bonus they can receive, but many more have signed up to be assessed in their proficiency. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Before we proceed further, members, I would like to remind you that as there are people listening and watching in Nunavut, please make sure that your electronic devices are put on silent.

Continuing on. Your first supplementary question, Member Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for explaining that further. We know where things have progressed. Even my constituency assistant has just completed her assessment too.

I'll switch to English. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, it's important that Nunavummiut are able to use the Inuit language, *qallunaujattaraluaq*, in their daily lives, not just to access government services but when they go into a store or need to interact with the private sector.

Can the minister clearly describe what initiatives are in place to support and encourage the private sector to use the Inuit language, and how does the minister's department monitor and evaluate the success of these initiatives? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. Mr. Speaker, I alluded to the grant that private businesses can apply to, the Inuktitut Language Incentive. On top of that, we are working with the different organizations to monitor how we can provide better services across our territory.

Mr. Speaker, we have a new Languages Commissioner. The Languages Commissioner's office also plays a role with regard to our language laws. If any Nunavummiut thinks that their language rights are being infringed upon, they can seek advice and/or support from their office to find ways on how we can address some language issues that might be arising in the member's constituency or in other parts of our great territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, very good Speaker. 57:59 Now, we all know that it has been way over 20 years and we still hear Nunavummiut saying that our government speaks only in English when it comes to day-to-day services. It operates in English every day.

I'm trying to be confident that every government department is aware of the commitment to make Inuktitut as the language in the workplace. Even though they know, the awareness does not seem to be leading to reality. As I stated earlier, many Nunavummiut are saying our government still operates using the English language.

(interpretation ends) Under Nunavut's *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, the Minister of Languages is required to table an annual report summarizing how government departments and public agencies are meeting their language obligations under the legislation. The most recent annual report for 2014-15 was tabled in June 2018.

When will the Minister of Languages commit to tabling an up-to-date annual report summarizing the government's most recent efforts to implement Nunavut's language legislation? (interpretation) Thank you, very good Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. We have been working on getting the reports finalized. However, I can't state at this time when I can commit to table those reports in this House. I can assure the member and my colleagues that once we have them completed, I'll have it vetted through cabinet for tabling and bring it into this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 800 – 5(2): Status of Sanikiluaq's New Health Centre

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

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

Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues will be aware, I have been keeping a close eye on the progress of Sanikiluaq's new health centre. From the outside, it's a very impressive building. I have heard that it will soon be completed.

Can the minister confirm when Sanikiluaq's new community health centre project will be completed and open for patients? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had some staff in there last week from our Capital Planning Division and we're looking at substantial completion; the inspection to be completed on March 23. If everything is successful at that stage, then we would be fitting in the office and equipment and all the technical aspects of the building. We're looking at opening in October, this fall. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for the information. Sanikiluaq's community health centre has been short-staffed for the past few months. As described by my colleague from Arviat North, this puts a heavy load on both staff and residents. Can the minister clarify what steps will be taken to ensure that Sanikiluaq's new community health centre will be fully staffed when it opens? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Health, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With this particular project and with the staffing shortages that we've had throughout the territory, whenever we get a new facility in place, there is more office space, which has been a deficiency of the community of Sanikiluaq of having enough office space. We are looking at initiating discussions internally this summer so that we can look at our staffing model for the new facility. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have raised the issue of health centre staff housing a number of times for my community and still I'm not convinced that the new staff housing units to be built next to the new health centre in Sanikiluaq will be allocated to health care staff so that they do not have to trek across town in the middle of our frequent blizzards to deal with emergencies. With the location of the new health centre, response times to emergencies will be greatly increased.

Will the minister commit to ensuring that some of the new staff housing units to be built next to the new health centre in Sanikiluaq will be dedicated to health centre staff? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member's message has been resoundingly loud and clear. With my officials at Health and with the officials at the Nunavut Housing Corporation, we have been working together, first of all, to get the infrastructure built, which the tender on that is closing next month. In addition to that, we have been working together on the allocation. Typically when new staff housing units come online, they are open to all GN staff.

The member's comments have been duly noted. Other than standing here and giving a guarantee right now that I cannot do, we are working together to make sure that the staff for the health centre would be allocated to those units. We want to make sure, like the member said, in inclement weather, how health staff get to the health centre would be a lot easier when it's next door. We work very hard with the community and with the Nunavut Housing Corporation to make sure that those units are being built next to the health centre with the intention of prioritizing them for health staff.

One of the housing allocation policies, which work in our favour in this case, is that health staff are deemed priority 1, so that works in our favour as we're developing our allocation to make sure that the majority of those units, if not all of them, will be allocated to health staff. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 801 – 5(2): Office Closure Policy

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been trying to pose this question since February 20 and there was always a reason that I was not able to put it out, but for some reason today, it's very fitting since it is your last day, so I'm honoured to ask the question.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Human Resources.

Mr. Speaker, as you will very much recall, you asked questions to the minister in February of last year concerning the government's Bad Weather and Office Closure Policy, which is provided for in section 1011 of the government's *Human Resources Manual*.

As you will also recall, you clearly stated that when it comes to decisions about office closures in communities, those decisions should be made by people in the communities, not by bureaucrats in Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, when you asked the minister for a clear commitment that the government's policy would be changed to devolve and decentralize decision-making authority in this area, the minister provided a very clear commitment that this would be done.

My question to the minister today is this: can he clarify when an updated version of the government's Bad Weather and Office Closure Policy under its *Human Resources Manual* will be published that reflects the minister's commitment? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Human Resources, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, very good Speaker. I also thank you for the question and it's an opportune time to ask it as it's starting to get blizzardy and extremely cold in the communities in Nunavut. Sometimes schools and government offices have to close, as well as some hamlets, but that's at the discretion of the hamlet council. We currently have an office closure and bad weather policy that has to be applied. We have one, including my deputy minister. For example, if there was a blizzard in Baker Lake, they have dialogue between my deputy minister and the community and they decide whether there should be a closure or not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You answered my first supplementary question without me asking. Thank you very much.

>>Laughter

Mr. Speaker, it is important that office closure decisions in communities be taken in close coordination with school closure decisions. I also recognize the responsibility of district education authorities in this area. Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe how these decisions are presently being coordinated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was going to respond to that, but I thought you would ask the same question. I would like to thank him for the question.

All communities have district education authorities. The district education authorities and the school principals have dialogue and decide whether there is going to be a school closure and for how long. The district education authority and the school principal work together to make a decision as to whether or not there should be a closure. Sometimes the schools are closed even though the offices are open. There are different circumstances. I believe that makes sense. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There seem to be different reasons why each community has different times when to close, either temperature or especially in the smaller communities sometimes the school buses don't operate because of broken equipment. My question to the minister is: why is there a different extreme cold rule, minus 55 or minus 50, in different regions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Speaker, my understanding is there is one rule and that is minus 50, from the information I have.

Mr. Speaker, let me clear out some of the combination of weather factors. (interpretation) They base their decisions on whether visibility is very poor at 200 metres, if the wind is 60 kilometres an hour or more, if it's minus 50, if the roads are not cleared and dangerous to drive on and the bulldozers are on the road, or if the taxis and other modes of transportation in the community are not available. There is a combination that applies.

If there is a safety concern for the students or for those people going to work, that is factored into the decision on whether or not to close the schools, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Question 802 – 5(2): QEC Expenditures and Operations

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

As the minister will recall, I asked her a number of questions about the QEC's expenditures and operations during last year's fall and winter sittings, and I want to follow up today on some of these issues.

My first question concerns the issue of workplace wellness and the morale at the QEC. Although the Qulliq Energy Corporation's most recent annual report contains detailed information in a number of areas, it does not address in any great detail the issue of workplace morale and employee turnover and retention.

My first question is this: does the minister know what the current employee turnover rate is at the Qulliq Energy Corporation and, if she does know, can she tell the House today how many employees have departed the corporation within the last 12 months? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for her question. Unfortunately I do not have that information, but I can find out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I consider knowing your staff very basic information that I feel the minister should know.

Onto my next question, as the minister is well aware, the Government of Nunavut's *Human Resources Manual* covers a wide range of subjects in respect to the public service. The manual provides detailed rules and proceedings concerning such matters as leave, attendance, and related subjects. The *Human Resources Manual* is a public document which any resident of Nunavut could refer to.

As the minister will recall, I asked her last year about the standing committee's recommendation that the QEC's corporate and human resource policies be made publicly available. In her formal return to my question, the minister indicated that these are only internally accessible within the corporation. Can the minister clearly explain this inconsistency and will she commit to making the QEC's corporate and human resource policies public? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the question. The Qulliq Energy Corporation's human resource manual kind of mirrors the Government of Nunavut's, so I can commit to tabling that document. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another issue that I have been raising is that of the Qulliq Energy Corporation's approach to overtime, which appears in some cases to be an example of a corporation being penny-wise but pound-foolish.

I have heard of practices where the QEC flies work crews back to Iqaluit for the weekend in order to avoid paying overtime. When I last asked the minister about this issue, she committed to reviewing the QEC's overtime practices. Can she tell the House today what the findings of her review were? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member again for her question. At this time I and the president or CEO of the Qulliq Energy Corporation are still reviewing these documents and I can provide information for the member once I have done so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung, Member Nakashuk.

Question 803 – 5(2): Employee Retention

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. This afternoon my questions are for the Minister of Human Resources.

(interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, he tabled the government's 2018-19 *Public Service Annual Report* at the beginning of this winter sitting. I am pleased to inform the minister that I have been reviewing the report with care.

Mr. Speaker, the report indicates that a total of 766 indeterminate or term employees left the government for a variety of reasons during the 2018-19 fiscal year. It indicates that the government "offers voluntary employee exit surveys for collecting and analyzing reasons why employees leave or change jobs."

Mr. Speaker, in order to improve our employee retention rate, we need to have good information about why employees are leaving. Can the minister indicate approximately what percentage of departing employees actually completed the exit survey?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Human Resources, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the question. 2020 I didn't catch the page number that you quoted from, but when people who recently worked for the government leave their jobs, we ask them to fill out the exit survey on why they resigned from the government. There are very few people who complete the survey. (interpretation ends) A very insignificant amount of people fill out the exit survey because it's on a volunteer basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) It has been my experience that some offices in the government are very stable and benefit from long-term employees and others suffer from high turnover. In some cases the high turnover is a result of issues related to bullying, lack of direction from management, and other dysfunctional workplace behaviours. In situations where a given office or division of a department exhibits an unusually high employee turnover rate, can the minister describe how the Department of Human Resources investigates the situation? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The need for a safe working environment involves working with the entire departmental staff to create a space of safety. When I first became minister for this department last year, the need for such an environment was brought up repeatedly and since it was prioritized last year, I am happy to say that my deputy minister and I share that priority.

I can state that ongoing training was commenced within the government for supervisors within the departments to recognize symptoms of a toxic workplace or if they notice unsafe working practices to put a stop to it. The employees receive directives and training to be aware of space places, appeals, or if they feel threatened, which supervisor to approach to receive a helping hand. This also applies if their own supervisor is the root cause of the unsafe practices. All employees are receiving this training and we are moving forward towards this goal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The 2018-19 *Public Service Annual Report* indicates that the government's retention rate is approximately 79 percent. This means that approximately one in five employees leaves their position during the year.

The continuous turnstile of employees, in looking at that scenario, and in looking at the report that the minister briefly touched upon about employees working in a safer

environment, can he describe what specific employee retention initiatives his department will be working on during the upcoming 2020-21 fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that question so that we can all have a clear understanding of the public service. There are many who have resigned from the government. Many have retired. Some people find better employment outside the government. It is a combination of these two factors that represents that in one number. It's not that all employees leave employment because they're unhappy.

We are seeking new government employees and attempting to make government jobs attractive. People who are currently working for the government are being given counselling on how they can move within the government and continue on to obtain higher positions within the government.

For the future leaders, there are internship programs and that will keep assisting government employees to progress so that they can gain higher employment through training. They can receive on-the-job training so that they can become supervisors. That's what we are doing right now. We are looking at other avenues so that the Government of Nunavut can be a better employer. Perhaps the biggest thing for our government is the benefits that we're working on.

On your first question on bullying, harassment of employees, and harassing supervisors, there is no room for that in our government. We want to see government employees working until their retirement and for them to be happy to work there. If we can deal with it properly, people will stay in their positions for a longer time, and we base our consideration. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to report that the work is ongoing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 804 – 5(2): District Heating System in Taloyoak

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, federal funding for the installation of a new district heating system in Taloyoak was announced in September 2018. Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this project is to “capture residual heat from power generation and provide space and hot water heating to nearby commercial and institutional buildings.”

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of Taloyoak's new district heating system, and can she confirm which buildings in the community will be connected to the new systems? (interpretation) Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) *Koana*, Mr. Qirngnuq, for your question. Mr. Rumbolt had asked the same question regarding Sanikiluaq with the district heating system. The district heating system in Taloyoak, as in Sanikiluaq, the commencement and expected construction completion dates are for the year 2020-21. Regarding the buildings that will be attached to the district heating system in Taloyoak, the buildings are the Natilik School, the Moses Tiliktaq Pool, the Paleajook Eskimo Co-op garage, and two hamlet garages. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qirngnuq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) That's good to hear. (interpretation ends) Can the minister clarify which company has been awarded the contract to install the new district heating system and can she clarify the budget for the project? (interpretation) Thank you, very good Speaker.

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

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I don't have the name of the company that has been given the contract for this budget. The total budget of this is...the confirmed funding is \$1.7 million. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will probably have the name of the company sometime in the future.

(interpretation ends) Information published by the federal government indicates that the new district heating system in Taloyoak is estimated to displace approximately 174,000 litres of fuel and 480 tonnes of carbon dioxide annually. That is good news.

Can the minister indicate if the Qulliq Energy Corporation is presently considering the installation of new district heating systems in Kugaaruk or any other Nunavut community? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Ehaloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) First of all, I would like to correct myself on the amount I had given you. The district heating system in Taloyoak, the complete budget for that is \$4.3 million. At this time I don't have any information on any district heating systems within other communities, but

because the money came from the federal government, I'm sure and I will look forward to working with my president of the Qulliq Energy Corporation to find out if we can access extra funding for other communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 805 – 5(2): Marine Infrastructure

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you, very good Speaker. I will again direct my question to the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. I asked questions yesterday regarding marine infrastructure. I'll ask further questions so that I can get clear answers.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the federal government's Safety Equipment and Basic Marine Infrastructure in Northern Communities Initiative provides funding for such things as community breakwaters. As the minister is aware, the deadline for submissions for proposals is March 31, next month.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clearly explain the process that the government is using to choose which specific projects will be submitted to the federal government for their consideration? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The process is that before and leading up to putting out the proposals, I have solicited with our MLAs and that in terms of which projects to look for. As part of this, before I make any submissions, I'll be bringing it to my cabinet colleagues to assist me in getting this proposal as I wanted a very strategic proposal.

As I stated, the call letter is very difficult for us as a government because the call letter does define that these need to be done within the two years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. Yes, I noted that it is something of importance to our communities. Please give it a lot of thought. My constituents are very keen on this project. In Hall Beach they have requested it and the hamlet has written a letter to the minister. Are you able to clarify what the hamlet should be doing to advocate further to push for this when they want this done? Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, this began last year and that we went to the communities to discuss the breakwater issue and specifically where the breakwater locations would be. I believe Hall Beach was involved as well as Igloolik. You brought that up as an issue and I believe I went to your community because of the concerns that you had raised and I was thankful to go look for myself personally. We spoke with the hunters and the hamlet about this and were engaged in the issues that were of concern at the community level.

I have advised the staff to do a community visit. I believe there are going to be 18 communities that they will visit. The timeline has not been finalized, but they will review that. I want to thank the member for continuing to raise this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. Yes, it is something that we have been engaged in and it is something that is a serious matter to our constituents. I have always talked about the fact that it is a real need and it is an issue that has been raised since 1999 when we got Nunavut. I'm pleased to hear that there will be a visit to Hall Beach and Igloolik.

However, with regard to this issue you mentioned, you identified that they will be looking at improvements. I would like to get more information on that. (interpretation ends) When it comes to community scoping studies that the federal government has provided funding for, can he confirm that Hall Beach, Sanirajak, is part of this study? (interpretation) Can he identify that and confirm if they are part of the study? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Yes, they are part of the study and they are one of the 18 communities that our consultants will be visiting.

I just want to add too and something that I'm very proud of is that in addition to this scoping study and the Oceans Protection Plan, our department also, through an application base, contributes to communities through our Small Craft Harbour Program. I encourage communities to continue to look at all these options. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Motion 068 – 5(2): Extension of Question Period

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

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order and it is not debatable. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and question period is extended for an additional 30 minutes.

Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Member Keyootak.

Question 806 – 5(2): Baffin Island Caribou Management

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I would like to direct my question today to the Minister of Environment.

Mr. Speaker, as we know, in the Baffin region there is a quota we have been allotted of 250 caribou. Mr. Speaker, I believe there was an announcement that it is now closed. Can you confirm that the Baffin region has reached its maximum total allowable harvest for caribou? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are 250 tags for caribou within the Baffin region. They will be available on July 1. I believe the total allowable harvest of 250 has been reached. There will be assigning the new TAH at a later time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For those who are listening and watching, particularly the harvesters, I used to be a harvester myself, but it was to another House.

>>*Laughter*

I would like clarity, as many would, that there are quota assigned to each of the communities and therefore the 250 tags have all been used even though some communities have not reached their own allotted quota based on the division of the 250, and that there are communities that have not even used all of their tags that were assigned to them accordingly. What is going to happen to those communities that were given a right to hunt? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The 250 allotted tags have now been used and so the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Management Board allotted and assigned tags to the different communities. However, whenever that amount has been reached, though the communities have been assigned a certain number, they are no longer able to hunt because we have reached the allotted 250 tags. That is according to this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for that clarification. Mr. Speaker, now as per my statement earlier, some communities have not harvested any caribou and they were not able to fill their hunting tags for the caribou. How many communities can you tell me that were not able to complete their hunts? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the actual numbers of harvested caribou, perhaps I can start from the top. Arctic Bay was short eight tags to reach their limit while Cape Dorset went over by one, Clyde River was short six tags of their quota, Igloolik went over by one, and Iqaluit overharvested by 19 while Kimmirut was right on the amount, while Pangnirtung went over by one tag, and in Pond Inlet they went over by two tags. When you add it, it totalled up to 251 with the quota set at 250 tags. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 807 – 5(2): Baffin Island Caribou Harvest

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, very good Speaker. My colleague for Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River asked some of the questions I wanted to ask. I say “good day” to my fellow residents of Tununiq and members.

As the minister will recall, he approved a change to the allowable caribou harvest numbers last fall. This change allowed for up to 25 female caribou to be harvested as part of the total number of 250. Can the minister confirm how many female caribou have been harvested during the 2019-2020 season? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I take pleasure in being asked questions by MLAs from the Baffin region. Overall in Nunavut we need to keep

our hunters informed of the statistics. Yes, of the 25 female caribou tags for the Baffin region, there were 18 female caribou harvested. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for adequately responding to my question. I'll speak English.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, today's public service announcement indicated that the total allowable harvest was "...established to support the recovery of the Baffin Island caribou population." Mr. Speaker, when my colleague from Iqaluit-Niaqunnguq recently questioned the minister about this issue, he stated that the caribou population is "...going up a bit in some parts of the island but not substantial enough to make any management change."

Can the minister indicate how significant a recovery will be required before the government is willing to consider an increase to the total allowable harvest? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't tell the members a number that would be ideal. Officials don't have any numbers in mind. It would be when there's a substantial amount. I know that's subjective. When the caribou population is back to what it was when it was healthy and the reproductive rate is high and the calf survival rate is high, when all those indicators are there, then we will look at a change of managing the caribou on Baffin Island. Right now our current priority is to make sure that the island caribou do recover and the quicker they recover the better it will be for Qikiqtaalummiut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, if everything works out in the coming months and we follow the schedule, we will use them during Christmas. They are very important food during Christmas festivities because the Baffin people end up ordering a lot of caribou for Christmas community feasts. Can the people request funding from your department to buy caribou that can be used in community feasts? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I remember correctly, the government has money available for buying caribou from other communities to bring to another community in Nunavut. I know Pond Inlet people have used that money where they buy caribou from other communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. For the second time I will recognize the Member for Netsilik, Member Qirngnuq.

Question 808 – 5(2): Insurance Coverage for Harvesters

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Environment with regard to this matter.

Mr. Speaker, hunting accidents have been happening for a very long time. We never know what's going to happen in the future. Mr. Speaker, the question I'll be asking, I don't know if it will be used or not, but I want to ask the question anyway.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as the minister may be aware, a tragic accident took place in my community of Kugaaruk shortly before Christmas. A hunter lost his life in an accident and the community has been grieving.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is much aware, the Government of Nunavut and the Government of the Northwest Territories jointly pay the premiums to the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission that allow for the commission to provide insurance coverage for harvesters. It is my understanding that the Government of Nunavut's share of the funding comes from the budget of the Department of Environment. Can the minister confirm how much the government pays into the fund on an annual basis? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First, my condolences to the community. No, I was not aware of the tragic accident that happened in the member's community.

On his question, if my memory serves me right, I believe our government pays close to \$1 million a year towards that program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qirngnuq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Information published by the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission indicates that "When a harvester is killed while harvesting, your family may get a pension. The WSCC will also help pay for the funeral."

Mr. Speaker, I am not certain that this coverage program is widely known in Nunavut. Can the minister clarify how his department works with the WSCC to ensure that all hunters and trappers organizations have clear information that they can provide to their members concerning this coverage program? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our conservation officers work with the hunters and trappers organizations to publicize this program and as long as you are considered a full-time hunter, you qualify to take advantage of this program should you tragically have to apply for it, whether it be injured or in that case, a death while out hunting.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct myself. I have been handed something here. The amount that is paid, according to what I have just been told, that information is about \$100,000 a year in terms of premiums.

Mr. Speaker, if anyone has any questions about the harvesters' compensation program, they can go talk and ask questions to their local conservation officers. (interpretation) Anybody in the communities, if you are injured while hunting, you can go to the conservation officer and talk to that person to see if you are eligible for compensation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qirngnuq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the minister. I understand and recognize that the Department of Environment administers a disaster compensation program that pays for the replacement of harvesting equipment but only in certain circumstances. Information published by the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission indicates that it does not pay for equipment like boats and snowmobiles.

Can the minister indicate if his department is considering introducing any kind of program that would help hunters cover the cost of purchasing private insurance coverage for their equipment? (interpretation) Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The workman's compensation program is compensation toward the hunter or the fisherman and it's not dedicated to any equipment in terms of they lost a snowmobile, their boats, or ATVs. The workman's compensation program is to compensate the hunter or fisherman while they are out harvesting.

Mr. Speaker, we do have a program, the disaster compensation. That program is to compensate the hunters or fishermen that have unavoidable accidents and their equipment is damaged or lost while they are out hunting or fishing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. I'll recognize for the second time the Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

Question 809 – 5(2): Sale of Caribou Meat in Nunavut

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Environment. I am not a very good hunter myself, as the minister knows.

Mr. Speaker, I had a written question about the sale of caribou meat this past fall and the Department of Environment responded to my request for numbers. On page 2 it states that they don't know right now how many caribou have been sold around Nunavut through informal channels, not through recognized stores, but either online or private sales on Facebook and things like that.

It states here in the response that the Department of Environment checked with the airlines to get the numbers of how many caribou are shipped to different communities. They requested the number of caribou, but the airlines wouldn't provide that information requested by the Department of Environment.

My first question is: since the airlines within Nunavut make a great deal of money from the Government of Nunavut in the amounts of tens of millions of dollars, why did they not agree to the Department of Environment's request? Does the minister know why? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Environment, Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot say why they won't give us the numbers because I don't know why. They have not stated why they don't want to give us the numbers. Along the same lines, we can't account for the amount of caribou that is transported through baggage. The only way we would be able to get that amount is to find out through excess baggage. I don't know why they don't want to provide us with that information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although I know that those who sell caribou to different communities are not breaking the law, as they have the right, it is a concern by other hunters and older people as well. They have told me that it is a worrisome matter. They are seeing caribou as cash and it is in the response here that one caribou can cost between \$300 and \$1,000. The amount of \$300 is the cheapest up to \$1,000 for one caribou. It is worrisome just looking at those numbers.

I ask the minister for the second time: can the minister write to the airlines or call them himself to request the numbers again? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I can write to them again as the Department of Environment to request those numbers again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope that the airlines will remember that that is correspondence from the Premier of Nunavut. This will be my last question.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board is working on a harvest reporting project in the Kivalliq region with the Kivalliq hunters and trappers organizations. I note in the recent newsletter that they achieved great success in Arviat and they particularly thanked HTO board chair Thomas Alikashuak and the involved staff.

Mr. Speaker, my final question is: what is the Department of Environment's involvement in the harvest reporting project in the Kivalliq? (interpretation) Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the best of my knowledge, this is a program being done by the Qamanirjuaq-Beverly committee and the HTOs and it's their project, to the best of knowledge, and if we were asked for any assistance, then we most certainly would have helped it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. I'll recognize for the second time the Member for Aggu, Member Quassa.

Question 810 – 5(2): Inuit Employment

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, although undeniable progress has been made over the past two decades with respect to increasing the level of Inuit employment in the territorial government, much more work needs to be done if we are ever to reach the goals set out by Article 23 of the *Nunavut Agreement*.

Mr. Speaker, the government's most recent quarterly employment report indicates that there were a total of over 5,137 positions across the entire government, of which roughly 3,654 were filled and 1,483 were vacant. That's a total of 1,835 filled positions were filled by Nunavut Inuit.

Mr. Speaker, in order for the government to achieve 85 percent Inuit employment in a fully staffed government, it will need to hire over 2,530 new Inuit employees. At the government's present rate of hiring, this could take decades.

Can the minister indicate what he considers to be a realistic timetable for achieving a full representative workforce? (interpretation) Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Human Resources, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for that question. I believe we all agree with him that the number of Inuit working for the government needs to increase and they are increasing, Mr. Speaker.

My vision is that at the end of the day there can be more Inuit working. That's our goal, but it's difficult to know when we will reach it. I can say this: as a stand-alone Department of Human Resources, we are reviewing how best we can recruit Inuit employees and if we can come up with candidates who want to work for the Government of Nunavut. We are working on that.

We are focusing on children through the Department of Education to prioritize attendance as this is the single most important factor. All of our children must attend school until they attain grade 12, whereupon they can pursue post-secondary education to qualify for higher positions.

It is at this point where the program I mentioned earlier comes into play with employees trained via the leadership program of the government so they can fill management positions upon completion of the program. We are providing programs in order to increase the numbers through the Department of Human Resources. I can't tell you when we will reach our goal, but we have to increase the rate of how many Inuit we're hiring and this is becoming more urgent today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. (interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, a new cooperation protocol between the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated was signed last month. The Kattujjiqatigiinniq Protocol commits both parties to "promptly developing and implementing robust Inuit employment plans and pre-employment training plans as set out in Article 23 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and the May 2015 settlement agreement."

Mr. Speaker, the minister sits on the board of directors of the Makigiaqta Inuit Training Corporation. Can he describe some of the specific pre-employment training initiatives that are currently funded by the organization? (interpretation) Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We had a meeting here in Iqaluit recently and we are starting to set up pre-employment training programs and using the funds that we have set aside for those types of programs. I currently don't have what will be initiated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, esteemed Speaker. I'll be speaking English as I was speaking English today. (interpretation ends) The government's most recent quarterly employment report indicates that there are a total of almost 195 Government of Nunavut positions in my home community of Igloodik, which is a decentralized community. However, the report also indicates that almost 70 of these positions are vacant. Approximately 20 percent of the vacancies are found in just two departments, Environment and Culture and Heritage.

When it comes to long-term vacant positions in decentralized communities, can the minister indicate how the Department of Human Resources works with other departments to identify ways of addressing the specific barriers that are causing these vacancies? (interpretation) Thank you, esteemed Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank Aarulaaq. He understands Inuktitut quite clearly, so I can speak Inuktitut to him.

Mr. Speaker, the departments located in the decentralized communities all have vacancies and that fact is truthful as we would prefer them all filled. Whenever government is searching for employees, we work with the regional centres on how to ensure the employee is effective, as well as the best way to publicize the position.

There are many factors. Although I am not looking for any excuses, different avenues exist why the number of Inuit employees isn't increasing. We also work with the regions to allocate housing if required, amongst other logistical issues. However, we work with all regional departments and agencies to fill vacancies in their departments, including when the position can be filled. We work with all departments to hire staff that they require.

We also work with the departments to try to prioritize Inuit hires and how Inuit who want to work can be accommodated. We meet regularly to try to resolve these challenges. We look for the best ways to hire employees for these positions and I know it takes quite a while, but that's what we do, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Members, please note that the time for question period has expired. Continuing on with the orders of the day. Written Questions. There are none. Continuing on. Returns to Written Questions. There are none. Continuing on. Replies to Opening Address. There are none. Continuing on. Replies to Budget Address. There are

none. Continuing on. Petitions. There are none. Continuing on. Responses to Petitions. There are none. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. There are none. Continuing on. Tabling of Documents. Minister of Justice, Minister Ehaloak.

Item 14: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 255 – 5(2): Nunavut Law Foundation Annual Report 2018

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am pleased to table the Nunavut Law Foundation’s annual report for the year ending December 31, 2018. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Member Main.

Tabled Document 256 – 5(2): Caribou News in Brief

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would like to table the *Caribou News in Brief*, winter issue 2019-2020, published by the Beverly Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board. It’s very good reading. I would recommend it to all members.

A brief quote from an elder in the publication reads as this, “We’ve got to respect the caribou that’s left now or in the future the caribou will be gone. My grandfather told me one day he will go up the hill and look out on the land and see an old caribou trail and you will have tears in your eyes.”

Mr. Speaker, I recommend all members to review this with care. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Tabling of Documents. There are no more. Continuing on. Notices of Motions. There are none. Continuing on. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. 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 39 and 40 with Member Akoak 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 16:19 and Committee resumed at 16:45*

Item 20: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairman (Mr. Akoak): Welcome back, colleagues. I would like to call the committee meeting back to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 39 and 40. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with the review of Bill 39 and the 2020-21 Main Estimates of the Department of Community and Government Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 39?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 39 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2020-2021 – Community and Government Services – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. I would now like to ask Minister Kusugak: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee? Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree to let the minister and his officials go into the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Thank you. For the record, Minister Kusugak, please introduce your officials. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Colleagues, to my right is Deputy Minister Constance Hourie and Mr. Kyle Seeley to my left. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Yesterday we finished with the opening comments for CGS. Do members have any general comments? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I heard and read the minister's opening comments from yesterday. The ransomware attack affected the entire government. When you were talking about that, I have further questions on information and that have not been responded, and the whole of the Government of Nunavut departments were affected after that incident.

Secondly, the minister mentioned the Nunavummi Nangminiqaqtunik Ikajuuti. It states here that this falls under the Department of Economic Development and Transportation,

but they will be working with the Department of Community and Government Services on the review. That is good news because NNI should be focused on Inuit having their own businesses. We support the real Inuit companies. We don't support Inuit companies that are only pretending to be Inuit companies on paper. They are just trying to profit from this government. This is not the first time that I have brought it up, but the minister has stated it and I am happy to hear that.

That is all, Mr. Chairman. I will have other questions later. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. General Comments? Seeing none, we will start on page J-4. Community and Government Services. Directorate. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$12,427,000. Agreed? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Community and Government Services is renewing their policies. The different policies will be put under one policy, if I understood it correctly. What was the decision there? Who had the discussion on whether this will be appropriate or not? That is my first question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am happy you are asking that question, as well as for your remarks earlier. In the review we are looking at what the best options are for my department. We are presently reviewing that with my officials. We work with different organizations. We were thinking and in having a discussion we have moved towards, it would be more appropriate to have one policy. That is where we are heading on the work we are doing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We are on the directorate or the upper management of CGS. Looking at your Inuit employment plan and looking at the executive and senior management positions, how much turnover has there been in the current fiscal year in terms of the senior management and executive functions within the department? I'm not looking for exact numbers; I guess I'm looking for a snapshot of what the picture is in terms of the capacity and the experience of the senior management within CGS. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) I am happy to hear what you are saying. Presently there are not too many in the senior positions in our department. Not very many have moved on or risen. I do not have a number for you because you have not asked for a number. It is well within what we can manage. If there are still vacant positions we will be looking to fill them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The positions will increase. There are presently 449 and they will be asking for 462. Which communities will be getting more positions within Nunavut? I hope I was clear. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have not identified which communities will get the positions. We still haven't done that yet, but we have identified the number of new positions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just a clarification, so the department doesn't know which communities will be seeing staffing increases under this proposed budget? I just want clarification on that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry for the confusion. No, it's not that. It's just that we have the person years; a majority of them will be here. Right now there might be an opportunity to maybe shift a position or two along the way. A majority of them will be here. It's just through this as we go forward there might be an opportunity to shift a position or two. We're still trying to align that at the moment. We will fill the positions, but there might be an opportunity to shift one from one community to another. I'm not trying to evade the question, but at this particular time we know most of them will be here. We're just not sure of exactly how many. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On the business plan, page 226, the first priority for the 2019- 2020 fiscal year, under the status update it says that "The department completed 57 percent of employee performance evaluations for 2018-19." 57 percent, so roughly 60 percent of your employee performance evaluations were completed in the previous fiscal year. Does the department have a target of completing 100 percent of their performance evaluations and, if so, when will they get to that point? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, our target is to have it 100 percent complete, but that's a moving target at this point. We have so many things on the go in our department and it takes a lot of work and coordination to complete these. We are working on a 100 percent target, but at this point I don't have an end date for this to

happen. I'm hopeful and the department is hopeful that we will have it in the next 12 months. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of performance evaluations for your staff in this upcoming fiscal year, 2020-21, it mentions on that same priority status update that a quality review exercise of performance review was also conducted. When you did that quality review exercise of your performance review, what did that tell you? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe for those particular details, if I could ask, through you, that Ms. Hourie respond to that detail. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Hourie.

Ms. Hourie: Thank you. Thank you to the member for the question. After we did that review...of course we always want to be 100 percent with our performance plan or performance reviews. Unfortunately we weren't at that percentage rate. We have implemented a regular meeting of the executives to talk about how many performance plans we are under 100 percent and as well, we initiated an Inuit-specific performance plan, again, weekly, where we sit with the executives to talk about where we're at with those percentage rates. We are trying to get those percentage rates higher. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That is good to hear. I think it is a good question for other departments to answer, how many of their employees have completed performance reviews in the past fiscal year. It could be, in my opinion, great information to see in every Inuit employment plan across the government in terms of performance evaluation.

Moving to the business plan, page 206, your second priority, and it is on the application of the NNI Act and Regulations, and under the status update it says that your department worked to establish a formal process to include career planning and training programs as part of the capital budgeting process. This sounds like it was work done to address Inuit employment levels, which is encouraging.

Maybe if I could get an explanation as to what that formal process looks like and if it's going to be standard for all the capital projects going forward or if it's just a project-by-project approach. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are working to link the capital planning process and career planning within our department and within the GN. However, the link needs to be made more formal and introduced as a mandatory part of our capital planning process. We would like to put it through across the board, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I note that this continues to be a priority, the work on the NNI Act and Regulations. for upcoming fiscal year. What types of things will be happening under this priority area? I'm still on page 206 of your business plan for the upcoming fiscal year under the NNI Act and Regulations. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some of the things that we are doing is we have an interdepartmental committee composed of my colleagues from ED&T, specifically the NNI Secretariat. Our Department of CGS, the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Family Services, the career development portion of that, we're trying to find solutions and recommendations that we can bring forward to the cabinet.

With respect to the NNI regulations and its operational issues, they have made some progress on some potential solutions on the approaches that we have on this and we are developing them. I would like to share them with you at an appropriate time, but they are still in the developmental stage. We are working amongst the different departments that I said in terms of trying to find solutions to deal with NNI so that it does what Mr. Main is talking about and I think many of us in this room that NNI needs to benefit Nunavummi Nangminiliit, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Specifically on the issue of "paper" companies, I know we keep coming back to this, but I know there's a new protocol between NTI and the Government of Nunavut. Do the department and/or the sister department, Economic Development, have any plans to utilize that protocol to address this issue? It's a longstanding issue of the "paper" companies. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hear the question clearly, but I think this is better answered by the appropriate department that is responsible for the NNI discussions with NTI on this matter. I'm not trying to duck the question at all, but I think it would be more appropriate if the appropriate minister responsible for the NNI would be able to respond to that at an appropriate time. I do know that at the contracting end that

it's something that gets brought up by contractors and the public in general, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I guess I should clarify that I'm bringing this issue up as it pertains to infrastructure in Nunavut and so I would suspect that if I bring it up with Economic Development, they're going to say, "Well, go talk to Community and Government Services because they're the ones who do most of the infrastructure projects in Nunavut." It's a suggestion that I'll make now to the minister.

Can the minister along with his colleague use that new protocol and all the things that are within that to approach Nunavut Tunngavik and say to them, "Look, this is not right that a real Inuit-owned company has to compete with a 'paper' one"? It's simply not right and the government is getting overcharged in certain cases for I don't know what. I can't see what value we're getting out of giving contracts to "paper" companies. That's my question to the minister in terms of using that new partner, Kattujjiqatigiinniq Protocol. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hear you. Again, I'm not trying to duck the issue at all, but as you could appreciate, our department nor any other government department decides who is qualified for NNI and that becomes very difficult.

What we could do and what we have been doing, working with the NNI Secretariat and the career services in Family Services, we have been working and developing a template through this process to assist so that we could increase as much as possible the amount of Inuit that are working and able to be working in any of the contracts that go out.

We are working on a template that will require that if this is a construction project, just for an example, if there is a construction project and there's an opportunity for Inuit to learn or be employed in it, we are working on a template to require that there be an X amount of Inuit working in a said contract and give an opportunity to train throughout the contract. We're working on a template for that.

In terms of, again, who is an Inuk firm and not, it's out of our hands, but we are working in procurement to try to do what we can and what can control and trying to make changes there so that there is as much Inuit impact and Inuit benefit in any of the procurement programs that do go out. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On page 207, it says “Explore additional procurement methods” and I’m looking at the department’s capital projects in the planning phase and design, bid, build, design build.

There seems to be a trend towards more design build projects. Is the department planning to look at... . This is a priority for the upcoming fiscal year. Is the department planning to look at labour only contracts; build/design? Build contracts, because using the Nunavut Housing Corporation as an example, that in the past has been very successful at both supporting Inuit and locally owned companies and getting high levels of Inuit employment. (interpretation) Has that been considered? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee that I had mentioned earlier is doing exactly those things that my colleague is bringing up. There might be an opportunity at this time to see if there is a palette to have design and build or design only, or build only, or supply only. Those contracts were beneficial in some instances and this is something that we are looking at and definitely it will be a part the process that we are going through right now and will include taking a look at that.

It might not be something that works in all instances and in all communities, but definitely where it is possible to have the most positive impact in terms of the time it takes to build and the time it takes to do things and get things, we are looking at the best possible outcome and that might be one of them, but it might not be necessary for all projects to go that way if you get my drift. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister. We will expect progress and as you know, we know that many unemployed people in Nunavut would like to see employment opportunities and be involved either through contract processes and so, young people who go and take training, my last question: (interpretation ends) On the last priority on page 207 it mentions “Evaluating the department’s processes and operations to ensure they are necessary, clearly defined and efficiently designed to... .” It almost reads like a reorganization of the department.

Is that what this priority is looking at? Is your department trying plan a reorganization under this priority? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As you are ware we have a very huge department and we are taking a look constantly to see where we could improve and where could streamline our department. I wouldn’t call it reorganization or realigning, but we are taking a look at our departments and seeing where could have better flow and see how best we could run as an organization. That is going on constantly and this is part

of that plan. I wouldn't call it "reorganization" but it is something similar to that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I just want to get clarification on if it's something that's going on constantly then it shouldn't be in your business plan as a priority right? That's my understanding of the business planning process. If it's a regular activity that you do every year it doesn't belong necessarily in the business plan as a priority. On that last priority there, will there be a report produced? When will these changes be implemented? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think this is more detailed than my previous comment in that we constantly look for better ways to be more efficient, but in terms of this project what we are doing is taking a look at where we are, where do we want to be, and what are our priorities to get there? I do not believe we will have a report at the end of the day, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main, you have eight seconds, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I just want to return to the staffing issue. So there is an increase of staff being proposed, but it was my understanding that departments were under instruction to re-profile positions as much as possible and that your department does have a number of longstanding vacancies. It's a very big department. Why is your department coming forward with new positions as opposed to... . Why was your department not able to re-profile some of their existing vacant positions into filling these new roles, as my understanding other departments have done? That is my last one for this round. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: On those particular details, Mr. Chairman, if you could allow Ms. Hourie to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Hourie.

Ms. Hourie: Thank you and I thank the member for the question. From the PY increase, we've got 13 PYs that are increasing from 2019-2020 to 2020-21. Of those 13, 11 are Vote 4 or 5, so the PY freeze doesn't apply to those positions as they are funded outside of the territory.

As well, we did have approval through the Financial Management Board for two new positions: A contract manager for the commercial airline contract and a chief elevator inspector required for uncontrollable increases in the mandate and the statutes for

policies. As well, we have deactivated six long-term positions and moved them around the department. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening, Minister Kusugak and your officials, Ms. Hourie and Mr. Seeley. It's nice to see you guys again. Before I begin I would just like to make a statement for the record. I'm not out to get CGS. Part of my role, of course, is to scrutinize government operations and ensure its meeting the needs of Nunavummiut. Although I've made my position very clear on situational contract employees, I just want to reiterate again that I'm not on a witch hunt or anything of that matter.

My first questions are going to be in relation to the opening comments presented by the Chair of the Standing Committee on Community and Economic Development. On the top of page 3 the chair made reference to the RFP which was released in June 2019 for an independent review and analysis in the area of information management and information technology, which closed in July 2019. My first question is if the minister would be able to provide us with an update on the status of that RFP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that RFP has been awarded, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question is: who is it that won that RFP and when is the estimated completion date of that review? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Gardner Group was the successful proponent on the RFP, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response, minister. The second part of my question was when we could expect completion of that review. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sorry about that. We anticipate the review to be complete by the fall of 2020. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks again for the response. Moving on to my next question also on page 3 of the chair's opening comments, there's reference to a new Qulliq Fuel Corporation, which was recently raised during our televised hearing with the QEC. The government's response indicated that the government is considering four options in this area. CGS' business plan indicates that an analysis of various corporate organizational options for the Petroleum Products Division has been completed and the report is due by March 31, 2020. I would like to ask the minister for an update on that and when we can expect to see the results of that review. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the questions from my colleague. Yes, my colleague correct, there was a review that was being conducted or is being conducted on the matter. We're anticipating that the report would be completed and given to the cabinet. We're hopeful that this will happen this spring of 2020, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to my next question and I'm going to refer back to questions that were raised last year. One of the items that were under discussion was discretionary spending and a recommendation that was put forward to the minister was to begin tracking out-of-territory duty travel. I would like to follow up on that and see if the minister has begun tracking that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we are tracking that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad to hear that. Thank you, minister. Moving on, last year another issue that was brought up was the fact that CGS has a relatively low number of Inuit participation in staff housing. The minister had identified the issue and I would like to ask if it has become an objective to ensure that more Inuit employees in CGS are taking advantage of staff housing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think my colleague appreciates how much work our department has put into hiring more Inuit within CGS. That in itself should at the end of the day start increasing the number of people who are in CGS housing. It's one thing that it makes it difficult to track because there are CGS staff that

are in housing that work for CGS, but their spouse might not necessarily be an Inuk and is named under the staff housing. We have those situations that happen.

Yes, we are working to increase the number of Inuit we have within CGS. We are working to increase the number of CGS staff that are there that can build up the CGS ladder, if I may use the term, and in turn we are working to ensure that CGS Inuit staff do get the equal share of staff housing if they require housing, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on. Last year I had brought up the issue with the Consumer Affairs Division and the fact that a major issue facing Nunavummiut is getting vehicle warranty work done. The minister had indicated at that time that he would look into it and see what can be done by Community and Government Services. I would like to follow up on that and see what the minister has done. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Unfortunately this is one area that we haven't been as quick as we should be to work on, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Vehicle warranty work can be very stressful here in Nunavut and it affects every single community. I would like to ask the minister if he would make a commitment to make this a priority in the upcoming fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand how difficult it is to get warranty work. It's hard enough to get it in Iqaluit, which is a capital city. It's even harder to get it when you're in a community where there is no mechanic to work on your warranty work. I hear the frustration and for sure, we are going to work on it. It is on our plate. Unfortunately we hadn't tackled it as much as we wanted to this year and definitely we will continue to work on it, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that commitment, minister. I'll move on. My next area of questioning is related to the PPD, which I believe falls under this page, if I can get clarification there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: That is under page J-8. Do you still have questions? Thank you. The next name on my list, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you. I have a couple of questions to the minister. First of all, welcome and your officials.

Your department's proposed 2020-23 business plan indicates on page 207 that one of the priorities for the 2021-22 fiscal year is to ensure that *Lottery Licensing Regulations* are being met and followed. My question is: how is your department currently addressing charitable and personal fundraising activities across Nunavut that involve gaming which is not clearly licensed or regulated? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really appreciate the question because this has been coming up. As you're aware, Mr. Chairman and colleagues, we did produce a public service announcement reminding Nunavummiut of the *Lotteries Act*. Mr. Chairman, across Nunavut we work with the municipalities in working with them to help those charitable organizations across Nunavut to be able to fundraise for their charity or their organization.

I'll just use some for an example. There are some minor hockey associations. We have some *pinginnaqtulirijiit* or search and rescue organizations. We have Girl Guides and Boy Scouts and different kinds of organizations throughout Nunavut. They could apply through our office for that organization's status. They can do that by talking to the recreation department in each of the municipalities. We work with them that way.

Wherever and whenever any municipality wants training and input on how to deal with gaming in their community, we have staff that would go and work with them and train them or help them out and same with the organizations out there that would like to get different status or assigned to be able to run bingos or charities. Our department gets called upon and we will work with them through it. The idea is to help them become charitable organizations and not try to not let them be, if that makes sense, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for his response. I have only one final question. The *Consumer Protection Act* was passed in 2017, as you know, the minister. The amendments address the issue of cheque-cashing fees for government cheques and other matters. Under the *Consumer Protection Act*, during the life of this current Assembly, let's say individuals are fundraising for funerals or "Go Fund Me" for death of a family to go to another community, is that covered and, if so, are these specific amendments being considered? My final question, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of cheque-cashing fees, we have notified the establishments across Nunavut that do cheque-cashing that they can't be charging fees for government-issued cheques.

In terms of "Go Fund Me" programs, we are looking into that at this time.

As for people who are fundraising for bereavement travel and stuff, there are actual bereavement committees in many of the communities across Nunavut that help families in need for bereavement travel or funeral services and stuff. We have a lot of committees like that across Nunavut and they go about it properly through the different charitable statuses.

I hope that answers the question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on Directorate. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for recognizing me again. When it comes to the consumer protection side of things, when it comes to specifically online payday loan services, can the minister clarify whether there's any way for the Nunavut government to monitor the use of these services? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not aware of how we can monitor or deal with that, but I'll commit to having our department look into it and come back with some detailed information on that issue, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. It's an issue that was brought to my attention by a constituent of mine and I was told that some of these online services charge very high interest rates and some of them may not even be based in Canada. It's concerning if Nunavummiut are getting charged very high rates.

On the issue of vehicle warranties, my colleague was asking questions on that. In the case that a Nunavut vehicle owner cannot or is being denied warranty coverage by a dealership or by an entity located outside of Nunavut, can that individual or do individuals...? I'm trying to make it less hypothetical. Do individuals contact Community and Government Services' Consumer Affairs? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the payday loan program, I think that's something where we could be proactive in terms of putting out advertising or a public service announcement like we did with the lotteries, just to be reminded that if you do go out with payday loans, you might be paying 25 to 30 percent interest. It's a lot higher than your Visa interest in some cases. Maybe something like that, we will look into that to see if a public announcement to remind people that the payday loan program could be very expensive, so we will commit to doing that.

In terms of people refusing to do warranty work on your vehicle, we're not aware of anybody who has contacted our office to complain, but let me use this opportunity to say that if there is, then we would definitely like to hear from them and see if there is not anything that we can do to try to help them, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I would like to suggest that the department reach out to the jurisdictions where we get most of our vehicles from, that Nunavummiut get their vehicles from, those being Manitoba, Alberta, Ontario, and Quebec. I believe those jurisdictions have either vehicle dealership associations or they will have Better Business Bureau type associations that might be able to assist when the department is looking into this vehicle warranty issue because it is quite concerning for residents who end up with a lemon. I believe there was one case in Coral Harbour or I think it was Coral Harbour. It was in the media and it had to get shipped out in order to get serviced. It's just a suggestion at this point. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is a good suggestion. I think we too as consumers need to look into those issues before we purchase a vehicle to ensure in writing that if we have issues with our vehicles, they will honour it, they will honour the drive train and whatever issues that may happen to it within a certain period of time. I think it's true. We will take a look into that. I committed earlier to the gentleman to your left that we will make this a higher priority and that will be a part of that all-encompassing... . But it is very serious when you spend \$75,000 on a vehicle, it comes off the ship and it doesn't start. No pun intended, but it starts there. You can run into some very serious problems. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The last suggestion I have on the consumer affairs thing is regarding income tax services and it was brought to my attention, and I don't want to name names. I will just say there is a large company that operates in Nunavut and a lot of Nunavummiut file their taxes through that company's financial services arm, and you really have to look in the fine

print to find out how much they are actually paying, how much they are actually getting deducted off of their income tax to have that service.

If the consumer affairs folks could look into it, and I understand people make their own decisions. They decide where to get their taxes done, but it should be upfront and it should be made clear from the very beginning when you bring your T4 or your paperwork into a business, they should tell you “This is how much we are going to charge you.” You shouldn’t have to go through the fine print and say “Oh, wow, that is a lot of money that I am going to pay for this.” That is just one final suggestion on the consumer affairs heading. (interpretation) That was my last question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree. I think we need to take the time to see how much money we are spending on our tax returns and is it worth to get your cash now or wait two weeks and save \$600 or \$300? Those things should be weighed out and they should be upfront, Mr. Chairman. I couldn’t agree more. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move to report progress at this time. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. The motion is carried. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the table. I will now rise to report progress.

Speaker (interpretation): Report of the Committee of the Whole. Member Akoak.

Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 39 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): There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Member Keyootak. The motion is in order. To the motion. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Continuing on. Third Reading of Bills. Continuing on. (interpretation ends) *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 23: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a reminder that there's a gathering of members-only in the Nanuq Room at around six o'clock and that for tomorrow at nine o'clock the Nunavut Leadership Forum will meet in the Chambers to select the new Speaker.

Orders of the Day for February 26:

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. Replies to Budget Address
11. Petitions
12. Responses to Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motions
16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 39
 - Bill 40
21. Report of the Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to thank all interpreters who work very hard. When the members are making their statements, the people of Nunavut who are watching the proceedings and for them to understand what's happening. I would like to thank you all.

Members, all the staff of the Legislative Assembly who work very hard on behalf of the people of Nunavut, we support you. We wish you the best, all the staff of the Legislative Assembly and Nunavut government employees. You are working for the betterment of the beneficiaries and people of Nunavut.

I would like to say "thank you" to each and every one of you and also the young people, the pages who work here in the House, you're very capable.

Before my closing remark, the decision I made was very hard and as I said when I made my announcement, but I would like to say "thank you very much" to the people of Baker Lake who elected me and all my family members, my wife, my children, my grandchildren, all of my relatives.

I would also like to say "thank you" to the Member for Aivilik who nominated me and also to each of the Members of the Legislative Assembly who selected me to be their Speaker.

As a reminder to all the people of Nunavut and Baker Lake, there's going to be a by-election and they will be selecting the most capable person. Please support the Members of your Legislative Assembly because they represent you to the best of their ability.

When I was selected as the Speaker, our Clerk and Deputy Clerk and all the employees on the top floor, thank you very much.

Also to the people of Iqaluit who welcomed me to their church and to the other communities that were very receptive when we went there. Thank you for your hospitality.

The decision I made was solid and it was out of compassion. I would like the people of Baker Lake to understand and to be at peace as you are beneficiaries and you will be represented. Please don't forget that there will be a by-election so that you will have a representative.

Lastly, for 31 years my wife was alone and raised our children, and starting tomorrow, I will be home.

Lastly, (interpretation ends) this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, (interpretation) February 26, at 1:30 p.m., when I'm not here anymore.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:53*

