

NUNAVUT HANSARD

UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT

MONDAY, MAY 30, 2022

IQALUIT, NUNAVUT

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Beauchesne's 6th edition, citation 55

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Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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Hon. Tony Akoak
(Gjoa Haven)

Hon. David Akeegok
(Quttiktuq)
*Minister of Environment; Minister of
Economic Development and
Transportation; Minister of Energy*

Joelie Kaernerik
(Amittuq)

Karen Nutarak
(Tununiq)

Mary Killiktee
(Uqqummiut)

Daniel Qavvik
(Hudson Bay)

Hon. P.J. Akeegok
(Iqaluit-Niaqunngu)
*Premier; Minister of Executive and
Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister
responsible for Immigration; Minister
responsible for Indigenous Affairs;
Minister responsible for the Utility Rates
Review Council*

Hon. Lorne Kusugak
(Rankin Inlet South)
*Minister of Finance, Chair of the
Financial Management Board;
Minister responsible for the
Nunavut Housing Corporation*

Hon. Joanna Quassa
(Aggu)
*Minister of Culture and
Heritage; Minister of
Languages; Minister responsible
for Seniors*

Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Inagayuk Quqqiaq
(Netsilik)

Bobby Anavilok
(Kugluktuk)

Hon. John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)
*Minister of Health; Minister
responsible for Suicide Prevention*

Alexander Sammurtok
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield
Inlet)

Janet Brewster
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Hon. Pamela Gross
(Cambridge Bay)
*Deputy Premier; Minister of Education;
Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic
College*

Solomon Malliki
(Aivilik)
*Deputy Chair, Committee of the
Whole*

Joe Savikataaq
(Arviat South)
*Deputy Chair, Committee of the
Whole*

George Hickey
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)
*Deputy Speaker and Chair of the
Committee of the Whole*

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)
*Minister of Family Services;
Minister responsible for
Homelessness; Minister of
Human Resources;
Minister responsible for the Status
of Women; Minister responsible
for the Workers' Safety and
Compensation Commission*

Hon. Craig Simailak
(Baker Lake)
*Minister of Justice; Minister
responsible for Labour; Minister
responsible for the Qulliq
Energy Corporation*

Hon. David Joanasi
(South Baffin)
*Government House Leader; Minister of
Community and Government Services*

Officers

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Michel Albert

Hansard Production
Innirvik Support Services

Box 1200

Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0
Tel (867) 975-5000 Fax (867) 975-5190 Toll-Free (877) 334-7266
Website: www.assembly.nu.ca

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Monday, May 30, 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 Joanasie, Mr. Joeline Kaerner, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Hon. John Main, Mr. Solomon Malliki, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Mr. Daniel Qavvik, Hon. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Inagayuk Quqqiaq, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 13:30*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Tony Akoak): Welcome to everyone. I ask the Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok, to lead us in prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker: Welcome, everyone. Item 2. Ministers' Statements. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 016 – 6(2): Meeting on Arctic Security and Sovereignty

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Good afternoon. I say "good afternoon" to my colleagues and Nunavummiut, especially my constituents in Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the meeting I had with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Minister of National Defence Anita Anand, Northwest Territories Premier Caroline Cochrane, and Yukon Premier Sandy Silver.

As you know, in March, Premier Cochrane, Silver, and I sent a joint letter to the Prime Minister outlining our concerns over arctic security and sovereignty. We noted that any decisions regarding the Arctic should be made in consultation with the people of the north. In addition, we outlined the need to invest in social infrastructure to strengthen our communities considering the renewed threat to arctic sovereignty.

On April 4 we had an opportunity to discuss these concerns with Prime Minister Trudeau and Minister Anand.

In that meeting, I joined the other northern premiers in outlining the importance of building strong, resilient communities and stable infrastructure in asserting sovereignty in the north. We discussed our shared commitment to ensuring northern and arctic communities remain thriving, strong, and safe. We also stressed the needs for investments in housing, infrastructure, health care and mental health, and climate change.

The Prime Minister thanked our governments for our solidarity with and for the support of Ukraine and its people in the face of Russia's invasion. He also noted that the Government of Canada remains committed to supporting the health, security, and prosperity of the Arctic, while defending Canadian sovereignty and upholding regional security.

Mr. Speaker, at that meeting both the Prime Minister and Minister Anand reaffirmed their commitment to continuing to work in partnership with the territorial governments on addressing arctic security and sovereignty. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Minister's Statement 017 – 6(2): Record Year for Reliability of Power

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Good afternoon, colleagues, and the people of Baker Lake, good afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to inform my colleagues that the Qulliq Energy Corporation's maintenance program is paying off. In the 2021-22 fiscal year the corporation recorded its best year for reliability in the history of Nunavut's solely owned utility.

On average, customers across the territory experienced fewer power outages and for shorter periods of time. Compared to the previous fiscal year, the corporation reduced the amount of power outages customers experience by more than half, from approximately seven power outages in 2020-21 to three power outages in 2021-22. The Qulliq Energy Corporation also reduced the duration of power outages a customer experiences on average from approximately six hours in 2020-21 to two hours in 2021-22.

Mr. Speaker, this has been accomplished due to the efforts of the Qulliq Energy Corporation's dedicated staff who aim to provide superior customer service. By implementing positive changes on how our electrical systems are operated and maintained, the corporation was able to simultaneously improve on maintenance planning and scheduling, leading to more effective asset management. This has led to significantly more engine availability, improved distribution equipment performance, and ultimately reduced service interruption frequency and duration for the average Qulliq Energy Corporation customer.

While we are excited to share this historical moment, the corporation continues to target areas requiring greater attention and is working to identify and address areas within Nunavut's electrical systems with below average performance. This crucial work will take place as warmer weather approaches and the Qulliq Energy Corporation completes

repairs, upgrades, and maintenance to power plants and power line systems. This work is required to ensure that customers have a safe and reliable power supply all year long.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the corporation's achievement in acquiring a 99.98 percent reliability rating and most importantly, providing excellent customer service to Nunavummiut across the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Quassa.

Minister's Statement 018 – 6(2): 2021 Qilaut Album Launch Concerts

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also say “good day” to my colleagues and members of my community who are listening to the proceedings. They are unable to watch the televised proceedings at the moment, so I say “hello” to them on the radio.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to update my colleagues on the recent 2021 Qilaut Album launch concerts that took place on May 14 here in Iqaluit. These events were an opportunity for the winning artists to share their music with Iqalummiut and celebrate Inuktut.

Mr. Speaker, Qilaut is the Department of Culture and Heritage's annual Inuktut song writing contest. The purpose of the contest is to celebrate our vibrant Inuktut music scene and inspire the creation of more original music in Inuktut. These winners were chosen by the public out of 13 submissions from last year's Qilaut contest in 2021. Due to COVID-19, my department had to delay the concert by one year.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the 2021 Qilaut theme was “Quviasuutiqarniq.” The concert included performances centred on this theme by the 2021 Qilaut contest winners. The event was a family-friendly public gathering, and everyone was encouraged to wear masks. Attendees were also given copies of the 2021 Qilaut album which featured songs from contest participants as well as other Qilaut-themed merchandise.

(interpretation) I would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped to organize this event and make it a success. Our communities are home to many outstanding artists and this was a great opportunity to share their talent.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, this year's Qilaut 2022 Song Writing Contest is anticipated to be launched in July. In the coming weeks we will be choosing a theme for the contest. When the contest is launched, I encourage all artists to participate by submitting their original songs in Inuktut for a chance to win. This is a chance to be creative and express joy through music, while celebrating our culture and language as Inuit.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I encourage Nunavummiut to promote and celebrate Inuktitut every day and ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating this successful event and everyone who took part. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Minister's Statement 019 – 6(2): Gjoa Haven Fire Response

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

Mr. Speaker, the Qariariit Building in Gjoa Haven was built in 1999 and, since division, has served as a central office site for Government of Nunavut employees living and working in Gjoa Haven. Sadly, on March 26 of this year, the Qariariit Office Building in Gjoa Haven was lost in a fire.

Mr. Speaker, the Gjoa Haven Fire Department fought the fire for well over 10 hours. No lives were lost in the fire. However, the building and its contents were a total loss in the end. This loss was felt by the community of Gjoa Haven and by Nunavummiut served by the departments located in the building, including Economic Development and Transportation, Justice, Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Family Services, and the Legal Services Board of Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the cause of the fire and long-term plan to replace the asset are still under review and development. Today I would like to like to share a little about the work done by the Department of Community and Government Services' Informatics and Information Technology Team in response to the fire that destroyed a key asset in the community and eliminated all network and telephone connectivity for GN offices, schools, and health centre in the community.

Mr. Speaker, within 72 hours of the fire, the Community and Government Services response team was on site in the community working with NorthwesTel, local partners, and client departments to identify new central server space to begin the restoration of services in Gjoa Haven. This included preparing equipment and supplies to establish a new Local Area Network room with proper electrical and communications infrastructure and cooling equipment, splice fibre, run external and internal cabling, and to build the primary servers.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to share with members that within six days of the fire, my department had successfully restored network services to Government of Nunavut departments and agencies in Gjoa Haven.

Mr. Speaker, the loss of the office building in Gjoa Haven was a tragedy and my department is currently reviewing next steps related to site restoration and eventual replacement of the building. Today I would like to recognize the hard work of the local firefighters, community members, and Government of Nunavut staff that contributed to the immediate response to the fire. It is at times like these that Piliqatigiinniq and Qanuqtuurniq are so important. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Minister's Statement 020 – 6(2): Amaaqaarniq Education Leave Program Success Stories

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to share the Amaaqaarniq Education Leave Program's most recent success stories with my colleagues and all Nunavummiut.

As many of you know, the Department of Human Resources' Amaaqaarniq Education Leave Program has offered Inuit employees of the Government of Nunavut and its public bodies an opportunity to advance their post-secondary education.

(interpretation ends) Specifically, eligible Nunavut Inuit who wish to pursue a professional degree or accreditation, trade, or apprenticeship programs in demand and consistent with the Government of Nunavut's Master Inuit Employment Plan can apply. Since the program's inception in 2017, we have seen ten successful graduates across various post-secondary studies, and we currently have 23 Inuit employees advancing their post-secondary education across numerous fields.

Mr. Speaker, in 2020, Marygalak Ashoona Bergin started her Amaaqaarniq journey to obtain a Psychology Degree through Algoma University. Through hard work and dedication, Ms. Bergin completed her post-secondary education on December 31, 2021.

I am also pleased to announce that Ronnie Suluk entered the program in January 2021 and recently completed his Diploma in Business Administration with Honours at Herzing College.

Mr. Speaker, it is with pride that I ask all Members of this House to join me in congratulating our most recent Amaaqaarniq Education Leave Program graduates. Congratulations to Ms. Bergin and Mr. Suluk. We wish you all the best in your careers with the Government of Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Minister's Statement 021 – 6(2): Smoke-free Places Mass Media Awareness Campaign

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues and the people of Arviat and Whale Cove.

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow on May 31, communities across Nunavut will celebrate World No Tobacco Day. This day highlights the harms and risks associated with tobacco use.

(interpretation ends) Amendments to the *Tobacco Control and Smoke-Free Places Act* came into effect in 2018 and introduced two new smoking laws: smoke-free places and buffer zones. Smoke-free places include health facilities, schools, playgrounds, daycares, arenas, sports fields, or at public events. It is illegal to smoke, vape, or use cannabis on the grounds of these places. All other public buildings and workplaces, like stores and office buildings, have smoke-free buffer zones of nine metres of any entrance to the building. These changes help protect Nunavummiut from second-hand smoke.

The Department of Health has developed a mass media smoke-free places campaign that will launch World No Tobacco Day and run for one year. The campaign includes posters for public buildings, information cards, videos for the Nunavut Quits website, NU Quits, social media posts, and community radio shows.

Community health representatives across the territory have been provided with tool kits to help speak to Nunavummiut about smoke-free places and buffer zones. Similar tool kits have also been prepared for schools and health centres. As always, community health representatives are available to support community members in their effort to quit tobacco.

It is up to all of us to be leaders in our communities by following the law and making sure others are too. Working together, we can protect Nunavummiut from second-hand smoke.

Uqaqtitsijii, if you or other Nunavummiut want support quitting tobacco, call the Nunavut Quit Line at 1-866-368-7848 or visit www.nuquits.gov.nu.ca. The service is free and confidential. Counsellors can assist you in Inuktitut, English, Inuinnaqtun, and French. You can also visit your local health centre to speak privately with a health care provider. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Thank you. It's so good not to be a smoker.

>> *Laughter*

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

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 029 – 6(2): Happy Birthday to Mother

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to say “happy birthday” to my last remaining parent, Ragelee Miluktuarjuk Angnakok. Happy birthday, mom. I'm very proud of you. You are now 82 years old. I am very proud of you and after my late father left you, you sort of were lower for a while, but then you have been able to raise yourself up and you have made it to 82. I love you.

Many people know her and she knows many people in Northern Quebec as well, my late father and my mother. Just so everyone knows, my mother is now living in the elders' home in Iqaluit. I just wanted to add that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 030 – 6(2): 2022 High School Graduates in Constituency

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to acknowledge nine great individuals who completed grade 12 and received their diplomas and in the constituency of Netsilik.

Mr. Speaker, they are: from Kugaaruk, George Nasalik, Janelle Niptayok, Courtney Apsaktaun, Joseph Porter, Sylvia Kayasark, Karlene Inuksaq, Henry Angutingungniq, Brett Kayasark; and from Taloyoak, Pierrette Karoo.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud and happy for these nine individuals. Mr. Speaker, I believe in a lot of great possibilities and these nine individuals achieved their goal of completing grade 12 the other day. It was on May 28 that they celebrated their graduation and I have seen pictures on social media, very beautiful pictures, and I am very proud of you all. The sky is the limit and I'm sure you all have a bright future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Rankin Inlet South, Mr. Kusugak.

Member's Statement 031 – 6(2): Rankin Inlet Fishing Derbies

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If my colleague's mother is watching these proceedings, I too wish her a very happy birthday.

Mr. Speaker, during this week just past, including the weekend, the residents of Rankin Inlet are ardent fishers, who like fishing, so a fishing derby was held where many residents took part, for the lake trout derby, some participants caught fish over four feet long, and these were giant fish, huge trout.

Just over this weekend, there was also an arctic cod derby held in Rankin Inlet. I was sent pictures of cod fishers completely filling up our local inlet shoreline. Many residents participated, so I am quite grateful to the organizers who plan out these events, Mr. Speaker, as they have already started planning for next year's derbies by laying out a timeline of fundraising games and potential prizes.

For residents in Rankin Inlet, on their behalf, I thank the fishing derby committee deeply as their derbies allow many residents to go outside to partake in activities, as many residents take the time to be included, and nowadays, people even travel in to be included to go fishing as well.

The barren grounds near Rankin Inlet contain many lakes, many of which houses huge fish specimen, but not all fish are big, as I catch the small ones usually. I wish to thank everyone who was included in the derbies that were successful and no accidents occurred in these events. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Gross.

Member's Statement 032 – 6(2): Loss of Youth Centre in Cambridge Bay

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. Good day to Iqaluktuuttarmiut and Nunavummiut and our colleagues here.

I would like to rise today in appreciation of all of our volunteers in the recent tragic fire that devastated our community and the loss of our youth centre.

Our fire crew that I would like to thank are Keith Morrison, Brian Wilson, Shawn Marriot, Aubrey Greenly, Jorgen Sim, David Garrison, Regine Julian, Derrick Elias, and Wayne Gregory.

I would also like to thank the hamlet and municipal staff, the QEC staff, the RCMP, HIKU Projects, and Jago for assisting in this tragic fire.

I'm sorry if I missed anyone, but *quana* to you all for your dedication and efforts to this past recent fire. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 033 – 6(2): Congratulations to Brother and Happy Birthday to Granddaughter

Hon. Joanna Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, wish a happy birthday to our colleague's mother, and I wish to speak to two matters today.

First, I want to acknowledge with pride the fact that one of my brothers got married, George Qaunaq and Jennifer McGee, and I am pleased to announce their marriage and wish them the best in congratulating them. Even though our mother was unable to attend this event, the nuptials took place, and they were both heartily welcomed, so thank you for that.

Secondly, the other issue of note is that one of my grandchildren is celebrating their birthday, 15 years young, Ms. Chloe Amelia Irqittuq Quassa. She just celebrated her 15th birthday. Although she is getting bigger, we still call her "Puny" since she was so small before. Thank you. That's what I wanted to say.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Member's Statement 034 – 6(2): Correspondence from Isaac Shooyook Regarding Substance Abuse

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Later today I wish to table a letter from an elder residing in Arctic Bay, Mr. Shooyook, who sat in the Assembly, who submitted his personal concerns.

Part of the concerns he expressed are also part of what I share, namely, concerns about the abuse of alcohol as well as what do they call it today? Cannabis? He expressed his opinion that these substances were being abused as he wrote in his letter which he wanted to share with all sitting MLAs.

I wanted to share it with my colleagues, therefore I will be tabling it as he was earnest in what he said, and to residents who are abusing alcohol or cannabis, I ask that you pay more attention to the impacts that they may have, as they become much easier to consume due to their ready availability.

I do not think we can return to the past, and it may be that we cannot stop this consumption today, nonetheless, everything is readily available and much of it comes in via the airlines, and with that in mind, please be responsible in your usage or consumption of these substances, and remember your families and potential impacts, so I want constituents to be careful.

I want to provide this perspective which I will be tabling later this afternoon. I kind of forgot this, but remembered it just now, that our colleague's mother living in Grise Fiord, to please enjoy her birthday today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 035 – 6(2): Baker Lake College Graduates

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, just recently, last week in Baker Lake, there was a graduation event in our local community learning centre, where students who were graduating their courses, and whom I wish to acknowledge.

I would like to acknowledge and recognize the three (interpretation ends) office administration course (interpretation) graduates: Angel Aksawnee, Daisy Kataluk, and Tonya Aksawnee, and (interpretation ends) there were also the adult basic education essential skills course graduates: Rebecca Arngna'naaq and Rayna Kubluitok.

I applaud your continued education. I hope that you guys continue to take some more courses and get into the career you wish to get into. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Member's Statement 036 – 6(2): Iqaluit Cod Fishing Derby Volunteers

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me. I rise today as just over this weekend here in Iqaluit as well, there was a cod fishing derby that was open to residents and many Inuit participated with over 850 participants. I too participated, with my family as we were able to spend the day outdoors.

This derby would not have been possible without these volunteers, and I wish to acknowledge them. First of all, Malaiyah Lucassie, Tooma Natsiq, Lina Hutchings, Martha Nowdlak, Ben Kovic, and Sam Tilley. I am very appreciative of their efforts and proud of these individuals.

Although Iqaluit is a huge place, we are still able to get together in such numbers as families and these are volunteers who spend a lot of time outside away from their own families and I'm very glad and appreciate their hard work, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for South Baffin, Mr. Joanasie.

Member's Statement 037 – 6(2): 2022 Toonik Tyme Snowmobile Race

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the residents of Kimmirut and Kinngait.

Mr. Speaker, during the spring we were able to continue the legacy of the Toonik Tyme festival, which took place this spring here in Iqaluit, and further, Mr. Speaker, during this event, one of the favourite events was the snowmobile race that goes to Kimmirut, and is followed by many people throughout the region, so I too wish to voice my gratitude to the volunteers who take part in Kimmirut.

They are essential to the success of this event, so Mr. Speaker, the snowmobile races continue the race with a small sled with emergency supplies and based on the news relayed from the volunteers no participants were hurt in this year's event which makes it even more pleasurable.

This year, on April 15 I was able to be in Kimmirut on the ice awaiting racers to clock in, and it was very exciting for the community of Kimmirut. We encourage that this continues on every year. I again would like to thank the community of Kimmirut, who are very welcoming and receptive to outsiders coming from Iqaluit during the games.

The racecourse was very exciting but was followed quite successfully. There were many people on both sides, and the weather was absolutely beautiful during the race, so I would like to recognize Kimmirut and also local volunteers in Iqaluit for ensuring the success of the race. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

Member's Statement 038 – 6(2): Recent Marriages in Sanikiluaq

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues, Nunavummiut, (interpretation) and my constituents in Sanikiluaq.

First of all, I too wish a happy birthday to Mary's mother. Ms. Quassa reminded me that last week, there were also weddings held in our community recently where four couples held them during the week.

I would like to recognize Danny Paul Eyaituk, Annie Eyaituk, as well as Nick and Mary Appaqaq, Joanie and Maryjane Kittosuk, Davidee and Sarahsee Oqaituk.

Mr. Speaker, for these last two years now, due to pandemic measures enacted, we had no clergy visiting our community. I would like to thank the clergy who were able to come to

our community recently. There were weddings and baptisms, quite a few actually as it included many children born in these last two years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. I, too, wish to make a statement applying to my personal connections, as I want to also announce one of my grandchildren's birthdays who is turning 10 years old, and although she just turned 10 this year, I have not been home for the past nine years as I have been away during these years.

I have been to the previous year's birthday, but it was only that year out of the ten that she is celebrating today. I wish her an awesome day today and hope she enjoys herself. I love you very much and wish you many more birthdays in the future. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

(interpretation ends) Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

Return to Oral Question 016 – 6(2): Sanikiluaq Municipal Office

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to supplement an answer I gave during question period on May 25. The Member for Hudson Bay requested information on the status of the tender process for the construction of the new municipal office in Sanikiluaq.

Mr. Speaker, I had stated that we approved \$13 million for the project in the winter sitting of the Legislative Assembly. We approved an additional \$5,271,000 in the winter sitting to the existing \$5,150,000 budget to increase the total project budget to \$13,421,000. The bids came in high and additional funding will be needed to proceed with this project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerck.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to the people of Amittuq and Nunavummiut, as well as my colleagues.

Firstly, prior to recognizing anyone, since today is the Member for Uqqummiut's mother, I wish her a wonderful birthday today, and I envy her as she still has parents. When you become parentless, you sometimes envy those who still have them.

Mr. Speaker, what I wanted to speak to, which includes acknowledgement as the person I am most proud of is my spouse, Samantha Morgan, my mother, Jarred Javagiak, my father, Thelma, and my sister-in-law, Shania Morgan. On their behalf I try to work hard and maintain my professionalism, as they are sometimes the only ones that I depend on.

To our youth, I ask that if your parents are still living, to take the time to visit them as parents, we miss our children sometimes, and I appreciate that you acknowledged me, where I could acknowledge my family who are here in the Visitors' Gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Oral Questions.

Members, please note that the Member for Tununiq will be absent from the House for today and tomorrow.

Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 049 – 6(2): Kivalliq Airport Terminal Buildings

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, Nunavummiut and the people of Naujaat and Coral Harbour.

Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, and they concern the issue of airport terminal buildings in the Kivalliq.

(interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, his department issued a request for tender on March 29, 2022 for the construction of three new airport terminal buildings in Naujaat, Chesterfield Inlet, and Whale Cove. The tender closed in early May. Information published by the government indicates that a total of five bids were submitted.

During last Friday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly, the minister indicated that his department is currently "in deep discussions" with Transport Canada concerning the tender.

Can the minister clarify what specific support his department is seeking from Transport Canada in respect to the tender? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think, throughout all of Canada and the federal government is quite aware, that all the capital projects, the escalating costs

have driven really high really fast after COVID. This is one of the things that we do need to talk to our federal partners because with the projects that the member raised, we have a 75-25 partnership with them on building those airport terminal buildings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you, minister, for your response. (interpretation ends) On August 9, 2021 the federal Minister of Transport announced “a top-up to the initial major investment of \$22.5 million in 2018 for five airport terminals in Naujaat, Kugluktuk, Kimmirut, Whale Cove and Chesterfield Inlet.”

During last Friday’s sitting of the Legislative Assembly, the minister indicated that “all of our projects are coming in at a very high bid at the moment and these projects are no different.”

Mr. Speaker, we know that inflation and supply chain problems are having an impact across the country. Can the minister clarify what specific factors are increasing the bid prices for the Kivalliq airport terminal building projects? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With all the bids, everything has gone up, whether it is lumber, metal, just about every piece of it, including labour, as they’re having a difficult time finding labour to do their capital projects. There are a number of factors that are driving the price up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for that response. (interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, the Rankin Inlet Airport serves as the regional transportation hub for the Kivalliq.

The Legislative Assembly previously approved funding for the replacement of the airport terminal building, and additional dollars were also provided by the federal government under the National Trade Corridors Fund.

Can the minister confirm if the Rankin Inlet airport terminal building replacement project is on schedule and on budget? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is on schedule and we’re going to try to proceed with that. Whether it is on budget is another matter and another matter that our department is talking to Transport Canada to figure out how we can get more funds into

this project. Once we have figured out how it's going to happen, I'll be reporting to the House. Currently I have written a letter to the chair of the standing committee on the explanations of what we're doing on the Rankin Inlet Airport. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 050 – 6(2): Qikiqtarjuaq Marine Infrastructure

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to better understand as some of the infrastructure projects are not proceeding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, and they concern the issue of Qikiqtarjuaq's new marine infrastructure.

On August 4, 2021 the Government of Canada announced \$40 million in federal funding towards the construction of a new deep water port in Qikiqtarjuaq. Earlier this year, the Legislative Assembly approved capital funding towards this important project, and I was very proud to have voted in favour of the capital budget.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance's Budget Address of last week confirmed that \$320,000 will be allocated during the 2022-23 fiscal year to initiate the new Qikiqtarjuaq marine facility.

(interpretation) Can the minister confirm when the formal contribution agreement for this funding will be signed between the federal and territorial governments? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We recently signed the agreements and the planning work on the facility has begun. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you for that response. (interpretation ends) It is my understanding that the Qikiqtani Inuit Association will be involved in the planning for the new Qikiqtarjuaq marine facility, given its importance to supporting the community's goal of participating more fully in the blue economy."

Can the minister clarify what specific resources will be contributed by the Qikiqtani Inuit Association in respect to this project? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I should clarify; the funding agreement has been signed on the government's capital funds but the Transport Canada agreement has not been signed yet, but will be signed soon.

For Qikiqtani Inuit Association's role on this particular project, we sought for their letter of support and we received that, and that is the extent that has been done for this in terms of a relationship with Qikiqtani. There is a lot more that is outside of the scope that will need to get done and that is something that we are going to continue to work on with Qikiqtani Inuit Association. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that response. I want to have open lines of communication. (interpretation ends) Over the past week, Members of the Legislative Assembly have learned that a number of tenders for major capital projects have been cancelled, which will result in delays for a number of important facilities.

Can the minister clarify what actions his department will take to address the cost and supply chain issues that have been impacting other capital projects? (interpretation)
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a program department we are very concerned and I will continue to work Community and Government Services minister, along with finance and all of cabinet. I believe as cabinet ministers we are all committed to finding a solution because our current way of doing things is the factor, and those are the things that we are looking at in terms of how we get our projects delivered. It's a very good question and it's a very difficult complex question that needs to get answered. We are all committed as cabinet ministers to try and get those solutions and I thank the member for questioning on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 051 – 6(2): Sanikiluaq's Daycare Needs

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, both of the day cares in Sanikiluaq were closed down since December 2021. I would like to thank the minister and her staff for working with the community to finally open one of the day cares after a long five months. It is greatly appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, without adequate daycare spaces, many of our young parents cannot attend school and in some cases essential services workers cannot go to work because they have to stay home with their children.

Can the minister provide an update on what steps her department is taking to ensure that Sanikiluaq's second daycare will also be able to open in the near future? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker, and *quana* to our colleague for the question. I'm pleased to note that your community does have one daycare space open after having two facilities closed in the recent months. Having a space for our young children to go back to while their parents are at work or at school is alleviating for the community. I'm pleased to know that the daycare has been opened.

As you note, the second daycare is not quite open yet. I can say the department has been working with the community and to ensure that that second facility is able to open. I know that we are waiting for community members to sign up as a board and so I encourage all community members in Sanikiluaq, if you would like to become part of a daycare board, there is a process to go through with Legal Registries, and the Department of Education is committed to working with the community to ensure that these spaces are open and we have a director of early learning and child care who would be very happy to assist and has been assisting the community to ensure that our spaces, such as our daycare facilities, are open for the public and able to be used for the community and to have our children in these spaces.

I encourage all of those who are interested in becoming a board member to step up, and we're happy to work with the community to further implement the second daycare.
Quana, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response, Ms. Gross. Mr. Speaker, Sanikiluaq's 2021-22 Integrated Community Sustainability Plan identified the need to renovate and expand our existing daycares. The condition and size of oldest day care building in Sanikiluaq restricts its use. Meanwhile the community is growing.

There is very limited space for children in the daycare. When they are taking a nap on the floor, anyone walking in can see the children sleeping in the entranceway right after the porch area.

Can the minister tell us what funding assistance is available to communities that need to renovate and expand existing daycare facilities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* to our colleague once again, on funding. I'm pleased to note that we do have a new signed agreement called the Early Learning Child Care Implementation with Canada-wide implementation with the federal

government and it is our plan to use the funds to assist families to have \$10 a day child care by the end of this coming December 2022, but we also have funds in there to help assist our daycares to be well equipped and to re-establish themselves as part of the implementation plan and part of the funds from this program, meaning that we are committed to opening 238 licensed spaces for our Nunavummiut children to be attending a daycare in our communities.

It is our hope that we can help and assist all of our daycares that need assistance and support to get to that means, whether it be renovation or help support the process of the getting the daycare started. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, for that response. Mr. Speaker, the federal government has committed to providing over \$66 million over 5 years towards Nunavut's early learning and childcare needs. As the minister has stated, the government committed to creating 238 new child care spaces with this funding.

Will the Minister of Education commit to making some of those funds available to communities like Sanikiluaq so that they can expand their day cares and provide more childcare spaces? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* once again for the question to our colleague. Yes, I can say that we are committed to spending these funds and have a timeline to spend the funds to assist our communities and the daycare facilities in our communities and I look forward to the implementation as the department currently with daycares across our territory to utilize the funds that are there. We are so thankful the federal government for the funds to help support our youngest population.

With that, yes, the department is very happy and committed to supporting our community daycares. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 052 – 6(2): Kitikmeot Polar Bear Management

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Environment and they concern the issue of polar bear management in the Kitikmeot.

As the minister will recall, I asked him a number of questions during our recent winter sitting concerning the Gulf of Boothia polar bear subpopulation.

At that time, the minister stated in the Legislative Assembly that the population estimate for the Gulf of Boothia polar bear subpopulation is currently healthy.

For the record, can the minister confirm the current population estimate for the Gulf of Boothia polar bear subpopulation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The abundance estimate for 1990 into 2000 is estimated at 1,592 bears. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board is meeting next month in Iqaluit. One of the agenda items at the meeting concerns the total allowable harvest for the Gulf of Boothia polar bear subpopulation.

On May 5, 2022, the Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Association provided a formal submission to the Board. In its submission, the HTA wrote that “The Hunters and Trappers Association would like an increase of 100 Total Allowable Harvest for Gulf of Boothia.”

For the record, does the minister’s department support the Taloyoak HTA’s request and, if not, why not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is for the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board to make those decisions. Our government has made recommendations in terms of what we deem as acceptable, but we rely on NWMB making the final recommendation for the minister to consider. I’m going to leave it at that and I applaud any HTO, especially your HTO that has formally submitted to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board. All hunters and trappers should be doing that when there is a new survey done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On May 6, 2022, the Chairperson of Kugaaruk’s hunters and trappers association provided a formal submission to the board. In its submission, the HTA wrote that,

“The Kurtairojuark HTO met with Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board staff and the Gjoa Haven and Taloyoak Hunters and Trappers Organizations to review and discuss the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board’s submission regarding the proposed Total Allowable

Harvest for the Gulf of Boothia poplar bear subpopulation. The Kurtairojuark HTO supports the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board's submission."

For the record, does the minister's department support the Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board's submission and, if not, why not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Kitikmeot Wildlife Management Board can make those formal recommendations to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board. All of that information gets reviewed by the board and once they have reviewed them all, then they make their own recommendations. Whatever that is, I am committed to reviewing that and making that decisions.

To date I cannot say I support this board or that board. It is up to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board to sift through all that information that is available to them and then they will make the determination for recommendation that will come to my table. Once that comes, then I will make those decisions and typically I ask the board members for their input as we make these decisions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 053 – 6(2): Federal-Territorial and Tri-territorial Initiatives

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm so happy to also congratulate my auntie's namesake, Sylvia Kayasark, on her graduation. Thank you for making us so proud, and congratulations to all graduates.

Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Premier, and they concern federal-territorial and tri-territorial initiatives.

In his minister's statement that he delivered during last Friday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly concerning his recent meeting with the Prime Minister, the Premier indicated that "... in our recent meeting, we emphasized the importance of collaboration between the Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and other Inuit organizations on issues such as housing in the North. The Prime Minister and I agreed on the urgency of closing the housing gap in Nunavut."

Mr. Speaker, that is a goal that every member of this House can agree with, and I seek some more details. As the Premier is aware, the recent federal budget announced "\$845.0 million over seven years to support housing in Inuit communities."

However, it is unclear as to whether this funding will flow to the Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik or Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, which is based in Ottawa.

Can the Premier clarify what agreement he has reached with the Prime Minister on how this \$845 million in funding will be allocated? Thank you.

Speaker: Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I would like to thank my colleague for that question. I too am really excited in terms of the work that we have been doing on the housing file. I think we understand that housing has been the one issue that prohibits Nunavummiut from advancing. To hear our finance minister just recently table his budget; our budget, and the strong emphasis that we are making on housing is very important.

To the question: the partnership agreement that I did sign with NTI is one I am really proud of in terms of our partner of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and through those structures, I very much look forward to putting together strong work plans as outlined in the agreement for us to collaborate on key areas like housing.

As such, I applaud the hard work that they lobbied to secure, the huge investments on housing, on top of the \$60 million that directed to the Government of Nunavut. Through the mechanisms I look forward to having the discussions with our partner, Nunavut Tunngavik, to outline where the collaboration will take place with our partner there. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Mr. Speaker, On Thursday of last week, the Nunavut Housing Corporation cancelled its Request for Proposals to design and build a new housing multiplex in Iqaluit. As the Premier will recall, the formal announcement that came out of his recent tri-territorial meeting with his Yukon and NWT counterparts indicated that “The already high costs for construction relative to the rest of Canada is increasing dramatically, adding to the challenges of building in a region with shorter construction seasons, infrastructure gaps, and climate change.”

Can the Premier clarify what specific discussions he had with the other two Northern Premiers concerning practical ways that our three territories could share resources and expertise to address the worsening construction cost crisis? Thank you.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I would like to thank my colleague for that question. As stated just by man ministers here, the cost of building not just in Nunavut, but right across the country has been at the forefront of impacting major projects all together, and that is no different to especially that we are in in terms of the housing crisis that are seeing.

I did have very constructive and productive discussions with our good friends, Premier Cochrane as well as Silver in terms of looking at best practices. I think we all share the unique challenges the arctic has in terms of not only building, but also the short window of opportunity to bring in supplies and materials.

In terms of the solutions, we did discuss in terms of creative way that they are doing it there to share best practices and that discussion will continue as we prepare for costs that are being prepared for July in terms of what those solutions are with the recent budget that we did just relay. I very much look forward to having concrete solutions moving forward with the Housing minister as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Brewster: As the Premier is aware, the City of Iqaluit has been working hard to address housing issues and I was proud to have been able to contribute to its success last year in securing federal investments under the Rapid Housing Initiative.

Last week, my colleague from Tununig spoke in this House about an innovative housing project that has been underway in Pond Inlet, and I know that other communities, including Cambridge Bay, have been active in this area.

Mr. Speaker, it is essential that the experience and energy of our municipalities be a part of the housing solution.

Can the Premier confirm when he and the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation will next meet with the Nunavut Association of Municipalities to identify areas for action and cooperation?

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I thank my colleague for that very important question, and really, her strong advocacy in terms of securing that Rapid Access Housing that I am so proud of as well. So *qujannamiik*.

I can confirm that we have had discussions with His Worship in terms of the incredible work that has been done on the housing front in the City here. I was very proud to have played a very small role in securing really what has prohibited the growth of any new housing development here in the city with the securement of federal investments of \$214 million in terms of critical infrastructure. That will then open the ability to build more.

So I very much look forward to having further discussions with the Minister of Nunavut Housing Corporation as advance those discussions. I am always open in terms of having collaborations with our municipalities through NAM with my colleague here as well. So I can commit to that continued dialogue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 054 – 6(2): Government Tenders Being Cancelled

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the people of Arviat.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, a recurring theme in this whole sitting has been cost overruns and tenders being cancelled. The Premier say we are in a housing crisis; 62 housing tenders were cancelled due to cost. Airports were cancelled due to cost. Some airports are going ahead, but it sounds like there is cost overrun, and I’m not sure who direct this question to, so I’ll for the CGS minister.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the CGS does the contracts for the departments, but it’s not their contract, but they are the central agency that controls all of the contracts. I know the departments have the prerogative to either keep the tender with over-budget or cancel the tender.

I’ll ask the Minister of Community and Government Services: does the government have a threshold where a tender is cancelled? Is it 10 percent over-cost, is it 20 percent over-cost? Is it 50 percent over cost? That is my first question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. The member is correct; the construction market and our government’s work in this area has been challenging, and on projects, especially with our financial capacities in terms of if there is a threshold on any project or contract that we are trying to proceed with, as far as I know, we don’t have a threshold but we do look at each case on a case-by-case basis whether or not how we’re trying to proceed as best we can with the resources that we do have. If there are opportunities to partner other organizations, we always look at those opportunities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reason I asked that is the airport in Rankin Inlet is still going ahead. It is over budget. It appears to be over budget by what the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation said. The one in Kugluktuk is cancelled. The three for the three Kivalliq communities appear to be over budget again, so we’re not sure if they are going to go ahead or be cancelled. That is why if there was a uniform formula, then it would be easy to understand. Like okay, 50 percent over budget is ridiculous on this project if there are two projects of similar financial consequences or an amount that is tendered there.

My next question: are there any contracts this fiscal year that have gone ahead within budget? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As mentioned, many things have contributed to the inflated and rising cost of constructing in the territory. Supply chains for materials have been disrupted and this included extended material, needing more time to look at procurement, timelines, so this has all had impact and has reduced the number of bids that we are seeing. So in some cases we're seeing some projects are just seeing one bidder or even none.

In terms of the question of how many projects are with, I don't have that level of details, but I can get back to the member on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The number of cancelled capital projects are quite a few. Although each department has said that the projects are not cancelled, just the tenders are cancelled. Mr. Speaker, due to sealift, and it was stated earlier by the Premier that due to sealift restrictions here, we can only get sealift in summer. I think the fact that the tenders are cancelled may cancel the projects.

I would like to ask the Minister of Community and Government Services' position if he agrees with me that some of these projects where the tenders are cancelled, for example, the 62 housing units that the projects could be cancelled due to circumstances like sealift, beyond the minister's control. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My department works with our client departments in managing capital projects and in terms of where we can most; of course no one here wants to see any of their projects slated for any of the communities removed. That is something that I think we will have to look at as whole if this legislature will want to do that. At this time I can't say for sure that any tenders or projects not proceeding or cancelled outright. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 055 – 6(2): Long-term Care Options for Kugluktuk

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to the people of Kugluktuk, to all Nunavummiut, as well as to my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) Long-term care options for Kugluktuk, Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, in the previous Assembly there was some discussion of building a long term care home in my constituency.

Can the minister provide an update on the current government's plans to provide long term care in the community of Kugluktuk? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for asking that question. We all agreed to and produced the *Katujjiluta* mandate. We worked together to create that. Elders are outlined in there already, and to date we have stated that there will be three elder facilities build, and one is under construction in Rankin Inlet. That is the first one. The other two will have one in Iqaluit and that other in Cambridge Bay. Those are the three elder projects that have been approved to commence more planning work towards our elders and the services and care they should receive, and this kind of planning requirement is part of the work budgeted for under this line item, and the project will be starting soon, which I am happy about.

I believe it will have a tangible impact for our elders. At this time, it is unfortunate Mr. Speaker, that the elders' facility in Kugluktuk isn't included in part of our plans towards that. I respond to that part of his question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the current government's *Katujjiluta* mandate includes "Aging with Dignity in Nunavut" as one of its key priority areas.

Would the minister agree that enabling our elders to live out the rest of their days in their home community surrounded by family and friends would fulfill the government's priority in this area? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I totally understand the immense importance of this issue, and I am totally aware of that. Our elders prefer to stay home while receiving care and I comprehend that perspective as I have heard it directly from my own constituents, and now in my role as the minister.

I have discussed some of these matters with our elders, both here in Iqaluit, Baker Lake and I know about this concern, but there is another facet or a caveat, which is the lack of beds in our facilities in Nunavut, as currently there is a shortage of beds although there are beds available, but they too are limited spaces.

This is why we previously sent out elders to Ottawa and other places with elders' facilities that provided the care needed. This is known by all members here, however, we believe we can create a better system and in partnership, both on identifying and resolving problems inherent to our elders' care, and the need to create better systems and

plans is completely why we must work on the vision as MLAs, at least to my understanding.

And, further, this current practice of sending our elders outside of Nunavut is not what we want to continue, so we will try to put a stop to that practice within Nunavut and concentrate on the construction of appropriate elder care homes in Nunavut which is illustrated here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I have been given to understand that the Hamlet of Kugluktuk did an enormous amount of work to develop a proposal, secure a site, and access funding, around \$36 million, to build a long-term care facility in the community. It was a very viable opportunity. Unfortunately it was not supported by the government of the day.

Will the minister commit to revisiting the possibility of building a long-term care facility in the community of Kugluktuk? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member. This plan is specifically towards the (interpretation ends) comprehensive elder care strategy (interpretation) which is to ensure that this action item is now something we can expect, and it is becoming easier how this can be accommodated, which department will be the lead, and our Department of EIA will have the ultimate control or management, however, it includes the Department of Health and other stakeholders to work with in this matter.

We must also commence community consultations on the kinds of issues we need to incorporate, generally in English (interpretation ends) consultations (interpretation) and I anticipate good things that will be brought up, as part of the ideas bandied about during these consultations although I cannot prognosticate the exact ideas, or what our constituents will inform us about.

What I think is that as a government we are open to more suggestions, and we must be open! We do not have answers for everything as many people out there have great minds as well, and the elders in our communities are among the best equipped to provide ideas or those who are on their local committees, or businesses as every sector must be utilized to provide benefits, and they can provide a good foundation and ideas in my opinion, that we can use to resolve these challenges.

During these consultations, after we hear from the communities on what they want to see along with their families, to look at the future years as part of our vision to start improving the situation, at least from my perspective. We must work hard on this file, but

it will be quite expensive and difficult so we must completely understand that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 056 – 6(2): Construction of New Power Plants

Mr. Kaernerk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the new Minister for the Qulliq Energy Corporation in regard to the plans in both communities that I represent, Igloolik and Sanirajak.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, this is the question I wish to ask firstly towards our newest minister. Was the Qulliq Energy Corporation preparing this past year or previously towards the upcoming capital plans and budgets for their plans? After the completion of this plan, will the communities of Igloolik and Sanirajak be part of the considered communities for improvement planning?

Does the QEC have any plans that include my two constituency communities of Igloolik and Sanirajak? 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 my colleague for the question. It is my understanding that the Qulliq Energy Corporation did receive ministerial instruction previously to commence the development of new power plants. One of them is for Igloolik. I do not have the information for Sanirajak on hand. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Kaernerk.

Mr. Kaernerk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for responding to that. It's good to hear that they're looking at Igloolik. The power stations in the two communities are older than me. Now, the minister didn't state anything about Sanirajak. What can we expect in the coming year? There is apparently no planning for the coming year for Sanirajak. We're going to be here for the next four years. Can the minister address the age of the infrastructure? 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 again. If he is referring to a listing of the age of our power plants, I can get back to him on that, and also to get back to his first question about Sanirajak, I can commit to look into what the plans are for Sanirajak, if it's on the radar for a replacement or a timeline of planning for it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kaerner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be glad if he can get back to me on that subject.

Now, in regard to the minister's statement on the second page, let me make a quote. It says, "While the corporation is excited to share this historical moment," and moving on to this paragraph, "This crucial work will take place as warmer weather approaches and the QEC completes repairs, upgrades, and maintenance to power plants and power line systems."

Let me go back to this again. The corporation has greater attention and is "working to identify and address areas within Nunavut's electrical systems..." Now, in regard to these statements, for the record, Mr. Speaker, can the minister commit and agree with me that the minister will visit my two communities for this summertime? If the minister could agree on that so that when it comes to crucial work, I would like to make the minister aware so that he probably understands where I am coming from. So for the record, will the minister agree to come visit my riding?

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

Hon. Craig Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To answer the member's question, yes I can commit to visiting your two communities that you represent. It is just matter of securing a timeline of when it would be the best time to visit the two communities. To my understanding, there are some times throughout the years where it is not the best time to visit a community because they are out fishing or hunting, but I do commit to visiting his two communities eventually. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 057 – 6(2): Annual Fuel Purchase

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to follow-up with the Minister of Community and Government Services from some questions I had from March 21 earlier this year. At that time the minister stated that 71 percent of the fuel had purchased for this year for the sealift season.

My follow-up question to that, Mr. Speaker, is: how much has been purchased to date, by fuel type. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. Our Petroleum Products Division has secured 100 percent fuel needs for our territory for this upcoming season and I will have to get back to the member with the break down once I get that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that commitment. Oil prices have increased by about 74 percent since this time last year. If these trends continue, Nunavut will most likely suffer a major increase in costs next year. Currently across the territory diesel fuel, as an example, is approximately \$1.30 a litre. Here in Iqaluit, as usual, we pay a little bit more than the territorial numbers. When we look at some of the construction challenges and different logistical concerns that have been raised numerous times in this House over the last period, it is very concerning when we can see a major increase in fuel costs potentially coming down the pike.

What options are being looked at in minimizing this impact? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll go back to his first question and then I'll respond to his supplementary. PPD secured 292.5 million litres of fuel. Broken down, it's \$131.8 million litres of diesel, 36.7 litres of JET A1, and 24 million litres of gasoline.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of trying to minimize cost, the territory has experienced the lowest fuel prices in the country and so we are quite inflated in that sense, but in terms of keeping our costs minimal for other sectors, it is just a matter of other operations will have to be impacted by this since we did increase it and we are looking at possibly increasing it further in the fall time. Those will have to be eaten up at some point. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the minister's commitment on that as well too and I'm sure I will follow up at a later point on some of those details.

One thing that a lot of people aren't aware of is that the fuel type that we purchase is considered premium down south, so we're even paying much lower prices than what southern Canada is paying right now, but that crunch is looming near down the road.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to touch on again the questions that I had back in March where the minister committed to exploring the use of fuel revenues to be used to fund PPD-related capital projects. As the minister is aware, there are growing pressures on our capital budgets to address our infrastructure deficit, especially in the area of housing. How are these discussions progressing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. We're looking at different options around how we can proceed in light of some of the proposals that we were looking at before. For example, the Nunavut Petroleum Products Commission is an area that this government will be reviewing data related to existing

material and seeking an independent review on options that we might bring forward to cabinet and seek a decision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 058 – 6(2): Keeping Our Elders at Home

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I again thank you for recognizing me. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, just last week an elder from my constituency passed away. This is a great loss for the community. The elder's last words were to say that there needs to be an elders' home in the community.

(interpretation ends) Can the minister clearly explain how his department assesses the need for elder care in each of Nunavut's communities? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member. First of all, my condolences to your constituents for their loss.

Mr. Speaker, all communities have health centres and the health centre leaders are continually monitoring elder care needs and they have home care services provided. Individuals provide home care at elders' homes for two reasons. They want the elders to be at home and be well taken care of and we know that as the health department, when the elders go through hard times, the family also ends up going through hard times and they carry a lot of stress.

On occasion we try to provide support at home through our home care providers. With that, for each individual community, how many elders need care and how many have disabilities or possible disabilities are noted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you, Mr. Minister, for your clarification to my question. (interpretation ends) I appreciate that the government has only so much money to build new elders' homes. However, there may be other options to provide elder care in a community, including renovating existing buildings.

Can the minister tell us what consideration has been given to renovating and modifying currently existing buildings in our communities so that they can accommodate elders who need extra service? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time, regarding older buildings and capital items, actually the facilities that could be used for this is not what we are dealing with, as we are commencing probing studies on buildings that could be converted into an elders' care facility.

This hasn't really been undertaken up to now, however, with regards to creating plans or strategies specific for our elders has been the priority as part of our envisioning targets as this is part of the details. Through this avenue, which I had mentioned previously in my response to the question posed by the MLA from Kugluktuk, and it is through the development of plans that we can have facilities that may assist in this way.

At least, in light of this issue, if we were to hear about potential benefits that are sustainable and which do not transgress existing legislation, as elders' care facilities have certain legal responsibilities related to the proper care and protocols, such as safety issues, fire protection issues, as we must follow legislative standards.

We have to do our due diligence under these regulations and I think we are going to arrive at something more positive for all of Nunavut and I think it will benefit all Nunavut communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for your response, minister. (interpretation ends) I recognize that when our elders require more support and care, they not only need a suitable place to live in but they also need the services of individuals who are trained to provide the necessary levels of support.

Will the minister commit to working with Nunavut Arctic College or other agencies to deliver programs to train individuals to provide elder care in our communities?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Department of Health, we continually collaborate with the Nunavut Arctic College, and currently we offered a course in Rankin Inlet, or which will be offered, related to proper care methodology or in English (interpretation ends) LPN in English, which is the Licensed Practical Nurse Program.

(interpretation) Provided I was able to speak English eloquently in this role... so, Mr. Speaker, in this case this is just an example as we have an ongoing working relationship with Arctic College concerning elder care.

With respect to home care workers, we have in-house training provided at health centres and slowly some receive proper training, but unfortunately due to pandemic measures the last few years, many of the programs were postponed.

We are trying to catch up with in-house training, but I'll continue to follow it up and I agree to follow up on his question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 059 – 6(2): P-50 Fuel Capacity in Arviat

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I would like to question the CGS minister a bit more.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, they have been flying in diesel P15 to Arviat for a while now. Can the minister inform us of how many litres will need to be flown into Arviat before Arviat can be resupplied by the tanker? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The diesel sales in Arviat have increased over the years. When we look at 2020-21 as well as 2021-22, there was a 22.5 percent increase as well as a 25 percent increase in 2021-22, if that makes sense. (interpretation) I'm sorry, (interpretation ends) but in terms of how much diesel had to be airlifted to Arviat, at this time there is 400,000 litres expected to be flown in. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm aware that Arviat is slated for a new tank farm, which is desperately needed, as the minister will agree, as it's a lot cheaper to have the fuel in there by ship than to fly them with aircraft, but the project will not start this summer. That means the fuel capacity in Arviat will not change. It will still be what it is as today as we speak and if it wasn't enough this year, and the minister said that it has gone up by 22 percent the year and 25 percent this year, if we follow the scale, then it's going to go up at least 25 percent again.

Does the minister have any contingency plan other than it's obvious that it would have to be flown in again because there was not enough capacity? Does the minister have any plans to bring in large, portable tanks so that Arviat can receive more diesel in the coming sealift so that it will not have to be flown in again? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Petroleum Products Division is closely monitoring the fuel consumption in Arviat and we're working to ensure that the community has enough fuel throughout the year in terms of if there's going to be a portable fuel tank being supplied. As a result, I'm not aware if there is, but I'll have to check and clarify to the member if there is or is not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister that he's going to look into it, as the minister would have to agree with me that it's a lot cheaper to bring in a few large portable tanks on sealift and then have them filled when the tanker is there as opposed to flying in again because if the current trend is going to continue and there is no reason why it wouldn't, then we are going to see a 25 percent increase in fuel sales in Arviat again this coming fiscal year, so that means more fuel would have to be flown in.

Mr. Speaker, can I have assurance from the minister that flying the fuel into Arviat will not impact the cost of fuel for Arviarmiut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Petroleum Products Division works within its budget and the revolving fund operates on an as-even basis, so whatever you bought the fuel for, you have to pass on to the customers. If that's the case for Arviat, I hope that will be the case. I can't say for now whether or not prices will increase in Arviat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 060 – 6(2): Transportation for Medical Clients

Mr. Kaernerk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. I have a question regarding another concern for the Minister of Health.

I might be wrong, as when we first got Nunavut, if you went for medical travel, they used to get a ride from their home to the airport. If I'm wrong, you can clarify me. When did this policy change, leaving medical clients without any transportation to get to the airport? Is there a change in policy on this?

Let me go to Channel 2.

(interpretation ends) When it comes to transporting medical patients from their home to the airport, I do believe there was a policy in place that these medical travellers were provided transportation from health centres. What happened to that policy? Why aren't health centres or the health department not providing transportation for those who don't have any transportation in terms of elders or people with disabilities? When was the policy changed? *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue he is asking about is a policy change. I can't speak to what the previous administration had, but I can say that when it's not an emergency situation, the Department of Health doesn't pay as long

as it's not an emergency from their home to the airport or from their home to the health centre or from their home to the airport. It's not a cost we cover, but if there is an emergency, we provide services. When a medevac is happening, they have ambulances in some communities and we support them through the financial funds to run the service. We provide a route for the service of keeping ambulances running. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Kaernerk.

Mr. Kaernerk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not talking about emergencies. I understand that emergencies are required in an urgent situation. I'm talking about the non-urgent medical travel. That's what I'm asking about. In Nunavut the health department, do they bring patients or do any communities provide a service from the health centre to the airport in a non-emergency situation? Is there any communities like that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me go to Channel 2 as well.

>>*Laughter*

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, non-emergency transportation to the airport for approved medical travel is reimbursed by Non-Insured Health Benefits for eligible Nunavut Inuit in four communities: Arctic Bay, Resolute Bay, Coral Harbour, and Whale Cove. The reason for it only being for those four communities is that it's based on the exceptional distance to the airport, which is more than six kilometres. Other than these communities, ground transportation from a client's home to the airport and back for approved medical travel is not covered by Non-Insured Health Benefits or the Nunavut Health Care program. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kaernerk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for providing those communities that are provided with transportation from their home to the airport. I'm sure that my constituents would be eligible to get transportation from Health, not when there's an emergency, because two of those communities are quite far and I have seen people walking to the airport when they are medical clients.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the minister won't want to make a commitment when it comes to changing the policy in terms of providing transportation. For the record, can the minister commit to the House that the department will be able to make amendments or make changes to the policy when it comes to medical clients and announce that again in terms of elders and for those people with disabilities? Will the minister commit to the House

that there will be policy changes in terms of medical transportation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't currently say yes, we're going to change the policy, but I can say that we should do a review and personally, those who have disabilities and elders shouldn't be required to walk if there are no supports of wheels. As a government, we must in some way, maybe through a voucher for the taxi, we want them to be well within the health system and during medical travel. It's a priority to support patients; I agree with it a little bit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Members, be aware that the time allotted for question period is now over. No. 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Replies to Budget Address. Item 11. Petitions. Item 12. Responses to Petitions. Item 13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Item 14. Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

Item 14: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 015 – 6(2): 2020-2021 Nunavut Emergency Management Annual Report

Tabled Document 016 – 6(2): 2020-2030 Sport and Recreation Action Plan

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table in the House the 2020-21 *Nunavut Emergency Management Annual Report*, as well as the 2020-2030 *Sport and Recreation Action Plan*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister for Community and Government Services, Mr... . Okay, you've done two already. Thank you. I just had my earpiece off for a minute. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Tabled Document 017 – 6(2): Correspondence from Isaac Shooyook Regarding Substance Abuse

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I stated earlier, Isaac Shooyook has written correspondence addressed to all elected officials regarding his concerns. I wish to table the correspondence.

I ask that all members review the documents with care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 15. Notices of Motions. Item 16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 17. Motions. I recognize the Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hicke.

Item 17: Motions

Motion 005 – 6(2): Extended Sitting Hours and Days

Mr. Hicke: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for South Baffin, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting hours and days as the Speaker deems fit to assist with the business before the House during this present sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

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 18. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 1 and 2 with Mr. Hicke in the Chair.

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

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House recessed at 15:30 and Committee resumed at 15:55

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

Chairman (Mr. Hicke): Thanks, committee members. I would like to call the meeting to order. In the Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bill 1 and Bill 2. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with the review of the 2022-23 main estimates and the Department of Community and Government Services, followed by the Department of Health. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Malliki. Are committee members in agreement that we deal first with Bill 1?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to ask Minister Joanasié: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee? As you have a couple there already, we will just get confirmation from the committee members that they agree that the minister has witnesses appear with him.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. For the record, Minister Joanasié, please introduce your officials.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have here with me my Deputy Minister, Kyle Seeley, as well as Director of Corporate Services Mandy Hickey. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasié. Where we left off on Friday was on page J-6. I did not have any more names on my list. Does anyone have any questions on page J-6? Information Management and Technology. Go ahead, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one question. Your department's draft 2022-23 main estimates indicate that the Information Management and Information Technology Branch has been reorganized. What specific objective is this reorganization intended to achieve? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Hold on a second. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for his question. There is a bit of a reorganization within the division to account for more streamlined reporting and the budget lines that some directors are directly involved with, so that's to ensure there is more efficiency within the division. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one more question. Your 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*." What is the timeline for introducing new legislation and to what extent has your department been consulting with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner on this initiative? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you could give me a moment.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies. We're looking at an environmental scan, looking at other jurisdictions, and making sure that our IM/IT policies and procedures, along with taking into account privacy and access to information, are well adhered to. Our office is in regular contact with the Information and Privacy Commissioner, and this is one area that is discussed between our offices. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My last question. On the business plan on page 198, on priorities for 2022-23 "Improve telecommunications and IM/IT customer service through the development of new communications resources and the strategic introduction of hybrid technologies."

What hybrid technologies are we talking about? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. New technologies in the industry are information technology, we're looking at providing equitable telecommunications services throughout the territory, including undersea fibre, low-earth orbit satellite, and microwave and community fibre. Those are some of the options that we are looking at. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list, Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister, and your officials. Looking at your business plan on page 197, on the Information and Communication Technology division, for 2021-22, it was budgeted for \$32,653,000, and for this fiscal year and the next fiscal year for 2022-23 it drastically drops from \$23 million to \$20 million.

Why has the budget been decreased by almost \$1 million, when there was a ransomware that happened during the previous Assembly?

My question is: Why has there been a drastic decrease in the budget for 2022-23? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we mentioned, there has been some re-jigging within the division on some of the budget line items. You'll note on page 198 of the business plan, there are two budget line items there for government for the Government Information and Planning division, that's increasing substantially by over \$6 million as well as a new line item, corporate chief information officer.

Those are budgets that we've re-aligned from that Information and Community Technology division.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can I get a clear response of why this budget has been decreased when the minister has mentioned on the other page that... Just trying to stick with one subject of information and communications technology division. Why was there a drastic drop of \$1 million for this year and next year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I believe, if I'm looking at the total amounts, Mr. Kaernek, it actually goes up by \$505,000, from 2021-22 to 2022-23. But, I'll leave it up to the minister where that slight increase comes in.

Hon. David Joanasië: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that's correct. As mentioned, there are some re-alignments that our IM/IT division has gone through. The directors that are involved on these budgets, we have to streamline those so that they work more efficiently within the division. It's meant to bring those staff that are dealing with these budgets to have a better way of working in the division. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Speaking of alignment, I am looking at these priorities for 2022-23 on page 198. The department wants to make improvement to its telecommunications and IM/IT customer service to the development of new communications resources. And, the strategic introduction of hybrid technology.

Nowadays we are relying on computers. How will the department be able to meet these priorities when you know when there is a stance amount of decreases. Can the minister elaborate on that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kaernek. And, I know Mr. Quqqiaq asked specifically about the hybrid technologies but there are other components in the communication resources. New communications resources. The minister may want to be able to elaborate. Thank you.

Hon. David Joanasië: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to clarify, this division we are, the Chair correctly pointed out, we are increasing the budget, not by much but its a pretty modest increase.

In relation to the actual work in this specific priority that the member brought up, there is telecommunications strategies slated for June 2022.

We are also looking at infrastructure assessments. Evergreen and purchasing of new equipment that is still to be determined. As well governance, looking at new policy standards as well frameworks in related to information technology.

Of course, this sector is ever changing and there's new technologies that are... . Could be beneficial for our government to employ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, for these priorities, Mr. Chairman, start from this fiscal to next fiscal year 2023 and all the way up to 2025-26. And, the government still want to continue make improvement and implement some kind of strategic digital plan.

So, I'd like to repeat my question again: If there ever another ransomware happen with the government systems, will the government will have a strategic plan when it comes those ransomware or whatever happen to hackers and will they be able to meet these priorities when it comes to ransomware? That will be my question for now.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kaernerck. Cyber security is always a concern in any entity, especially government. Minister Joanasie

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, like as I mentioned this sector is ever changing and there are different areas where our government has had to deal with, for example the ransomware attacks.

Cyber security, what are the standards that are in place for ensuring that our network is safe. So, our department and this is an area where we need to safeguard the government system. In my opening comments, I brought up that the built-in artificial intelligence, for example, flagged and blocked 20 ransomware-based files entering to our system.

And, there are other statics that I shared. So, I can share that our IM/IT division has these resources available from them to make sure our system is in check and secure and being able to... . So that all of our employees across the territory within our departments and division are able to use it safely and securely. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for that response, Minister Joanasie. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On business plan "Priorities for 2024-25 continue the implementation of telecommunications strategy to transition technologies lower earth orbit satellites." And the other bullet under there is "Continue the transition of government departments from satellite to high speed network."

Did this department looked at the request for proposal that was sent to all the MLAs in November? And, highly recommend that the department look at the proposal cause this is a known fact to increase bandwidth for our network from a satellite, all the government

has to do is if buy in that request for proposal they can propose to the CRTC to increase bandwidth. I highly recommend this department look at the proposal.

During the winter sitting, the department stated that they would look at the proposal. Did the department look at the proposal? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasia.

Hon. David Joanasia: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the question, our department has not looked at that proposal since it was an unsolicited proposal. Typically, our procurement process works in that way. Put out a call for proposals for such things if we are trying to acquire a service or equipment from the private sector. So, we haven't looked at that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, minister. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I highly recommend that the department looks into the proposal. It's a great proposal. Everything is in place. All the government can do is take over and it would mean that Nunavummiut would be hired to work with the proposal. So, I highly recommend that the government take a look the proposal. It would be great for Nunavummiut and it would benefit this government.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sorry for my questioning but there is a lot of money in play. And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Quqqiaq. And maybe if I may, Minister Joanasia. Maybe you can give us a timeline on when those requests for proposals will be coming out so, as the Assembly we kind keep on top.

Not just this aspect but the fibre aspect. I know we're delving a little bit into the capital side but it is in the business plan to continue implementation. So, I think it's a valid question.

There seems to be a lot of confusion over where some of these chips are falling and when they are going to be falling.

So, maybe if the minister will be able to update the Committee on where you are in access to IT infrastructure and bandwidth? Minister Joanasia.

Hon. David Joanasia: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd be happy to share information around timelines for those that new requests once they are set and so, I get back to the Committee with that information. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasia. I appreciate that.

Again, we are on page J-5. Information Management and Information Technology. I have no more names on my list.

I have one quick question if the committee will indulge me. In the minister's opening comments on page 6, the second paragraph speaks to the launch of the online Inuktitut training for staff throughout the territory and the translator application.

When there is some questions on this topic to the Minister of Languages last week. The minister had mentioned only 14 people were able to take advantage of language training last year.

And, obviously with COVID in-person programming is challenging at the best. But, does the online feature, is there a tracking on how many people participate in it? How exactly does an employee access this program so, that people that are listening can know that there are resources available, that they can access for language training. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the departmental language training program, we do try to encourage and promote this for our employees and we would like to get more up take on it.

In terms of the translator application, I think there might be a way to capture statistics around how many are using that app, because anyone can use it with a smartphone or tablet. Yeah, I'll have to get back to the committee with if there are more statistics available.

However, I know this Microsoft machine translator tool is... . We've worked with Culture and Heritage and Microsoft on it and there's three phases, including text-to-speech, Inuktitut, as well as the development of a process to keep language models current, as well as development for Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun language models.

I would also like to note and give praise to the Minister of Education who recently had an opportunity to promote this app. I understand that they are working with educators to have it as a resource at their fingertips in the classrooms. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasie, and I look forward to that other information you committed to.

So, again page J-6. Information Management/Information Technology. \$44,756,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed

Chairman: Thank you. Going to the next page, J-7. Infrastructure. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister, and your officials. Great to see you again.

I've just got a few lines of questions underneath this branch. My first line of questioning will be regarding the Technical Services division, as this division plays a crucial role in the capital planning and capital project delivery.

I was wondering if the minister may be able to provide the committee with an update on the staffing capacity within this division? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Technical Services, there's seven PYs and one is vacant. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that as well, minister. I am also wondering if you would be able to provide the committee with the capacity within the Capital Projects division as well? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are 15 PYs in capital projects, 6 vacancies currently. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. Moving on to my next line of questioning: last year the Qulliq Energy Corporation had released their Commercial and Institutional Power Producer program, or policy.

I was wondering if the Government of Nunavut would fall under the category and be eligible to participate in that power producer program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not sure if we're eligible or not; I'll have to get clarification on that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I'll follow up with you on that at another date or also with the new Minister of the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

My next line of questioning is going to be regarding the Utilities Management budget or division, which is currently at \$43 million. Looking at the QEC's most recent annual report, the Government of Nunavut paid roughly \$32 million in power. I'm curious: how closely is senior management monitoring the utility usage of our government-owned or leased facilities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

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

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

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. The Government of Nunavut leases and operates about 565,000 square feet of lease space towards GN operations. That's inclusive of both offices and warehouse space. The Energy Management Program, which we would have discussed during the capital estimates program, is one example of the programs that we have in place to help increase the energy efficiency within GN-owned and operated assets.

As far as the management of the utilities go, we pay the bills to both the QEC for electricity as well as the fuel bills for GN-operated assets. The tracking of that information, in fact, substantiates the business case cycle and our request for funding within the future fiscal year cycle. Any kind of increases to any of the utility costs are tracked quarterly or when there is any kind of substantive change to a rate. Those projections are done in advance of each fiscal year to make sure that we're staying ahead of that cycle. We have a similar process in place regarding municipal utilities as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Seeley, for your response. I think this will be my last question and it's a question that I have raised previously as we have gone through this O&M process.

As CGS plays a major role in the capital planning and development process in support of the sponsored departments and in light of the GN's \$30 million electricity bills, has the department conducted any sort of cost analysis in the design of new major capital projects in light of the O&M side of things to determine whether or not these new capital projects will incorporate alternative energy systems, whether generating or battery systems? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're seeing more consideration being given towards moving to that and incorporate solar and/or wind in building designs in that aspect. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. (interpretation) Are you done? (interpretation ends) Next name I have on my list: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the minister and your officials, the first question I would like to ask is: in the business plan on 201, (interpretation ends) "Providing support for expanding or renovating existing continuing care facilities in Nunavut." (interpretation) Where are the renovations going to take place? Which communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. We are trying to support these different departments with their priorities and the capital program is part of it.

For example, if some communities have infrastructure that can be used for elders' facilities, or if they have a facility that needs to be improved, we help them with that. If any work needs to be done on that infrastructure, this is where it would come from.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for your prompt response. My third question, (interpretation ends) "Continue to manage project delivery for Nunavut fibre infrastructure." (interpretation) On business plan on 201. (interpretation ends) Where does it stand now? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are continuing on with this program and the monies we approved for capital with that. It is constantly moving forward. I will have an announcement concerning this and where it is at the moment. Once the information is available I will provide it to this House. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for your response. (interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2022-26 business plan indicates on page 201 that one of its priorities for 2022-23 fiscal year is to continue with strategy, review, and study on the impact of adoption of Nunavut-specific modifications as they apply to existing Nunavut building codes and National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings. What specific issues have been identified with these codes? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is my last question.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies. This review is to consider the impact to Nunavut in adopting the National Energy Code of Canada for buildings. The National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings is part of a national model code which Nunavut has adopted, the building, fire and plumbing codes. The codes set standards for energy efficiency requirements for the construction of new buildings and the review includes code version, energy savings and practicality on Nunavut construction, funding of the study, and timelines. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki, you had another question.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies, another question just popped up. Thank you, minister, for answering my question.

(interpretation ends) Ensure department advice to investigate the potential for alternative building technologies to be used and manufactured in Nunavut, with emphasis on energy efficient and climate-friendly construction. Could the minister provide some clarification on this area? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Sorry, I just missed the very last part, they had already moved the microphone over to me, maybe if you just wanted to repeat your question again, Mr. Malliki? Please.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. 2024-25, bullet 3, priorities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just give me a second.

This priority is to ensure that our department's experts have an opportunity to provide into the investigation and feasibility of different methods of alternative building technologies to be used and manufactured in Nunavut.

So, in addition, it ensures that economic development and transportation... . The feasibility study outcomes and research material, already completed by my department, is in the integration of the energy efficiency and climate friendly construction. It's to ensure that, given our environment and with climate change, what are the impacts that we're seeing as well as how are construction being built in this environment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for clarifying this point.

In which community would the proposed study be taking place? Or would it be in the regional hubs or in the smaller communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Joanasié

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's not for one community, but all the communities in which any capital project is taking place. That's where it lies. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to go back a question that MLA Malliki made and the minister responded by saying that they are going to have announcements on the fibre infrastructure shortly. The minister did not really answer or respond to his question, if the budget was not approved with announcement, or deleted that section, would the announcement still come forward? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Forgive me if I'm wrong, I interpreted that as the minister is going to be providing information to the committee on an earlier question. But, Minister Joanasié, did you want to clarify?

Hon. David Joanasié: My apologies, Mr. Chairman, and committee. I meant to say that there will be an announcement on the Nunavut fibre project that we had approved through the capital planning process. Just for clarification. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I understand. Thank you to the minister for clarifying.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to go back to one of the priorities under 2022-23 and then its 2023-24 and 2024-25 and 2025-26. It's in all of them. Support government efforts to expedite the construction of regional long-term care facilities with capabilities to meet need of Nunavummiut with complex care needs.

I understand all that, just can the minister expand on what he means by support? Is there going to be more money thrown in, is there going to be the supply chain issue dealt with. If he can just expand on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That specific priority is in relations to our department supporting and other departments in reaching or trying to achieve the *Katujjiluta* Mandate priorities.

So, we are working with all the different departments. Making sure that we're along the lines of what we had agreed to through the mandate and keeping us accountable for... . One of the projects that we are trying to push forward on expedient way and so, there is a lot that that goes into this but we are supporting that priority in a way that our department within what our department's priorities are.

How we fit into that is we try and support other departments in reaching the mandate priorities that we set out to do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. If I may Mr. Savikataaq, this is something that I brought up last week to the minister. It almost feels like it's a cut and paste exercise for the business plan. I understand that there is a need to identify mandate items in here. But as a central agency, Community Government and Services are there to support the whole of government infrastructure.

It could be listing schools in here, health centres in here, a number of different things. And, when the water gets muddy, if I can use that term of making specific items in here, it draws more questions to in my opinion not really the appropriate ministry.

I know you are to support all of these ministers and their departments with infrastructure needs and put it in the business plan and the way it has been done this year, it does confuse the issue for the Committee and for the public. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In my opinion the keyword is expedite, expedite usually means fast-track. You pump in more money and are you cutting corners and for, regional long-term care facilities and it is in the mandate that they should be built.

The government has said many times and agree with them. We are in a housing crisis. But, they are not expending any public housing units here. It's not in there.

I am just wondering why they're expediting just one item of the mandate when you would think that the housing would be in there cause the mandate wants to build one thousand housing units within the next three and a half years. And, it's not being expedited like long-term care. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is I think a new way that the business plans have been presented. We are working with, again, our client departments and other players that. This is something that we are continuing to push for and try to make headway on where we can around what is the environment that we are working with and there have been questions around the construction costs and how much are going beyond the financial resources that we've approved.

Those all come to play in that we have to prioritize our projects and maybe reprioritizing them, but I'm looking forward to continuing on with health for example, they are the main driver on this specific priority, but we play that central role around supporting how they manage that particular project in the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will just be a comment before my next question: From what the minister just explained here, they work with the departments to expedite certain projects. So, they are going to expedite the construction of regional long-term hubs, but they're not going to expedite any housing construction by the sounds of it. Or they're not going to expedite any of the schools need to be built. They're not going to expedite any of the air terminal buildings that the tenders have been cancelled on.

I know they are a central agency and it's the department that actually makes the decision to go or cancel tenders. That's just a comment and I'll leave it there.

Another bullet here is "Support efforts to renovate or repurpose existing buildings for the use in housing continuum." And that's in priority 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026.

My question to the minister is: is CGS taking over the responsibility of the housing corporation, which the housing corporation is responsible for building and maintaining houses in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, we are not taking over those responsibilities, but we do have a surplus within the department that we do surplus disposal.

That's an area where, again, we work with other partner departments, where if there are synergies that we can deliver on our mandate, then our department's willing to work other departments in that area as well as other priorities that are set out in Katujjiluta. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, CGS will be using their funds to renovate and repurpose existing buildings that are surplus from the GN to turn them into housing? Just a clarification on that, thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We'd support that effort when there is an opportunity identified. Different communities have different infrastructure or housing

levels and needs. But, of course the needs are great. We want to maximize and make sure that we're using our resources to the full effect. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't get a clear answer. "Support efforts to renovate and repurpose existing buildings." My question was: is CGS going to use their funds to renovate or repurpose existing buildings? Or is housing going to use their funds? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No. We will continue to work with the departments around discussing how best to strategize and use our existing resources. That's how we're trying to proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know the infrastructure needs are great within the communities and a lot of the communities wanted to take surplus GN building assets and turn them into youth centres or office space. Does this mean now that the priority will be to turn all those units into housing units? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our Surplus Disposal Policy remains the same, where our assets are first, we put it out for other departments to take up and use for their uses. If no other department takes that opportunity, then we will give it to the municipalities and/or non-profit organizations at the local level. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know the building policy where the department surpluses it and then other government departments get first right of refusal. If none of them want it, then it goes to the hamlet, but what I just asked is: does it mean that there's going to be more of a push for these surplus buildings if the need for housing is great in the communities, and it is great, that there will be pressure for Housing to take these and turn them into housing? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: If you will give me a sec.

Thank you and apologies again. For example, I think there could be more pressures and more challenges around not just the housing continuum but other infrastructure needs, but

we're trying to look at ways where, let's say for example, since land and land availability can be a hindrance to development, perhaps it's a way of repositioning a house and/or houses so that a larger facility can be built in that lot. That's just one example of how we're trying to work within this priority. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is my last question here. It says in the second-last bullet, "Continue implementation of the Nunavut Energy Management Initiative and monitor construction activities in North and South Baffin." I'm just curious as to why the other two regions of Nunavut are not mentioned at all. Nunavut has three regions and there are only two that are mentioned. There is only one region there, the Baffin, that's mentioned, so if I can just get an explanation. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are continuing and we will be presenting other projects for energy management initiatives for the Kivalliq. The implementation phase is anticipated to be completed for the fall of 2022 and there is the Kitikmeot. The planning phase for this project includes hazmat studies, energy audits, and investment grade feasibility studies, so that is to commence this coming fiscal year and completing in the following fiscal year, 2023-24. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on page J-7. Infrastructure...oh, Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm interested in these priorities for 2022 and all the way up to 2026 and the line of questioning to Mr. Savikataaq, "Support efforts to renovate or repurpose existing buildings for use in the housing continuum." Does that mean for those abandoned buildings, abandoned GN housing units? Is that one of the priorities that CGS is planning to renovate or repurpose those buildings that are abandoned and, if not, why not? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe I responded to that question, but we support them in managing their assets, whether they're, let's say, repurposing a building or housing from... . We're just trying to support housing needs and if the corporation is repurposing a facility or a building of their own, then we support in their endeavour. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now, why is this a priority for CGS when the Nunavut Housing Corporation is the one that is responsible? Why is this listed under priorities all the way up to 2026 from this fiscal year? As you just mentioned, it's the

Nunavut Housing Corporation's final decision, but why is it under the priorities under that business plan? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just further to this, I think, since CGS is quite well positioned on different fronts, in not just construction but also we want to show that we are committed to our mandate as well. With the critical deficit of housing available to Nunavummiut and severe overcrowding, we want to look at and support housing as they explore alternative options.

I had mentioned earlier about the example provided where we're looking at possibly repositioning housing, but there are different parts where we want to continue on in this area and work with Housing as well as other departments to reach this mandate objective. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. CGS will be pursuing efforts and will make a commitment to make these existing buildings up to date and, if so, looking at the Real Property in the business plan, page 200, Real Property says, "Manages Government of Nunavut office space, administers leases and is responsible for disposal of real property assets." What's going to happen to those assets from the old NWT days that are abandoned? Is that one of the priorities that CGS will be looking into when it comes to disposal? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Whoever owns the asset initiates the surplus disposal. If they don't have any use for it, then they proceed with trying to get other departments if they want to take it up; if not, hamlets or non-profits. That cycle is still ongoing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now, as you stated earlier that it's up to the responsible department, for instance, I'll give you an example, the Qulliq Energy Corporation. That's just one of my examples of those buildings that are abandoned. Now speaking of municipal governments, since the QEC or other departments don't want to get that building, how will CGS be in support when it comes to transferring those buildings to municipal? Will there be any efforts going into repurposing existing buildings? How will the department be able to support and put in an effort when they're transferred to the municipal governments? How will the department be able to help or support them? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. My department prepares and circulates, so there's a master list of all Government of Nunavut assets and broken down by department and community. Once a fixed asset like a building or structure has been identified as surplus, CGS assists the department owning the asset with initial planning to determine feasibility of repurposing that facility. In the Infrastructure Branch, there's a committee consisting of senior managers to facilitate this surplus process. It has been an ongoing thing that our department has been working with this surplus public property. It could be offered up for sale or transferred to priority interests. That's the process that we have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll leave this for now and move on to my other questions.

On page 201 of your priorities for 2022-23, in the line of questioning to Arviat South when it comes to continued implementation of Nunavut's energy management initiatives and the construction activities in North and South Baffin, which North Baffin [communities] are listed for this initiative? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies. North Baffin consists of Grise Fiord, Arctic Bay, Resolute Bay, Pond Inlet, Clyde River, and Qikiqtarjuaq. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's surprising to hear that Igloolik and Sanirajak are more northern than Clyde River. Where does Amittuq stand when it comes to North Baffin? Are we South Baffin? Where does Amittuq stand when it comes to North Baffin? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sanirajak and Igloolik are, for this purpose, under South Baffin along with Kinngait, Kimmirut, Pangnirtung, Sanikiluaq, and Iqaluit. This is also considering of the number of assets between the communities that gets taken into account. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a comment, yes, Igloolik and Sanirajak are on the radar, but when it comes to capital projects, it seems like they're left out. That's just a comment.

I have another question. Is it all right, Mr. Chairman, if I go to Inuit employment plans? It's in the business plan. I just wanted to get your advice first before I move ahead. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kaernek. We covered that in the first page under the Directorate. If it's a simple line of questioning, I'll allow it, but if you're looking at extending it into a number of questions, maybe we will look at a different venue. Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek: Thank you for the clarification. Yes, it's going to be detailed, so I'll leave it at that now.

Saying that, how have been business plans been planned? As our Mr. Chairman has mentioned, is it just a cut-and-paste here and there from 2020 all the way up to 2022? Has there been any commitment put into these business plans when it comes to planning for all 25 Nunavut communities in order not to have the carryovers over again? Has there been a real commitment put into providing this business plan?

Looking at this one subject, "Support efforts to renovate...existing buildings," how much commitment was put into these business plans when it comes to planning for all of Nunavut's 25 communities? I'll stop there for now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kaernek. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe for the benefit of some of our new members, just to kind of give a background of how these business plans come into fruition, from the time they are initiated up until they reach our tables, if you will allow, I'll have my deputy respond to lay out kind of the process because he knows that intimately through the officials' level. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kaernek, you had another question? (interpretation) Are you done? (interpretation ends) Oh, sorry, Mr. Seeley. Go ahead, Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. The development of the business plan government-wide this year was initiated in concern following the election and the establishment of the new government mandate.

The ongoing development of business plan priorities are driven by, in our case as CGS, things like regulatory requirements for things like fuel storage or technical improvements to facilities or new initiatives within the municipalities. Those standard business-driven priorities are the types of things that I think members have come to expect to see listed within an annual cycle, typically starting with the identification of the priority in year one and a review, followed by development in the second year, followed by implementation, perhaps, in the third year, a typical cycle within a three-year business plan.

With the development of the new government priority with the new government, this time around, an effort was made both to identify those independent business-driven priorities for each department as well as show a consolidated effort to achieve the stated priorities of the government, which is how and why it is that things like housing and long-term care are identified as actionables or priority objectives within our business plan as a singular department.

As we discussed the other day, I think it was Friday, CGS is somewhat uniquely positioned as a service department to work with both municipalities and agencies like the NHC on things like housing. Similarly, the Department of Health... . Thanks. Similarly, things like long-term care, strategic development or expediting of those projects is meant to show the priority that those mandate items are positioned within our business plan as well as some of the business plans I expect the committee will be reviewing in the coming days.

That being said, there is a highly intentional and, we would like to think, strategic approach in identifying our business plan priorities for CGS for our specific line items to serve the communities and the individual stakeholders that we're accountable to 365 days a year. In addition to that, there is some additional content showing how it is that our department will work toward the government's more overarching mandate.

I think that that's and given the interest of time, I'll stop there with the process that we took and the number of discussions that happened leading up to that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Seeley. While I do recognize why this was being done this way, I do think it does bring some confusion to the table. When you bring in specific items or specific departments or entities that you're linking to, not mentioning others, especially with such a central agency such as Community and Government Services, it muddies the waters. I'll leave that, again, as a comment.

Infrastructure. Page J-7. \$120,987,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. We will go to page J-8. This is an information item only. There is no money being appropriated from it, but I will open the floor to questions on the Petroleum Products Division. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a question. (interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2022-23 main estimates indicate that the number of positions in the Petroleum Products Division is increased from 30 in the 2021-22 fiscal year to 34 in the 2022-23 fiscal year. What are the new positions and where are they located? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Malliki. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Four new PYs are proposed in the Petroleum Products Division and will be funded from the revolving fund: our collections specialist, operations analyst, admin and data entry clerk, and systems coordinator, all within Rankin Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The 2017-18 Annual Report of the Petroleum [Products] Division was tabled in the legislative on March 2, 2021. When will the 2018-19, 2019-2020, 2020-21, and 2021-22 annual reports be ready for tabling in the Legislative Assembly? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Although these annual reports from the PPD are not a statutory requirement, we do recognize that there's a great interest from MLAs on the information provided.

(interpretation) I'm sorry. (interpretation ends) All the annual reports are currently in translation and we're expecting to table them in the fall of 2022. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister for the response. (interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2022-26 business plan indicates on page 203 that one of its priorities for the 2022-23 fiscal year is to "Proceed through the legislative process to establish the Nunavut Petroleum Products Commission." To what extent does the proposed legislation differ from the bill that was introduced during the Fifth Legislative Assembly? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The former Bill 52, a proposal to establish the *Nunavut Petroleum Products Commission Act*, since that died off the order paper, my department is looking at how we can proceed on a new front with a new government. The existing legislative proposal will be reviewed by an independent party and they will be bringing forward options for cabinet to decide on. Once that has gone through, I'll be providing the legislature updates as we progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will be my last question. (interpretation ends) The Petroleum Products Division, (interpretation) do they forecast fuel price increases in the near future? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I know the minister has mentioned a couple of times that they're looking at an increase in the fall, but maybe if Minister Joanasié could be a bit more specific. I know you don't have the amounts, but maybe if you're looking at any projections, if you're looking at just a fall increase or would there be another increase in the spring as well. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Thank you for the question, as Nunavummiut are interested to know about the price of fuel. In the current 2022-23 fiscal year the price of fuel will be announced in the fall once we have received all the fuel we have purchased, (interpretation ends) upon completion of resupply. After that, the fuel prices will be set to ensure that the PPD does not exceed the authorized limit of the revolving fund. (interpretation) In addition, we're continually monitoring the global market price for fuel.

(interpretation ends) The Petroleum Products Stabilization Fund currently has a limit of +/- \$20 million and the current deficit balance is approximately \$13.2 million. That's prior to the closing 2021-22 results. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name I have on my list: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was going to ask what the stabilization fund limit was, but the minister just announced it. When the new prices are coming...let me just go back a bit.

During question period, the minister stated that all fuels have been purchased for the upcoming year. Can he not do a calculation now because all fuel has been purchased and there would be no more fuel purchased for the upcoming year? Can't a calculation be done now or at least a process started to get what the fuel price hike will be? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. *Mamianaq*, Mr. Chairman. The cost of shipping the fuel as well is also built into this, so that has to be factored into the price and to sell it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is the minister stating that a resupply will start in approximately one month or so and they haven't negotiated a shipping rate yet? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a matter of the actual cost of the whole inventory for the next resupply. This also involves, because not every community...they will have to be topped up, but the shipping rate is secured. Those remain, but there are still other cost factors that need to be considered. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In his opening comments on page 9 there, if the minister can explain to the newly elected MLAs because if I was newly elected, I would be wondering too. The budget for the revolving fund is \$250 million, I believe, and the budget for 2022-23 is \$267,751,000, almost \$268 million. Why are they over budget? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: If you will give me a moment, Mr. Chairman and committee.

Sorry, Mr. Chairman, I was going back to page 9; I had to find it back. Is he referring to the entire CGS budget of \$267 million? If he can clarify, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) I'm sorry.

Chairman: If I may, I think what the member is looking for is an explanation of how the revolving fund works and how it's not a part of the actual O&M budget for the Department of Community and Government Services. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and my apologies. The revolving fund provides for a mechanism to purchase, transport, store, distribute, and sell all the petroleum products to Nunavummiut in a safe, economical, efficient and reliable manner. Basically, as I have said it before, the division purchases the fuel and then passes it along to Nunavummiut at cost. This division is not a money-making venture and we just recover the cost of bringing it to Nunavummiut, to put it in simple terms. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The revolving fund, is the department going to get very close to its limit now? I know that 70 percent, I think, was bought, but the other 30 percent was probably bought at the higher rates. Are they coming close to the limit now? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. It's actually a really good question because, when I look at the main estimate projection, it says it's projecting an almost \$8.5 million surplus. The minister just mentioned that it's a \$13 million plus deficit right now, so that's quite a bit of recovery in a fiscal year. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you will give me a second again.

Mamianaq, Mr. Chairman. If you will allow or maybe if you come back to the question or if he has other questions, we will take time to find the information that he is seeking. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I have no problem waiting until you find the information.

I'll go on to questions I was questioning the minister in question period about Arviat's lack of capacity to have enough diesel P-50 now for the year. I did ask the minister and he was non-committal about purchasing the largest portable fuel tanks they could. I know that is capital, but if you need to buy more fuel to put in Arviat, you've got to put it somewhere. I don't know if I could ask that or not. Will the minister seriously look at putting portable tanks in there? I know that is capital, I know that, but if he could just give me an answer. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. As there is a lot of public interest around this topic, I'll allow the question. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are committing to Arviat's early resupply and then there's going to be another top-up, but also with that, we're considering what are around the portable fuel tank options to see if they would be viable. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Going back to the stabilization fund, the minister said that it's at negative \$13 million and the maximum limit is plus or minus \$20 million. The minister did state that there will be a fuel increase. I can't calculate it yet, but how aggressively is the department going to work on putting the stabilization to a positive factor because that will determine the price that Nunavummiut pay for their petroleum products? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With the new prices that were set, the PPD is forecasting a net profit of \$3.2 million and that would reduce the stabilization fund deficit balance to \$9.9 million. That's for 2021-22. In terms of how aggressively we're trying to take to bring this balance back to zero, we will have to see around what costs we want to present with Nunavummiut over the next few years in terms of... We are anticipating an increase for sure in the fall. We can't say how much, but yes, it's still to be determined. I can't say aggressively we will go to reduce the balance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarity then, just so we will all understand, ten months from now, the stabilization fund will still be \$9 million something in deficit. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: *Mamianaq*, Mr. Chairman. Right now, preliminary forecasts for fiscal 2022-23 indicate that the stabilization fund ending balance would be back to zero, so that's 10 months from now. This figure will be updated after the resupply season is completed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Then the minister can just explain to us just the question before that. He said that the stabilization fund would put \$3 million more money into it by the end of the year. That's how I come up with \$9 million because it was... I'm sorry, no. It will be \$9 million at the end of the year, so if the minister can just explain because he has told us two different figures now in two different answers. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for giving me an opportunity to clarify. The stabilization fund currently has a deficit balance of \$13.2 million and right now the division, the PPD is forecasting having a net profit of \$3.2 million, so it will bring the deficit balance of the stabilization fund down to \$9.9 million. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you. I don't want to be stuck here, but it's going to be \$9.9 million. When will it be \$9.9 million? Is it at the end of the fiscal year, which is ten months from now, or is it when we get resupply? The minister is not very clear on this. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Once the 2021-22 fiscal year is closed, we will have more definitive numbers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: From what I understand, the minister is stating that when they close the books on 2021-22, as of the April 1 numbers, you will have a better understanding. I see Mr. Seeley and the minister nodding their heads. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you. It's just my last question here is: do they have the numbers on how much of the revolving fund will be used in the 2022-23 year, this upcoming sealift? Thank you and that's my final question. If they have it, I would be happy if they, if he can't get it right now, provide it to us as soon as possible, then that's fine. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. We won't know until after the resupply has been completed, so at that time we can provide an update. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name I have on my list: Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In your opening comments, the last item that my colleague next to me referred to on page 9, I wanted to make a comment. (interpretation ends) "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) I have a little understanding here.

However, similarly, he alluded to Arviat and I just want to add to this myself, looking at the figures that I trust and based on these, I know that this is a very important issue. Fuel purchase is very important in one of my constituency communities of Clyde River, which has absolutely no fuel and no storage facility.

Similarly, I'm asking if a portable tank could also be provided. Perhaps this is just outside of the issue being discussed, but I think that we have an interest there as well. Clyde River is pretty large and it uses a large budget to operate. Are you really planned for the benefit of my constituents? I'll end that there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the fuel tanks and the situation to date, having a much better understanding of it myself as well, and I would like to thank my colleague for welcoming us to her community and giving us a tour and having met with the local hamlet council. To date the tanks are utilized for aviation fuel. The ultra-low diesel fuel was discussed and if we can store them in the existing tanks and we will continue with that in the upcoming year. We also support the municipality by flying in diesel for community use. Perhaps this week or next week, more fuel is also being flown into the community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for that response. Again, as this page was just an information item, I have no more names on my list. I'll ask committee members to go to page J-3. Detail of Expenditures. Community and Government Services. \$267,751,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié, if you want to provide very brief closing comments.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and committee members. I want to give a great big thank you to both my officials but also everyone that helped put together this business plan and our budgets for the upcoming fiscal year, which we have already started the fiscal year, but due to timing, we've had to delay.

Again, thanks for all the questions and we will look forward to a year of great service delivery from our department to not just the government but to other Nunavummiut and hamlets especially. Thank you for your time, Mr. Chairman, and I look forward to following up on the items that we said we would. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out. I will ask committee members to stay in your chair and I'm sure the Department of Health officials are listening very diligently right now; if they could proceed directly down to the Chamber. We're going to take a one-minute break and proceed directly with the opening comments.

>>Committee recessed at 17:33 and resumed at 17:35

Bill 01 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2022-2023 – Health – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to open the committee meeting back into play. I would like to ask Minister Main: do you have any officials that you would like to appear before the committee?

Hon. John Main: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Do committee members agree that the minister's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. For the record, Minister Main, please introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Today I present to you the Department of Health's main estimates for fiscal year 2022-23.

With me today are Director of Policy and Planning Linnea Ingebrigtsen and Executive Director of Corporate Services Greg Babstock.

For 2022-23, the Department of Health proposes a Vote 1 budget of \$446.1 million. While this represents a decrease of \$25 million from the year prior, 2022-23 will be the

first year of Health's strategic reinvestment of the new resources obtained through the Non-Insured Health Benefits travel programs negotiations with Indigenous Services Canada and Health Canada.

Following significant lobbying efforts with the Government of Canada over a period of several years, health ministers of the previous government and Mr. Hickes and Mr. Kusugak secured a contribution agreement for NIHB services with an increased medical travel co-payment from \$125 to \$715 per one-way trip, equating to a notional \$20 million increase to the contribution, as well as \$58 million in additional federal funding to directly offset the costs the territory was to have paid for eligible client medical travel over and above NIHB program entitlements.

This combination of agreements ensured that Health and the Government of Nunavut were no longer subsidizing NIHB-eligible medical travel on behalf of Canada. This arrangement began in fiscal year 2020-21 and Canada has again agreed to provide these amounts to Health in 2022-23. As a result, the newly obtained resources have permitted the reinvestment of these funds directly where they belong, into better health care service provision within Nunavut for the betterment of all Nunavummiut.

Of the \$58 million in additional federal funding, Health is proposing to reinvest \$33 million in 2022-23 to support the establishment of 75 community-based health centre support positions, such as medical travel clerks, housekeepers, and registration clerks, and to increase budgets for agency nurses, health centre security, laboratory services, pharmacy services, and paramedic support services.

We propose to expand our Health Information Unit so that we can better integrate evidence and data into future decision-making processes. We also propose to include additional resources to support the implementation of the *Mental Health Act*, promote staff training and development initiatives, as well as boost core medical needs, such as physician services, out-of-territory mental health and out-of-territory health services.

As this is the first year of the department's strategic reinvestment of these newly recognized funds, the remaining \$25 million not utilized by Health in 2022-23 will be available to Health in subsequent fiscal years to further fund additional new initiatives intended to help provide more health services within the territory, keeping people closer to home, as well as other opportunities to further enhance service delivery.

With continuing discussions between the department and the federal government, it is anticipated that a new long-term arrangement to ensure 100 percent coverage of NIHB-eligible client medical travel will be in place for the 2023-24 fiscal year, entrenching these investments in Nunavut health care for many years to come.

Every year community health centres experience increased demand for services as the population of Nunavut grows. It is necessary to strengthen staff capacity in health centres across the territory in order to help optimize these expanding health care delivery obligations.

Primary to Health's reinvestment of our new federal funding in 2022-23 is to address the emergent staffing shortfalls within vital community health centre administrative and support functions. Specifically we are asking for \$5.06 million in 2022-23 to fund the creation of 75 community-based indeterminate staff positions. These positions include 25 housekeeping positions in response to the increased sanitation requirements brought on as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, 30 medical travel clerks and 1 medical travel specialist to support a return to anticipated medical travel volumes post-pandemic travel restrictions, and 19 registration clerks to strengthen the initial interaction with the client upon coming to a health centre and reduce the reliance on clerk interpreters to fill this role. A further \$1.67 million is to be requested as part of the 2023-24 main estimates to bring this total investment in health staffing to \$6.73 million for the 75 full-time positions. This investment is to be targeted towards communities with all but one housekeeper position, 74 person years in total, to be located outside of Iqaluit.

The Department of Health is continually seeking new ways to improve access to and the provision of health care services for Nunavummiut. For fiscal year 2022-23, in utilizing the recognized travel program revenues, Health is requesting continued budgetary support for several health care initiatives. \$1.0 million each is being requested to support the budgets of the laboratory and pharmacy operations within Iqaluit Health Services. With both these clinical functions being paramount to the government's pandemic response through COVID testing and vaccine management and distribution, this funding will correct historical budget deficits within these two vital responsibility centres.

To assist in meeting any emergent staffing needs within the clinical complements of community health centres, Health is requesting an additional \$3.7 million for agency nurse procurement and \$4 million for paramedic support services. With the procurement of nurses continuing to be a challenge globally, supplementary staffing options for clinical needs are to be required by the department to ensure that community health centres both remain open and accessible to community members when services are required.

The safety and security of both clients and staff remain of paramount importance to the Department of Health. With security incidents continuing to increase in severity and frequency, several enhanced security initiatives have been instituted in multiple locations across the territory. To ensure that the incremental costs of these security actions are covered, Health is requesting a further \$2.44 million in 2022-23 to supplement existing security resources of \$1.45 million obtained in prior years.

The availability of both indeterminate and short-term staff housing and hotel space continues to be a serious constraint to the staffing of vital health care positions within Iqaluit Health Services and indeed in health facilities across the territory. In order to ensure that there are accommodations available for transient health staff, such as locum physicians and nurses at the Qikiqtani General Hospital, and while in transit to community-based clinics, Iqaluit Health Services has accumulated and internally manages an inventory of 48 transient housing units within Iqaluit. Health is requesting an additional \$1.92 million in 2022-23 to supplement the existing appropriation of \$782,000

within the responsibility centre to ensure that this essential program is sufficiently resourced.

The department has been and continues to manage budgetary allocations in some program areas that are insufficient as a result of increasing and uncontrollable health care delivery costs, operational growth, and increase in consumption of health care services have also further shown the need to financially support multiple key care delivery programs. In 2022-23 Health is requesting an additional \$10 million we allocated towards the budgets of several very familiar and recognizable functional areas, including \$4 million for out-of-territory mental health, \$2 million for elder care, and an additional \$4 million for physician services.

Prior to April 1, 2020, Health did not have a single organizational unit dedicated to the effective management, utilization, and protection of health information. The establishment of the Health Information Unit, or HIU, saw the integration of several existing units within the department into a single division that oversees health information technology, virtual care infrastructure and administration, as well as the data and information management needs to support departmental operational objectives. Health is requesting \$1.21 million to fund seven additional positions to further enhance the capabilities of the HIU in the facilitation of data and information that is to be used for decision-making and reporting purposes and in the provision of virtual care services. Positions being requested include a manager of project management and planning, several virtual care coordinators, a research coordinator, as well as an administrative assistant and data entry clerk.

The Department of Health is looking to new and creative ways to develop, promote, and ultimately retain key staff across a variety of vocations. To promote a culture of ongoing learning, Health has put a priority on workplace education and training to build the capabilities of the public service and in the long term, retain employees. With an emphasis on increasing Inuit employment and developing strong Inuit leaders, Health is committed to providing education, training and professional development opportunities that prepare adult learners for positive contributions to society and meaningful employment within the department and the public service of Nunavut. To support these learning and staff retention priorities, Health is proposing \$1.21 million be allocated for the creation of four human resource assistant positions to be located in Cambridge Bay, Rankin Inlet, Pangnirtung, and Iqaluit that will assist in the management of ongoing training and development activities, Article 23 staff development initiatives, facilitate staffing opportunities, such as direct appointments, internal transfer assignments, and casual staffing opportunities, and support the regional human resource function. Operational funds are also being proposed to support the provision of various educational and training opportunities and to support staff who are on long-term education leave and in attendance in an academic institution.

Nunavut's new *Mental Health Act* was adopted during the spring 2021 Legislative Assembly sitting and is a crucial step forward in modernizing mental health care in Nunavut. The Department of Health broadened its new *Mental Health Act* in recognition

of what was brought forward in community consultations. The new Act includes provisions to help facilitate care delivery closer to home through the use of community-assisted treatment orders and for which a new position is required to coordinate. Funding is also required to develop and deliver new policies, training, and regulations, as well as for the development of a mental health and addictions strategy, which the new Act mandates the Minister of Health create. The new Act also has provisions for postvention services and mental health monitoring that require financial support. Health is requesting \$1.46 million in 2022-23 to fund the community-assisted treatment coordinator as well as operating resources for Act-mandated obligations.

Iksivautaaq, in conclusion, a continuing priority for the Department of Health in the coming year and beyond is to promote and foster the well-being of all Nunavummiut and help to nurture healthy and vibrant communities. It is always important to recognize the advances made by the Department of Health staff on behalf of all Nunavummiut, especially so in navigating the territory through the global COVID-19 pandemic. Our aim is to continue to build a well-governed, integrated, collaborative health care system that is innovative and responsive to the needs of all Nunavummiut. The department envisions a health care system that embraces Inuit societal values and empowers Nunavummiut to live healthy lives.

Iksivautaaq, that concludes my opening comments. (interpretation) I thank you all.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Main. Mr. Malliki.

Committee Motion 001 – 6(2): Rule 6(2) to Complete Opening Comments

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I move a motion as per Rule 6(2) that our sitting hours be extended so that we can complete the opening comments for the Department of Health. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The motion is in order. Do members agree? Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Please proceed, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Members of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness have reviewed the 2022-23 main estimates and business plan of the Department of Health.

The proposed 2022-23 operations and maintenance budget for the Department of Health reflects the federal government's recent contribution for Non-Insured Health Benefits, specifically in the area of medical travel. Since 1999, the Department of Health has shouldered the majority of costs for medical travel and has regularly overspent its budget as a result. The standing committee fully supports the minister and his officials in their

ongoing negotiations with federal representatives to ensure that the Government of Canada continues to meet its financial obligations with respect to medical benefits for the Inuit of Nunavut over the long term.

Mr. Chairman, the standing committee has noted that the Department of Health is proposing to increase the number of its staffing positions in 2022-23 as well as increasing budgets in various program and service areas. With the department's vacancy rate currently at 47 percent, committee members have raised concerns regarding the creation of additional positions. Recognizing the ongoing reliance on casuals and relief staff, including agency nurses, the committee encourages the department to renew its efforts in the area of recruitment and retention of health care professionals, including a review of bonus and remuneration packages that could make permanent employment opportunities in Nunavut more competitive when compared to elsewhere in Canada.

Mr. Chairman, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of a number of health program areas as well as expanding and enhancing such delivery systems as virtual health care. Members look forward to updates on the department's progress in expanding its provision of virtual care services as we move past the pandemic.

The standing committee has been given to understand that the Department of Health will be working to establish a Health Information Unit which will oversee the collection, management, and use of health data and information. Members encourage the minister to ensure that the department's work to develop health privacy legislation takes developments in this area into consideration.

The standing committee strongly encourages the minister and his officials in their efforts to promote and provide education, training and professional development for Nunavummiut to enter the health care fields. While there is a great demand for mental health services, it has been recognized that mental health workers who are familiar with Nunavut's culture, history, and language are most effective at providing services in our communities. Initiatives in suicide prevention, addiction and trauma treatment, as well as the ongoing monitoring and support of individuals suffering from mental illness must all take into account the Inuit experience across generations and communities.

Mr. Chairman, concerns related to elder care have been raised by Members of the Legislative Assembly, advocacy groups, media, and members of the public on an ongoing basis. While the standing committee appreciates that the development of a comprehensive elders and seniors strategy for Nunavut will encompass a number of critical areas, including housing, culture and language, and family support systems amongst others, the provision of home care and long-term care for elders falls under the mandate of the Department of Health. Members will be paying close attention to the department's efforts to recruit and train Nunavummiut to provide in-person elder care as well as initiatives that will provide support for elders to remain in their communities and regions as they age.

Mr. Chairman, the department's Office of Patient Relations plays a significant role in assisting our constituents to resolve concerns or issues relating to health services for themselves and their family members. Members strongly encourage the minister to table a report on the activities of the Office of Patient Relations, including information on systemic issues that have been identified and the types of processes and procedures that are followed to resolve different issues.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening remarks. I anticipate that individual members will also have questions and comments as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Brewster. With that, I recognize the clock and I will rise to report progress to the Speaker. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you can excuse the witnesses, please.

Speaker: You may sit down. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Hickes.

Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Hickes: 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. Kusugak. The motion is in order. To the motion.

An Hon. Member: Question.

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

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

Item 23: Orders of the Day

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

Orders of the Day for May 31:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions

7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Replies to Budget Address
11. Petitions
12. Responses to Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motions
16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 1
 - Bill 2
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 Tuesday, May 31, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 18:00*

