

NUNAVUT HANSARD

UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2020

IQALUIT, NUNAVUT

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Beauchesne's 6th edition, citation 55

Corrections:

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Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Aggu)

Hon. David Akeeagok
(Quttiktuq)

Deputy Premier; Minister of Economic Development and Transportation

Tony Akoak
(Gjoa Haven)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Pat Angnakak
(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak
(Cambridge Bay)

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

Hon. George Hickes
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

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

Hon. David Joanasie
(South Baffin)

Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Education; Minister of Languages

Joelie Kaerner
(Amittuq)

David Qamaniq
(Tununiq)

Pauloosie Keyootak
(Uqqummiut)

Emiliano Qirngnuq
(Netsilik)

Hon. Lorne Kusugak
(Rankin Inlet South)
Minister of Community and Government Services; Minister of Human Resources

Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)

Hon. Patterk Netser
(Aivilik)

Calvin Pedersen
(Kugluktuk)

Hon. Joe Savikataaq
(Arviat South)

Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister of Energy; Minister of Environment; Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council

Craig Simailak
(Baker Lake)

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

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Friday, October 23, 2020

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeeagok, Mr. Tony Akoak, Hon. Jeannie Ehloak, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Joelie Kaerner, Mr. Paulosie Keyootak, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. John Main, Hon. Patterk Netser, Mr. Calvin Pedersen, Mr. David Qamaniq, Mr. Emiliano Qirngnuq, Hon. Paul Quassa, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Mr. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 9:00*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Paul Quassa)(interpretation): Good morning. Before we proceed, Mr. Keyootak, can you say the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Keyootak. Mr. Netser.

Matter of Personal Privilege

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. I send my love to my fellow residents of Coral Harbour who will be holding a funeral and to those who have lost a loved one, I am thinking of all of you. Also, to the people of Naujaat, I say “good morning” to you.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise in accordance with Rule 20(1) of the *Rules of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut* which provides that “With leave of the Speaker, any Member may explain a matter which, although not contempt or breach of privilege, concerns the Member in his or her capacity as a Member of the Legislative Assembly. In particular, the Member may explain that he or she has been misquoted or misunderstood, or deny published accusations against the Member. The explanation must be clear and concise and no debate shall be allowed.”

Mr. Speaker, I have provided you with a copy of an article that has been published in the online edition of *Nunatsiaq News*. It’s also in the national newspapers.

Mr. Speaker, as you have noted, the Premier of Nunavut is quoted as saying that my comments were based on racism and gender violence, which is not true. Mr. Speaker, I wish to clearly, firmly and formally deny this accusation. (interpretation) This is simply not true, Mr. Speaker.

I was portrayed wrongly as a denigrator of other races and accused as being such. This is entirely fabricated.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, (interpretation) as I voiced in a (interpretation ends) member's statement (interpretation) in this past week, I was using as my basis those women who tire of being pregnant and request an abortion. I never singled out any specific group as being insufferable or to blame, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my member's statement explained my position, which I again emphasize: it has nothing to do with racism or prejudice, and I encourage all members to review the *Hansard* with care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank you for giving me this opportunity to set the record straight. (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thank you. Rule 20(1) provides that no debate shall be allowed on this matter raised under this section and we will continue with the orders of the day. (interpretation) Thank you.

(interpretation ends) Ministers' Statements. Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Mr. Savikataaq.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 480 – 5(2): Government Liaison Supports to Nunavummiut during COVID-19

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, over the past eight months we have all experienced significant changes in our daily lives. As a territory we have come together to create a clear path forward to do our best for the health of all Nunavummiut during COVID-19.

Today I want to highlight the significant work of government liaison officers in our communities during the pandemic. To ensure Nunavummiut are able to receive the necessary supports, the GLOs worked in collaboration with Service Canada to create a northern territory 1-877 number with Inuktitut-speaking service members. The government liaison officers also worked with the Canada Revenue Agency to promote their toll-free number for Nunavut clients.

Mr. Speaker, government liaison officers also collaborated with Government of Nunavut departments to facilitate continued access to our programs and services. They have been instrumental in helping Nunavummiut receive valuable information on COVID -19.

Throughout the pandemic, our liaison officers have met bi-weekly with their GLO network to update each other, share information, and provide solutions on issues throughout our communities.

Mr. Speaker, the GLOs' involvement and support to Nunavut communities is a great example of resourcefulness under difficult circumstances and has heightened the

importance of working together during these difficult times. Please join me in thanking our GLOs for their continued work and dedication in promoting our government's important work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

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

Minister's Statement 481 – 5(2): 2020 Laura Ulluriaq Gauthier Scholarship

Hon. Jeannie Ehloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends)
Good morning to my colleagues and those that are watching.

Mr. Speaker, we have been fortunate to have admirable Inuit role models in many industries across our territory. I would like to take some time today to recognize one role model in particular. In 2008 Ms. Jenna Kilabuk of Pangnirtung was selected as a role model in "Lead Your Way!" – a program that was developed by the National Aboriginal Health Organization. This year Jenna is the recipient of the Qulliq Energy Corporation's 2020 Laura Ulluriaq Gauthier Scholarship.

Ms. Kilabuk continuously demonstrates outstanding academic achievement, willingness to volunteer in her community, and shows a keen interest in bettering lives around her through wellness and recreation. As a future graduate of the Nunavut Teacher Education Program, she looks forward to strengthening Inuit language and culture from where it matters most: with our young people. By enriching the minds of our students, it is her goal to help bridge the gap between today's education system and our territory's traditional values.

Ms. Kilabuk is inspired by Laura Ulluriaq Gauthier, to whom this scholarship is attributed. Much like Ms. Gauthier, this year's scholarship recipient is a hard-working mother making a positive impact with perseverance and resiliency. In addition, she has also worked closely with supporting children with physical disabilities and learning needs and continues to apply this essential care at home.

The Qulliq Energy Corporation provides the annual scholarship to model students who set a positive example for their communities. Jenna will make an excellent role model in our classrooms and I wish her all the best as she continues to lead the way for our students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

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

Minister's Statement 482 – 5(2): Recognition of Translation Bureau during COVID-19 Pandemic

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, Nunavummiut and members.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to recognize the important and critical work of our Translation Bureau staff at the Department of Culture and Heritage.

Mr. Speaker, as you all well know, there were significant disruptions to government operations during the first months of the COVID 19 pandemic. As many workplaces physically shut down across the territory, including Government of Nunavut departments and agencies, the need for translations remained and the requests for urgent translations increased significantly.

Mr. Speaker, during the Government of Nunavut office closures between March 20 and June 8, 2020, the Translation Bureau staff completed translations of almost 1.8 million words, representing approximately 7,500 pages of translations. (interpretation ends) A third of these translations were directly related to COVID 19.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, during this same period, our Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun translators received and fulfilled many emergency translations requests outside of regular office hours; translating approximately 50,000 words which would typically require 200 hours to complete. Emergency translation requests for French totalled approximately 25,000 words.

Mr. Speaker, interpreters and translators are often the vital communication link between the Government of Nunavut and Nunavummiut. Providing critical information to Nunavummiut in Inuktut and our other official languages is no easy task and requires dedication, passion, and hard work.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would formally like to commend, applaud, and thank all the interpreters and translators from and outside the Translation Bureau for all of their hard work and dedication to ensure Nunavummiut have access to information in Inuktut and the other official languages. I ask all Members of this House to join me in giving our interpreters and translators a standing ovation. *Qujannamiik, ma'na, koana, Uqaqtii.*

>>*Applause*

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

Minister's Statement 483 – 5(2): Inuit Internships with the Department of Economic Development and Transportation

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good morning” to all of you.

Mr. Speaker, our government is firmly committed to increasing Nunavut Inuit representation within our public service. This ongoing work is guided by the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* principle of Pilimmaksarniq: development of skills through observation, mentoring, practise, and effort. I rise today to highlight three examples of progress in this important area, all three using our government’s Sivuliqtiksat internship program.

(interpretation ends) In March of this year I welcomed Wendy Bolt as the department’s director of community operations for the Kitikmeot region. Based in Kugluktuk, Wendy Bolt is a long-time departmental employee who successfully completed the Sivuliqtiksat Internship Program, moving into senior management.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, our government is actively hiring two other Inuit Internship positions within my department: the Qikiqtaaluk director of community operations based in Pond Inlet; an advisor, community economic development, based in Kugluktuk. Both are three-year internships anticipated to graduate into their positions in 2023. Both are posted on the Government of Nunavut website. Applications may be submitted until November 6. I strongly encourage interested Nunavut Inuit to apply. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers’ Statements. Minister of Health, Mr. Hickes.

Minister's Statement 484 – 5(2): Telehealth in Nunavut

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Virtual care technology such as telehealth has improved access to health care for all Nunavummiut. The Department of Health recognizes the opportunity virtual care offers Nunavummiut by allowing them to access care in their community quickly and eliminating the need to travel.

Mr. Speaker and members, I am pleased to share that telehealth services are active in all 25 communities and Department of Health staff is working diligently to improve and expand services. Over the next year, plans are in place to replace all existing telehealth equipment to bring it in line with current technology and best practice standards.

One piece of equipment I am excited to share with members is the Med Horus Scope. This device is a diagnostic tool equipped with a camera that allows for not only general imaging but also has attachments for ear, nose and throat assessments. Staff in all of our

health centres will receive training on this exciting device that will enhance the availability of care in our communities.

Lastly, a new telehealth scheduling tool is also being added to the telehealth system. This new tool will allow for improved appointment and patient tracking, enhanced privacy, and improved data sharing.

Mr. Speaker and members, the delivery of the telehealth program is critical to the overall health outcomes of Nunavummiut. It connects them to health care providers within Nunavut and other jurisdictions and is a vital component to our health care system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Acting Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Mr. Joanasie.

Minister's Statement 485 – 5(2): In Recognition of Ellie Tungilik

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Ellie Tungilik, a Gjoa Haven resident enrolled in Nunavut Arctic College's Jewellery and Metalwork program.

Ms. Tungilik recently won the 18th annual Bank of Montreal 1st Art! Competition. This competition celebrates the newest generations of artists across Canada and reviews submissions from recent graduates in fine arts programs.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Tungilik's submission was a beautiful necklace titled "Finding Hope." In explaining the inspiration for her piece, Ms. Tungilik drew on her love of the land and the stories she heard about ravens. This piece celebrates colour, love, travel, and meeting new people.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, to be recognized nationally is a great honour. I am proud of the ways Nunavummiut are drawing from their own experiences and expressing them in different ways. I invite all Nunavummiut to continue to draw from the land, to keep sharing stories, and to encourage everyone to find creative ways to express what is important to them.

Please join me in celebrating Ms. Tungilik's win. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. We congratulate them here in the House. Ministers' Statements. I have no more names on my list. Let's proceed. Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, followed by the Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu. Member Qirngnuq.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 716 – 5(2): Taloyoak High School Graduates

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good morning” to my colleagues and my fellow residents of Netsilik and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge this fact that by next year our current crop of graduates will be able to apply for post-secondary courses, even with the COVID-19 pandemic, as it will eventually be another sickness requiring inoculation.

Even with COVID-19, Taloyoak had graduates during the month of May in my constituency. They succeeded although restrictions were placed on them beforehand while the pandemic struck as congregations of any kind were not allowed. These are the graduates:

- Jeremy Boisvert
- Crystal Mitchell
- Hayley May Totalik
- Holly Tularialik

These students capably passed their grade 12 classes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu, followed by the Member for Baker Lake. Member Angnakak.

Member's Statement 717 – 5(2): Uquutaq Society Transitional Housing Opening

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Good morning. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge an important milestone in this community.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday on Thursday, October 22, the Uquutaq Society hosted the new site opening of its transitional housing project. I would have been very pleased to attend and celebrate this event, but as you will recall, I was pretty busy in this Chamber chairing the meeting of the Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge and applaud all the effort and hard work that has gone into making this project a reality, as well as the significant supports from all levels of government.

Homelessness is a critical issue in our territory. There are often very few options for those who don't have a place to call home. Transitional housing offers a way to move

from homelessness and relying on shelter space when it is available to being able to access and maintain more permanent housing for oneself.

Mr. Speaker, the Uquutaq Society's project is an ambitious one, offering programming and services that will assist men who are currently homeless in the community of Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, the opening of the Uquutaq Transitional Housing will also bring about some changes in our community, including the accessibility of shelter space for our city's most vulnerable.

At the appropriate time I will have some questions on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Baker Lake, followed by the Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove. Member Simailak.

Member's Statement 718 – 5(2): Supporting Care Closer to Home

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to my colleagues. For everyone back home in Baker Lake, I hope you guys will have a good day today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to revisit a concept that was very important to previous governments but seems to have lost its way in recent years.

Mr. Speaker, "Care Closer to Home" is a concept that many Nunavummiut value highly, especially when it comes to our elders. Following this approach, approximately ten years ago, the continuing care centres in the communities of Igloolik and Gjoa Haven were built to provide residential long-term care for elders in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that there is a big difference between the levels of long-term care that may be provided, and I do appreciate that level 5 care and dementia care require specialized health services. However, many of our elders simply require some additional support to be able to live comfortably and safely.

Mr. Speaker, statistics show that in 2019 there were close to 120 elders in the community of Baker Lake. The Martha Taliruq Centre, which was closed down by the government a couple of years ago, was an elders' home which offered supportive care to a number of Baker Lake elders who could no longer live by themselves. Sadly, since the closure of the centre, Baker Lake elders needing care must now leave their home community.

Mr. Speaker, another concept that was strongly supported.... .

Mr. Speaker, I request permission to conclude my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are none. (interpretation) Please proceed, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to my colleagues. You can see this is very dear and near to my heart.

Mr. Speaker, another concept that was strongly supported by former Nunavut governments was “decentralization.” Decentralization promised jobs, opportunities, and a level of self-sufficiency to those communities which are not regional centres.

Mr. Speaker, the community of Baker Lake has ample room for development and could easily support a home for elders who may need a little extra care to live their lives safely and comfortably.

While I recognize that the government needs to plan for the delivery of higher levels of specialized long-term care, I also believe that consideration must be given to providing supportive care to elders in their home communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members’ Statements. Member for Arviat North, followed by the Member for Tununiq. Member for Arviat North, Mr. Main.

Member’s Statement 719 – 5(2): RCMP Body-worn Camera Pilot Project

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to applaud the announcement of the pilot project regarding body-worn video cameras in Nunavut. The announcement came down, I believe, two days ago and it will be a pilot project in the community of Iqaluit. I think we can all remember earlier this year when there was a lot of national attention on the issue of serious incidents involving police forces and indigenous people, including Inuit.

Following that period of scrutiny or during that period of attention, our Premier wrote to the Prime Minister, and I thank you for copying the Regular Members’ Caucus so I could have this letter here, but I think it’s important to recognize that getting to this point where it’s a pilot project has required the support of many different parties and all differing levels of government. I think that credit should be given where it’s due. I look forward to seeing the results of this pilot project as well as the rollout of body cameras across Nunavut and it is part of a national initiative to see that happen for all RCMP officers.

I would just like to thank first of all Northern Affairs Minister Vandal, Senator Dennis Patterson, who brought together a group of stakeholders on this issue and continues to do so, our MP, Mumilaaq Qaqqaq, who is also involved, our Premier of course, and the Minister of Justice. NTI President Kotierk has also been supportive, as well as my colleague, Mr. Qamaniq, I believe, who is a bit of a leader on this issue and I think he deserves some credit as well.

>>*Applause*

Of course I can't forget Ms. Jones with the RCMP "V" Division and all her staff. (interpretation) I have expressed my appreciation to them and I will have questions for the minister on the progress of this initiative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

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

Member's Statement 720 – 5(2): Issues with Medical Boarding

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good morning" to my colleagues, as well as the residents of my community and Nunavummiut.

Now, I will want to submit queries to the Minister of Health on the policies related to the Tammaativvik Boarding Home and private home billeting here in Iqaluit. Now, when Tammaativvik is overloaded, medical patients here in Iqaluit must look for billets locally.

With COVID-19 present, people who are billeting patients starting having issues with payments. The local residents who billeted medical patients weren't receiving payments for long periods, and the papers used for billeting purposes became harder to determine who was responsible for payment.

I will have questions at the appropriate time for the Minister of Health on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerk.

Member's Statement 721 – 5(2): Recognition of Our Elders and Youth

Mr. Kaernerk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, my colleagues. Also good morning to the residents of Amittuq. I rise this morning to speak about the Inuit language and in particular our beloved elders.

Mr. Speaker, our language as Inuit may be a source of debasement amongst our youth as they seem reticent to speak. I urge all youth never to be embarrassed to speak Inuktitut as this is our language.

Whenever I rise in this House, I speak primarily in Inuktitut as this is our cultural practice. I, too, can speak in English, nonetheless, I represent mainly Inuit in my constituency, therefore when I rise, I speak Inuktitut for clarity.

The Member for Baker Lake just made his statement about the elders and the need to provide further support for our elders. I have no parents, but I feel deep empathy for our elders. Whenever one tries to speak about human nature within the House, it can become quite stressful as you can feel it here.

Many of our elders committed themselves towards establishing Nunavut distinct from other regions, and today we are living in Nunavut, yet our elders were left hanging, waiting for change. How can this government ensure that further support will be provided to the elders of Nunavut and make it easier?

The shield says, "Nunavut is our strength." Many Inuit elders anticipated change and they have now passed on. I apologize, Mr. Speaker. People such as my parents anticipated change and wanted our language and culture to be preserved and promoted in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask for unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Kaernerk.

Mr. Kaernerk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for allowing me to speak further.

At the time of our election, once I sat in my seat, I announced that I would fight for the Inuit who were voiceless, specifically our elders who needed advocacy. It has been a stressful three years since that time, at least to me personally.

I am at a loss for words just now, and unable to do more at this time. In this House we state our opening prayer prior to starting our session, specifically to ask for assistance to those less able and the elders.

I sometimes lose what I am going to say; perhaps if I were to use an ancient term that is rarely used today. I feel ashamed of my inability to enact change. Although words such as those are not used much today, the meaning applies.

I want this government to empathize with our elders, who sacrificed much to achieve their dreams, and that the government must reimburse them. Without our elders, where would any of our public servants be?

Look at our culture and our language that are being thrown away by public servants, and even ourselves as we are not using it. I encourage this government to bear down on strengthening our Inuit language by speaking it.

I don't know what else to add at this time, but what I think I can state here is this: look at our voting public. They voted for us since they believed in our commitment and our

campaign promises. It is extremely hard in trying to do so, but we must never forget whom we are trying to represent as we must look at them whenever we rise to make a statement. These past three years as the representative for Amittuq have been quite hard.

To our youth, never give up and always persevere. Even though we may experience challenging times, they are also a learning experience and we learn something new every day. I will always remember what my mother said. Our culture will always be here and that detractors will come from all over. Our lifestyles and lives as Inuit will not change. I passionately urge our youth to never give up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

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

Member's Statement 722 – 5(2): Tribute to Bill Gower

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Thank goodness that today is a Friday.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you announced yesterday that my colleague, the Member for Rankin Inlet North, is unable to attend the session at this time, so I ask everyone who is from Rankin Inlet to feel free to contact me and my assistant who is available in my constituency office in Rankin Inlet.

I rise today to commemorate an individual who was known very well by a lot of Nunavummiut.

Bill Gower resided in Rankin Inlet for many years, and although he is no longer with us today, which is in itself tragic, he was an extremely nice man and he was very active in the hamlet. He served as a hamlet councillor, and he was gregarious and at one point, he was also serving as a bylaw officer back in those days, so Mr. Bill Gower became known as "Billy Bylaw."

As a matter of fact, most of the adults now who were youth or young people back then when he was a bylaw officer called him Billy Bylaw, and they even had a diddly song they would start singing whenever he strolled into the dance hall. They would use the Pink Floyd tune by slightly changing the lyrics of the song, but in tune with "Don't Need No Education," they would sing (interpretation ends) "We don't need no Billy Bylaw..."

>>*Laughter*

"Hey, Billy, leave us kids alone!"

>>*Laughter*

(interpretation) Whenever they would spontaneously sprout into that song, he would feel loved and it made him happy. He would tell me such stories as we often had discussions and at that time he felt proud that the youth even had composed a song which was a source of pride and children enjoyed being around him as he was a wonderful worker.

He also personally walked over vast amounts of lands within the Kivalliq region as a prospector searching for minerals and he enjoyed that aspect of his work. Every summer he was out prospecting, walking from Rankin Inlet in the springtime and spent upwards of two months prospecting and searching for minerals, sometimes walking back too.

He would sometimes return via kayaks or other watercraft he had helicoptered into the lake he wanted to prospect around. He totally enjoyed being on the land and he was happiest working with other prospectors. As many Nunavummiut recall, he also served as the supervisor at the Nunavut Arctic College campus in Rankin Inlet, so many people knew him well. He also knew Rankin Inlet intimately.

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

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Please proceed, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, my colleagues.

He intimately knew Rankin Inlet, both the town and history. He read everything related to Rankin Inlet and would check everything recorded about the community. He also initiated discussions with the elders of Rankin Inlet about how the beginning of the community came about, and he was familiar with the history right up to the current era.

When I was in CBC, he would often visit the offices to relate stories that dealt with mining around Rankin Inlet and the surrounding areas. It used to be very informative. At this time I offer my condolences to Saujalik and their children and many grandchildren, and the entire family as well.

I know that all of us will recall the funny aspects of Bill Gower that will always be remembered, Mr. Speaker. Let us all have a good day.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. I also have fond memories of him while I was living in Rankin Inlet. I knew him personally. Thank you very much.

Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list. Let's proceed. (interpretation ends) Returns to Oral Questions. (interpretation) Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. All Nunavummiut are in our thoughts as they can't be here at this time. Let's proceed.

Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, followed by the Member for Uqqummiut. Member Qirngnuq.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 1004 – 5(2): Housing Issues

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions this morning are for the Acting Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up today on a number of issues that I have been raising as the MLA for Netsilik. As the minister is aware, the Nunavut Housing Corporation's current public and staff housing community allocation plan is publicly available on its website.

The plan indicates that Kugaaruk and Taloyoak are to receive a total of 30 new public housing units over the 2020-21 and 2021-22 fiscal years. Now that we have approved the NHC's capital estimates, can the minister formally confirm that these allocations will be going ahead? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Acting Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The budget is passed and it's for 2021-22, therefore the tendering process will start once the fiscal year of 2021 has started. A tendering process would be done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qirngnuq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During yesterday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, I tabled a letter that I recently received from the Municipality of Taloyoak. As the minister will have noted, concerns were expressed about vacant units in the community that are in need of repair. Will the minister commit to having his officials contact the Taloyoak Housing Authority directly to discuss this issue? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Acting Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a quick clarification, the Nunavut Housing Corporation budget was done in COW but has not been formally passed in the House yet, so I spoke a little too quickly. That's a correction I just made right now.

Mr. Speaker, yes, we can work with the Taloyoak LHO as to why these houses are vacant. As I stated yesterday, there are different reasons why there are vacant houses in communities. When a public housing unit is vacated, then generally repairs are done to

that unit to make it a better unit or a newer unit, and sometimes the repairs are extensive and it takes longer. The LHOs work on this with their M&I project funding, but we will the LHO in Taloyoak to see what we can do to help them out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for answering my question. (interpretation ends) The letter from the municipality also expressed concerns about the community's public housing wait-list. Will the minister commit to tabling updated information in the Legislative Assembly which contains the latest wait-list numbers for each community? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Acting Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I also stated yesterday in Committee of the Whole, we are working on a new wait-list. Currently right now the wait-list is provided by the number of applicants and the number of public housing units that are in stock for that community and it's an equation. We're also looking at the age of the housing units in the communities. Right now all that is being worked on and once we have updated it and try to make the wait-list as best as possible so it fulfills the needs of the communities, I can share that with the members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Before we move on, I want to again remind members and ministers to refrain from using acronyms.

Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, followed by the Member for Baker Lake. Member Keyootak.

Question 1005 – 5(2): Status of New Health Centre

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good morning" to the people who are following the proceedings in Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq, including my colleagues.

I want to apologize first of all for not being able to go to Clyde River. I first apologize to the people of Clyde River who are listening to and watching the proceedings. I tried to go up there, but the weather just would not cooperate. I tried to go to Clyde River three times, but it would just not work and I could not get there.

Mr. Speaker, my question will be directed to the Minister of Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that we have been trying to get a new health centre for Qikiqtarjuaq for a very long time. I think our health centre is the oldest health centre in

Nunavut. It has been utilized for a very long time now and I think it should not be used anymore. It has gone way past its lifecycle.

Can the minister give us an update on the planning for the health centre for Qikiqtarjuaq? They were supposed to get into the design stage in March 2020 and the new health centre was supposed to have been brought in, in 2020-21. What's happening with the project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we're figuring out where to put major infrastructure, it is not up to us. We work with the different departments of the government. We have to work with the different departments, so we do that and we work with the health department for the Qikiqtarjuaq Health Centre. The design stage is almost complete, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, my constituents are expecting this and the community is very aware of this. Can the minister indicate if the planning can be done or is there going to be another delay? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My colleague's concerns are very understandable. I can say that the earliest time that we can look at for construction and financial approval would be the 2022-23 fiscal year. From now until then the planning will be done and the design stage will be completed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister just explained that this will be brought out in 2022-23. That's a long way off. We received a letter previously which stated that the design was going to be completed this summer and that construction would start in the 2020-21 fiscal year.

Now, my constituents have been expecting these things and whenever there is a delay, as regular members, we should be notified as soon as possible when things like that happen because we make our people expect things that are not going to happen. Whenever we as regular members tell our constituents what we are going to get and then there are delays, it seems like we have lied to our constituents.

Can the minister clearly indicate that the health centre will actually be built in 2022-23?
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I stated earlier, the department that I represent is not the only decision-maker as projects move forward. I will again speak with my ministerial colleagues on proper communication of what has been delayed or moved ahead, but what I'm referring to is the construction starting in 2022-23. That is the actual plan right now.

Sometimes we need to delay plans that have been made for good reasons. Whenever a school burns down or even a health centre or other major piece of infrastructure somewhere else breaks down or is burnt down, we have to move capital funds somewhere else. Sometimes these delays are necessary, but we will keep our colleague informed about developments that are happening and if there is a need for more delays or if things can be done faster, I will let my colleague know. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, followed by the Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu. Member Simailak.

Question 1006 – 5(2): Supporting Care Closer to Home

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, as I noted in my member's statement, I believe that the community of Baker Lake could support an elders' home to provide basic levels of care to those elders who need it. Can the minister clearly explain why it was determined that the Martha Taliruq Center in Baker Lake could no longer remain operational? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The former MLA grilled me very arduously on this topic over the years as well.

Mr. Speaker, there were a number of reasons why that facility had to be closed. The society that was operating the facility was not in legal good standing for a number of years, despite efforts with the Department of Health staff to bring them up to help them with their financial reporting requirements that they were unable to fulfill. There were a number of code issues with the building that is even highlighted even more when we look at what's happening across the country and around the world in long-term care facilities, where the facility in Baker Lake was just not suitable for elder care purposes.

We are looking at different options for that building that I am sure the member will have in follow-up questions that I can get into more detail with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for your response.

Mr. Speaker, in reviewing the *Hansard* from May 30, 2019 when you posed questions regarding the original budget of \$700,000 to renovate the Martha Taliruq Centre, the minister stated, “When we look at the scope of work that would need to be done to bring that building up to current care facility codes, that amount is extremely not enough.” Can the minister clarify how much money would have been required to renovate the Martha Taliruq Centre to bring it up to current care facility code? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don’t have the exact amount in front of me now, but it would have been cheaper to build a brand-new facility. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for your response. Mr. Speaker, as I noted in my member’s statement, there is a large population of elders in Baker Lake and I am confident that anyone of them would tell you that if they needed to move into a facility to receive extra support and care, they would want to stay in their home community. Will the minister commit to reviewing his strategy for providing elder care in Nunavut and reconsider supporting the operation of elders’ homes in such communities as Baker Lake? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Health, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like all governments and health care entities around the world, we want people to age in place. We want people to stay at home for as long as possible. When we did have to make the decision to close the centre in Baker Lake, one of the first things I did was add five home care positions to the health centre in Baker Lake to help support seniors living at home to stay in their community.

In addition to that, we had a very long dialogue about our strategy for elder care facilities across the territory. Last year we got approved to build a facility in Rankin Inlet, which unfortunately was delayed a year, mainly due to the COVID situation on acquisition of materials, but I will say that the silver lining of that opportunity is that there is talk of more national standards for long-term care facilities to be implemented, so it gives us the ability to be able to merge those decisions in with our design phase, which is pretty much

completed. We were kind of waiting to see what the federal government is going to do with any code variations for long-term care facilities.

At the end of the day nobody in here wants to send people outside their community, but we have to do what's best to provide the health care for elders. At the end of the day the focus is to make sure that they're healthy and as happy as possible, obviously, and having them in regional centres gives that ability for people who are travelling to typically go through the regional centre to go anywhere else, it gives the opportunity to visit family members during any recreation or medical travel. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu, followed by the Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove. Member Angnakak.

Question 1007 – 5(2): Status of Iqaluit Shelters

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Acting Minister of Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday saw the official opening of the Uquutaq Society's transitional housing project, which is a very positive step forward.

In late August of this year the executive director of the Uquutaq Society issued a public service announcement stating that when the new men's shelter opened, there would be a strict limit on the number of men who would be admitted to stay the night.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that there will be a significant decrease in the number of shelter beds available in the community. Can the minister describe what steps are being taken to ensure that there will be somewhere for Iqaluit's homeless men to go for the night when the new shelter is full, the low-barrier shelter is full, and they have no other alternative? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Acting Minister of Family Services, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was a very good grand opening yesterday that I attended shortly for this. With the number of beds that are in Iqaluit and the majority of it is with Uquutaq shelters, our department will continue to work with the society and work with anybody who can help the homeless. It is a critical part of time during winter and our staff are very hard working with the partners to try to get as much shelter beds around the city. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The dark and cold months of winter can be a very scary time for people who have nowhere safe to go, especially when there isn't any room left at a shelter or if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol. It makes it even more dangerous.

Can the minister provide an update on the current status of the low-barrier shelter, including whether there are enough beds to meet the demand, and specifically what support is provided to individuals who show up but have to be turned away due to capacity issues? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Acting Minister of Family Services, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Iqaluit low-barrier shelter can house up to 17 people. Once that reaches capacity, it becomes difficult for all the partners that are trying to help, either those that have addictions and those that have no homes at all and nowhere to turn. Here in the city, I think it's fortunate that there are a lot of good partners out there and are working very hard and tirelessly, and I continue to applaud our partners for this, but sometimes it is left with no option and so we've got to continue to do this.

I think one of the things that I did was in terms of tabling the homelessness survey, it highlights that we really need to do something. Is it with houses? Is it with our addictions? What's the underlying thing that we can do to help better Nunavummiut, to shelter them? Shelter is a very basic need in our territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, it's a difficult and complex issue for sure, especially when we're talking about people with addictions and have nowhere to go at night in the wintertime.

Mr. Speaker, being homeless is a very difficult situation. It is even more difficult when that person has children who they love and want to care for. Removing children from the care of their parents and putting them in foster care is not necessarily a solution. We all know that keeping families together is the best course of action for everyone's well-being.

Can the minister explain how his department works with other agencies, such as the shelters or the local housing association, to identify options for individuals or families with children who are homeless so that they can stay together as a family in a safe and comfortable location? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Acting Minister of Family Services, Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the opening, there was a very emotional speech that was done as part of this, which was a woman with her children were homeless before and had to rely on shelters and had lost all hope, but she has turned around and is now a very strong advocate of housing and homelessness.

I think, through our very good partners here and through this territory that we're trying to do, the Department of Family Services has guidelines in terms of how can you get a shelter in your community. There are guidelines that are there and what supports are available that come through this. I strongly urge that any society that wants to try to take this to contact our department because we definitely need more shelters, as the member stated. I thank the member for continuing to raise this in a profile. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, followed by the Member for Amittuq. Member Main.

Question 1008 – 5(2): Body Camera Pilot Project for Iqaluit RCMP

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to ask questions to the Minister of Justice.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, on the topic of the body-worn camera pilot project which was announced this week, my first question for the minister is: what will the Department of Justice's involvement be in this pilot project and what is the minister's reaction to this announcement? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Justice, Ms. Ehloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for his question. The Department of Justice was very excited to hear from Minister Vandal. He had personally called my office to inform me of this pilot project being held in Iqaluit. Should the project be successful, I am hoping and like everybody here in this room, I hope that we can deploy this project across Nunavut with the assistance from the federal government as our financial resources within the department are very limited.

The Department of Justice will be working with the RCMP and the federal government, Public Safety Canada, on rolling out this project. Because it's such a new announcement, we're working with them to ensure that the deployment of this project can be done in a proper manner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) The body-worn camera initiative is encouraging, but I think it's important to understand that cameras alone won't fix policing in Nunavut and the issues are much deeper and much more complicated than that. The Premier's letter to the Prime Minister mentioned the legacies of residential schools, the dog slaughter, and other historical and modern abuses of Inuit by police.

With that in mind, would the minister be able to provide an update on recruitment and training efforts of more Inuit into the RCMP? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Justice, Ms. Ehloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I again thank the member for his question. When it comes to recruitment of Inuit to join the RCMP force, the department has been working diligently on trying to go to schools, go to trade shows, go to events so that we can introduce our young people about what the program is all about, where they could go to apply to become police officers, and as everyone knows, because of COVID, our travel has been restricted with entering our communities. I can assure the member that this work will carry on and we will ensure that we do focus on trying to recruit more Inuit members into our RCMP force. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After we heard about that in the news, the RCMP will now have body-worn cameras and I noted that the Minister of Northern Affairs Vandal.... How do I put this? (interpretation ends) I noticed that in the media coverage of this recent announcement, the federal Minister of Northern Affairs was quite forthcoming in terms of discussing the issue of systemic racism, and that is something that is being actively discussed and debated at the federal level. Can the minister update the House on what discussions she has had with her cabinet colleagues regarding the issue of systemic racism within the justice system? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): I wish to remind the member that your question is in a different category compared to the first question you enquired about. I would like to remind all members that questions must remain within the same subject matter as originally queried and to not include different matters altogether, as an example, as that makes for easier transitions within the Assembly. I will ask the Minister of Justice if she would like to respond to that. Minister Ehloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Systemic racism is very real. I am a residential school survivor. I had lost my language, but because of my family support and because my parents couldn't speak English, I was very lucky to regain my language.

As Mr. Qirngnuq had stated, we need to speak our language more. I can speak to and sit down with an elder and speak to them fluently, but when it comes to sitting in this House, I am very nervous.

This cabinet is aware of systemic racism in Nunavut, and we as a cabinet are working very hard to ensure that systemic racism stops and it stops at this level first. We try to tell

our constituents and we inform them of what systemic racism is and the first step, I believe, is through the body-worn cameras. It makes our RCMP officers and the public itself accountable to the people they serve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, followed by the Member for Gjoa Haven. Member Kaerner.

Question 1009 – 5(2): Marine Infrastructure

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, my fellow Amitturmiut. We have to joke around once in a while.

My question will be directed to the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

All residents of the Amittuq constituency have clamoured for this piece of infrastructure for many years. I wish to query the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation on what is the status.... How can I properly say the term? A wharf or dock in our dialect; a small craft harbour in our dialect.

What is the position of the Department of Economic Development and Transportation in terms of the small craft harbour sites that started off with the six communities that would first receive studies on feasibility? Is this the first step? My first question is: what is the status of these small craft harbour plans? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for continually questioning me on this topic. We were supposed to travel to every community prior to the pandemic, but this COVID-19 epidemic has deeply affected our responsibilities.

With respect to docks and issues related to receiving offshore ships and sealift cargo, we have had to include every issue when conducting reviews on deficits and infrastructure requirements in the communities to ensure that we eventually get equitable infrastructure by continually applying for funding for every community in Nunavut. That's the status of that matter presently. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, although I didn't hear anything related to the question about the status of this matter, nonetheless, let me

reiterate by informing you that this piece of infrastructure has been clamoured for, for many years now.

Previous MLAs who served in this constituency before my election have all requested this infrastructure. Now I wish to ask the minister this question. When reviewing capital items and when members are asked to review capital items, in representing Sanirajak and especially the HTO or hunters therein, what is the Department of Economic Development and Transportation's position related to this? Have you worked with the local hamlet?

This dock has been requested for many years, so I ask: how have you worked with the Hamlet of Sanirajak? What's the status of the proposed plan by the Department of Economic Development and the hamlet? I would like to know the status. That's my next question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I went to our colleague's community already. Was it last year already? That is time that flew by. At that time I met with the hamlet council as well as the HTO board along with the MLA, our colleague, regarding the best possible site for this dock. I am grateful he showed me the location, and I thank the rest of the local representatives.

As I stated just prior to this, any dock or breakwater infrastructure need is being included in a study. The study is already delayed and our staff are required to travel to the communities, to all communities actually. Further, the hamlets and the HTO will be part of the group, as we have requested their inclusion when this issue is being studied.

Again, the study is delayed and I cannot speak to the exact time it will be restarted, as at this time I don't have the information. When I receive it, I will forward it to my colleagues, especially if my officials will travel to your community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Kaernerk.

Mr. Kaernerk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, indeed this impacts my fellow Amittuq residents. Perhaps if I make this statement: we are also part of the Inuit groups who deal with deep sea issues. The situation requires that all boat owners are capable of pulling their boats to safety and by banding together, residents usually are able to preserve each boat...

People who go out hunting by boat, using the people of Igloolik as an example, due to the fact that we don't have a dock or a small craft harbour, how else can the hamlet encourage the Minister of Economic Development? I don't know how else I can state it. We already know that they are working on the deep sea port here.

I wonder in which year that will be during the capital planning process of the government. I'm asking the minister if this matter can be considered in this House for the harvesters because they also work hard.

What else can we do when we are requesting capital items? Smaller communities should also be considered. What more can we do and how can the Minister of Economic Development provide more support for this infrastructure that has been requested for a very long time? That is my last question. I want his agreement in the House to have them make further considerations and in thinking of what the government desires. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the proposal of the capital estimates for 2021-22 in the House, my department has requested \$500,000 and I will try to get approval from you for that purpose so that communities can apply for it. I thank our colleague very much for approaching me and asking me questions in the House and in my office on what we can consider and we have had deliberations.

The \$500,000 is a small amount, but we are waiting for the more expensive items and more important items. I know the federal government needs to work with all of Canada. They have forgotten Nunavut. They have a lot of funding available currently. We are trying to visit all the communities and once we have more details of the large pots of funding that are being made available, we will submit requests for funding. That is what we plan to do.

For example, the \$500,000 is a small amount. It's not enough for all the communities, but while we are waiting for it, there are different things available. For example, as you spoke about vehicles earlier, there are two communities that have metal ramps that go into the water and once the freeze-up starts, they pull them back. That's cheaper. It's not really a harbour, but it is a start and it will be of assistance to the community. Our hamlets can apply through our department if the funding is approved for that \$500,000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 1010 – 5(2): Community Morgues

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues and the community of Gjoa Haven. Being a Friday, I would like to say I am proud to be from Nunavut and also proud to be a Canadian, where I can speak freely.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

As the minister will recall, I have raised the issue of community morgues on a number of occasions during the current Legislative Assembly. I will continue to raise this issue until we as a government are able to ensure the dignity of the deceased.

Mr. Speaker, when I last raised this issue during our winter sitting, the minister confirmed that an interdepartmental working group had been working to develop a strategy concerning community morgues. Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update today on the status of this work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank him for requesting an update on that. Mr. Speaker, the interdepartmental working group that I touched upon is starting the work. It is progressing. Mr. Speaker, when COVID-19 arrived in Canada, we were concerned about how we would address this if the coronavirus arrived in Nunavut and if many people would pass away in the communities.

Included in the discussions was how bodies would be handled before they are buried. With that being the case, we know about the availability of morgues so that bodies can be kept in a cool environment and have adequate space. We are getting mobile refrigerated units ready so that they can be available in the communities. We are looking at the benefits that can be realized in the coming years while we plan for morgue facilities in the communities. Mr. Speaker, that's our current status. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In his reply to the correspondence that I wrote on this issue, the minister indicated to me that his department is “committed to assisting municipalities with the costs of converting a surplus building into a morgue and visitation area for the deceased through its small capital fund with funding packages of up to \$250,000.” Mr. Speaker, I again thank the minister for taking this action. Can the minister indicate which communities have submitted funding requests to his department? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the correspondence was sent with regard to the small capital fund, I still don't know how exactly how many communities have submitted funding requests through that fund. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In his reply to me, the minister committed to working with the Municipality of Gjoa Haven to address our community's situation. We still have an old building that is being used and has never been fixed up as a visitation centre. I again thank him for this commitment. Can he update me today on what actions have been taken for the building in Gjoa Haven? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The municipalities and our staff have frequent meetings to look at options, to look at what assets they have, and what types of renovations are required. We are currently working with the municipalities to look at where we can find a solution and to make sure that the building is used for its intended purpose. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, followed by the Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu. Member Qamaniq.

Question 1011 – 5(2): Issues with Medical Boarding

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health, as I stated I would ask him questions in regard to the Tammaativvik Boarding Home and billets.

My first question for the minister is: who is responsible for the administration of billeting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It depends. If somebody is travelling for medical travel purposes and going to a community in Nunavut for medical travel, such as Iqaluit, to the hospital here, and they arrange to have their billeting done at home, if you were travelling down here and you have friends or family that you know you want to stay with, you can arrange that billeting as part of your medical travel package and you will be reimbursed upon your return.

If you come here and there is a lack of space or you go to the boarding home and you determine that you want to stay with a friend or family last minute, then it is arranged through the boarding home and that's where the payment would come from. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for answering my question. In my riding there were individuals who were billeted at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic. The people who had billets almost didn't get paid

in my constituency. Can the minister look into this to see if there are people who haven't been reimbursed for billeting expenses since the coronavirus pandemic started? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This issue has arisen a couple of times and I know that during the quarterly meetings and different communications from our health staff to the management at the Tammaativvik Boarding Home that they do discuss this and hopefully they are cleaning that file up.

Any time that somebody has any issues with regard to their medical travel or medical care, I strongly recommend they contact the Office of Patient Relations; they are very good at assisting people to navigate through the system, or through you, through my office, absolutely. Anybody that hasn't been reimbursed for billeting expenses would have a choice to make. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for that response. I again want to ask about when Tammaativvik is overcrowded and they are required to billet the patients. Is it okay for the manager of Tammaativvik to take in billets? Is it considered a conflict of interest when a patient is billeted at a home of one of the staff members? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Typically the process is if there isn't room at the boarding home, which there has been stresses on those limits lately with the COVID situation and increase in services here in Iqaluit, the first directive is to go to a hotel or a partner, but there would be nothing prohibiting a manager from taking in billets to help offset some of the demand. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu, Ms. Angnakak.

Question 1012 – 5(2): Addressing Care for Elders

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Seniors.

Mr. Speaker, last month the news media reported that the leader of the Nunavut Seniors Society was stepping down. The society has received funding from the Government of Nunavut for a number of years, but it is not clear what other kinds of support they receive.

Can the minister clarify how he works with the Nunavut Seniors Society to address issues that directly affect seniors and elders across Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister responsible for Seniors, Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have worked with them in the past to develop the handbooks, certain project-specific initiatives where they were provided funding for. The specific funding that the member is speaking about does come through Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; it doesn't come through the Department of Health.

It has been a while since I have met with them personally. I believe they have had some challenges with quorum and with keeping up board members, which I believe has led up to the status we're at right now where the chair or president is stepping back. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Angnakak: Mr. Speaker, I do recognize and applaud the government for allocating funds to our elders' societies and to various elder-related activities and initiatives. However, we all know that achieving real difference in people's lives is not necessarily accomplished with money alone.

Can the minister clarify what supports and resources are currently in place to identify the real issues that are faced by our elders, and can he also clarify who provides independent advocacy on behalf of elders in order to ensure that those issues get addressed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are numerous departments and organizations out there that work to provide services and advocacy for seniors. We have recently provided a letter of support to CanAge, a national organization that has committed to working with different seniors' societies or senior groups here in the territory through the COVID relief. There's a continuing dialogue.

I don't have an exhaustive list of who we all work with and even I don't know how exhaustive all the services are that work together, but the seniors society that was in place or is in place in a bit of a hiatus right now was a great entity that was able to advocate on behalf of seniors. I really hope that they can revitalize that society. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second and final supplementary question, Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although I recognize that the government is moving forward with plans for establishing long-term care facilities in Nunavut that will be able to provide the higher levels of health care so that our elders are not forced to leave the territory, and although I recognize that the Department of Health has a well-established home care program, I remain deeply concerned that we are not moving fast enough to ensure that we can support dementia care here at home within the foreseeable future.

Mr. Speaker, a comprehensive elders strategy, which is an issue that I have been raising since the previous Assembly, must also take into account those social challenges that face our seniors, such as elder abuse, financial abuse, loneliness, and food insecurity. When will the minister commit to tabling a comprehensive Nunavut Elders Strategy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Minister of Health, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have spoken to staff recently on this topic and I don't have a date or a commitment that I can provide. A lot of our health care management and senior positions are being diverted to deal with the COVID situation, so capacity is a severe issue right now. It's on the table as we are discussing different proposals and projects to move forward with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. I wish to advise members that the time for question period has expired and we will now proceed to Item 7. No. 7. Written Questions. (interpretation ends) No. 8. Returns to Written Questions. (interpretation) No. 9. (interpretation ends) Replies to Opening Address. (interpretation) No. 10. (interpretation ends) Petitions. (interpretation) No. 11. (interpretation ends) Responses to Petitions. 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. (interpretation) No. 13. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. (interpretation) Thank you. Member for Baker Lake, Member Simailak.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 302 – 5(2): Letter from Municipality of Baker Lake Regarding Royal Canadian Mounted Police Detachment

Tabled Document 303 – 5(2): Letter from Baker Lake Regarding Airport

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two documents to table today. The first document is a letter from the Municipality of Baker Lake concerning the community's Royal Canadian Mounted Police detachment, and the second document is a letter from the Municipality of Baker Lake concerning the community's airport.

Mr. Speaker, I will have appropriate questions for the appropriate ministers next week on these important issues, and I encourage all members to review the documents with care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Tabled Document 304 – 5(2): Stories in Stone: How a Hand-Built Church Shaped a Community and Culture

Mr. Qirngnuq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you know, one of the community of Kugaaruk's well-known landmarks was the old stone church, which was originally constructed decades ago.

Mr. Speaker, a chapter in our community's history was recently closed when the old structure was demolished for reasons of safety. I was very pleased to note that CBC North has published an excellent account of the church and its impact on our community.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all members to review this very interesting document with care, as you will learn a great deal about the community's history and people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. Acting Minister of Family Services, Mr. Akeeagok.

Tabled Document 305 – 5(2): Minister's 2017-19 Report on Poverty Reduction

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to table the minister's 2017-19 Report on Poverty Reduction. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. Mr. Netser.

Tabled Document 306 – 5(2): Nunatsiaq News Article: Removal of Patterk Netser from Cabinet

Tabled Document 307 – 5(2): National Post Article: Premier Expects Removal of Minister from Cabinet

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the *Nunatsiaq News* which was released two days ago, or October 22, which quotes the Premier saying that his comments were based on racism and gender violence and it's not reflective of the Government of Nunavut's values and principles. Mr. Speaker, these are false accusations. Also, the *National Post* as well has posted it across Canada, which quotes him as saying the same thing. Mr. Speaker, these are absolutely blatant and false accusations, and I wish to table this document. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Tabling of Documents. (interpretation) Let's proceed. No. 14. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions. (interpretation) No. 15. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. (interpretation) No. 16. (interpretation ends) Motions. (interpretation) Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Item 16: Motions

Motion 086 – 5(2): Extended Sitting Hours and Days

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South Beach, just kidding, Rankin Inlet South, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting hours and days as the Speaker deems fit to assist with the business before the House during this present sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

Speaker (interpretation): All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Motions. (interpretation ends) Premier Savikataaq.

Motion 087 – 5(2): Removal of the Member for Aivilik from the Executive Council of Nunavut

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* provides that the members of the Executive Council of Nunavut hold office during the pleasure of the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS this House has lost confidence in the Member for Aivilik;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, that the Member for Aivilik be removed as a member of the Executive Council of Nunavut.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Savikataaq, Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Premier, I am honoured to lead our Executive Council and as Premier, I sometimes have to make difficult decisions in the best interest of our territory, our communities, and the residents. This is one of those times.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nunavut values diversity, equality, and fairness for all. There can be no tolerance for disrespectful, hurtful remarks or actions, and we must uphold our government's principles and values. Unfortunately Minister Netser's comments have damaged those basic values and proceeded to cause pain and division across our territory.

Mr. Speaker, this is not an issue of religion or freedom of expression. It is an issue of targeting specific groups and voicing of unacceptable opinions on the value of an entire group of people and as well as women's access to health care.

An Hon. Member: A point of order.

Speaker (interpretation): ...(inaudible)...

Point of Order

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My point of order is that I never raised any issues on ethnic groups. My point of order, Mr. Speaker, I spoke out on behalf of the unborn babies across Canada that have been aborted and I had no intentions of saying any racial remarks towards any ethnic groups. That is my point of order. (interpretation)
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker's Ruling

Speaker (interpretation): I'm sorry. As the Speaker, I can say this: (interpretation ends) it's not a point of order; it's a difference of personal interpretation. (interpretation) That's all it is. I would like the mover of the motion to continue. (interpretation ends) Premier Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will continue where I left off.

Mr. Speaker, this is not an issue of religion or freedom of expression. It is an issue of targeting specific groups and voicing an unacceptable opinion on the value of an entire group of people as well as women's access to health care. This kind of intolerance is not covered under one's freedom of expression and it is simply not an option to ignore this intolerance.

Nunavummiut deserve better and this government is committed to improving their lives. We will not stop listening or acting to make this a reality for all Nunavummiut. It is up to us, everyone in this room, to show our commitment to stand up against racism and gender violence. Now is that time.

Mr. Speaker, black lives matter. Indigenous lives matter. Women's rights are human rights. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. To the motion. Seconder of the motion, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A vote of non-confidence is a difficult matter to debate. It's not an enjoyable experience and no one in this room wishes to go through the ordeal. However, we have been put in this situation and must now deal with it.

On behalf of my constituents and all Nunavummiut who have been offended, I would like to thank the Premier for his swift action. When the events unravelled, I publicly supported the Premier's decision and I still do today.

Mr. Speaker, the comments in question were intolerant, inappropriate, and hurtful to many Nunavummiut.

Minister Netser is a veteran member of this Fifth Assembly and has more political experience than many of us here. The comments made were unbefitting of an elected official, let alone a cabinet minister, and the member should have known better.

Over the last few weeks there have been several references to freedom of speech, which is an American constitutional right. Under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* we have the right to freedom of expression. The fundamental difference between the two is that freedom of expression is not absolute. Freedom of expression does not equal freedom from consequence.

The fact that the minister is still defending his position leads me to believe that there is no remorse for the actions. For that reason, I will vote in favour of the motion to remove Minister Netser from the Executive Council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) To the motion. Next on my list is (interpretation) Member Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is a difficult day within the House with the motion put forward with regard to our fellow colleague. However, I would like to make a point that the Member for Aivilik with regard to the uncomfortable situation that we felt, I would like to say that the written note that he made were not written in the House. Therefore I am not comfortable with the motion put forward and the removal that we are trying to proceed with because as you mentioned, we do have an expression of freedom with in Canada.

As Inuit we try to live freely. Mr. Speaker, as MLAs we are representing Inuit, our fellow people within our communities, and we are also working closely with colleagues within this House.

Our fellow colleague for Aivilik, when we try to remove him with this motion and the portfolios that he has been stripped of, it is something that we have to deeply reflect on with the steps that we have taken to this point.

We have to think about the fact that our constituents are the ones that brought us to this House. We have to think about our children and the future of our children. We have to deeply reflect our society's values into the future.

If we are going to strip our fellow MLA minister of his position, and of his removal, we have to deeply reflect where we came from first and how we are going to proceed into the future. This is a difficult day. We have strong beliefs in our society, but we are just the beginning in our times as an Assembly as we are a young territory.

We have to have a basis because our ancestors brought us here. If it were not for our ancestors' beliefs, we have to continue to remember that we were guided by their strong beliefs. If we followed our strong beliefs, we would not have come to this point.

I will not support the motion to remove our colleague from the Executive Council. Mr. Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to speak to the motion.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. To the motion. Member for Cambridge Bay, Minister Ehloak.

Hon. Jeannie Ehloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The comments made by Minister Netser were gender and racial biased and are very concerning to me personally, but as the Minister responsible for Human Rights and the Minister responsible for the Status of Women. As the Minister responsible for the Status of Women, I support the rights of all women and girls currently living in Nunavut.

Canada's *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, section 2(b), freedom of expression, states, "Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:

(b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press..." This right cannot be used to excuse hurtful and discriminatory statements against a particular defined racial, ethnic, gender, sexual, religious or other identifiable group.

In a free and democratic society, we can believe whatever we want to, but we cannot say whatever we want when those statements have a negative impact on the rights and dignity of others. This is particularly true for those of us in office.

Nunavummiut have the right to receive services from their government without fear of discrimination. When a cabinet minister makes these types of statements, it can bring into question the impartiality of the government with respect to the delivery of services. As cabinet ministers we must respect Inuit societal values:

- *Inuuqatigiitsiarniq*, respecting others, relationships and caring for people;

- *Tunnganarniq*, fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming and inclusive; and
- *Piliriqatigiinniq*, working together for a common cause.

Therefore I will vote in favour of this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) To the motion. Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): I seem to have lost my notes.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, to my colleagues in this House, to my constituents in Coral Harbour and Naujaat, and to all Nunavummiut, I would like to provide you with some clarity on comments I made over social media, and to our young member there, Mr. Adam Lightstone, (interpretation) Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, (interpretation ends) that fateful day when the Premier called me that I had made those comments and I offered right away to offer my apologies, but he said, "No, it's too late."

Just to clarify that, he accused me of being arrogant and refusing to apologize, but as soon as I heard I got a call from Mr. Premier, my wife was next to me, she heard what he said. (interpretation) Thank you.

Speaker: There is a call for a point of order. Mr. Savikataaq.

Point of Order

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like the clarification of misleading the House. At no point in any communications or conversation I had with the member did I call him arrogant. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker's Ruling

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to indicate that we were not privy to the conversations that were held between the parties. I believe this is just clarification. I'm just saying that we didn't hear how the conversations took place. Thank you. Please proceed, Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am a man of principles and values, and I wear those on my sleeve like a badge of honour, the same way I feel about my family. I believe that my principles and values are a strength and reason why the people of Naujaat (interpretation) and Coral Harbour voted for me to represent them in the House. I am here because of their confidence in me, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) I do not nor have I ever tried to impose my values and convictions to others and I wholly respect everyone's right to their own opinions, to the freedom of speech, and to live in harmony and freely in this democracy we call Canada.

My values are a part of my cultural identity as an Inuk, and these values have long existed about the value of life before Christianity ever landed on our Inuit shores. (interpretation) As Inuit we value life greatly, from those who are still in the womb to newborns and even up until they are elders. We value them highly. Whenever there is a suicide, we are in tremendous grief because we very much value the life that was lost.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, for me, Inuit societal values will always be a part of who I am, and our young member from Sanirajak always refers to that and I applaud him for that. It is part of our *Turaaqtaqut* mandate which makes reference to this when legislation is being written. The other line we often use is *Inuuqatigiitsiarniq*, respecting others. Each Assembly or mandate has always made reference to Inuit societal values since Nunavut's inception. From conception to the passing of an elder, Inuit have always celebrated life and we will continue to do so.

My cultural identity as an Inuk or Eskimo whose people survived genocide gives me some insight to systemic practices that discriminate against visible minorities. As mentioned, I am guided by my faith and convictions and I am a product of my cultural identity as an Inuk. My lived experience caused me to ask similar questions about the high abortion rates among our own people.

The government has raised systemic racism and I, perhaps, naively thought I was free to ask about this problem that we all collectively are working to change, which is racism, Mr. Speaker. This is the background for my statement.

I never intended my words to represent anything derogatory to women, of whom I respect with all humility. I value all Nunavummiut as equals and I consider life precious neither have I ever passed any judgments on those who have gone through abortions. I understand it's a horrible experience for the women who have gone through it and there is hope for them.

After speaking to close friends from the black community, I have come to understand the term "All Lives Matter" has been used to undermine the cause of the black community, whose goal is to highlight how society has systems in place that value their lives. My reference to "All Lives Matter" was certainly not stated in that context and I would not have chosen these words if I knew they could be misconstrued as attempting to negate the struggles of my black brothers and sisters.

As Inuit we can all [empathize] with the Black Lives Matter movement because we too have experiences with racism.

Mr. Speaker, my late mom used to tell stories of how, when she was a young girl playing with her husky dog, and about the time there was dog slaughter, a government official went up to her with a loaded gun and started pointing his rifle to the dog and out of her love for the dog, she stood in between the government official and her dog and she saved its life.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to read an email I received from a friend who lives in Nunavut, who is not Inuk, and I have received many emails lately in defence of me. He said, "Hi Patterk Netser. I have not read your actual FB post, only the news report articles and agree with you to speak your mind and your thoughts. Abortion to the black lives movement, as I see it, is not a concern to the organization." These are his words.

"In the USA, 247 babies are aborted every day. No protest or speeches from Hollywood movie stars; only silence. Then is the Government of Nunavut sending the message, 'All lives don't matter,' by stripping you of your government portfolios for expression an opinion?"

As you know, people are stuffed into houses and some with outrageous mould across.... I'm sorry. Let me repeat that. "As you know, people are stuffed into houses and some with outrageous mould conditions across Nunavut, which might mean our lives don't matter because, if we don't respect the lives of the unborn or fight for their lives to live, why do our lives matter?

Last July 2019, and I made mental note of this, Trudeau committed \$14 billion over 10 years to be spent outside of Canada for women's reproduction services and half of that for abortion, and here we are struggling for housing.

Patterk, you need not to say sorry or say you were just talking out loud. Say what you want to say without apology. Never back down when our freedoms and charters of rights are being infringed and trampled. Have they come for you, then who is next in their wrong thinking? You expressed an opinion on the Internet, then stripped of your portfolios and possibly further action coming.

Is the government testing control over social media and the Internet, what one can say and one cannot say? Are you Nunavut's public example of no speak, the government control over speech and thoughts? What's coming if the average Joe criticizes the government or has an opinion about anything? Will they be picked up and shipped into the dark of the night to one of the many new internment camps built across Canada today?

It would be easy to become an unreported lost soul now that the federal government pays Canadian news media and currently rushing towards controlling what is said and reported on the Internet. How quickly it has become all lives don't matter.

I repeat: are the TB Inuit lost souls shipped away and forgotten? Today, express an opinion or think out loud and you're removed. Impose mind control for all to stay silent. Troubling, disturbing times.

You have a voice, Mr. Netser. Don't let it be silenced or your kids and your grandchildren will also be harshly silenced along with the rest of us to become no thinking, no voice people. Keep standing up to help shine the light for more to hear what's happening to Nunavut and Canada: the rapid implementation of spread

technocracy control, stripping of our freedom, charter of rights, and silencing of our voices. Keep fighting for yourself, adults, children, and future children onward.”

Thank you to the person that took the time to send it to me.

Mr. Speaker, I have been focusing in my cabinet portfolios at correcting those problems by bringing to light the housing shortage that Inuit and Nunavut face compared to other Canadians and by ensuring that all Inuit have access to the training and education they need to get jobs and a meaningful career that our territory offers.

We all know that there is a gap between indigenous communities and the rest of Canada. I see the struggle to eliminate systemic racism as intricately connected to the movement to value the lives of people who have suffered, and this is a system that devalues them because of their racial or cultural heritage. As a Canadian I support the struggle of all communities that seek equality.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that all lives cannot matter if black lives don't matter, but my post on social media was meant to bring to light to those without voices, the unborn. I had no intention to single out any one ethnicity, but I was responding to a post specifically referencing to the Black Lives Matter movement. My comments were meant to draw attention to the importance of life and that was all. I did not make those statements in the House and I did not make them as a member of the Executive Council but as an Inuk that values life.

Mr. Speaker, as a result of my actions, I am forced to defend those comments here because I am being threatened with losing a seat at the Executive Council. Colleagues, if you all remember, I was actually given very little choice by you when there was a seat opened up on the second year of our mandate. I am sure most of you considered my principles and values when you asked me to vacate my seat with the regular MLAs. I have, for the last two years, upheld those convictions with integrity.

I stand before you, my colleagues and all Nunavummiut watching from their homes or offices, to let you know that I am a man of principle and I will not change. I am a family man, a law abiding citizen, who will continue to work hard for all Nunavummiut.

I am proud to be a part of a government that is working for people to make their lives better. I know this is a slow process, but I have been driving the college and the Nunavut Housing Corporation to meet and exceed the mandate under *Turaaqtaqut*.

Mr. Speaker, God willing, I hope this work will continue and I ask for your confidence and vote against the motion.

Mr. Speaker, I will be requesting recorded votes. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) To the motion. I have no more names on the list. Does the mover of the motion, Mr. Savikataaq, have any closing comments?

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The fact is as Members of this Legislative Assembly, our code of conduct states that “We will acknowledge the need to conduct ourselves in a manner that withstands the closest public scrutiny. We will refrain from behaviour that brings dishonour or disrepute to ourselves, the Legislative Assembly or the people of Nunavut” and that we, again quoted from the code of conduct, “we all promise to uphold, respect the roles and place of all residents of Nunavut.”

Members, we promised to commit our public lives to all the people of Nunavut, regardless of gender or race. It is vital that we uphold our privilege of service to each and every Nunavut resident.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that Minister Netser’s comments do not respect or honour them and these views should have no place in our leadership. I therefore ask the members to vote in favour of removing the member from the Executive Council and I also request that this be a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) A recorded vote has been called. All those in favour, please stand and sit down when I call your name.

Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Akeeagok.

Mr. Hickes.

Ms. Ehaloak.

Mr. Rumbolt.

Ms. Angnakak.

Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Main.

Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Joanasie.

Mr. Kusugak.

Mr. Keyootak.

All those opposed, please stand up and sit down when I call your name.

Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Netser.

All those abstaining, please stand and sit down when I call your name.

Mr. Qamaniq.

For the motion, those in favour, 14; those opposed, 3; those abstaining, 1. The motion is carried.

(interpretation) Let's proceed. No. 17. (interpretation ends) First Reading of Bills. Second Reading of Bills. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Kusugak.

Item 18: Second Reading of Bills

Bill 52 – Nunavut Petroleum Products Commission Act – Second Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that Bill 52, *Nunavut Petroleum Products Commission Act*, be read for the second time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. Bill 52. To the principle of the bill.

An Hon. Member (interpretation): Question.

Speaker: All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

(interpretation) Can you hear me? Thank you. (interpretation ends) Bill 52 is referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation.

Second Reading of Bills. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Kusugak.

Bill 55 – An Act to Amend the Property Assessment and Taxation Act – Second Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that Bill 55, *An Act to Amend the Property Assessment and Taxation Act*, be read for the second time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

An Hon. Member (interpretation): Question.

Speaker: All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 55 is referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation.

(interpretation) I will just continue. (interpretation ends) Minister of Justice, Ms. Ehloak.

Bill 55 – An Act to Amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Agreement Act – Second Reading

Hon. Jeannie Ehloak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I move, seconded by the Hon. Member of Tasiluk, that Bill 53, *An Act to Amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Agreement Act*, be read for the second time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

An Hon. Member: Question.

Speaker: All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 53 is referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation. Minister of Finance, Mr. Hickes.

Bill 55 – An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act – Second Reading

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 54, *An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the *Revolving Funds Act* to allow the Financial Management Board to increase the authorized limit of the Petroleum Products Revolving Fund. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

An Hon. Member: Question.

Speaker: All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 54 is referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation.

Minister of Finance, Mr. Hickes.

Bill 56 – Liquor Tax Act – Second Reading

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat South, that Bill 56, *Liquor Tax Act*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill provides for levying of a consumption tax on liquor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. All those in favour of the motion. The motion is in order. (interpretation ends) To the principle of the bill.

An Hon. Member (interpretation): Question.

Speaker: Okay. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 56 is referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation.

Minister of Health, Mr. Hickes.

Bill 57 – Tobacco and Smoking Act – Second Reading

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Arviat South, that Bill 57, *Tobacco and Smoking Act*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill regulates the sale and use of tobacco and smoking products. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

An Hon. Member: Question.

Speaker: All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and Bill 57 is referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation.

Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Kusugak.

Bill 58 – An Act to Amend the Cities, Towns and Villages Act – Second Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that Bill 58, *An Act to Amend the Cities, Towns and Villages Act*, be read for the second time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

An Hon. Member (interpretation): Question.

Speaker: All those in favour. Opposed. Bill 58 is referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation.

Second Reading of Bills. Mr. Rumbolt.

Motion 089 – 5(2): Early Adjournment

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Rule 46, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Gjoa Haven, that the House adjourn for the day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) There is a motion on the floor to adjourn for the day and the motion is not subject to debate. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and we will proceed to Item 22 on the order paper.
Orders of the Day. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A notice of the meeting for this afternoon of the Full Caucus at two o'clock has been cancelled.

Orders of the Day for October 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. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents

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- 14. Notices of Motions
 - 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
 - 16. Motions
 - 17. First Reading of Bills
 - 18. Second Reading of Bills
 - 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 51
 - 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
 - 21. Third Reading of Bills
 - 22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. This House stands adjourned until Monday, October 26, 2020, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House adjourned at 11:44

