

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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Minister responsible for the Utility
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responsible for Seniors*

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Thursday, May 26, 2022

Members Present:

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

>>*House commenced at 13:31*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Tony Akoak)(interpretation): Before we proceed, Ms. Quassa, can you say the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Quassa. (interpretation ends) Item 2. Budget Address. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Item 2: Budget Address

Minister's Statement 009 – 6(2): Budget Address

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to introduce our government's proposed budget for 2022-23.

Before I begin, I would like to thank my neighbours, friends, and family from Rankin Inlet South for re-electing me last October. They have supported me many times now, and I do not take that for granted. It is because of them I can use my voice to influence positive change in Nunavut, and I am grateful for that.

Last fall, I spent many hours knocking on their doors, as you did, listening to their concerns, and learning about their hopes and dreams for the future. Mr. Speaker, one encounter I had last fall really stuck with me.

As I passed through a playground one evening, a young boy came over to me to ask what I was doing and why I was knocking on people's doors. I told him that I was going from house to house to ask people about the things that are most important to them, so that if they voted for me to be their MLA, I would know what they wanted me to do to help them.

When I asked that boy what was most important to him, I will never forget what he told me. He talked about how much he missed his *anaanatsiaq* because she was all the way in Ottawa, living in a home. Even though the boy wasn't old enough to vote, he told me he wanted to vote for me so I could help to bring his grandmother home.

For the rest of the campaign, I was motivated by that conversation, Mr. Speaker, and I still am. I think about that young man often and how I want to use my time in this legislature over the next three and half years to make sure that by the time he becomes a grandparent himself, his grandchildren are not saying the same thing.

With the budget I am proposing today, we are taking steps required for us to achieve this goal.

Mr. Speaker, as I work with my colleagues around the cabinet table to make decisions, it is the vision and aspirations of Nunavummiut that guide me. I am committed to ensuring that our government listens to and learns from the wisdom of all Nunavummiut, including the little boy in that playground, because they are the reason we are here today.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as you know, this is the first budget of Nunavut's Sixth Legislative Assembly, and my first Budget Address as the Minister of Finance. However, while I am new to this role, making sense of the government's dollars and cents is not new for me.

As a former Minister for the Department of Community and Government Services and the Department of Health in the previous government, I oversaw some of the biggest budgets in Nunavut's history. Together these two departments account for nearly 40 per cent of all spending by the Government of Nunavut, but as big as these budgets are, I know that they are still not enough to meet all our infrastructure and public health care needs.

This is because when Nunavut became a territory 23 years ago, we did not have the same physical and service delivery infrastructure enjoyed elsewhere in Canada, and it has been a challenge for us to catch up since our fiscal arrangements do not fully consider or address the health, education and housing deficit that existed when Nunavut became a territory.

Although we have made progress, we have not yet been able to build to the same standard of public services and infrastructure that can be counted on in southern Canada to kick-start local economies and give families an opportunity to flourish. Despite these challenges, we have moved forward because we know it is not good enough to keep doing things the way we have always done them just because it is a comfortable place or familiar.

For generations, the people of this land have moved to where the opportunities are, relocating and reconstructing their camps as they followed the animals they hunted for clothing and nourishment. These nomadic hunters perfected the essential survival skills

that we rely on today, including resilience, persistence, and a commitment to the community.

>>*Applause*

This approach, which has allowed Inuit people and our culture to thrive for generations, is what our new government will rely on to go farther and faster than we ever have before.

By working with our Inuit partners and other levels of government, our goal is to make a breakthrough during our mandate and to foster transformational change in Nunavut that echoes through future generations. We will do this by being creative and innovative in our approaches, and by delivering concrete actions that result in a better quality of life for Nunavummiut and their families.

Since the election, we have worked hard to develop a vision and plan for the territory that meets the needs of elders and young people alike.

(interpretation) In December, Members of the Legislative Assembly, the leadership of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and Nunavut's three regional Inuit organizations came together to collaborate on their ideas for the recently announced *Katujjiluta* mandate, which outlines our government's commitment to work in unity to bring new energy, new ideas, and a renewed spirit of collaboration to achieve our objectives together.

With this budget, we are laying a new foundation for the future in Nunavut, one that improves the quality of life in all communities and that diversifies our economy to ensure that the abundance of our land and water is shared by all.

(interpretation ends) Our plan includes using new methods and involving partners to support local businesses, add to community economies, and customize approaches in response to local capabilities and needs. We will stretch our resources as far as they will go so that we can keep up with the demands of our growing population and take advantage of emerging opportunities.

Working with the federal government on nation-building projects that strengthen all of Canada, from coast to coast to coast, is central to our vision. We are thankful to have partners in Ottawa who are willing to walk alongside us on our journey, and who have provided unprecedented support in recent years.

As we noted when we introduced our capital estimates plan, departments have identified about \$490 million in federal support for capital projects in Nunavut, mostly through distinct funding streams that flow through the Department of Community and Government Services. This funding will complement the \$356 million in new and carried over capital appropriations that will be provided by the Government of Nunavut, bringing total capital spending this year to nearly \$850 million.

>>Applause

But that is not all, Mr. Speaker. In April the federal government announced \$214 million funding to ensure the safety and long-term sustainability of Iqaluit's water supply, which is an essential first step to build more homes in our capital city and to help relieve the housing pressure across the territory.

The federal government also announced \$60 million in their budget for the Government of Nunavut to invest in affordable housing and related infrastructure, which is in addition to \$845 million over seven years for housing across Inuit Nunangat.

These investments are a game-changer, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank my federal counterpart for ensuring funding flexibility for the territory to work with its partners to develop and execute a plan for housing that realizes the promise and potential of all communities.

(interpretation) While we are excited about these federal commitments, we know that even more is needed. This is why, in addition to continuing our lobby efforts with the federal government, we are investing \$51.5 million through the Government of Nunavut, nearly 25 percent of our total capital budget for 2022-23, in the Nunavut Housing Corporation, and this is just the beginning. Over the term of our government, we intend to bring forward budgets that will see us dip into our surplus to make substantial further investments in housing and housing programs.

>>Applause

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, dipping into our surplus will mean deficit budgets. However, thanks to the prudent fiscal management of previous governments, I am confident we can safely manage these short-term deficits in order to address our dire housing shortage. These unprecedented investments in housing are why a key commitment of our *Katujjiluta* mandate is to work with Inuit organizations to develop private market solutions that provide Nunavummiut with greater housing options.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nunavut has already identified \$868 million in new capital spending over the next five years, including the \$204 million that has been approved for 2022-23. This will help transform the territory in ways that honour our unique place in Canada and the world.

Our government is confident in our collective ability to realize a prosperous, inclusive economy and healthy, welcoming communities, and the budget I present to you today is a step toward that vision.

>>Applause

Fiscal Highlights

• 2021-22 Overview

Mr. Speaker, we are blessed to live in a territory where the resources from the land and the water have sustained our way of life for generations. In recent years these blessings have left Nunavut with the largest increases in Gross Domestic Product, or GDP, in all of Canada.

According to the Conference Board of Canada, our economy grew by 7.4 percent in 2021, and in 2022 it is projected to expand by a further 6.4 percent. This is driven largely by activity in our mining sector, as well as easing COVID-19 health restrictions, which weighed down economic activity during the pandemic.

The result is that we ended 2021-22 in relatively good financial shape. Although the actual year-end results will take a few months to tabulate, we expect a surplus in the area of about \$100 million.

• 2022-23 Projected Revenue

Going forward, our 2022-23 budget projects revenues of about \$2.6 billion, the majority of which comes from the Territorial Formula Financing program, which will provide us with nearly \$1.9 billion, or 71 percent, of our total revenue.

We expect other federal transfers to provide an additional \$121 million, as well as approximately \$371 million through third party funding agreements.

We plan to collect about \$277 million from our own-source revenues, including \$160 million in taxes, \$23 million in staff housing rent, and \$83 million from various other sources.

• 2022-23 Projected Expenditures

In terms of spending, we expect to spend at least \$1.9 billion for government operations in 2022-23. This is in addition to the \$204 million for capital approved in March.

Our proposed budget also includes a contingency fund of \$75 million, the same amount proposed in the 2021-22 budget. This will provide us with the flexibility to address any issues or unforeseen events that arise over the course of the year.

It will also enable us to take the time we need to develop the critical strategies and actions we need to implement our *Katujjiluta* mandate, including one of our highest priorities: to invest in care for aging Nunavummiut.

>>Applause

Aging in Dignity in Nunavut

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, our elders are Nunavut's living memory, and our government is committed to honouring them in their later years and showing them the respect they deserve. To honour their vision and perseverance, we want our parents and grandparents to live their last years in dignity, closer to family.

>>*Applause*

We want young Nunavummiut, like the boy I met in the playground in Rankin Inlet, to grow up with their *anaanatsiaq* and *ataatatsiaq* nearby, so that they can learn from and be cared for by them.

We will begin by creating two new positions in the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs to lead the development of a comprehensive elder and senior care strategy and implementation plan. This strategy will be developed with broad input from elders, families, communities, and partners, with a goal of improving daily life for Nunavummiut who are aging.

We will expedite the construction of regional long-term care facilities that will be able to meet the complex care needs of Nunavummiut and we will expand and renovate existing facilities.

>>*Applause*

(interpretation ends) We will also initiate our plans to enhance supports to improve daily life in continuing care facilities. This includes providing cultural and linguistic training for staff working in continuing care facilities and encouraging community-based initiatives for elders and seniors.

Our government's proposed 2022-23 budget takes a step in this direction by providing \$500,000 through the Department of Family Services for greater access to country food by elders and other Nunavummiut by investing in four community-based organizations working to address food insecurity.

>>*Applause*

Funding will be used to shift from ad hoc and emergency food relief efforts toward supporting community food organizations that are more sustainable, comprehensive, innovative, and culturally appropriate.

We want Nunavummiut to age in comfort and dignity, and the increased investment proposed for 2022-23 is just a start.

>>*Applause*

Expanding the Housing Continuum

Mr. Speaker, as you know, in addition to being the Minister of Finance, I am the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

Our government's commitment to expand the housing continuum promises to keep me and my team busy over the next few years as we invest in new construction and partnerships to increase the range of housing options available to Nunavummiut.

Thriving communities and local economies require a mix and adequate supply of housing, but across the territory, this is a challenge. With the cost of building in the north estimated to be close to three times higher than in Toronto, where the Leafs are out, no other jurisdiction in Canada spends proportionately as much on housing as we do.

As I noted earlier, in 2022-23 our government proposes to invest \$51.5 million for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, which includes \$21 million for public housing, an increase of \$3.5 million from last year. It also includes \$6 million for staff housing, an increase of \$1 million from last year.

>>Applause

However, even with these investments, we know we will continue to suffer from a shortage of affordable, suitable and supported housing. This affects our economy and prospects for growth as well as the health and well-being of Nunavummiut and their communities. This is why one of our most ambitious goals in the *Katujjiluta* mandate is to facilitate the development of at least 1,000 units of all types to the stock of affordable housing and continuum of housing options.

>>Applause

As I mentioned earlier, such an ambitious goal will require significant federal and territorial funding and you will see these commitments in our capital budgets over the term of this government. Plans are already under development that could see proposed incremental spending of more than \$200 million on housing and housing programs during our mandate with the support of this Assembly.

>>Applause

To better use the housing we have now, we will review and improve the delivery of staff housing programs and prioritize actions that encourage Nunavummiut to move into affordable rental units or homes of their own.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, homelessness and severe overcrowding is a widespread issue that affects the lives of many across Nunavut. Some Nunavummiut have no choice but to seek shelter in unstable and unhealthy places so that they can endure the extreme climate and harsh conditions of our environment. This puts them at risk of violence,

exploitation, and continued cycles of addiction, which is far more costly for them, their families, their communities, and governments in the long run.

To address this, the Department of Family Services is working with the federal government and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated on a Tripartite Table on Homelessness.

>> *Applause*

(interpretation ends) In this budget, we propose \$1.5 million to support initiatives that result from this partnership, such as new shelter requests, transitional housing, respite spaces, the Inuk'raq cabin building program, community capacity building, and temporary emergency response shelters.

We also propose \$1.5 million for family violence shelter funding to ensure adequate staffing levels and to strengthen their capacity to deliver programming, counselling, and support services. This enhanced funding will benefit existing family violence shelters in Rankin Inlet, Cambridge Bay, Kugluktuk, and Kugaaruk, as well as new shelters that are expected to open in Pond Inlet and Gjoa Haven in 2022-23, and in Baker Lake and Pangnirtung in the coming years.

>> *Applause*

The government also proposes \$3.7 million to support the increasing number of clients in group homes, supported living homes, and alternative family care homes, as well as the greater complexity of their care requirements. We need to do all we can so that everyone feels safe and cared for in those settings.

Enabling Health and Healing

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, supporting the health and healing of Nunavummiut is a priority of our government.

The *Katujjiluta* mandate outlines our commitment to invest in training and community-led programs to ensure that more local and culturally relevant health services are available.

(interpretation ends) Investing in prevention and other population health supports has been a challenge for Nunavummiut in the past, given the cost to the territory for patient transportation, an expense that other jurisdictions do not have.

Over the years, successive territorial health ministers have advocated for the federal government to recognize its obligation to ensure equitable health care for Nunavummiut, which finally resulted in a commitment last year by the federal government for \$58 million to cover the cost of medical travel.

>>Applause

This funding, which will once again be available in 2022-23, will enable the Department of Health to reallocate up to \$33 million in the year ahead in key initiatives, such as hiring public agency nurses and investing in health centre security, laboratory services, pharmacy services, and paramedic support services.

(interpretation) Overall, our government's proposed 2022-23 budget includes funding for 75 new health care support positions, such as:

- \$2.1 million to hire 31 new medical travel clerks to improve service for medical travel clients

>>Applause

- \$1.6 million to hire 25 new housekeeping staff to maintain the cleaning protocols implemented in response to COVID-19, and
- \$1.3 million to hire 19 new registration clerks to support health record implementation and enable interpretation clerks to dedicate their time to providing quality client service.

>>Applause

Every year the demand for community health centre services grows alongside Nunavut's population, and these new positions will strengthen health care capacity and create good jobs in our communities.

Through targeted recruitment efforts, we will ensure the positions are filled by Nunavut Inuit, and all new staff will be provided with training and support to ensure they uphold health standards and maintain client confidentiality.

>>Applause

(interpretation ends) To support our new government's commitment to health and healing, our proposed budget also includes \$1.2 million to expand the Health Information Unit to better integrate evidence and data into future decisions.

Health research provides important information about disease trends and risk factors, outcomes of treatment or public health interventions, and health care costs and use. Collecting and analyzing this data and undertaking more rigorous research about our health system will enable us to develop guidelines for best practices and ensure high-quality patient care.

Mr. Speaker, our proposed budget includes \$1.5 million to support implementation of the *Mental Health Act* which passed in 2021, including early intervention, Inuit approaches to healing, and more local supports.

>> *Applause*

Funding will be used to enhance case management, provide care closer to home, and develop and deliver new policies, training, and regulations, including a Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. These investments in the well-being of Nunavummiut are just the start.

During our mandate, we will build on these initiatives and expand effective models for community-led programs and services. This includes improving the quality of services delivered by the Family Wellness Division in the Department of Family Services. On this front, our 2022-23 budget proposes to invest \$310,000 to create a new Quality Improvement Program to improve adoptions and foster care programs.

>> *Applause*

Family Services will also hire three new client liaison officers to monitor the provision of residential service care and ensure they meet our high standards.

In addition, our government's proposed budget provides \$2.8 million in operational funding to hire 28 people at the Aaqqigiarvik Correctional Healing Facility.

>> *Applause*

Aaqqigiarvik loosely means "a place for help to make progress in life," and this funding supports that by creating a more positive environment that is conducive to a healthy and respectful path forward for inmates.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the health and healing of Nunavummiut is affected by the grief that so many of us live with because of the historical and intergenerational trauma.

To better support those who deal with addiction and dependency, our capital plan proposes a further \$19 million, including \$2.1 million in 2022-23, to help build the Nunavut Recovery Centre. This, combined with the \$42 million committed by the federal government, will provide a state-of-the-art facility with programming specifically designed for our culture and values.

This centre, which will be founded and developed based on Inuit cultural practices and values, will provide a range of treatment and healing interventions to address both substance use and trauma. Treatment will be based on Inuit cultural values, practices, and knowledge so that those who need it the most can build a solid foundation on which their journey of healing can begin.

>>Applause

Reinvesting in Education

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, just as our elders hold a special place in our hearts, so do our young people. Nunavut has the youngest population in Canada, with about one-third of Nunavummiut being under the age of 15. In the years ahead, these young people will become adults looking for work, training, and somewhere to live and raise their own families.

To prepare children and youth to take their places as the leaders of our territory, the *Katujiluta* mandate commits our government to invest in supports that help them gain self-esteem, develop healthier relationships, and successfully pursue education and employment. This is why our five-year capital plan includes over \$70 million, including \$7.5 million in 2022-23, to advance the construction of schools in Taloyoak and Coral Harbour, and to substantively complete the renovations of the École des Trois-Soleils here in Iqaluit.

(interpretation ends) Our plan also recognizes the value of investing in children and youth by supporting them to engage in sport and physical activity. Sport and recreation helps children learn how to succeed at school and builds their skills and confidence for the future. It also creates greater community cohesion and gives Nunavummiut who are on the field and in the stands a stronger sense of connection.

For this, the proposed 2022-23 budget includes \$1.7 million to support Nunavut's youth to participate in the Arctic Winter Games, which are now an opportunity for them to showcase their talents to the world.

>>Applause

The Games, which are usually held every two years, were cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and postponed again for 2022. Instead, they will be held back to back in 2023 and 2024, after which they will resume their normal schedule.

Supporting youth development includes investments in early learning and child care. Mr. Speaker, this past January our government took a monumental step down this path when our Premier and the Prime Minister jointly announced an agreement to provide an average of \$10 a day child care by March 2024.

>>Applause

This agreement, which is expected to save families with children up to six years old up to \$14,000 per year, also commits \$66 million over five years to create 238 new licensed early learning and child care spaces by the end of March 2026.

Although there are infrastructure challenges that must be addressed for us to fully meet these goals, we are a step closer to improving child care and addressing our years-long wait-lists and shortage of trained child care staff.

Mr. Speaker, in 2022-23 our government will continue to implement a new school staff funding formula that better reflects the needs of students and schools across the territory. This will be the second year of a three-year rollout of this new formula for schools, and it will bring the total budget for the Department of Education to \$252.3 million, an increase of \$8.7 million, or 3.5 percent, over last year.

>>Applause

Last year the new formula resulted in 42 new school support staff in our schools to help our students succeed.

This year we will invest a further \$2.5 million to hire 25 new school community counsellors, school secretaries, and custodians in our schools. These critical positions will help to keep our schools safe and clean, and they will support the mental health and well-being of our students.

(interpretation) To ensure that every student in Nunavut can get to school on time every day, our proposed 2022-23 budget commits \$1.4 million for more school busing across the territory.

It also provides an increase of \$4.2 million to account for the new four-year collective bargaining agreement signed with the Nunavut Teachers Association in January.

(interpretation ends) This agreement will support teacher recruitment and retention by implementing annual wage increases beginning retroactively in July 2021.

To support bilingual education in our schools, Inuit language allowances will be provided to eligible employees.

As well, the new agreement includes more flexibility to assist teachers and their families through new paid leave allowances, including for domestic violence.

The agreement provides competitive salaries and benefits so that Nunavut can continue to recruit and retain the best teachers for our communities.

Teachers are the pillars of our education system and they are critical partners to help us deliver our commitments in the *Katujjiluta* mandate.

>>Applause

We will work closely with them as we undertake our plans for a phased rollout of full-day kindergarten programs and accelerate work on the K to 12 Inuit language curriculum and Nunavut-specific learning resources.

Other key mandate actions include integrating more life skills and career counselling into the K to 12 curriculum to foster self-reliance, self-esteem, and early career direction.

We will also enhance and support school meal programs with community-based partners so that no child struggles to learn on an empty stomach.

To support our students to succeed after graduation, we will prepare and implement a multi-year training strategy with Inuit organizations and other partners to enable the development of Nunavut's labour force and economy.

Our goal is to increase training for employment in sectors such as mining, arts and crafts, tourism, and small business as well as create opportunities for pre-employment work experiences for high school and post-secondary students throughout the year.

>> *Applause*

Support for enhanced education in Nunavut includes improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students program and other direct and indirect supports for post-secondary learners.

An example of this in our proposed budget is the Government of Nunavut's Summer Student Employment Equity Program supported by the Department of Human Resources. For this program, we intend to invest \$2.6 million, an increase of \$1.6 million, to provide government employment opportunities so that high school and post-secondary students can gain skills, knowledge, and abilities in their areas of interest and study.

>> *Applause*

Our commitment to education includes support for continuous learning across all ages. On this front, the Amaaqtaarniq Education sponsorship and leave program for Inuit programs in the Department of Human Resources has shown encouraging results. Twenty-three Inuit employees are currently pursuing various post-secondary credentials to enable them to qualify for professional and management positions in our government, and since 2018-19, ten have completed their studies.

Our proposed budget also includes continued funding for the Inuit Executive Career Development Program, which provides career development and advancement opportunities for Inuit to successfully move into senior management and executive positions in the Government of Nunavut. Currently there are 12 participants enrolled in this program, which was developed and launched in September 2021.

These programs, which provide on-the-job training, mentoring, access to academic courses and other learning experiences for young Nunavummiut, are a reason the Government of Nunavut has been recognized as one of Canada's top 100 employers for young people for the fourth year in a row.

Mr. Speaker, our government continues to be committed to meeting our obligations under Article 23 of the *Nunavut Agreement* to achieve a representative public service, and initiatives like this will support our success in meeting our Inuit employment targets.

Diversifying Our Local Economies

The *Katujjiluta* mandate includes a commitment by our government to help diversify our local economies. One of our most significant initiatives in this regard relates to our plans to bring high-speed fibre optic Internet to Nunavut so that Nunavummiut can connect with each other and the rest of the world.

In 2022-23 we plan to invest \$17.2 million in the fibre project, which is critical to creating successful, sustainable communities and improving service delivery across the territory.

>>*Applause*

Connecting to fibre optic cable will result in greater satellite bandwidth and faster Internet for other communities in Nunavut, supporting our efforts to achieve sustainable economic development and diversification in all sectors.

(interpretation) Our economic diversification efforts also include investing in Nunavut's potential to grow the blue economy.

This includes investing \$2.5 million over the next five years for small craft harbours and \$320,000 this year to initiate a marine infrastructure project in Qikiqtarjuaq.

The federal government has committed \$24.5 million to improve sealift areas in several of our communities over the next few years which will help to develop our arctic trade corridor and improve northern vessel safety and services.

We also propose to develop our ocean economy by investing in research and data, such as \$1.5 million for the Research Vessel Nulijuk, Nunavut's multi-purpose fisheries research vessel to advance science-based conservation and the sustainable development of Nunavut fisheries.

>>*Applause*

Air travel provides an essential connection between our communities. To keep air travel safe and comfortable, we have committed \$8 million in 2022-23 to replace or expand six air terminal buildings. Through the National Trade Corridors Fund, Canada will add an additional \$23.3 million to these projects this year.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, pursuing our climate goals by investing in existing infrastructure is an opportunity for economic development, which is why we propose to

provide \$500,000 through the Department of Environment's Renewable Energy Program in 2022-23.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

>>Applause

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: This program, which provides grants to homeowners and cabin owners to purchase and install renewable energy systems, is a tangible way for Nunavummiut to minimize their carbon footprints while also generating economic activity. To date, 81 cabins and 3 homes have been approved for funding.

These kinds of investments, which help us to strengthen our economy as well as pursue our climate goals, are important, given the territory's reliance on the resource sector as the main source of its economic growth.

In the longer term, Nunavut's economy is expected to remain strong due in part to favourable commodity prices for minerals and a new mine that is set to begin production in 2024.

As this sector grows, so do the opportunities for Nunavut's small- and medium-sized businesses. To support these efforts, the government will refresh the strategic plans for sustainable economic development and diversification in all sectors, including mining.

To position Nunavut as an attractive and welcoming jurisdiction for mineral exploration and investment, our proposed budget includes \$1 million for a new mineral exploration program called Discover, Invest, and Grow, or DIG.

Nunavut is one of the only jurisdictions in Canada that does not have a mineral exploration support program. To help us compete for investors, the proposed DIG program is designed to encourage mineral exploration by the junior mining sector, which has the potential to support more and better job opportunities for Nunavummiut. This point is key because, although Nunavut's economic outlook is bright, we know that more Nunavummiut need to benefit from the opportunities presented by our growing economy.

Growth for the sake of growth is pointless if it does not translate into development and a higher quality of life for Nunavummiut. This means that our future economy must be built on a foundation that prioritizes jobs and opportunities here at home. As we work toward developing a diversified economy in Nunavut, we will do just that.

>>Applause

Mr. Speaker, with this budget, we are a step closer to devolution and the final transfer of jurisdiction over Crown lands and resources from the Government of Canada to Nunavut.

Devolution will bring decision-making closer to home, giving Nunavummiut a greater say in the issues that affect them. Final decisions over public lands and resources will be made in Nunavut and not in Ottawa.

As with the investments in housing and other key infrastructure noted earlier, devolution will be a catalyst for the transformational change that propels us on the next phase of Nunavut's journey.

>> *Applause*

Conclusion

Mr. Speaker, before I conclude my remarks about this year's proposed budget and our plans to invest in the *Katujjiluta* mandate, I would like to thank my staff and everyone who spent countless hours to develop this budget during a period of change and transition.

Our new government has been able to create an ambitious plan with the assistance of public servants from across all departments, and I am excited by what we will achieve in the coming years with their support.

Although our goals are ambitious and require much hard work and new investment, I am optimistic that we will achieve all we set out to do. If the past is any indication of the future, we will continue to achieve great things, for we have already come far in a short amount of time.

On one hand, the 23 years the territory has been in existence seems like a blink of an eye. On the other hand, the change and transition we have experienced is as profound as the journey of a person from newborn baby to adulthood. Over the years I have been proud to personally witness this journey for so many of Rankin Inlet's youth.

Without telling you exactly how old I am, Mr. Speaker, let me just say that I have seen more than one generation of babies grow up to have babies of their own.

(interpretation) Over 20 years ago as Mayor of Rankin Inlet, I wanted to celebrate these young people, and to honour their contribution to the bright future we all look forward to, I started gifting a new watch with the year engraved on it to the new graduates in my community of Rankin Inlet.

I plan to give out 47 watches at the end of this school year, and my goal by the end of the Sixth Assembly is to give out hundreds more. I do this so that graduates are reminded of their accomplishments every time they looked down at their wrist. I want them to remember that time is precious and that building for the future means seizing opportunities today.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Speaker, I want them to know that our government, guided by the strategic outcomes outlined in the *Katujjiluta* mandate, is committed to working hard on behalf of them, their families, and our communities for a better quality of life for all.

Together with our partners, elders, and young people, we will continue to pursue the dream of Nunavut, and the budget that I submit to you today brings us closer to our vision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Before I go to my next item, just a reminder to those in the media booth to please wear your masks. Thank you.

Item 3. Ministers' Statements. Item 4. Members' Statements. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

Item 4: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 022 – 6(2): Pond Inlet Housing Pilot Project

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you Mr. Speaker, and I thank you Lorne for a well-given speech.

I rise today to congratulate the municipality of Pond Inlet for an innovative housing pilot project that has recently been undertaken. The policy has utilized funds that are received from the Department of Family Services to repurpose a seacan into a tiny home.

The municipality is looking at ways to expand the project so the community has a greater range of transitional housing options for residents.

Mr. Speaker, the process of constructing the homes also provides opportunities for residents to develop skills in the trades.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavut is facing a housing crisis and there are no quick or easy solutions. Innovative projects such as the one that I have described today are crucial to making progress and I ask all members to join me in congratulating and supporting the municipality on its efforts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you. Just a reminder again to those in the media booth, please wear your masks. Thank you.

Members' Statements. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

Member's Statement 023 – 6(2): Congratulations to Piqqusilirivvik Graduates

Ms. Killiktee: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I am proud to rise today and be able to congratulate a number of my constituents at Piqqusilirivvik Inuit Cultural Learning Centre in Clyde River.

Mr. Speaker, at this time while I have an opportunity to advise you and my colleagues that I have received a formal invitation to attend Friday's graduation ceremony in Clyde River. So, I won't be here on that date as I'll be away visiting my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, Piqqusilirivvik plays an important role in our community. We are very proud of the work that it does in helping to preserve and promote *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and their skills.

Mr. Speaker, this year's graduates are:

- Tapitia Appak
- Roslyn Aqsitaq
- Terry Hainnu
- Annie Iqaluyuaq
- Andy Issigaituq
- Janet Kautuk
- Imona Kilabuk
- Donna Palituq
- Lucy Palituq
- Sarah Palituq
- Joshua Paniaq
- Tamusie Panniluk
- Reepa Piugituq
- Joshua Qaqqasiq
- Sainia Tasugat

My apologies if I omitted anyone.

Mr. Speaker, I also wish to pay tribute to the hard-working instructors, Jukeepa Hainnu and Levi Palittuq and staff at the school.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating this year's graduates and to express our support for the important work that is undertaken at Piqqusilirivvik. So, let's give them a big hand. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

Member's Statement 024 – 6(2): Condolences to Earl Harvey

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today and I want to send sincere condolences to the late Earl Harvey, who passed last week. He was a hard-working man, a family man, and he will be missed. May he rest in peace. Our hearts are with him.
Koana, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerck.

Member's Statement 025 – 6(2): Inuktitut Language

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Good day, people of Amittuq and people in Nunavut and my colleagues here.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today regarding the Minister of Finance's budget address. Young people are thought of. That's great. So, young people, work hard so you can have a good future and you can even be an MLA here at some point.

Mr. Speaker, however I would like to say that our language and our culture is alive up to now and the Minister of Finance just did the budget address for the coming year. For 23 years we have had Nunavut. It's been 23 years!

When we were trying to create Nunavut, we were told that the government would run in Inuktitut and our language would be recognized and strengthened and utilized.

However, Mr. Speaker, Inuit culture is just being used as words by all the groups. Right now, they just say the words and have been for the past 23 years while we've had Nunavut. *Uqausivut 2.0* was initiated in 2018 and expires in 2023. I am proud of our language and that is why I use it in the House. Nunavut is our strength and our language is what I use as my strength to represent my constituents.

I will listen to those who elected me, my constituents and any concerns that they have or anything that needs to be corrected, I will voice them here because that is the way I am. I am proud of my constituents. I'm sure that everybody else here thinks like that.

When we're going into question period, I will have questions for the minister about language and regarding *Uqausivut 2.0*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement 026 – 6(2): National Victims and Survivors of Crime Week

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to congratulate our Minister of Finance on providing his first budget address. Towards the end of the nearly one-hour speech, I was worried that the minister may lose his breath.

Anyways, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with many Nunavummiut as well as Canadians who recently marked National Victims and Survivors of Crime week, which took place from May 15 to May 21.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased that our government publicly recognized this week with a number of events and initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, as you know I have been a vocal advocate for actions and initiatives to support victims and address serious crime. During the previous Assembly, I raised a number of specific matters, including the goal of passing a new Clare's Law for Nunavut; which would help to address the issues of intimate partner abuse and violence.

I also addressed the urgency of taking action against sexual predators and human trafficking, the importance of enforcing court ordered restrictions on alcohol, and the need for implementing recommendations from the office of the coroner and findings of coroner's juries.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues during the term of our office on these issues and I will have questions for the appropriate minister at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Members' Statements. I have no more names. Item 5. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 6. Recognition of Visitor's in the Gallery. Welcome to the visitors in the gallery. Item 7. Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

Item 7: Oral Questions

Question 024 – 6(2): Renewable Energy Initiatives

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues, and Nunavummiut.

My questions are for the new Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

On April 13, 2021, the Qikiqtaaluk Business Development Corporation announced that it had been awarded \$6.5 million in federal funding from Natural Resources Canada to support the Sanikiluaq High Displacement Renewable Energy Demonstration project.

During the recent winter 2022 sitting of the Legislative Assembly, I had the opportunity to speak in the House about this important initiative and I noted its important objective of producing clean electricity for the community and reducing the use of diesel fuel.

Mr. Speaker, I also noted that I had recently had the opportunity to meet in person with an environmental assessor who was in the community to conduct scoping work in respect to the project.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister might be aware, I recently provided his office with a copy of a formal support letter that I wrote in respect to this project. Can the minister confirm that he has received and reviewed my correspondence? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, my colleague for the question. Yes, I did receive your letter and we are in the process of reviewing it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Minister Simailak, for the very short answer.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will be aware, a significant number of Nunavut organizations have recently provided formal letters of support in respect to the Sanikiluaq High Displacement Renewable Energy Demonstration Project.

Bear with me Mr. Speaker, these include: the Municipality of Sanikiluaq, the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation, the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, the Kitikmeot Corporation, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, the Sakku Investment Corporation, the Kivalliq Inuit Association and the Nunasi Corporation.

Those are almost 10 letters of support to the project. Can the minister confirm that these organizations will receive formal replies from the Qulliq Energy Corporation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation. Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. Yes, we did receive responses, requests for information, and what not. We are working through them and when we can respond, we will respond to them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response, minister. As the minister is aware, the Qulliq Energy Corporation has experienced delays in starting its' Independent Power Producer Program.

The organizations that I mentioned earlier have requested that the Qulliq Energy Corporation enter into direct negotiations with the project proponent for the power purchaser agreement.

Will the minister commit giving direction to the Qulliq Energy Corporation to begin these discussions? Yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you again Member, for the question. The Independent Producer Power Program is currently on hold. We are still working on specialized pricing strategy, and once the report is completed we will review it and go from there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

Question 025 – 6(2): Pond Inlet Housing Issues

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

During Wednesday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, we were informed that a number of public and staff housing construction tenders for 2022-23 have been cancelled because the bids were too high.

Because of this, I would like to ask the minister. Earlier today, I discussed the details of a pilot project that has been undertaken in Pond Inlet, where they are trying to convert a sea can into a tiny home.

Can the Nunavut Housing Corporation start to build small houses like that, or can they offer financial assistance to help the local hamlets in starting similar projects? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you for asking that question. I saw a photograph of the small home that is being worked on in your community, and it was really good to see that.

Mr. Speaker, I can't say right now if we will be committing to additional, similar projects right now because we have no idea how adequate or economical this one will be. There are a large number of variables that have to be addressed, including how they will be heated, and what kind of fuel that they would use. Our workers are trying to see how we can build more homes and I know that we will be keeping an eye on that project in Pond Inlet to see if we can utilize any of it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the minister for the response. In March (interpretation ends) I asked the minister about the Canadian

Mortgage and Housing Corporation's announcement about the new affordable housing unit for Pond Inlet, that were part of the federal Rapid Housing Initiative. At that time, the minister indicated that this was "moving forward."

Can the minister update me today on the status of these units? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Those units are already under construction and they are due to be done soon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your second and final supplementary... . You're done?

Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Question 026 – 6(2): Renewable Energy Initiatives

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to the people of Arviat.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the new Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

As the minister will recall, I asked a number of questions to his predecessor during our recent winter sitting concerning the issue of the corporations renewable energy initiatives, including the Independent Power Producer program.

At that time, I noted that the Qulliq Energy Corporation had awarded a contract over a year ago, April of 2021, for consultants to develop a specialized pricing strategy for renewable energy suppliers to sell energy to the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

When I last raised this issue in the House, the minister of the day stated that the process had been delayed due to the pandemic.

Can the new minister update us today on the status of the QEC's Independent Power Producer program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for the question. Yes, it had been delayed due to outstanding issues such as COVID-19, but the Qulliq Energy Corporation does plan to submit the Independent Power Producer policy for cabinet consideration later in 2022. That's the aim. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hamlet of Arviat has been waiting for almost two years for an independent power purchase agreement. Their federal funding, in the millions, is being jeopardized for the lack of progress by the Qulliq Energy Corporation and I urge the minister to get on with it and get the independent purchase agreement done. It needs to be done. This government believes in clean power? Well, this is an example of clean power in the second or third biggest community in Nunavut, and the reason it's lagging behind is because QEC is not pulling up their end of the bargain.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, the municipality of Arviat has been working on a clean energy micro-grid project. This project is looking to utilize solar, wind, and battery energy in order to achieve a 50 percent reduction in diesel fuel dependence.

The municipality recently sent correspondence to both of the MLAs, myself and to Minister Main highlighting the need for the Qulliq Energy Corporation to enter into direct negotiations with the municipality and the project proponent without further delay.

Will the minister commit to providing this direction to the corporation, yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for the question. It's a difficult question to answer with a yes or no.

The purpose of the Independent Power Producers program is to help lower fossil fuel use, but the intent of it also is to make sure that it is revenue neutral, meaning it will not increase the cost of electricity for Qulliq Energy Corporation customers, which is why we have to be careful in what direction we give and consider it properly going forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand to be corrected but I believe in the Independent Power Purchase Agreement, there is a clause in there that states that QEC will not buy energy for more than it costs to produce currently.

So, that is not a valid excuse and it should be a very easy question for the minister to give his Qulliq Energy Corporation directions to get on with this.

As my colleague earlier from Sanikiluaq also his project is also being held up for the same reason. There is no excuse to delay this any longer if the government truly believes in reducing our reliance on diesel energy within Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will be aware, section 9.3.2 of the Qulliq Energy Corporation's current General Rate Application addresses the Corporations Renewable Energy Program Strategic Plan.

The GRA indicates “QEC is also conducting a review of the Net Metering Program as well as the study on intermittent renewable energy penetration levels in the communities, which will inform potential revisions to Net Metering and Commercial Institution Power Program.” That is quite a mouthful.

Qulliq Energy Corporation will submit its’ finding and recommendations to the Government of Nunavut upon completion of these studies.

Can the minister confirm when the findings and the recommendations will be finalized and shared with all Members of this Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, to the member again for the question. I can commit to getting back to the member with what I can. Still being here for three weeks, I am still trying to figure it all out. But, I do commit to getting back to the member with a response. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 027 – 6(2): Tuberculosis

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health today.

Mr. Speaker, today the government released information regarding a tuberculous outbreak in yet another one of our communities.

And, I’d just like to say I encourage all who believe that they may have TB or may have been exposed that they visit their health centres for screening, and importantly that those who are diagnosed with TB complete their treatment regimen for the good of their own health and that of fellow community members. And, I wish you well in your recovery.

Can the minister clearly describe how his department is screening and tracking tuberculosis cases across Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question. I agree that tuberculosis is a concern. It’s one of the priority areas and those that are affected are many.

The current screening occurs when a person believes that they have been exposed, and then this will be followed with a tracing of the individuals’ contacts in the household and in the community.

These individuals will then ideally attend the health centre for testing and screening and possibly treatment. Contact tracing is a valuable resource and in previous outbreaks, we held community wide screenings, but currently we haven't thought to look at this community-wide approach. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us many lessons with respect to addressing communicable diseases in our communities and in the territory as a whole.

I would like to take a moment to thank the many healthcare workers who have supported our communities through the pandemic, as well as through treatment of the communicable diseases that we have been facing for many years.

Can the minister tell us what changes have been made to managing and addressing the high rates of tuberculosis and other communicable diseases in Nunavut as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) In terms of COVID-19, unfortunately as the member will be aware, Mr. Speaker, there were many elements of the Department of Health's work that were delayed as a result of COVID-19. So, that was a real, direct impact unfortunately when it comes to tuberculosis. We are trying to get our efforts back on track.

We don't necessarily have too many applicable measures directly that we can take from COVID-19 to tuberculosis. The nature of the disease is different, they spread in different ways, and the treatment for them is also different.

But, I can share that we recently completed an internal review and evaluation of the direct observed preventive therapy program for latent TB, that's where our clients come in to receive medication.

That evaluation assessed if people's needs are being met in the delivery of TB treatment in Nunavut communities and it also aimed to make TB treatment more culturally appropriate by incorporating feedback from the clients.

It's a case where we are continually trying to improve and I also should mention, Mr. Speaker, that we really value our relationship with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated on this file, and look forward to bringing a regional action plan forward to cabinet for approval in the short term which will lead to additional actions in the territory against TB. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and minister. I look forward to hearing more on that collaboration with NTI on tuberculosis.

I would just like to go back to the issue of screening. Mr. Speaker, during the previous Assembly, the government conducted a number of tuberculosis screening activities across Nunavut communities and one of those communities was in the minister's own constituency.

I'd like to know, will the minister commit to continuing with more tuberculosis screening activities in other communities across Nunavut during the term of this Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) In terms of community-wide screening, I can't commit to additional community-wide screenings. As a department we are evaluating the cost-benefit.

Up front, there is a large up-front cost in terms of logistics and equipment that has to go in regarding community-wide screening and my understanding is that community-wide screenings may be more achievable in smaller communities such as Whale Cove, but when it comes to larger communities that also have tuberculosis issues, the logistics around those community-wide screenings can be exponentially or much larger and harder to handle. That's a barrier that we have to consider.

We are conducting a cost effectiveness analysis on this as well as an options paper. All that to say, we are trying to figure out whether or not additional community-wide screening clinics make sense in the future. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 028 – 6(2): Budget Address/Capital Projects

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Finance.

In the budget that the minister went over very eloquently, on page 3 it talks of the capital carry-overs, and it states on the very last paragraph on the right-hand side that we expect a similar amount of capital carryover in 2022-23, that being approximately \$139 million carry-over last year.

My Curious George factor kicked in when I saw that, Mr. Speaker. With some of the challenges with infrastructure being constructed right now, how is that number concluded? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The Hon. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the numbers we were reviewing last year's numbers and then for this year there is a \$152 million or thereabouts. We are still going through the effects of COVID-19 which delayed most of the projects that we have proposed to do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that response. The next question that I have in this topic Mr. Speaker, the number of these projects involve federal funding or third-party funding and I am just again curious as to whether is there is an impact on any of those third-party funding in this construction season? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not that I am aware of. But in the coming days we will be I will be here with my officials discussing the carry-overs, as such, in this House and we can get into more details at that time. But, I don't anticipate any difficulties on that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A number of questions were asked yesterday to various ministers on different infrastructure projects across the territory. Two five-plexes in Taloyoak that is not proceeding, a five-plex in the Speaker's home community of Gjoa Haven not proceeding and another 5 plex to my colleague to the left in Kugluktuk not proceeding. Sanikiluaq hamlet office not proceeding and the Clyde River Territorial Park office and Visitors Centre not proceeding, the Kugluktuk power plant not also not proceeding.

Mr. Speaker, I am anticipating that there is going to be a very serious challenge with expending capital dollars this fiscal year on budgets that we approved in the last session. And, I am anticipating that is likely a shorter list of projects moving forward versus those tenders cancelled or delayed.

Can the minister provide a list of the projects that are expected to move forward this year? I believe it will be shorter than the other one. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Because those tenders were not moving forward as such does not mean that there is not going to be any infrastructure being built in the communities.

As I said yesterday, we are working hard right now to see where we can move forward on projects. Those projects that were cancelled because of the high cost of the tenders some of them they will all go forward eventually just not right now.

And, we are working very hard with the Minister of the Nunavut Housing Corporation to see what projects that we can do and what other areas we can do to bring some of those projects forward Mr. Speaker.

And, I'll see if I can produce the document my colleague is looking for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerck.

Question 029 – 6(2): Use of Inuktitut Languages

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

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring up the issue of *Uqausivut 2.0* which was brought in 2018 and was to end in 2023 and it has quite a few subjects included.

The use of our language, the use of the Inuktitut language in the workplace, I would like to know from Culture and [Heritage] about what plans they have for *Uqausivut 2.0*, as the deadline is fast approaching.

What types of plans do you have with regard to *Uqausivut 2.0*, what plans does your department have? Thank you.

Speaker: Minister of Languages, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanne Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I would like to thank the member for asking this question.

With *Uqausivut 2.0*, 2018-23, the deadline is fast approaching and we have quite a few tasks that are ongoing. For example, the hamlets are required to have any documents in both languages and in the businesses there is a requirement to produce documents in both languages and also to provide services in both languages.

Again, within the government or Inuit properties, there is a requirement to have an Inuktitut-speaker employed so that they could provide both languages. At the end of five years we will produce and make changes or to strengthen some parts for 2023-24. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have had Nunavut for 23 years and with the *Languages Act* on page 13(3), for the *Inuit Languages Protection Act* was enacted by this House.

Following this Act, I would like to ask this minister, using an example, the school principals, you indicated that there is a requirement to have bilingual documents at the hamlet council, for example, following the Act.

What about government employees who would like to learn the Inuktitut language, how many government employees have taken the Inuit languages courses, how many have taken the course, how many have completed the course, and I will have another question afterwards. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Languages, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I would like to thank the member for his question. With the training courses available, be it Inuktitut-speaking proficiency or taking French language courses, they were made available to our employees to increase their proficiency in Inuktitut, for 2020-21, there were 14 students who took this course. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your final first supplementary, Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for producing those numbers. I would like to urge the department to up the number of students taking the courses.

There is a qamutik in front of us, it's not a qamutik with a 'q' at the end. When we leave her on our way to the hotel, we see the spelling 'qamutiq' which is spelled wrong.

I would like to ask the member another question regarding *Iviqtippalliajut*, which was produced and included in *Uqausivut 2.0*. The deadline is again in 2022. The minister will probably recall that she has a tendency when it's taking a bit too long. Is it possible to expedite some of these courses so that more is implemented, regarding what was written in *Uqausivut 2.0*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Languages, Ms. Quassa.

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank my colleague for asking that question. I'd like to respond by saying "Yes, of course!"

>> *Laughter*

Of course *Uqausivut 2.0* will be revamped after being reviewed and we will look at what requires strengthening. At that time, we will have an opportunity to further implement and strengthen the contents in 2023-24. That will be done while we are reviewing

Uqausivut 2.0. Then afterwards, we will produce a revamped document. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 030 – 6(2): Liquor Plebiscites

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Finance and they concern the issue of plebiscites held under the territorial *Liquor Act*.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall a plebiscite was last held in the community of Kugaaruk in February of 2019, just over three years ago.

Mr. Speaker, at that time, a majority of voters chose to keep the community prohibition system in place.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, Section 48 of the territorial *Liquor Act* provides that “Where at least 20 qualified voters in a settlement, municipality or area petition the minister to hold a plebiscite to determine whether the consumption, possession, purchase, sale or transport of liquor ought to be restricted or prohibited in the settlement, municipality or area, the minister may order that a plebiscite be held to determine the wishes of the qualified voters of the settlement, municipality or area.”

Mr. Speaker, I have recently been advised by the Municipality of Kugaaruk that approximately two dozen have signed a petition for a new plebiscite to be held on the question of changing the community’s status.

Mr. Speaker, my question is: can the minister confirm whether or not his department has formally received a copy of the petition from the municipality? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes I have seen the document my colleague is referring to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make it very clear that I fully support the choices that my constituents in Kugaaruk and Taloyoak make in this area through the democratic process.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify how he will decide whether or not to order a new plebiscite in Kugaaruk? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The community of Kugaaruk decided back in 2019 of February, 73 percent overwhelmingly supported that restricted quality still be there, that it still be a prohibited community. That's just been three years ago, Mr. Speaker.

I understand there is no timeline into how often you could request a plebiscite. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, it takes a lot of effort and money to run plebiscites and it's just been three years ago since the last one.

I've seen the letter asking that another plebiscite be held, so I will take a bit of time to take a look at it and think about when would be a good time to hold a plebiscite again in that community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware his department's current business plan indicates that it has been working towards undertaking a review of the *Liquor Act*.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate what specific changes are being considered in respect to those sections of the legislation that deal with liquor plebiscites? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To his comments, we will be discussing this issue in the coming weeks and it will outline what changes we will be expecting under the *Liquor Act*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

Question 031 – 6(2): Transportation for Schools

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today on an that issue I've raised more than once, but I'd like to bring it up again to the Minister of Education. We are here for the benefit of Nunavut.

I mentioned before that I will speak for the smaller communities and I would like to make a comment regarding teachers in our communities. I think most communities know that not every DEA has a vehicle.

I would like to ask if there are any funds provided for rentals or usage of vehicles for our staff? Or, perhaps is there a way to compensate staff members that use their own vehicles for work purposes? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker, and *quana* to the member for the question regarding vehicle use.

As you know, we have elders in all of our schools across the territory and we do provide services to get our elders to and from work. If there are any questions regarding elders' support, the DEA has funds to support elders to get transported to our schools.

In regards to renting a vehicle, that question will have to be channelled through the DEA and I can get back to the member with the specific details to that question. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's not really clear here, as an Inuk she doesn't understand Inuktitut so we have a communication barrier. But I would like to further add to my question in English.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, it's about school staff. They have their own personal bills to pay, including the expenses of doing school businesses can add up.

School counsellors often have to go do house visits to discuss issues with parents, or when the school hires new members from south and they're expected the staff are expected to pick up and do the service delivery from the airport and to the new homes.

For that, can the minister tell us whether her department has any specific policies with respect to the school staff using their own strength, transportations on behalf of the Department of Education? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* to the member for the question and I am sorry about the language barrier. And *quana* for clarifying your question regarding school staff and supporting school staff to get to and from work or other places in the community.

At this time there is no policy regarding busing or transportation for teachers or other staff without the exception what I said I spoke about to in the last answer. However, this in regards to teachers, its up to the DEA to conduct the appropriate means for the staff to get around and support the teachers as they need. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you for your clarifying the question. Yes, I will be asking this in English.

(interpretation ends) I recognize that it may not be practical or feasible for every school to have a dedicated vehicle and I also appreciate that there is ability issues for whoever is using the department vehicle.

However, it does not seem rights that school staff are expected to provide transportation on their own expense on behalf of the Department of Education.

For that, will the minister commit to look into an issue into this issue and develop a policy whereby school staff who use their own vehicles to conduct school related business can be reimbursed? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. And *quana* to the member for the question. There is a support for teachers to get reimbursed through their DEA for work-related expenses. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 032 – 6(2): Introducing a Claire’s Law for Nunavut

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the new Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation has gotten a good workout both today and yesterday and so, I thought I would give him a break and ask my questions to the Minister responsible for the Department of Justice.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, As the minister will recall from our service together during the previous Legislative Assembly an issue that I raised on a number of occasions was the importance of developing and introducing Clare’s Law in Nunavut.

Over the course over the last couple of years, I think that we’ve made some progress towards achieving this goal. I’d like to ask can the minister inform the House today if and when he intends to introduce legislation to create a Clare’s Law for Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, member for the question. Thank you for thinking of the member or Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation and giving him a break.

The department recently completed a Nunavut-wide consultation on the *Family Abuse Intervention Act*. Thanks in part actually to the member for this important issue for his continued advocacy.

The department included Clare's Law and domestic violence information sharing in a *Family Abuse Intervention Act* consultations. The next step for the department is to review the many comments on submissions received from the consultation participants and front line stake holders. The department's review will look at legislative steps we can take to improve the *Family Abuse Intervention Act* to ensure it is responsive to victims.

Part of this review will be to review their comments shared with respect to domestic violence information sharing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, I'd like to thank the minister for his response as well the Department of Justice.

Justice's efforts on conducting the consultation on the *Family Abuse and Intervention Act* and I appreciate the minister for bringing that up as that leads me to my next question.

As the minister had indicated, the department had received many comments and on the community consultations on the *Family Abuse and Intervention Act*. I am sure many of those would be quite insightful.

And, I'd like to ask if the minister will confirm if and when he will be tabling his departments reports on the results of these community consultations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department does hope we do hope to be able to complete the consultation report by the fall and once the report is completed I will inform my colleagues of the decisions with respect to the consultation on the *Family Abuse and Intervention Act* and Clare's Law. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, I'd like to thank the minister again for his response. I look forward to reviewing the results of those consultations in the fall.

As the minister will also recall I tabled a package of documents last September which included the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Nunavut formal submission to the Department of Justice concerning this issue.

One of the Information and Privacy Commissioner recommendations was the department should "Prepare a policy impact assessment for Clare's Law as contemplated by section 42.1 of the *Access to Information and Privacy Act*."

Like to ask; can the minister update the House today on the status of Department of Justice to act on this recommendation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. Simailak.

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Should we decide to proceed with Clare's Law as part our *Family Abuse and Intervention Act* amendments, we will be sure to work with you and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and we will ensure that the conduct... . Sorry, we will ensure the conduct the necessary privacy analysis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 033 – 6(2): Environmental Protection

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, for recognizing me a second time today, Mr. Speaker.

My questions are for the Minister of Environment and concern the issue a very important issue of environmental protection.

As the minister will recall, a number of important questions were asked during the Winter Sitting of the Legislative Assembly concerning the status of the government's work to identify responsibility for the clean-up of contaminated sites across the territory.

At that time the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation stated that and I will quote directly from *Hansard*:

“The Qulliq Energy Corporation is included in the Contaminated Sites Management Working Group, a territorial effort to address contaminated sites with the Government of Canada. The Government of Nunavut's Department of Environment currently has the lead to move the file forward with senior officials of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada.”

Can the Minister of Environment provide an update today on what specific progress has been made by the Contaminated Sites Working Group to resolve long-standing issues related to responsibility for cleaning up contaminated sites across Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. There is a working group that is collecting and getting feedback from the department on the draft policy. Also on top of that, we're doing a desktop risk assessment in the sites that have been identified as potential responsibilities of the Government of Nunavut. The risk assessment framework will be used to prioritize

phase 1 and environmental site assessments for the 2022 field season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, his department's current business plan indicates that its Environmental Protection Division "manages the contaminated sites inventory for the Government of Nunavut and oversees waste management and diversion efforts, as well as conducting targeted environmental monitoring throughout the territory."

The most recent territorial Public Accounts indicates that the Government of Nunavut has "identified an additional 73 sites on Commissioner's land for which liabilities for contamination may exist for assessment, remediation and monitoring."

Will the minister commit to tabling a comprehensive and up-to-date inventory of all contaminated sites in Nunavut when the Legislative Assembly reconvenes for its fall sitting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are over 270 sites across Nunavut and I don't know how extensive that document is; I'm going to have to review that document itself and whether we would be able to table or whether it's available for the public. I will definitely look at the report and report back to the House if I could go through that route. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is also aware, his department's current business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2021-22 fiscal year was to "begin the review for updating the *Environmental Protection Act* to ensure that it is relevant and consistent with current environmental practices."

Can the minister indicate what specific amendments to the statute are being considered and can he confirm when he expects to introduce a bill in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know I have it in my information here, but I can't get it in terms of the timelines. We are working towards doing a legislative proposal for this *Environmental Protection Act* in terms of what needs to be changed. We're not at the stage of when and how we will be introducing it and so I don't have a definitive timeline at the moment in terms of when we plan on putting forward amendments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 034 – 6(2): Tuberculosis

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would like to just continue on one of my colleagues' questions for the Minister of Health on tuberculosis.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, he's from Arviat, so the minister knows about the issues of tuberculosis in Arviat. For the record, can the minister give us an update on what is being done to control and contain the spread of tuberculosis in Arviat? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question. Tuberculosis is a concern in Arviat and it is also a concern in many other communities. We are continually working on addressing the issue. When we are informed of a presumptive case of tuberculosis in Nunavut, we work with them on the initial assessment and if the results come back positive for tuberculosis, they begin treatment and medication is given, but a challenge in Arviat and in the other communities is the shortage of nurses. The nursing shortage has been highlighted as a challenge this spring and heading into the summer, but we are continuing to work hard on addressing tuberculosis, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for his response. As the minister stated, the nursing shortage poses a challenge. As I understand it, tuberculosis will not be eradicated in Arviat as long as there is a shortage of nurses. I would like to confirm if that's what the minister stated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was talking about the challenge. The shortage of nurses is a problem in many communities. We always work hard towards eradicating tuberculosis and as I stated earlier, we always work with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated on this matter. I also mentioned, in English, the (interpretation ends) regional action plan. (interpretation) We work together with Nunavut Tunngavik and we're getting close to making an agreement with them.

Once the plan has been approved by my ministerial colleagues, more work will be done on it later and more will be initiated in Nunavut. The plan is to eradicate tuberculosis in Nunavut by 2030 and that is the goal. There will be programs to help that will be created along the way. I can't speak to the details at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for the update for all of Nunavut, but I'm quite concerned about TB in Arviat. It's not getting any better; it has been years. The Department of Health was working heavily on it before COVID and then I noticed they're working on it, but it has just come to almost a standstill. I encourage the minister to work harder in his home community to eliminate TB in his community. Yes, we want it all gone for Nunavut, but I believe that Arviat has a pretty high prevalence of TB right now and it should be looked at very seriously.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister: will the minister be applying to NTI for the tuberculosis money that they have spent, I think, 25 percent of the federal money they got? I believe only about 25 percent has been given to the GN to eliminate TB. Will the minister be applying for any funds from NTI specifically to combat TB in Arviat? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Three questions in one maybe? I guess I'll choose one to answer.

First of all, in terms of the needs of the community of Arviat, absolutely I understand where the member is coming from, but I believe Mr. Speaker that member also understands that I've been put here in this seat to work on behalf of the entire territory and as such I can't go to my staff and say "This community, or that community." That's driven by the clinical experts, the professionals like Dr. Patterson. They are the ones that look at the whole territory and they see where the health issues are.

We know that tuberculosis is very closely linked to housing issues. When it comes to Arviat or other communities, that's one of the reasons why we are, as a government, pushing so hard on housing because we know it's going to pay off in terms of health outcomes.

I understand the member's frustration. Right now, we are trying to stay on top of tuberculosis in Nunavut and I can't commit to funding applications to Nunavut Tunngavik, but that would be something that would flow out of the development of the regional action plan on tuberculosis.

Additional actions, funding, and collaboration with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated will flow once that plan has been finalized. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

Question 035 – 6(2): Mould Assessment and Remediation

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask further questions to the Minister of the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

(interpretation) During my recent community call-in show, I heard a number of concerns from constituents regarding a range of housing issues, including the problem of mould infestation in housing units.

As the minister will recall, the Nunavut Housing Corporation 2022-23 capital estimates were recently approved by the Legislative Assembly, and I am pleased to have voted in favour of the corporations proposed funding of \$7 million for mould assessment and remediation.

Can the minister confirm how many units in Pond Inlet will benefit from mould assessment and remediation during the 2022-23 fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) During our winter session, I sang a song to my colleague from Amittuq about housing. There have been no units in Pond Inlet identified for mould remediation in the 2022-23 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Oh, that's not good. Having mould-free houses promotes health. People who live in mouldy houses experience bad things happening to their skin and other health problems.

If a house becomes mouldy, can it be immediately remediated and cleaned up? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The local housing associations have been notified and some of their workers have been trained in mould assessment and remediation. The local housing association maintainers have been trained so that they can do their own mould cleaning. Local tenants should inform the local housing association if their unit has mould issues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask, if a letter is received by a doctor that says a person has been affected by mould, does they become a priority for mould remediation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot say yes, as the detail and the number in the communities that require mould remediation. As to whether or not this would help, I'm not aware. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

Question 036 – 6(2): Airport Infrastructure

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for recognizing me for the second time.

My questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation and they concern the important issue of airport infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by acknowledging Air Inuit and the Makivik Corporation for their positive response to the municipal council of Sanikiluaq's recent request to resume scheduled air service to the community. I recently had the honour of formally writing in support of the request and I appreciate President Aataami's prompt and positive personal reply to me.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, his department's 20-year Infrastructure Needs Assessment for Nunavut Airports was produced in April of 2014, almost a decade ago, and tabled in the House during the Fourth Legislative Assembly.

Can the minister confirm when the updated needs assessment will be ready for tabling?
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The report is done. It is being translated into Inuktitut, and once that is done we will table the document. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response, minister. I look forward to the tabling of the document.

Mr. Speaker, Sanikiluaq's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan identifies a number of issues with Sanikiluaq's current airport infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, there have been a number of incidents at the airport over the past decade and there are concerns that current east-west orientation of the airport's runway poses safety concerns.

The Integrated Community Sustainability plan indicates that a new runway which is oriented in a north-south direction would address these issues given the community's prevailing winds.

Can the minister clarify his department's timeline for addressing this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have... . In terms of the timelines for whether that project is going through or not. In terms of what we are doing specifically for Sanikiluaq, once I have that level of detail I'll be very happy to provide it to the member, but to move and change airstrips right now, I don't think we have anything in the capital plans to move airstrips at this time. If there is a study or something being done, I'll definitely provide the information to my colleague. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I look forward to hearing minister's study on the airport runway as there have been a couple of airplane crashes or incidents in our community.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware his department's 20-year Infrastructure Needs Assessment for Nunavut's Airports identifies issues with community's current airport terminal building and Sanikiluaq Integrated Community Sustainability Plan recommends a number of actions including enhancements to a parking lot spaces and the installation of a new generator.

Can the minister clarify his department's timeline for addressing these issues? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For Sanikiluaq's particular renovations or any. the one the information that I've got right now is that there was a ramp that was installed in 2020. I don't know if there is any other work that that being done at the moment.

There are a lot of these projects are gone through either through the small capital or direct. And at this point I don't have the details in terms of what's being worked on for the renovations side for our airport terminal.

And, I also want to clarify for the second question. And I'm finding it in the information. There is no study in terms for the airstrip relocation at the moment. But, I will be very happy to look at the integrated sustainable plans and work with my colleague in terms how to what the next processes we can take. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 037 – 6(2): Elders on Income Assistance

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Family Services.

(interpretation) For those on income support receive difficulty on the signed consent form, can that be adjusted for social services clients? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question. Elder or not an elder who are benefits for assistance, they have to review their income from the previous months or any other assistance from the federal government is reviewed. The funds from there are identified what they are eligible for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. They look at their bank statements. Sometimes they're on medical travel and they are supported by family and that assistance is deducted from their eligible assistance. When they travel to Yellowknife or to Edmonton, wondering how not to take those deductions off? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks for clarifying that. Those that receive assistance have been adjusted for when they travel outside of their community. That deduction should not be taken off. If you have gone to hospital and you're staying at Tammaativvik, and you receive assistance for that month, that will also affect income support for those who are travelling.

Within 30 days their assistance would be for that month would now not be affecting their assistance. They can receive assistance based on the adjustments for when they go into the hospital. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Quqqiaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When they are not approved for assistance, or receiving assistance, this affects the food in the community. There is no juice mix or food for children. When we sign agreements, is there ways to adjust this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question. It is regrettable that this happens, especially for those that are left behind at home. When you look at the level of assistance, you consider the mother, father, the parents receive assistance. If they receive funds when they are away we review those.

However, also, we adjust the funds, if they receive less than \$700 we have to assess the number of people in the households and following that the deduction is not taken anymore. Also, I mentioned we follow guidelines and we are currently reviewing those guidelines. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Members, the time allotted for Question Period is now over. I will go to Item 8. Written Questions. Item 9. Returns to Written Questions. Item 10. Replies to Opening Address. Item 11. Replies to Budget Address. Item 12. Petitions. Item 13. Responses to Petitions. Item 14. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Item 15. Tabling of Documents. Minister responsible the Nunavut Development Corporation, Mr. David Akeegok.

Item 15: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 005 – 6(2): 2020-2021 Nunavut Development Corporation Annual Report

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am happy to present the 2020-21 Annual Report of the Nunavut Development Corporation to be tabled today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 15. Tabling of Documents. Item 16. Notices of Motions. Item 17. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Motions. Item 19. First Reading of Bills. I recognize the Minister of Finance, Minister Kusugak.

Item 19: First Reading of Bills

Bill 01 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2022-2023 – First Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 1, *Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2022-2023*, be now read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

First Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Minister Kusugak.

Bill 02 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2022-2023 – First Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 2, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No. 1, 2022-2023*, be now read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

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

First Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Bill 03 – Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 2021-2022 – First Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 3, *Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 2020-2021*, be now read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

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

First Reading of Bills. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Bill 04 – Liquor Tax Act – First Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 4, *Liquor Tax Act*, be now read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

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

First Reading of Bills. Minister of Justice, Mr. Simailak.

Bill 05 – An Act to Amend Certain Acts Respecting the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – First Reading

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Pangnirtung, that Bill 5, *An Act to Amend Certain Acts Respecting the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation*, be now read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

First Reading of Bills. Minister of Justice, Mr. Simailak.

Bill 06 – An Act to Amend the Judicature Act – First Reading

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 6, *An Act to Amend the Judicature Act*, be now read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

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

First Reading of Bills. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Bill 07 – Interim Language of Instruction Act – First Reading

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that Bill 7, *Interim Language of Instruction Act*, be now read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

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

Item 19. Second Reading of Bills. I recognize the Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Item 20: Second Reading of Bills

Bill 01 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2022-2023 – Second Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 1, *Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2022-2023*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the Government of Nunavut to make operations and maintenance expenditures for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*No audio*

>>*House recessed at 16:05 and Committee resumed at 16:32*

Item 21: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairman (Mr. Hickes): Thank you, members. We're in Committee of the Whole to review bills and other matters. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following item to deal with: Bill 1. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to proceed with the review of the 2022-23 main estimates, starting with the Department of Community and Government Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Are we in agreement to deal with Bill 1?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 01 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2022-2023 – Community and Government Services – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié, do you have any officials that you would like to appear before the committee with you? Thank you.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasié. Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. I think we just had enough an agreement. For the record, Minister Joanasié, please introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members. (interpretation) Today it is my pleasure to join you here today to review the main estimates and business plan for the Department of Community and Government Services.

Joining me here today is my Deputy Minister, Kyle Seeley, and on my left is the Director of Financial Services, Mandy Hickey.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Community and Government Services is responsible for providing a wide range of programs and services to the Government of Nunavut departments, local governments, non-profit organizations, and individuals.

As a service department, Community and Government Services will play an essential role in assisting client departments, achieving the priorities of the Sixth Assembly identified in the *Katujjiluta* mandate.

Our services are provided through five different sections, each responsible for planning and managing different components of the Government of Nunavut's mandate and priorities. They are:

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, the Directorate Branch, with a total proposed operating budget of \$13,108,000 for 2022-23. This branch includes the office of the deputy minister as well as the department's human resources, policy, and consumer affairs and financial services divisions.

In addition to departmental corporate services functions, Community and Government Services Directorate Branch's Financial Services Division provides procurement, dry goods resupply, and air charter logistics support for all Government of Nunavut departments.

Over the past year, in addition to providing vital support to communities during states of emergency, the department's logistics services have played a critical role in facilitating the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, personal protective equipment, and rapid antigen tests.

The Local Government Services Branch provides financial and administrative support to enhance the quality and sustainability of municipal programs and services in Nunavut's 25 communities. The total proposed operations and maintenance budget for the Local Government Branch in 2022-23 is \$88,900,000. This request includes \$2,972,000 in additional funding towards the following initiatives:

- \$852,000 towards municipalities to offset increases in fuel prices incurred by municipal corporations;
- \$400,000 to offset property tax increases payable to the City of Iqaluit for Government of Nunavut assets in Iqaluit;

- \$450,000 in grants and contributions to support athletes and coaches preparing to compete in major games, including the 2023 Arctic Winter Games; and
- \$1,270,000 to support Team Nunavut's participation in the 2023 Arctic Winter Games.

Itsivautaaq, despite the additional funding requested for these initiatives in 2022-23, members will note a net decrease of \$1,057,000 in the total Local Government Branch operations and maintenance 2021-22 total budget of \$89,957,000. This is due to the realignment of \$2,513,000 in contribution funding approved by the Assembly in March 2022.

Of the \$88,900,000 proposed by the department in 2022-23, \$71,766,000 of this amount is grants and contribution funding administered by the department to municipalities and non-profit organizations, and in some cases, individuals. This funding is used by these organizations to offset their operational costs and support the delivery of the programs and services to Nunavummiut.

Subject to approval by the Assembly, 2022-23 will also mark the third consecutive year the department has increased its investment into municipalities through the Municipal Funding Program. We will continue to collaborate with municipalities to ensure funding is aligned with the costs of operating safe and sustainable communities.

Itsivautaaq, in addition to the financial support provided to municipal corporations and non-profit organizations through grants and contribution programs, CGS also provides support directly to stakeholders, including municipal officials and administrators.

Local government divisions work directly with municipal clients in important areas, including orientation of municipal councils to their powers and responsibilities under the relevant legislation, monitoring and oversight of financial management practices, introduction and implementation of asset management programs, identifying municipal infrastructure priorities, maintaining emergency preparedness and response plans, accessing departmental programs and services.

Mr. Chairman, the restrictions on intercommunity travel have caused the department to develop new means of engaging with community representatives remotely to meet business objectives in key areas, such as municipal asset management workshops, youth ambassador training, sports and recreation action planning, integrated community sustainability plan workshops, municipal staff orientation training, emergency preparedness and response meetings, and as travel restrictions ease, I expect these new online support mechanisms will be maintained and supplement the more traditional face-to-face delivery models that help the staff of the Local Government Branch establish and maintain the important relationships with their clientele.

Itsivautaaq, the department's Information Management and Technology Branch is responsible for managing the Government of Nunavut's core network and

communication services. This includes managing the existing and emerging hardware and software needs of client departments and maintaining the security of Government of Nunavut records and systems.

Over the past year, the value of a secure and robust network with the capacity to support working and learning remotely has been made clear here in Nunavut and worldwide. During the 2021-22 fiscal year Government of Nunavut staff created over 1,250 SharePoint sites and over 850 Microsoft Team sites to support a collaborative working environment across all Nunavut communities.

Additionally, the Government of Nunavut's security tools allowed staff to access over 1.4 billion files on the Internet. Of these files, over 20,000 security threats were flagged and isolated using the system's built-in artificial intelligence, with over 20 ransomware-based files being blocked.

Continued investment into the operations and maintenance of the Government of Nunavut's core network services will ensure the department can provide Government of Nunavut departments and ultimately Nunavummiut with enhanced access to programs and services provided through the Government of Nunavut's core network.

The launch of an online Inuktitut language training for staff throughout the territory and the recent development of the translator application are evidence of the role technology can play to ensure Inuktitut thrives as a living language in Nunavut, and I am pleased with the efforts of my department to make Inuit language a more functional part of its operations.

Itsivautaaq, the Department of Community and Government Services Informatics proposed operations and maintenance budget for 2022-23 is \$44,756,000. This amount is a net increase of \$505,000 from 2021-22. The additional funding will support additional software licensing requirements.

(interpretation) Mr. Chairman, the Infrastructure Branch of the Department of Community and Government Services provides a comprehensive suite of services to all Government of Nunavut departments. These services include the development and oversight of technical standards, capital planning, project management, ongoing building maintenance, inspection and oversight of all properties and assets released by the Government of Nunavut.

The proposed 2022-23 operations and maintenance budget for the Infrastructure Branch is \$120,987,000. This is an increase of \$2,488,000 from the 2021-22 year. This increase is driven primarily by increasing fuel prices and forced growth within the department's leasing portfolio. Approximately a hundred of these buildings comprise of nearly 540,000 square feet of space.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, the Infrastructure Branch will continue the execution of Nunavut's Energy Management Program across government-owned facilities. Based

upon the success of the Iqaluit pilot project initiative, an energy savings of \$1,800,000, we are proceeding with an energy upgrade program in the Kivalliq and Qikiqtaaluk regions, with a combined additional annual target of more than \$5 million in energy savings and 4.7 tonnes of greenhouse gas reductions to support our government's effort to slow the effects of climate change so that Nunavummiut can enjoy our land for generations to come.

This branch is also responsible for the oversight and enforcement of Nunavut legislation, including the *Technical Standards and Safety Act*, the *Nunavut Building Code Act*, and the *Fire Safety Act*. This legislation exists to ensure buildings in Nunavut are safe for occupancy.

Between the coming into force of the *Nunavut Building Code Act* on September 1, 2018 and December 2021, more than 3,000 design plans have been reviewed, 896 permits issued, and 1,245 site inspections were completed, representing \$595 million of construction value.

(interpretation) Mr. Chairman, the Petroleum Products Division is responsible for the purchase, storage, and distribution of fuel to the public, homeowners, businesses, airlines, and governments in Nunavut.

While fuel is sold and delivered within the communities by their respective local fuel contractors, the majority of petroleum products related assets like tank farms, dispensing units, and fuel delivery trucks outside of Iqaluit remain the priority of the Government of Nunavut's Petroleum Products Division.

Unlike other Government of Nunavut operations, the Petroleum Products Division operating funds must be recovered via the sale of products. This is achieved through the Petroleum Products Revolving Fund. The fund functions much like a commercial line of credit wherein the division purchases bulk fuel inventory up to a total of \$250 million per year, with these expenses and other operational costs being recovered through retail sales of petroleum products.

(interpretation ends) This annual cycle is an important component in establishing retail fuel prices in Nunavut, as the division must function within the maximum authorized limit of the fund and the Act requires that the fund operate on a break-even basis. Fluctuations in global markets are and will remain a long-standing factor in the purchase of bulk fuel.

The Petroleum Products Division has a mechanism called the Petroleum Products Stabilization Fund, which is meant to stabilize fuel prices in years when world markets dictate high fuel prices by deferring high prices when markets stabilize or drop so Nunavummiut don't experience large fluctuations in any given year.

The Petroleum Products Division can utilize this fund within its set limit to stabilize the prices of petroleum purchased, sold, and distributed by the Government of Nunavut.

In 2021 the Petroleum Products Division purchased and delivered 136,350,000 litres of ultra-low Sulphur diesel, 47 million litres of jet A-1, 25,390,000 litres of premium unleaded gasoline, 177 drums of aviation gasoline, and 111,832 cans of naphtha to Nunavut communities.

The Petroleum Products Division continues to provide Nunavummiut with fuel prices that are among the lowest in Canada. In 2022-23 the division will manage summer resupply and pursue additional advancements in the safe and efficient management and storage of fuel in Nunavut.

(interpretation) Mr. Chairman, the Department of Community and Government Services' proposed operations and maintenance budget for 2022-23 is \$267,751,000. This is a net increase of \$1,960,000 from last year's budget, which was at \$265,000,791. That will ensure the Department of Community and Government Services can continue to provide important services to our client departments, local governments, and non-governmental organizations.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my opening remarks and I am proud to be the minister of a department that will play an important part of pursuing the priorities of *Katujjiluta* and building safe communities in Nunavut. I look forward to our discussions this afternoon and it will be my pleasure to take any questions from the committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasié. Does the chair of the standing committee have any opening comments? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Community and Economic Development on its review of the proposed 2022-23 Main Estimates and 2022-26 Business Plan of the Department of Community and Government Services. The department's proposed 2022-23 operations and maintenance budget is \$265,751,000. This represents a 0.7 percent increase from the 2021-22 main estimates. The number of departmental positions has increased from 462.0 to 466.0, which represents an increase of 0.9 percent.

Members raised a number of issues and concerns during the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee. Mr. Chairman, the department's proposed 2022-23 main estimates include approximately \$67.0 million in funding for a number of different programs that support municipalities. The department's new Community Development Grants and Contribution Policy expires on April 1, 2025. Schedules to the policy cover the Municipal Funding Program, the Water and Sewage Subsidy Program, the Municipal Organization Operating Fund, the Community Development Fund Program, the Community Asset Protection Program, the Municipal Collaboration Program, and the Community Lands Administration Fund. The standing committee encourages the minister to table an annual report in the Legislative Assembly on the administration of the policy.

The department's proposed 2022-23 main estimates include approximately \$4.3 million in funding for seven different programs that support sports and recreation. The department's new Sport and Recreation Grants and Contributions Policy expires on March 31, 2023. The department's draft 2022-26 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2022-23 fiscal year is to "develop the accompanying action plan to the Nunaliit Aulajut Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation Framework." Members look forward to reviewing progress in this area.

Amendments to the *Consumer Protection Act* were passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2017. These amendments addressed the issue of cheque-cashing fees for government cheques and other matters. The standing committee continues to encourage the department to review the feasibility of regulating payday loans. The standing committee continues to note the increasing prevalence of charitable and personal fundraising activities undertaken by both organizations and individuals that offer participation in gaming activities that are not necessarily operating under a clear regulatory framework. In some cases, individuals appear to be operating gambling schemes simply as a means of making money. The standing committee continues to encourage the department to ensure that regulations made under the *Lotteries Act* keep pace with changes in this area, and notes that one of its priorities for the 2022-23 fiscal year is to "review the *Lotteries Act*."

The *Emergency Measures Act* was passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2007. Sections 5 to 9 of the legislation provide for the preparation of "emergency management programs" on the part of government institutions and municipal councils. However, although it has been 15 years since the legislation was passed, these provisions have still not been brought into force. The standing committee will continue to monitor progress in this area.

In recent years, the department's annual capital estimates have included a number of "funding bundles" for infrastructure related to water, wastewater and solid waste. On November 4, 2021, the department issued a request for proposals for the development of a "Nunavut-Wide Regional Solid Waste Management Plan." The request for proposals was subsequently cancelled in February 2022. The department's draft 2022-26 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2022-23 fiscal year is to "work with partners and stakeholders to develop and deploy the Drinking Water Strategic Framework Action Plan." It also indicates that it will "continue to work with lead agencies and other stakeholders in the development of a solid waste strategy and solid waste management regulations." However, the extent to which the Department of Community and Government Services and the Department of Environment are coordinating their work in these areas is not clear. The standing committee will continue to monitor the progress of these initiatives.

The "Information Technology" and "Information Management" divisions of the department have been eliminated. Their positions have been redistributed to a new "Corporate Chief Information Officer" division, a new "Government Information and Planning" division, and a new "Information and Communication Technology" division. The purpose of this reorganization is not entirely clear. During the fall of 2019, the

Government of Nunavut was impacted by a major “ransomware” incident. The department’s 2021-24 business plan indicated that it was “working closely with an industry leader in digitization on the development of information management digitization standards and potential creation of the *Information Management Act*.” The standing committee looks forward to further work in this area clarifying such issues as the extent to which the jurisdiction of the territory’s *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* extends to cloud-based information.

A new *Building Code Act* was passed by the Third Legislative Assembly and received assent on June 8, 2012. The department’s draft 2022-26 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2022-23 fiscal year is to “continue with the strategic review and study on the impacts of the adoption of Nunavut-specific modifications as they apply to existing Nunavut building codes and the National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings.” Members have raised a number of concerns regarding the administration of the legislation as it applies to regulatory requirements in respect to small-scale projects undertaken by homeowners. Mr. Chairman, these concerns have related to such matters as the availability of inspectors in smaller communities.

The 2017-18 Annual Report of the Petroleum Products Division was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 2, 2021. The 2018-19, 2019-2020, 2020-21 and 2021-22 annual reports have not been tabled.

That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2022-23 Main Estimates and 2022-26 Business Plan of the Department of Community and Government Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Before we move to page J-4 or page 189 in the business plan, I’ll ask if any committee members have any general comments. Seeing none, we will proceed to the page-by-page review of the departmental estimates, starting on page J-4. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening, minister and your officials.

I don’t have many topics to discuss under Directorate other than the department’s Inuit employment plans. I would like to begin off by noting that as of December, the most recent Inuit employment statistics report, the department was at approximately 42 percent Inuit employment.

However, I would like to note some positive aspects of your Inuit employment plans portion of the business plans and specifically your priorities for the 2022-23 fiscal year. I was very happy to see that the department is working on the delivery of an afterschool program, employment initiatives in Nunavut schools, and to increase awareness for students for jobs and the career paths available in CGS and across Nunavut. I was also very delighted to see that the department has made it a priority to encourage every division within the department to have an interim position.

I would like to start off my round of questioning on those two topics. I was wondering if the minister may be able to elaborate a bit further on the development, delivery, and success of the afterschool employment initiatives. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for his question. With this priority, we do want to create employment opportunities and develop career options and support skills development for our younger population and targeting students and university or post-secondary students. With this, the idea is to increase viable candidate pools for future vacancies within the department. When there's a job opportunity for creating a new position or an existing vacancy, we want to try to kind of bring them in too and if there's an interest in that field, the idea is to fill those vacancies strategically. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for providing that information. I wish you and your department all nothing but success in this initiative. I think it is an excellent initiative and will likely have some very successful long-term outcomes for the department as well as our youth.

Moving on to my next item under your priorities was to encourage every division within the department to have an intern. Again, I'm very excited to see this. I was wondering if the minister may elaborate a little bit further and provide some details on the current status of interns within the department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Yes, that's ongoing work that we're trying to promote and again, when there are opportunities for that to happen, for an intern to be acquired within any of the divisions, we want to promote that and make sure that they can succeed and advance.

There are different stakeholders that we try to work with and our CGS-HR and there are other departments even that contribute and/or we want to work with Education, the college. If there are training opportunities, we want to maximize those other partners. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, minister. Moving on to my next line of questioning under Inuit employment plans, one matter that I have been very vocal about over the last number of years is encouraging Government of Nunavut employees to take advantage of our Education Leave Program as well as Sivumuaqatigiit Education Leave Program. I was wondering if the minister may be able to provide a little bit of information as to how

many employees within the Department of CGS are currently participating in either one of those education leave programs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you for the question. I might have to get back to the member and the committee on the specific numbers, if they will be patient, but I'll come back to the committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasié. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for committing to follow up with that information.

I've got two further questions under Inuit employment plans for the department. Another very important aspect of achieving a representative workforce is the utilization of transfer assignments to allow current employees to gain much-needed experience. I would like to ask the minister if he would be able to provide some information on the number of Inuit employees within the department that are taking advantage of training opportunities such as transfer assignments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. Going back to his previous question around employees on education leave, this past year, there are three and the number of employees on education leave that are Nunavut Inuit candidates are two.

In terms of the transfer assignments, we have a total of 14 ongoing Inuit employees on developmental transfer assignments and one has successfully been direct appointed. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasié. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, minister. It's very excellent to hear that there are 14 Inuit employees taking advantage of transfer assignments to gain experience.

For my last question, another key aspect of promoting Inuit employment within the department is the utilization of succession planning and mentorships. My final question is: have there been any positions that have been identified for potential succession planning in the current fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wouldn't say that they have been identified *per se*, but this is an area that interests us and we want to continue to build capacity within and there are opportunities for either training or learning plans for our

employees, either career laddering or there are opportunities for coaching, mentoring, and professional development. Those avenues are always open and we try to, again, guide them into succeeding. It's an ongoing work that we're doing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasié. Just to remind members that we are on page J-4. Directorate. Community and Government Services. \$13,108,000. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the deputy minister's office there, the budget was \$760,000 in 2021 and now for 2022-23, it is \$582,000. I know that the operational costs probably didn't go down, so I'll just ask the minister if the deputy minister and the staff may be taking a cut in pay. Thank you.

Chairman: After the recent announcement, Mr. Seeley, I doubt it, but Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, that's not a cut in pay, but there has been some realignment of budgets internally in that particular division, so that reflects that budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister elaborate on "realignment of budgets" so that we know where that money got earmarked to instead? Thank you.

Chairman: I knew that was coming. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. There was a departmental internal realignment of \$140,000, the divisional administrative officer got deactivated, that was for \$95,000, and then senior technical specialist lead was also deactivated for \$120,000, so the net change is \$355,000. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasié. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since these positions were activated, can the minister elaborate on why they were deactivated? Were they not needed? Were they redundant or what was the reason that they were there at one time and now they're not? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: *Mamianaq*, sorry, Mr. Speaker...Mr. Chairman. I'm under the wrong heading here; my apologies.

Under the deputy minister's office, there's a net decrease of \$194,000 and a senior advisor position was deactivated, that's \$125,000, as well as an administrative assistant position for \$85,000. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll ask the same question on those. Were they positions that were not needed anymore? Were they never filled? What was the reasoning for having these positions that they don't need them now? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you will allow my deputy to respond on that. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The two positions, when the new deputy started a year ago, decided to reprofile them towards some other priorities within the department, including employee relations and additional administrative support for the financial services division. The strategic advisory position wasn't one that was viewed as an equal priority to supporting our employees within the department. We changed the strategic reallocation of the positions to better meet our operational needs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Seeley. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Staying on operational matters, I know that one of the current ADM positions has been vacant for almost five years and I think the other one is vacant now too. I think there are no indeterminate positions on there. Can the minister give us an update on the two ADM positions? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the two ADM positions has been filled and the other on local government is under competition, so that's open. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's good to hear because having a position that high up vacant for such a long period of time of five years is not good for anyone in the department. It should have been filled long ago and I'm glad that you're in the process of filling it.

Going on to other matters here, for your 2022-23, one of the priorities, in the second bullet, is "Provide advice on incentivizing the use of Inuit labour in housing construction and maintenance." I'm just curious whether CGS is going to be involved or take over the tendering of Nunavut Housing Corporation Inuit content contracts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, we're not looking at that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sometimes it's good to get short answers, but sometimes it's not. If he can just elaborate on what "incentivizing the use of the Inuit labour force in housing construction" that normally all these years, I know that the housing corporation has managed their own files. Are they working with the housing corporation? Are they going through the contracts? If the minister can elaborate on what that means. I'm all for higher Inuit labour content. I just want to know what the department means by that one line. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's in line with the *Katujjiluta* mandate, CGS is to play a supporting role in advising as well as advocating for incentivized Inuit labour in housing construction as well as the maintenance. We're supporting Nunavut Housing through their processes to ensure that the Inuit content is as high as it can be. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: If I may, Mr. Savikataaq, maybe the minister could elaborate on exactly what some of those discussion topics will be. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is in working with the NHC and other partners. We want to make sure that there are opportunities that we can leverage to maximize Inuit labour. I don't want to really get into the details of things, unless you will allow my deputy to have a bit more in-depth explanation on where things are at on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I'll leave that up to Mr. Savikataaq if he wants to pursue that. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do. I was going to ask if he can elaborate on that again in terms of what exactly is happening. Are you offering more money to the contract? Right now, I believe, with Nunavut Housing Corporation contracts, they have a minimum Inuit content and if they don't meet it, there are consequences. If they meet or exceed it, is there more money being put in from CGS to the housing corporation? Just exactly what is the plan in terms of incentivizing the use of Inuit labour? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for that clarification from the member. The incentivization of the Inuit labour in those housing contracts, the conversations that we are having with Nunavut Housing and other departments include things like the structuring of the contracts and the tenders that are being put out so that they are more likely to be bid on, a manageable size for smaller, local Nunavut firms to be bidding on them, as well as some of the discussions in and around local training programs to identify more local workers or Inuit workers in communities to be employed during the construction of those projects. These conversations have been ongoing.

Our department does have some fairly unique insights into the structuring of contracts and the market in Nunavut in administering the procurement centrally for the rest of the government. Those discussions are underway and we are here to proceed with them for achieving the mandate objectives. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Seeley. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we heard earlier, all the tendering for all the Nunavut Housing Corporation public housing and staff housing units were cancelled and they're in negotiations with the private sector on the next step. Will these incentives be used as part of these negotiation tactics? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. If you will allow my deputy to respond on that again. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Please proceed, Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Increasing Inuit labour has been a major priority for the government. I fully expect that any incentivization of increased Inuit labour standards within the contracts will be included in the ongoing negotiations, including those with housing. Those conversations are underway, including more broadly with other departments on how we can improve the situation and get those numbers up.

That question to housing, I think, would be better suited there, but from our perspective as the procurement department, we're very eager to talk about different ways to include Inuit labour increases in the structuring of the contracts and the general procurement. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I'm asking this department is because it is one of their priorities. That's why I'm asking it. It would be inappropriate for me to ask the Nunavut Housing Corporation on one of the priorities of CGS. Just to clarify that, if you put it in your priorities, then you should be able to explain it. I understand that you want Inuit content up and I understand that, but I'm still not clear on

incentivization. Are there going to be bonuses like in the old days? Are there going to be bonuses paid if they exceed their Inuit content or just exactly what do you mean by “incentivization”? I know you talked about making contractors want to bid on it, but I’m just not getting exactly what they mean. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. We’re not presenting this as an item that we will need money to give bonuses to winning bidders. We’re supporting the housing corporation and others and trying to just find ways where we can make sure that there is a positive outcome that comes from housing construction other than just the builds.

When we’re talking about increasing Inuit employment, we want to improve the local ability to deliver housing and increase the trades knowledge, so there is training involved throughout the build. When there are opportunities when the construction is happening, we want to make sure that it goes well for the Inuit that are involved in the construction projects. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I’m all for having the highest Inuit content of any contract available, just to make that clear, but I’m curious as to why this applies, according to this priority, only to housing construction. Why does it not apply to construction of a new school, building a tank farm, or renovating a school? Why is it specifically just housing construction? Do we not want higher Inuit employment on all construction within Nunavut? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. Of course we do want, across all construction, not just with Housing but also with housing construction, and when we’re talking about the local labour pool, especially what’s available and how we can tap into the resources that are there, that’s what we’re also looking at too in terms of how we can engage the local skills and available resources. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with the minister that we need to and have to get as much local employment as we can with any government contract within the communities because there is limited employment and limited training opportunities in the communities.

I’ll go on to a different project here, a different topic. One of the priorities too is “Review the *Lotteries Act* and proceed with the legislative process to propose potential amendments.” Mr. Speaker, we’re all aware here on social media that there’s a lot of, and I don’t think it’s even a grey area, gambling that’s going on. It’s people buying spots,

people having raffle tickets, and I just want the minister's position on the unregulated gambling that appears to be going on within Nunavut. Thank you.

Chairman: Very good question, Mr. Savikataaq. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we're talking about unregulated, of course that would fall under... . If it's breaking the law, then it would be under the jurisdiction of the RCMP or Justice.

What I can speak of is on regulated. We do have some communities or hamlets that have authority to issue licences for lotteries and so this is also an area that I think ongoing discussions with hamlets and the realities that the member talks about, there are spots and other types of lotteries going on, whether it's unregulated, is there a way where, as a government, as a local government, perhaps they want to regulate things with our support.

Yes, the world is changing and with online, there are many different avenues for lotteries, but we would like to support and make sure that people are doing fundraising go through the proper channels and work with either the hamlet or our Consumer Affairs Division. We have supports there to make those lotteries happen in a lawful way. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I bring this up is because it's not a local hamlet issue. When they sell spots, it's very rarely that one community buys them. Therefore the one community cannot regulate another community. That's why I believe it's the responsibility of the department responsible for gaming and lotteries to deal with it.

I mean, if they're reviewing the Act, is there a possibility here that you won't need a licence and anybody can run a lottery for anything they want? Are we going in that direction? If we're turning a blind eye to what's going on right now and there's a review, will there be revisions so that anyone can sell spots, anyone can run a lottery and you don't need a licence? Is that the direction the department is leaning towards? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would say no at this point, but just in terms of updating this existing legislation, we want to include different advancements in lotteries and provide options for fundraisers around registered charitable and non-profit orgs, having conversations on how, but also with that... .

I guess to the member's question around if there's illegal gambling occurring, if this is the case, then I would suggest that they connect with the RCMP when it's unlawful. Right now we don't play a role on the enforcement of lotteries or unlicensed lotteries.

Through this review of the *Lotteries Act*, I think we're looking at all options around how gaming occurs in the territory. Things are changing, as I said, with online or other means. I can't say that we're going in that direction, but we're looking at the different options and working with stakeholders throughout the process. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With the current *Lotteries Act*, when someone is selling a spot or a raffle for a snowmobile or an ATV or a boat and motor, is it legal or illegal under the current Act? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If they don't have a licence that's under the legislation, the legislation only speaks to where they have a licence, then they can sell a raffle, a ticket, or a spot or what have you. That's where it is. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: I won't even bother intervening. Mr. Savikataaq, go ahead.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a very clear question; it's easy to answer. Under the current *Lotteries Act*, is it legal or illegal to hold a raffle or sell spots if you don't have a licence to do so? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you. If you don't have a licence, then it is illegal. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: With Mr. Savikataaq's permission, why would anyone bother getting a licence then? Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Sorry, your mic goes off for a bit. Can you repeat?

Chairman: Thank you. If it's only legal if you have a licence, why would anyone bother getting a licence? Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you. Basically you get the licence to do it lawfully and otherwise, then it's not, but it's to provide also structure for non-profit orgs or other fundraisers when you have to use a community hall or other venues and/or radio stations. That's my response. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thought it was clear, but just for clarity, under the current *Lotteries Act*, if you do not have a licence to run a raffle, which is selling spots, it is currently illegal. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Correct. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to comment on this, I understand it when there are fundraisers that a blind eye is turned, like someone wants to fundraise to send someone to a funeral or to a sick relative, I could sort of understand that is a grey area.

When someone is actually running a raffle to sell their own equipment, whether it be a snowmobile, an ATV, a boat, or a parka, in my opinion, it is not a grey area. If the department will continue to turn a blind eye to it, then maybe the legislation should be changed so that it's legal to do that. I'm not advocating for either side, but when you make legislation, it's there for a reason. It's there to be enforceable.

Currently right now it's a free-for-all in terms of online selling of stuff within Nunavut. It's not even within Nunavut; it's out of jurisdictions too, which is much harder to regulate or follow. I know that technology is changing. This Act was probably written when the Internet was not so prevalent, where you could just put on there, "Okay, I'm selling spots for this, you buy \$20 a square, there are 100 squares, and I'll draw a ticket and that person will get it."

It's just a comment that the department can't keep turning a blind eye. Either enforce the law or change the law, one or the other. Thank you. That's it.

Chairman: Thank you. I took that as a comment, but I'm going to ask Minister Joanasié to respond to that, please. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. This is where the idea is to review this Act and, again, to get all the stakeholders involved, given the new realities that are faced and talking about exactly some of the things that the member brings up. Some communities than others have a larger base for fundraising, so they garner more attention. Some lotteries I have seen open it up wide, not just within Nunavut or even within one community but across. This is an area that we want to continue to make improvements on how lotteries and gaming occur in the territory. I look forward to the potential amendments, with the feedback from, of course, members here as well as publicly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (Mr. Savikataaq): Thank you, minister. I wanted more TV time, so I'm on this side now.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With the Chair's indulgence, I would like to follow up on his line of questioning.

Earlier in one of the responses, the minister mentioned that as these types of lotteries are deemed illegal and reported to the RCMP, there are a couple of things within that that drew some questions in my mind; one, obviously, a lot of our communities are very small, we all know each other, running to the RCMP for somebody who is trying to fundraise to send a family member to go visit a sick family member, to me, is not a good use of RCMP resources. I would just like to echo Mr. Savikataaq's comment that I think this does need to be worked on in the legislation. I do appreciate the minister's comments on those lines, so I'll leave that as a comment.

I do have a question and I'm going to go back to the business plan. Mr. Savikataaq highlighted a concern that was raised at some of the standing committee meetings. I know the one on social wellness, it came up a number of times with a number of different departments and it sounds like it came up in the other committee meetings as well too. There seems to be a lot of crossover when you're talking about the departments' responsibilities.

Now, Mr. Savikataaq was talking about the use of Inuit labour. On that same topic, in the third bullet it says, "...renovate or repurpose existing buildings for use in the housing continuum." Again, I find it confusing to members when we're asking questions to a department whose responsibility lies where.

I know that the Department of Community and Government Services is not in the housing business. That's under the purview of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, but is there some type of project or a shared program or a shared discussion with the Nunavut Housing Corporation to incorporate housing into other infrastructure projects, or what role is Community and Government Services playing in this, or was this simply a cut-and-paste exercise for the business plans from a number of different departments? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. We thank the member for his questions. CGS, we are involved on the surplus side of government assets and so in that sense, we do play a role around existing facilities and/or when we're trying to... . If a government department doesn't have any more use on a building, let's say, and it needs to be brought up to code and another department would like to take it up for their purposes, a program or service, then we do play a role in that. It's another priority area where we play a supporting role but also making sure that our resources are well used and in partnership with other departments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, just on the same line on page 189, right at the very beginning of the core business, the department's responsibilities, it stated, "Expedite the construction of regional long-term care facilities with capabilities to meet the needs of Nunavummiut with complex care needs." As we just had the budget released today and we previously approved the capital budget, there were no new dollars anywhere in either of those two budgets for anything to do with long-term care facilities other than the continued project in Rankin Inlet.

When I look at the priorities and responsibilities, I know that would typically fall under the Department of Health to move forward a project like that. Has there been a business case submitted? Is this something that Community and Government Services is looking at doing? I'll just expand on that a little bit. In the next bullet it says, "Expand and/or renovate existing continuing care facilities." I would just like to ask what role in this fiscal year is the Department of Community and Government Services playing in those projects. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you will allow my deputy to respond on that. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the member for the questions. I think that at the heart of the questions that the member has raised is that within the business plan and perhaps more importantly, on a day-to-day operational basis, Community and Government Services is currently positioned as a central agency to provide services to other GN departments and agencies.

The terms like expediting projects and the other references the member made, our efforts are to enhance the work with the client departments, those are the owners of the projects or approve projects, and to provide additional services and support in the early stages of the discussions when they are moving to developing the business cases or when they are pursuing longer term strategies.

We're the service department that provides those technical insights, the different procurement solutions, to those client departments when those needs are identified by the client department to CGS. From a service delivery perspective, one of our priorities is to ensure that we are providing the supports required to the client departments specifically for the projects that they have identified, the approved projects that they have identified, as well as some of the longer term strategic initiatives identified by those projects within their respective plans.

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

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It did and I thank Mr. Seeley for that response. It does lead me to kind of my next question then. The way it was just described is that the client department, using that term, would come forward to Community and Government Services and request their assistance on renovating or repurposing existing buildings to use in the housing continuum or to look at the long-term care facilities.

In those examples that are listed in the business plan right now, have there been any initial discussions with the Nunavut Housing Corporation or with the Department of Health on the two specific initiatives that were brought forward by Mr. Savikataaq and myself? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sorry, can you repeat the last part of your question, please?

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes, repeat your question, please.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you. Just with the two topics that were raised regarding the Nunavut Housing Corporation and their Inuit employment as well as increasing the access to other projects as well as the Department of Health regarding long-term care facilities, whether expanding, renovating, or building new, have already been discussed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. For the continuing care facilities, expanding and/or renovate, we have been discussing or working with Health as well as the Nunavut Housing Corporation. As a supporting role, CGS would support engagements as they are raised by the lead, Health, and contribute accordingly. Yes, we have been talking with Health around that. As for the housing continuum, ED&T is also involved as well as Housing on those fronts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that response. I'll leave the details to the appropriate appearances.

On page 3 of the minister's opening comments at the very top, it talks about community and government services staff providing vital support to communities during states of emergency, such as the critical role and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, personal protective equipment, and the rapid antigen tests. I can attest with personal experience on how engaged staff at Community and Government Services were throughout the pandemic that we're still currently in.

That being said, it does talk about, on the first page, with the procurement side of things and obviously with the easing of COVID measures and obviously the reduction of many planned projects that were mentioned here yesterday and today, and it sounds like more and more seem to be coming out of the woodwork as tenders are cancelled and/or postponed, I guess, the workload of some staff is going to be dramatically affected.

Now, I know Community and Government Services has struggled in the past with the number of projects that have been put forward and that has been a reason brought up in the past on some of the delays in some projects as well as some of the capital carryovers.

With this kind of a unique occurrence of staff that have been utilized with the COVID response that their role is diminishing, with the decrease in projects that are being brought forward likely in the next couple of years, is the department adequately staffed to cover the existing need and if it's an overstaffing, are there other projects or other duties that these staff members could be undertaking to accomplish even more for Nunavummiut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: There is no doubt that we need to hire more project managers, but there are different teams involved, procurement as well as other divisions throughout the capital process. Different teams work in conjunction and make sure that within the current workforce that we have filled that we try to advance on our projects.

Yes, there are hindrances such as the bids come in over budget, but I think that's an area that is a hot topic not just within Nunavut but around the country and elsewhere. I think that has to do with the economy and the supply chains have been affected.

Going back to the member's question, we need more project managers, so it's an area that my department is well aware of and trying to get more capacity in that area. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure that will be a topic that will be coming up many times over the next few sessions.

On that note, Mr. Chairman, I would like to recognize the clock and make a motion to report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. You lose.

>> *Laughter*

The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials from the witness table.

Speaker: ...(no audio)...Mr. Savikataaq.

Item 22: Report of the Committee of the Whole

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

Speaker: There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Hickes. The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

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

Item 23. Third Reading of Bills. 24. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 24: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Orders of the Day* for May 27:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Replies to Budget Address
11. Petitions
12. Responses to Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motions

16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills

17. Motions

18. First Reading of Bills

19. Second Reading of Bills

- Bill 2
- Bill 3
- Bill 4
- Bill 5
- Bill 6
- Bill 7

20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Bill 1

21. Report of the Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker: This House stands adjourned until Friday, May 27, at 9 a.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:59*

Speaker: Item 22. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Orders of the Day* for March 7:

24. Prayer
25. Ministers' Statements
26. Members' Statements
27. Returns to Oral Questions
28. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
29. Oral Questions
30. Written Questions
31. Returns to Written Questions
32. Replies to Opening Address
33. Petitions
34. Responses to Petitions
35. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
36. Tabling of Documents
37. Notices of Motions
38. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
39. Motions
40. First Reading of Bills

41. Second Reading of Bills
42. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
43. Report of the Committee of the Whole
44. Third Reading of Bills
45. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

