

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Tony Akoak

(Gjoa Haven)

Hon. David Akeeagok

(Quttiktuq)

Minister of Economic Development and Transportation; Minister of Justice; Minister responsible for Labour

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok

(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguut)

Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister responsible for Immigration; Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs

Bobby Anavilok

(Kugluktuk)

Janet Brewster

(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Hon. Pamela Gross

(Cambridge Bay)

Deputy Premier; Minister of Education; Minister responsible for Seniors

George Hickes

(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole

Hon. David Joanasie

(South Baffin)

Government House Leader; Minister of Community and Government Services; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council

Hon. Joellie Kaernerck

(Amittuq)

Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Languages; Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation

Mary Killiktee

(Uqummiut)

Hon. Lorne Kusugak

(Rankin Inlet South)

Minister of Finance, Chair of the Financial Management Board; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation

Adam Lightstone

(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Hon. John Main

(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

Minister of Health; Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention

Solomon Malliki

(Aivilik)

Deputy Chair, 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

Karen Nutarak

(Tununiq)

Hon. Daniel Qavvik

(Hudson Bay)

Minister of Environment; Minister of Energy; Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College

Joanna Quassa

(Aggu)

Inagayuk Quqqiaq

(Netsilik)

Alexander Sammurtok

(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Monday, October 23, 2023

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 Joanase, Hon. Joeline Kaerner, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. Solomon Malliki, Hon. John Main, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Ms. Karen Nutarak, Hon. Daniel Qavvik, Ms. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Inagayuk Quqqiaq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Mr. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 13:30*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Tony Akoak)(interpretation): Good day. Before we begin, Mr. Simailak, can you say the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, my colleagues. (interpretation ends) I hope you enjoyed your weekend and are all set for this week's work.

Ministers' Statements. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 276 – 6(2): Speaker Welcomes Premier to Gjoa Haven

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Good afternoon and thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good afternoon" to my fellow MLAs and Nunavummiut who are listening to the proceedings.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I continue to be awed by the beauty of our territory's western region. My recent visit to the Kitikmeot community and your beautiful community of Gjoa Haven was no exception.

On your invitation, Mr. Speaker, I visited Gjoa Haven on August 1 and 2. I wish to thank you and your beautiful wife, Annie, for your incredible hospitality.

>>*Applause*

In Gjoa Haven we were greeted at once by Mayor Megan Porter. I so remember it like it was yesterday. It was hot and sunny, Mr. Speaker, and I was honoured to be able to serve burgers and hotdogs to residents who came out for the feast.

Mr. Speaker, through your coordination, I appeared before the hamlet council to listen and answer questions. I sat down with the Kikitak Housing Association and stood on the lots where Nunavut 3000 builds began this summer. I visited your vibrant health centre run by dedicated staff. At the continuing care centre, I spoke with elders from the region and learned that the 10-bed centre is a key community employer.

On a serious note, I visited the community morgue, an older building with no temperature control. This is one example of how far-reaching the territory's infrastructure deficit can be, even having an impact on the care of the deceased.

I will acknowledge, though, Mr. Speaker, that my visit came at a time when residents were recovering from the tragic events and the tragic losses of community members. Despite this sadness, I experienced Gjoa Haven's welcoming spirit and resilience. Inuit culture is alive and well in that community. Thank you to the Tainiit drum dancers and all the dancers, from youth to elders, who shared this traditional practice with me.

We always end our statements this way, but after experiencing the kindness and beauty of Gjoa Haven, I mean it especially when I say "thank you, Mr. Speaker."

>>Applause

Speaker: Before going to the next minister's statement, I would like to say that we're thinking about the community members of Gjoa Haven, who just received just last night, lost another member. We're thinking of my community.

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

Minister's Statement 277 – 6(2): COVID-19 Fall Wave and Flu Vaccines

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, we are seeing an increase in COVID-19 cases and other respiratory infections in Nunavut currently. It's important for Nunavummiut to receive their COVID-19 and flu vaccinations at their earliest opportunity.

(interpretation ends) As we head into winter, getting the updated COVID-19 vaccine and your flu shot helps protect against viruses that can make us very sick, that can put us in the hospital or medevaced out for urgent care.

Getting both the COVID-19 and flu vaccine means a lower risk of widespread infections in our communities. This safeguards individuals and families, but also ensures safeguards the Nunavut health care system so we can focus on those needing care every day.

Nunavut's fall COVID-19 vaccine rollout is based on guidance from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization. It is strongly recommended individuals follow

the ‘rule of six’: if it has been six months since your last COVID-19 vaccine or if it has been six months since a COVID-19 infection, you should get your COVID-19 vaccine.

Flu and COVID-19 vaccines are free and available at all health centres in Nunavut. It is safe and recommended to receive both the flu and COVID-19 vaccine during the same appointment.

Uqaqtitsijii, there’s an opportunity in the Legislative Assembly today to get vaccinated and protect our loved ones and communities against COVID-19 and influenza. During the afternoon break, our public health team will be in the lobby to administer the COVID-19 and flu vaccines. I invite all MLAs and ministers to participate.

(interpretation) Vaccines are safe, vaccines are tested, and vaccines work. Nunavummiut, please get your updated COVID-19 and flu vaccines as soon as you can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Ministers’ Statements. Hon. Minister responsible for the Workers’ Safety and Compensation Commission, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister’s Statement 278 – 6(2): New President and Chief Executive Officer

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, my fellow MLAs and Nunavummiut, as well as the residents of Pangnirtung.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce the appointment of Rick Hunt as the new President and Chief Executive Officer of the Workers’ Safety and Compensation Commission. Mr. Hunt joins the commission after almost 20 years of service with the Qulliq Energy Corporation. His experience and depth of knowledge in the occupational health and safety field is extensive. I am pleased to have him lead our organization.

(interpretation ends) This marks the first time that the commission’s president will be based in Iqaluit instead of Yellowknife. Hon. Paulie Chinna, Northwest Territories Minister [responsible] for the Workers’ Safety and Compensation Commission, and I are equally supportive of Mr. Hunt’s appointment and trust that he will advance workplace safety in both territories. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Minister's Statement 279 – 6(2): Access to Safe Drinking Water in Communities

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and we are thinking of the residents of your community. Good day, Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, earlier in the sitting, I tabled a report reviewing the emergency measures taken by my department in response to the 2021 water contamination incident here in Iqaluit. This incident highlighted that access to safe drinking water is essential to community life and reinforced the importance of ongoing investment into water treatment infrastructure in our communities.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, ensuring our drinking water meets the needs of our growing population and the national Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality will require a substantial, continued investment into replacing, upgrading, and maintaining water treatment infrastructure in every community in Nunavut.

In 2024-25 alone, my department is proposing proactive water treatment plant upgrades in six communities to ensure their water treatment infrastructure has the capacity to produce high-quality drinking water for delivery to homes, businesses, and government facilities.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, these planned upgrades are being proposed to ensure local water treatment infrastructure meets the future needs of our growing communities and are in addition to the ongoing maintenance and upgrade of existing water treatment facilities in our communities.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, nothing illustrates just how vital access to safe drinking water is more than not having it. In the last six months, my department has taken immediate measures to repair and upgrade water treatment infrastructure in eight communities. These measures included stabilizations of Arviat's water reservoir berm, upgrades to Baker Lake and Grise Fiord's water storage tanks, repairs to Kugluktuk's water intake, pump replacements in both Chesterfield Inlet and Pangnirtung, an electrical issue in Arctic Bay, and finally, immediate repairs to the pumphouse and water treatment plant in my own constituency of Kinngait where a series of breakdowns and equipment failures have required investment to ensure water delivery can be maintained this winter. My department will continue to provide the support necessary to ensure safe drinking water is produced in communities and responds quickly where operations require assistance.

Mr. Speaker, my department is committed to ensuring Nunavummiut have ongoing access to safe drinking water in the short, medium and long term. I would like to recognize our municipal partners for their fundamental role in managing water treatment and distribution in communities and the resilience and patience of our residents.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Minister's Statement 280 – 6(2): 2023-24 Full-day Kindergarten Pilot Program

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. Good day to those in the House with us and those across Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the Department of Education's full-day kindergarten pilot project has officially launched now in five communities across the territory. Schools in Apex, Chesterfield Inlet, Kimmirut, Kugluktuk, and Whale Cove now offer their kindergarten students a full day of learning.

Mr. Speaker, we are excited by the launch of this pilot. Full-day kindergarten gives students access to more instructional time to build their knowledge and skills related to Inuit language and culture, literacy, and numeracy, while promoting physical and social-emotional health and wellness.

Research shows that a full-day kindergarten program gives students a strong foundation that positively impacts their future learning. On top of the many benefits to students, it also provides parents with additional child care options.

Mr. Speaker, the 2023-24 full-day kindergarten pilot is the first step to help guide a phased-in system-wide rollout. Piloting the expansion of full-day kindergarten in five select schools helps ensure that the program's future expansion maximizes benefits to students and staff.

The department will assess the pilot program's results throughout the school year. Lessons learned from the pilot will then inform the department's long-term implementation plan to strengthen the sustainability of full-day kindergarten across all Nunavut schools.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Members of this House for their advocacy, along with key recommendations from other members of the Special Committee to Review the *Education Act* that helped chart this path for these young learners and future leaders. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Minister's Statement 281 – 6(2): Iqaluit Deep Sea Port Grand Opening

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to update my colleagues on a very exciting project: the Iqaluit Deep Sea Port.

After years of work by contractors, engineers, and project managers, my department celebrated the grand opening of the Iqaluit Deep Sea Port on July 25 of this year. The grand opening was well-attended by the public, industry, and dignitaries. The opening provided an opportunity for Iqalumiut to see the facility up close and for sealift companies and the Department of Economic Development and Transportation to showcase the port's operations. I would like to thank my colleagues who attended the opening, as well as staff at the department for coordinating the event. I would also like to extend my thanks to our federal counterparts and other departments that contributed to the completion of this project.

Mr. Speaker, in the next few weeks, the first [year of] operations at the Iqaluit Deep Sea Port will draw to a close. By all accounts, the season has been extremely successful.

Naturally, the sealift operators and fuel resupply tankers that can come alongside and offload directly ashore or into the pipeline have seen the greatest benefit. Their time at port has been reduced by up to two-thirds.

Operations that cannot come alongside the wharf are also seeing great benefits. The wide, evenly sloped barge ramp provides protected access at the tides and the huge marshalling area allows for quick and efficient movement of cargo out to the customers.

Mr. Speaker, this seaport met its first challenge last December, when two fuel tankers arrived late in the year and were able to safely complete their resupply. At the end of this month, two scheduled cargo vessels and a tanker are all scheduled to be in port at the same time. Given the flexibility and efficiency the facility has provided so far, I have no doubt that the facility will rise to this challenge as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

Minister's Statement 282 – 6(2): Success of the Summer Student Employment Program in Grise Fiord

Hon. Daniel Qavvik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are thinking of your community.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, (interpretation) despite Grise Fiord being the smallest community in Nunavut, my department was able to double its presence this summer thanks to the Summer Student Employment Program.

Mr. Speaker, Officer Christensen was able to mentor David Watsko Jr. also known as "D.J." in valuable on-the-job experience.

D.J. is originally from Grise Fiord and is entering his second year with the Environmental Technology Program with Nunavut Arctic College in Iqaluit.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, D.J. was able to receive on-the-job training and was able to gain valuable experience in both in an office and on the land settings. D.J. assisted the Government of Nunavut in a wildlife research project on muskox on Ellesmere Island.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to highlight the Summer Student Employment Program that provides opportunities like on-the-job training. D.J. looks forward to enrolling in the Summer Student Employment Program again next summer to continue his work with the Department of Environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 373 – 6(2): Traditional Skills Development at Igloolik High School

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues. I also say “good day” to the residents of Igloolik.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to express my gratitude to the high school students. For the past two weeks, they were taught about ice forming on lakes and how to do that. They were taught by Inuit on how to collect the ice. Some people prefer ice water for their tea. They also learned how to go on the ice safely.

I am very appreciative of the fact that they were taught very well and I would like to ask my colleagues to join me in commending these individuals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 374 – 6(2): Tribute to Elder Marie Anguti

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to pay tribute to one of my constituents, Elder Marie Anguti of Kugaaruk, for her important role in strengthening Inuit language, knowledge and culture.

Mr. Speaker, Marie Anguti was born in 1943 at an outpost camp and was raised in Kugaaruk. Elder Marie Anguti has been teaching and promoting our Inuit language by way of sharing traditional stories, throat singing and songs, most notably through *pihiq* and drum dancing.

Mr. Speaker, Elder Marie Anguti has performed in many drum dancing festivals in Nunavut over the years, as well as internationally, in Vancouver and Toronto, and also performing in a number of countries, including France and Monaco. Mr. Speaker, Marie Anguti has also visited schools in Kugaaruk to teach students about *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and traditional sewing techniques.

Mr. Speaker, Elder Marie Anguti was appointed to the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit in 2021. The Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit assists with recommending Inuit knowledge and expertise to the Government of Nunavut's departments. Marie Anguti's lived experience, recommendations, and teachings have been of immense value.

Mr. Speaker, I would like express my appreciation for Marie Anguti for her important efforts to strengthen and revitalize the Inuit language and culture.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in paying tribute to Marie Anguti. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

Member's Statement 375 – 6(2): Bullying and Violence in Our Schools

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, Nunavummiut, my constituents in Coral Harbour and Naujaat, as well as my fellow MLAs. It's great to be back here again, as my flight was delayed past the first sitting day.

Mr. Speaker, my statement today is regarding bullying and violence in our schools, which is a concern that is raised by parents and students.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address a serious concern raised by many of my constituents, both parents... .

Speaker: Sorry, Mr. Malliki. This is not question period at this time; it's just a member's statement. Members' Statements. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Sorry and thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was making my member's statement.

(interpretation ends) ...many of my constituents, both parents and students, about the unacceptably high rates of bullying and violence in our schools.

Mr. Speaker, it is very upsetting when a parent contacts you with a photo of their 12-year-old student who has been so badly beaten by a fellow student they have to be medevaced out of the community.

Mr. Speaker, it is sad to hear that parents aren't sending their kids to school because they are worried for their safety.

It is even sadder to hear that our youth are scared to go to school because of the violence they see around them, fearing that it might affect them.

Mr. Speaker, our children are losing opportunities to receive their education because of the bullying and violence in our schools.

I recognize that the Department of Education has started to collect data on the number of violent incidents reported in schools. That is a start, but it is a slow start and does nothing to reassure students and parents right now that steps will be taken to prevent the bullying and violence or even to hold the bullies accountable.

Mr. Speaker, it seems every week there are fights at the local high school. For the sake of our children's health, safety, and mental wellness, this situation must not continue. For the sake of their education and their future, it cannot continue. I call on the government to address this serious issue immediately. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Member's Statement 376 – 6(2): Municipal Elections in Baker Lake

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to my colleagues and all the staff.

Now, to the people of Baker Lake, there is a municipal election for hamlet council and mayor. It would be great if everybody would go out and vote. There are two people running for mayor and they are Kevin Iksiktaaryuk and James Taipana.

For the hamlet council, there are twelve candidates. They are: Adam Adose, Mikey Akilak, Aquilaq Amaruq, Trevor Attungala, Siobhan Doherty-Iksiktaaryuk, Eva Elytook, Michael Mautaritnaaq, David Owingayak, Salamonie Pootoogook, Grace Tagoona, Eric John Tapatai, and Becky Tootoo.

All these people are running for council. It's great to see so many candidates. In Baker Lake, it would be great if everyone can go out and vote today, and good luck to all the candidates. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

Member's Statement 377 – 6(2): Lack of Mental Health Services

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, to the people of Pond Inlet, my colleagues here, and to the people Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, October 10 was World Mental Health Day and this year's theme was "Mental Health is a Universal Human Right."

Mr. Speaker, I was left wondering how the term "universal" applies to Nunavut. The lack of mental health resources across our territory is crucial. It feels that this human right is not universal at all.

Mr. Speaker, the trauma of the past from colonization, residential school experiences, and federal day schools live on from generation to generation. Trauma must be addressed with the right supports and services. Without those services, people often turn to drugs and alcohol to escape the pain.

The community of Pond Inlet is often left without a mental health nurse for over three months at a time. The community has witnessed far too many tragic events. People are destroying themselves.

Mr. Speaker, I have written e-mails and letters to our government on this issue, but mental health resources are still lacking.

Mr. Speaker, I find it so frustrating to think that establishing a good mental health system with solid infrastructure could have been one of the government's top priorities when Nunavut was created to set us on a strong healthy path forward.

While I look forward to the completion of the Nunavut Recovery Centre, it is still some years to come before people can go there for treatment.

Even so, Mr. Speaker, treatment for addiction issues only touches the surface. Trauma goes much deeper and must be addressed consistently, in our home communities, where we can learn to face challenges directly in our lives.

Mr. Speaker, if mental health truly is a universal human right, then our government must do a better job to ensure that this right is promoted and protected.

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

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 378 – 6(2): Constituency Visit to Clyde River

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, good day, people of Iqaluit, Clyde River, and Qikiqtarjuaq, as well as everyone here.

I rise today to talk about my constituents. We were elected to represent our constituents and I want to elaborate to my colleagues on an experience I went through during my campaign. I promised to hold a public meeting within two years with my constituents in both of my communities, not just a local radio show, but a face-to-face meeting and I fulfilled that promise. The reception from my constituents of Clyde River was hearty and welcoming.

Mr. Speaker, as the MLA for Uqqummiut, I want to voice my pride in accomplishing this event, although I was rather inexperienced, having never hosted a public meeting with my constituents, especially in a different community, but I am pleased that it was successful and I have felt rather invigorated.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud for the privilege, albeit it is sometimes stressful representing two wonderful communities, although some members represent three communities as it is based on population sizes. We need to acknowledge these challenges as it can become quite difficult obviously, particularly when living in a different community. By not being fellow residents, our traditions also differ from each other, although we are fellow Inuit, but each community has their own peculiarities.

During my constituency visit, bad weather and the lack of intercommunity airline schedules posed challenges to our dates from travelling as frequently as we would like. Mr. Speaker, we need to recognize the residents of Clyde River, who all took the time to attend my public meeting, especially the adults, youth and elders who attended. Their comments, concerns and other issues expressed in the public meetings showed their desire to enact change, and this will ensure our working relationship becomes much stronger even in representing them for the next two years.

I would also like to report that the meeting was very successful. I urge the members to do that. It is very good and supportive. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

Member's Statement 379 – 6(2): Table Tennis Players from Kugluktuk

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, Kuglukturmiut, Nunavummiut, and colleagues.

(interpretation ends) I rise today to acknowledge and welcome table tennis players from Kugluktuk: Nate Kamingoak, Mikail Bolt, Nolan Puasi, Kaya Atamat, Coach Robert Lynne, and also Maria and Atilla Csaba, who spearheaded with running and opening up the tournament here. I welcome them to Iqaluit and wish them well during their tournament stay. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 380 – 6(2): Table Tennis Players from Arctic Bay

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Prior to commencing my statement, I wish to inform colleagues that my oldest constituent in Arctic Bay, Qaapik recently lost another of her children over the weekend. I send my love to the family so we are keeping you in our thoughts, as well as in our prayers as we share in this loss.

Mr. Speaker, the residents of Arctic Bay went to play (interpretation ends) Ping Pong (interpretation) although on Friday it was misunderstood. It's now called (interpretation ends) ping pong. (interpretation) They had a very successful tournament, which was quite enjoyable to watch. I believe there were seven communities that participated in this tournament.

The parent/coaches, Cody Kilabuk and Crystal Enoogoo, worked very hard to bring the participants here raising funds. They also ensured the athletes practised hard. When Inuit work together, anything becomes possible. I would like to congratulate them as well and the participants:

- Ken Aola
- Sheldon Allurut
- Taryn Enoogoo
- Lorna Kalluk
- Violet Naqitarvik

I would like to congratulate them. Advancing to the Arctic Winter Games in Alaska are:

- Trudy Qaunaq
- Puka Allurut
- Keegan Qamanirq

These four individuals will be attending the Arctic Winter Games. Three divisions will be represented by Arctic Bay athletes. I am ecstatic that they won five gold, one silver, and three bronze medals.

The justice committee and HTO in Arctic Bay donated funds, along with local residents buying things to help fund the trip and I appreciate their support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 381 – 6(2): Hockey Equipment Drive and Hockey School in Rankin Inlet

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As we all know, Rankin Inlet is known, rightly so, I think, as one of the most active communities in terms of sports and recreation in our territory. This weekend was no different, Mr. Speaker.

Last week, the community did a hockey equipment drive where anybody and everybody that registered for minor hockey was able to get equipment of whatever they needed. Some of the children went and got registered and they didn't have any equipment at all, but when they came out of the arena or the community hall, they were fully equipped, all free, from the hard work of the volunteers in our community. Other members in the community that had outgrown their equipment could trade them in for new or used equipment that better suits them.

After that, Mr. Speaker, this weekend, the community put on another great hockey school. The hockey school that is put on in the community runs from morning 'til night and it's not just about learning to skate; more importantly, it includes literacy, it includes learning respect, having fitness classes and then skills programs in hockey. This is not possible without the tremendous support we get from our community, all the mothers and fathers, and even those with nobody playing hockey participate in its movement, and I appreciate everybody that participated and volunteered for that.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, we had our summer; in Rankin Inlet, we have soccer and baseball tournaments that happen continuously. We have two basketball courts that run nonstop, 24 hours a day, with young people playing in them. We also have not-so-young people out playing in our ball diamond.

This summer, for the first time, there was a Rankin Inlet team called the Freaks, who went to Winnipeg to participate in the slo-pitch nationals across the country. Mr. Speaker, I am so proud of the team. They came out of there winning the national championship. Mr. Speaker, I am proud of...

>>Applause

...I am so proud of our team, Mr. Speaker. I would like to get a bit more time to conclude my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are none. Please continue, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, our slo-pitch league in Rankin Inlet is second to none. They're always holding some kind of slow pitch tournament over the weekend, and we have many

participants from across the Kivalliq region coming to participate. They also work with children and have slo-pitch and fast pitch for the children in Rankin Inlet as well.

Getting back to the Freaks, Mr. Speaker, our national champions coming out of Nunavut, I'd like to recognize them by name. In no particular order: Mr. James Merritt, Chad Taipana, Chad Graham, Kandace Graham, Norman Okalik, Tracy Roach, Carlo Hamilton, Catharine Ayaruak, Seamus Ayaruak, Nigel Nakoolak, Olivia Tagalik, Loren Kaludjak, and Edna Hamilton. Congratulations and I'm proud of every one of you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker

>>Applause

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Member's Statement 382 – 6(2): Municipal Election Day

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, although my colleague made a member's statement on this fact, as we all know that there are local municipal elections. For residents in both Arviat and Whale Cove, I encourage all of you to exercise your civil rights by voting.

There are several candidates running for the mayorship in Whale Cove and the local council, and I support all the candidates who put their names forward. In Arviat, there are several candidates for the council and they are all worthy of our support.

Nonetheless, we already elected a new local mayor, Joe Jr. Savikataaq, and I congratulate you and look forward to working with you on several issues together with my colleague from Arviat, whom I am sure will also collaborate with the mayor obviously.

To all the candidates for local hamlet council and mayors, they have huge responsibilities and as MLAs, we must work with them and provide support so I wanted to publicly express my appreciation to each and every one of the candidates, Mr. Speaker. Today, I encourage Nunavummiut to vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker

>>Applause

Speaker: Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Pangnirtung, Ms. Nakashuk.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Today I would like to recognize Mr. Rick Hunt, the new President and Chief Executive Officer of the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission.

Mr. Hunt is no stranger to this House. For nearly 20 years, he served with the Qulliq Energy Corporation. His new role with Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission is particularly significant because it is the first time in the history of that organization's presence in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories that the President and Chief Executive Officer is located here in Iqaluit. Welcome, Mr. Hunt.

>>Applause

Speaker: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. I have my own. I have a community member from Gjoa Haven sitting behind the Premier, and she is my sister. Her name is Lucy Kusugak Akoak, and she works with the mental health department in Gjoa Haven. Welcome to the Assembly.

>>Applause

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 540 – 6(2): Bullying and Violence in Our Schools

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

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken about the high levels of violence and bullying in our schools. Can the minister clarify whether she is aware of incidents of violence in our schools where young victims are being medevaced out of the community? If she is, can she tell us how these situations are addressed by her department staff? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* to the member for the question. As we all know, I was away on leave as my daughter was born and I had Minister Joanasie acting on my behalf and I do know that a letter was sent to the Department of Education in regard to bullying in schools.

Mr. Speaker, the situation was looked into and the department has written a letter back to the member on October 12 about that instance he is referring to. Yes, we are aware of the situation of bullying in the schools, and I thank the member for bringing forward his concerns. Whenever there are issues in our communities, we do hear from the member and from his constituents as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister didn't indicate how these situations are addressed. All she stated was that she was informed of the situation.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I understand that the department has a new school violence tracking system. Can the minister describe how this system works and how it is used to directly address the increasing level of violence and bullying in our schools?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* again to the member for the question on the violence incident reporting.

As a Canadian-wide issue, violence in schools have been a top priority for the Department of Education and for the Nunavut Teachers' Association.

In October 2022, last year, Mr. Speaker, we had a new anti-violence reporting tracking system and that was established through the Nunavut Teachers' Association under the Safe Schools Anti-Violence Committee, and with that we have this new mechanism for reporting any incidents to this tracking system.

The reporting of incidents includes violence and harassment. It is also a way for us to use as preventative measures so that we can work on corrective and preventative actions to take if there are similar incidents that occur in the future.

We never want to see any incidents of violence in our schools, Mr. Speaker, but this is a way for us to know if they are happening and if it used correctly then we are able to have the data there to show and support that we can have resources launched into communities where there are situations happening if they do happen. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Preventative wasn't answered. I'm not getting any answers.

Mr. Speaker, as I noted in my member's statement, parents in my constituency don't want to send their children to school out of fear for their safety. Students in my constituency are afraid to go to school due to bullying and violence.

Will the minister commit to provide additional security measures for the schools in my constituency so that our children can continue to receive their education in a safe environment? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* to the member for that question. In the particulars around additional security, all of our schools do have updated security cameras. Those installations can always be looked back at if there are ever incidents.

We do have mechanisms for our headquarters here in Iqaluit to go through any footage as required. If it is needed to be accessed by the RCMP, for example, or others, we are able to look at that footage in a secure manner, and send any materials over to the RCMP if need be, if it gets to that point.

As far as extra security measures, I can talk to the member about what he's referring to, and if he has any suggestions for extra security, Mr. Speaker, I'd be pleased to hear what his suggestions are from his constituents, and the Department of Education will look into his request. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Question 541 – 6(2): Guaranteed Basic Income

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my questions are for the Minister of Family Services.

The issue of providing a guaranteed basic income for eligible Nunavut residents was raised in this House some time ago. The minister has indicated on a number of occasions that the issue was being 'explored.'

Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell this House: what is her current position on establishing a guaranteed basic income for eligible Nunavut residents? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank you for your question. In regard to the review, we're looking at what would be best if we're going to be establishing a guaranteed basic income. We have compiled the report, but we are currently reviewing it. With the guaranteed basic income, we have been doing a review of it for quite some time now, but I can tell you that the report is completed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister didn't provide her position, but I'll move on to my second question here. The Government of Nunavut's contracting database for 2020-21 shows that the Department of Family Services paid Blueprint ABE a sum of just over \$892,000 for a feasibility study on guaranteed basic income.

Can the minister provide an overview of the findings of that report, and specifically, can she tell us whether the report recommended providing a guaranteed basic income in Nunavut or not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that question. To say it in English, (interpretation ends) the guaranteed basic income feasibility study for Nunavut, there are two overarching designs on that program; first is the income tax-based program, which would be very similar to reviewing families, whether it be one person or four people in the family, on how they can be eligible for income assistance using their income tax on the yearly basis. That kind of study could be very costly for the government. The other one is the reforming the current income assistance system, along with *Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit*, or an income-based principles, that would, again, explore on some of the programs, assessments that we do, and that can include decentralized areas as well.

For the other question, I am sorry; I don't remember the other question the member had asked. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister for your response. The other question was whether, or not the report recommended providing a guaranteed basic income in Nunavut or not.

Mr. Speaker, for my last question, I am certain that the report commissioned by the Nunavut Department of Family Services contains some useful recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, this is becoming more and more important for me. As I mentioned in the spring sitting, some of my constituency may have to rely on this in just a few years when the mine shuts down in Baker Lake.

So I am wondering, will the minister commit to tabling the guaranteed basic income feasibility study so that we the Members of this House and the public can be better informed on this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank you for that question. In regard to the report, there are different segments. (interpretation ends here) Phase 4 of the feasibility study has seven different design elements and those are pretty well including the Nunavut based income program and approaching cost of living. There are seven of those. (interpretation) Actually they are all different.

Nonetheless, as I indicated, we are contemplating how deeply we will dive into this report, as it is still being considered, but the report will be tabled once it is completed after the review is finalized. We anticipated, but may not be able to table it in this fall sitting, but it will be completed in the near future still reviewing the report and after the review is done, we will table it possibly not in this fall sitting, but in the near future. Due to the details, with their complexity and difficulty in implementing the recommendations, the issues are constantly being reviewed as to the best method to provide the services, including how best to conduct a review of the challenges, in particular due to the large expenses incurred for caring for Nunavummiut and how best to ensure the efficiency of these expenditures.

These are the problems that are making this whole process rather challenging. However, once the report is tabled, it will become clearer on the needs, and also how to make revisions in our future for the plans we wish to implement which will improve them, and they would be included. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North, Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

Question 542 – 6(2): Foster Parent Recruitment

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Good afternoon, people of Rankin Inlet North and Chesterfield Inlet. (interpretation ends here) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services.

Earlier this month, a public services announcement was sent out across Nunavut inviting prospective foster parents to an information session held in Iqaluit on October 16.

Can the minister provide an update on how well this event was attended and whether any new foster parents were recruited? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much for your question. I am very pleased that there were local invitations for prospective foster parents. Although we are constantly requesting local names, some of the communities don't even have any foster parents.

This issue, to date has been our biggest challenge and one we keep advertising, however it is good to hear that the meeting was well attended and many citizens came to make enquiries, although I cannot provide details. Nevertheless, I am proud of the parents who are contemplating becoming foster parents, and the paperwork is still being received by our department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recognize that the need to attract and inform new foster parents on the roles and responsibilities involved in providing a home for some of Nunavut's most vulnerable individuals. However, it concerns me that recruitment efforts are mainly focused in Iqaluit. Can the minister tell us whether there are plans to host similar foster parent information sessions in other communities, including Rankin Inlet in the upcoming months? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank you for that question. From what I know, we've had calls of people interested in seeing this kind of recruitment done in their community, and if there's going to be another recruitment session, we will focus on the other communities. We have to make sure that there's proper care given to the foster children, and there's also assessments that have to be done. I can't tell you at this time when we're going to be holding those types of sessions in Rankin, but I'll let you know once we have the decisions made. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The continuity of cultural, being able to speak Inuktitut and eat *Inuksiutit* food is very important for young Inuit children, who are already facing the uncertainty of being removed from their home and separated from their family. Our government should be making greater efforts to encourage families in communities outside of the capital city to open their hearts and homes to foster parents.

Will the minister commit to hosting foster parent information sessions in the communities outside of Iqaluit to increase the number of foster homes who can care for and support children in need? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, for the question. Thank you, for encouraging the search for more foster parents, we realize we are short in communities.

To reiterate, and in any way that we can support the foster families, we at times meet with the foster parents in communities, and to plan around Christmas for activities with the families, and the many complex issues, if in any way we can support these children, I encourage us to seek more foster parents. We require more, and are looking at ways to recruit more in the communities as required. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 543 – 6(2): Funding for Nunavut Students

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

Over the past year and a half, I have asked the minister a number of questions, and I'll refer back to the question that I had asked the minister last fall with regard in the financial assistance on Nunavut students.

How many applications were made, how many were approved, denied or are still pending? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* to the member for the question. As for the particular details of the member's question, right now, as of fall 2023, for the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students enrolment, we have Nunavut Inuit who are studying in the territory, we have 131 who are enrolled and receiving financial assistance; for Nunavut Inuit who are studying outside of the territory, we have 152 recipients, bringing the total to 283 Inuit that are receiving financial assistance. For non-Inuit studying in Nunavut, we have 9 recipients and for non-Inuit studying outside of Nunavut, we have 40 recipients, bringing our total to 49. Our total enrolment numbers for this fall are 332 students.

In terms of the question on approval, we had the number of approvals for 2023-24, we have had in each category, 168 Inuit studying in the territory and outside of Nunavut, 204, and non-Inuit we've had 12 studying in the territory and studying outside the territory for non-Inuit, 63, bringing our total to 447. Overall, we have seen a rise since COVID for these applications. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll have to go over the *Blues* to get those final numbers again. Unfortunately, I was comparing the numbers to last year's response and in the response last year, the minister stated that there were 753 between Inuit and non-Inuit who had applied for financial assistance for students. I do have a challenge in those numbers that you're stating that they're increasing, yet I'm seeing a notable decrease. Anyway, I'll move along, Mr. Speaker.

The minister has previously stated that a lack of information on FANS applications can delay approval, yet even now, I'm still hearing of students waiting weeks to hear back from staff at the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students office. Has the minister established minimum response times to respond to applicants and, if so, what is that time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* to the member for that question. I'm sorry that there have been delays to certain applicants. We never want to see that happen and we are reviewing the FANS program with the comprehensive review and are looking to enhance the program. As I have stated here, we have interim solutions to address some of the issues that we've had to increase our employment. We have been able to hire seven casual staff to the FANS department to help with the program overall, which has helped the application.

To address the question that the member has asked, it can take up to 15 business days for applications to go through as there is a chain of procedures and government process that the applications do have to go through with the Department of Finance and also with banks. Some institutions take up to five business days for payments to go through to students, depending on which institution they have, but in our peak times, it can take a little bit longer for these applications to go through. We do try to address applications as fast as we can and they can sometimes go through a lot quicker than 15 business days, but if there are ever any instances, I appreciate any questions that come to my office or to the FANS department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that response and I do look forward to seeing more work done in that area.

Mr. Speaker, almost exactly a year ago, October 26 of last year, the minister responded to a question regarding that comprehensive review and stated "As we were undergoing the comprehensive review of the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students program for Nunavut, and working to support our students as best we can, this task is undertaken with a lot of serious regard in terms of working to meet all of the aspects that our students need."

Mr. Speaker, it's been a year now since that commitment was made to do this comprehensive review, yet I still have yet to hear a timeline of when this review is to be completed. Maybe the minister would be able to update the House today on that time frame? Thank you.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* to the member for the question on the comprehensive review timelines for the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students program.

We do have a lot of work in front of us as we overhaul a significant piece of the department's branches, as the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students program funding has never been updated like this before, Mr. Speaker, as it has been something that has been inherited from the Northwest Territories government with the policies and procedures. There are a lot of undertakings that the department has done, hence the term

‘comprehensive review’ for this program. We do re-envision to look way different and enhanced in so many different ways.

Mr. Speaker, just a quick update for the timeline; the whole project overall should be completed and we are trying to speed this up, but it is anticipated that the overall FANS portion of this should be completed by 2025-26, and that is because it has to go through several steps to get there.

Right now, we have completed the comprehensive review and we are working on a report and I look forward to that coming through the process with the recommendations, but I can’t speak to that, Mr. Speaker, right now.

However, we also have other work in the areas of a legislative review for the Act, we have the development, design, mechanics of the program, which is the public face of the program and the operations manual, which will be next fiscal year; 2024-25. In early 2024-25, we also have the development for a new database, so hopefully we will be able to get that going through as it is a major component and one of the biggest pieces that we need to support is a new database for the FANS program.

With that comes a procedural database and computer system. Also, the following year, that will be to test the database and computer system, and then finally a full roll-out of the FANS program.

I know this seems like a long timeline, Mr. Speaker, but we are hoping to have interim measures slowly and gradually as we go through this. I really do look forward to seeing a re-enhanced program for our students. We can’t advocate enough on how important it is to have a more enhanced program and robust system for our financial assistance. I really thank our member for his continued support in speaking to the matter. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 544 – 6(2): Lack of Mental Health Services

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

Mr. Speaker, I recently wrote a number of emails and a letter to the minister with respect to the lack of mental health services in Pond Inlet.

Can the minister confirm that he has received my correspondence and indicate when I might expect a reply? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for the question. The issue of mental health needs to be discussed, not only here, but across the territory of Nunavut. This helps to address the issue. I have received your correspondence of September 14.

We have been working on a response, but I'm not sure if I have a draft at the moment. There are many letters and files that we have underway, so I will follow-up once we have the response. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you, minister. I will be expecting that correspondence.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I do recognize that hiring certified mental health nurses and other staff is a huge challenge for the Department of Health. I am aware that all across Canada there is a shortage of qualified health staff.

However, it has also been recognized that having mental health workers and counsellors who share the same culture, language, and background as the people they are working with is the most effective means of achieving a successful outcome.

Can the minister provide an update on what initiatives are underway to employ Inuit as mental health workers in our community? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question.

(interpretation ends) In terms of Inuit employment within mental health, the largest initiative we have right now is our paraprofessional project. That is a project where I am pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, out of the 31 mental health and addictions paraprofessionals currently working across Nunavut, 25 of them are Inuit. This program or project has been designed specifically to try and bring more Inuit into the service providing space. We have identified that as a gap.

So there are four different paraprofessional positions that have been created and those positions are structured so that the paraprofessionals work alongside our mental health professionals, such as mental health nurses in the community. Also, the positions are structured so that there is career laddering that can happen.

In the longer term, Mr. Speaker, what we would like to see is for our paraprofessionals moving into the professional field. That is a longer-term goal, but I think through career laddering, something we are hoping to see in terms of increasing Inuit employment within mental health. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize. Thank you, minister. I am very happy to hear that there is some work being done on it. I expect some new mental health workers.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, Ilisaqsivik is a Nunavut-based organization which not only offers counselling, but also offers training for counsellors. Their services are Inuit-led and culturally and linguistically relevant to Nunavut.

I believe our government should invest more heavily in supporting this initiative to train, certify, and recruit Nunavut-based mental health counsellors.

Can the minister clearly describe how his department works with Ilisaqsivik, and what steps have been taken to support this organization in training mental health workers to work full-time in our communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. Yes, we do work with the Ilisaqsivik group, and I'd like to recognize them that they are an independent body, and they make their own decisions on what needs to be done, but I would really want to support them and other groups like that in Nunavut.

For example, in Rankin Inlet, Pulaarvik Kablu, in Cambridge Bay, Department of Healthy Living, there are different groups like that that we support. With the Ilisaqsivik group, we work with them on a bunch of different matters.

(interpretation ends) So, there's a few different areas where we are collaborating actively with Ilisaqsivik, in terms of mobile trauma response work, in terms of some of the other initiatives around developing Inuit-led and Inuit-specific addictions and trauma treatment in Nunavut.

So, there are a number of different fronts that we are working with Ilisaqsivik on, but I am aware that the honourable member's question was specifically around training. In terms of the direct link between Ilisaqsivik and my department, I can't speak to those exact details, but I will commit to returning with more detail to the member directly, when I have that available. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 545 – 6(2): Nunavut Land Use Plan

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the new Minister of Environment. I had to make a decision there, I made it really quickly.

It was exactly one year ago, this week, that I raised the issue of the Government of Nunavut's role in respect to the development of Nunavut's land use plan.

As the minister is aware, the Nunavut planning commission submitted the 2023 recommended Nunavut land use plans to the federal Minister of Northern Affairs, the Territorial Minister of Environment, and the President of Nunavut Tunngavik back in June of this year.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to take a moment to acknowledge that a number of the planning commission employees lost their housing in a fire recently, and some of them were my friends, and I know how difficult that was for them, and I'm so amazed at how this community of Iqaluit stepped up for them, and across the territory. So, I've been thinking of them.

>>Applause

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, the draft land use plan has been in the hands of the reviewing parties for over four months now. Can the minister provide an update on his department's review of the proposed new plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. The Government of Nunavut is reviewing the 2023 recommended Nunavut land use plan to ensure it aligns with the Government of Nunavut mandates on goals and objectives, and we expect to see the plan, whether it will be approved or rejected in the new year, in the coming new year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the minister for that response. As I noted earlier, the draft Nunavut land use plan has been submitted to the federal Minister of Northern Affairs, territorial Minister of Environment, and president of Nunavut Tunngavik for review. I'm wondering: can the minister confirm when he will be meeting in person with the federal minister and the president of Nunavut Tunngavik to discuss the new proposed plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can say that we can expect to meet in the new year, but I have not confirmed the timeline as of yet. I will update the plan to the House once the signatory parties meet in regard to the 2023 recommended Nunavut land use plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the last clarification because I would hope that the meetings would take place before the Government of Nunavut finalizes their perspective on the plan.

Mr. Speaker, we all recognize that there is a dynamic tension between the importance of protecting our environment and wildlife and the importance of promoting economic development and natural resource extraction.

Over the past number of years, the Government of Nunavut's position in respect to where the appropriate balance lies has shifted back and forth as governments and ministers change office.

For the record, can the new Minister of Environment clearly explain how he will determine whether or not the Nunavut Planning Commission's proposed new land use plan achieves the right balance? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. The Government of Nunavut believes that the plan needs to strike an appropriate balance between habitat protection and responsible development. Mr. Speaker, it is not to say our government wants to stop mining, but there needs to be a balance between habitat protection and also responsible development within our territory.

Mr. Speaker, the plan will also allow amendments to the plans within the plan and there's a process that it must go through if anything needs to be amended. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 546 – 6(2): Providing Care at Home

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

Mr. Speaker, from time to time, families have a loved one who develops an illness that requires care and support, or an elderly parent may no longer be able to independently look after themselves. Many families step up to look after their loved ones, especially when it does not require intense or sophisticated levels of care.

Can the minister clarify whether his department keeps track of how many individuals receive health care from family members in their homes and how it ensures that they receive the necessary medical resources to be safe and comfortable? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. (interpretation ends) I think, whether or not we keep track, we do keep track in different ways in terms of the needs at the community level. The key point of contact for most communities is through the local health centre.

Looking at the Home and Community Care Program, we do have solid statistics through that program where we keep track of the number of clients and I am pleased to report that when we look at the numbers year over year, we are supporting more and more and more Nunavummiut, in most cases in their home through that home care program.

I hope that that partially answers the member's question. I don't know that everyone of the clients that are receiving care from their family members would necessarily be enrolled in the home care program so there is a possibility that those numbers would differ. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Anavilok

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends here) Some illnesses, probably most, take years to develop to a stage where an individual suffering from an illness requires professional help, or hospitalization.

In many cases, family members can manage their health needs and provide the necessary assistance. In doing so, these families are saving our government's resources by not taking up beds in health facilities, or care homes.

Can the minister clarify whether any kind of financial compensation is available for family care providers who are looking after member with an illness at home?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends here) I really would like to thank the member for pointing out the importance of family in terms of those health outcomes, whether its and elder, whether it is a family member with medical conditions know that the contribution that they are making to not just their own family, but to their community and territory huge.

Through the Department of Health, we don't currently have a program set-up to provide financial supports to individuals who are providing care, but you know, outside the Department of Health there may be other measures in place depending on the particulars of the individuals. If there is a disability that is involved, there may be some federal supports that they may be eligible for.

The short answer through the Department of Health, no, but we are interested in providing support to individuals and families, however we can, to the best of our abilities.
(interpretation) 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 here) While individuals who care for their family members at home do so with the highest level of love and compassion, it can be a very tiring role to take on.

I do recognize that despite care may be made available to that family caregivers can have a period of rest, but I am confident that additional supports would also be very welcomed.

Will the minister consider establishing a compensation fund for family care givers who provide low-lever health care in their homes to family members? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends here) I will get in trouble from my colleague, the minister of finance if I go an commit to spending money that I don't have approval for here.

Speaking seriously, I can commit to looking into this idea and working with my colleagues to explore it and if there is an interest from the member to be the hon. member to be in involved in that examination, or discussion initially, I will certainly extend that olive branch as well. I thank the member for raising this issue. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 547 – 6(2): Homeownership Programs

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask questions in regard to having a safe home, and having a proper home.

I rise today and my questions are for the Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation, and they concern the corporation's homeownership program for Inuit, elders, and seniors. I apologize for not explaining further.

As the minister is aware, the Nunavut Housing Corporation offers a number of programs. These include the senior citizen home repair program, the senior and disabled person preventative maintenance program, and the seniors and persons with disability options. I believe there are three types of different programs for seniors and for disabled persons to do preventative maintenance.

With that, Mr. Speaker, the objectives for these programs are good, but I'm very concerned that the elders in smaller communities are not taking advantage of them. I believe so because I'm advised by our constituents that if there's funding available for

maintenance or to fix broken stuff in the communities and for maintenance, I know that these programs are really good, and we want the communities to have access to them.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Housing Corporation's most recently tabled annual report for the 2021-22 fiscal year indicates that there was only one approved homeownership program application from residents in Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq.

So, can the minister indicate how many applications were received and approved from these communities during the year 2022-23 fiscal year? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For programs such as support programs, are all different and NHC has quite a number of these programs under their mandate. I will provide a detailed outlined of these programs, by providing a breakdown of the funds and the number of residents supported through the programs.

To date, just to cite this example, emergency repairs is a program that offers emergency assistance to homeowners who may incur problems such as a broken furnace, and if it requires emergency assistance. There were 104 recipients or homeowners who received assistance under this program to date.

For the private homeowners, under the (interpretation ends) Home Ownership Home Repair Renovation (interpretation) program, for home repairs such as floor installations, broken window replacement, we had 38 approved applications from our homeowners.

Under the Home Furnace Fuel Tank Repair program, when the fuel tanks spring a leak current code requires a complete replacement of the fuel tank, and to date, actually over this winter period is what I am referring to here, there were 18 approved applications.

For residents applying for the down payment assistance program to purchase a home, under (interpretation ends) Down Payment Assistance (interpretation) program there were 5 approved applications. For the Seniors Homeownership Maintenance program, there were 11 approved applications. Under the Seniors Preventative program, for furnace repairs and safety issues under this (interpretation ends) Homeowner Preventative Maintenance (interpretation) program, there were 10 approved.

In total, for the approved applications through these programs, 186 applications received approval, and we are anticipating further applications, as sometimes funding runs out for the equipment required, or if the application isn't fully completed, issues crop up causing delays, so there are still 101 files requiring further details.

These are additional to the applicants already approved, and there are still ongoing files. Once these are finalized or clear, perhaps over the course of the winter, we can provide

further details as to the approval breakdown by community, including applicants and approvals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for your response. I know that it will be very interesting to have regional information for each region such as Qikiqtaaluk, Kivalliq and Kitikmeot so that we can find out more as to which region has more applications.

Mr. Speaker, we know that we need to provide more information to the people out there so that they'll know what kind of programs are accessible, especially to elders and seniors because this program is very good and beneficial. Some homeowners are living in old, dilapidated homes.

On November 7, 2019, the Nunavut Housing Corporation's homeownership program review report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. One of the recommendations in the report was that the Nunavut Housing Corporation (interpretation ends) "consolidate programs related to purchasing or building a home into a single homeownership program, and consolidate programs related to home repairs and maintenance renovation into a single home improvement program."

For that, Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe what actions the Nunavut Housing Corporation is taking to implement this recommendation? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my colleague for her questions on that. We established a committee last winter, rather in the spring sitting. Our colleague now sits on that committee and we wanted to conduct a review of the NHC programs, and how to make improvements on the ones I just alluded to.

Some of them require more promotion or publicity as not many people do not apply nor understand the program and what it is trying to support, and during our last meeting in Naujaat, we agreed on the need to simplify these programs. Yes, we need to make them less cumbersome and easier to understand and promote.

Some programs should also be amalgamated into a single program, perhaps by looking at how best to utilize the support funding to those in need. We spoke to these issues, and some of the issues we debated in that committee setting, has been tabled to my colleagues at (interpretation ends) cabinet (interpretation) where it is currently under review as we want to make improvements.

I will use this example, for an applicant for homeownership, under the down payment program, we will set aside funds for repairs. In the past, applicants constructed their own homes back before Nunavut came into being. We are looking at a similar program for people capable of building their own homes, and perhaps if the applicant has funding for construction costs.

There are different elements within these programs that we want to introduce, and will table our report this coming winter. Also, we have revised and improved other programs such as local housing units being offered under a rent-to-own program which people have requested. We will look at offering more programs under this area as well, with new rules and policies related to homeownership programs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for clarifying this in more details. Be that what it is, unfortunately, even as a member of that review committee, I was unable to attend due to encountering bad weather on the scheduled travel dates.

This indeed shows that more attention needs to be paid to the homeowners and support programs. It is obvious that the programs require further massaging, so it needs to be felt more succinctly by staff, and provide further direction to Nunavut Housing Corporation (interpretation ends) Headquarters (interpretation) and to ensure they direct regional staff to work with smaller communities. This is to the programs are accessible, promoted and if residents are aware of these programs...

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Housing Corporation's most recently tabled annual report indicates that "eligibility criteria for the homeownership programs includes income testing...the adjusted household income is measured relative to a community-specific Homeownership Program Income Eligibility limit. These limits are derived from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Housing Income Limits."

Mr. Speaker, these limits have not been updated since October 2014, which it has been nine years. Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate when they will next be updated?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I had previously mentioned, we are taking a very good and fresh look at the homeownership programs and home assistance programs that are in the window of the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

We have those programs that we want to improve on and make changes to; one of them is homeownership and the down-payment assistance program, and other homeownership-g geared programs that we do have. Within those programs are new, improved, and

adjusted criteria for being able to qualify for certain amounts of funds in order to be able to build or purchase your own home.

Those are currently within cabinet and as soon as they are approved, I will be more than happy to share it with the members and the public, Mr. Speaker, and in those documents will lie the changes and improvements to the old criteria. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 548 – 6(2): Street Lighting

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

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, the Legislative Assembly approved \$2.0 million in capital funding in recent years to enable the Qulliq Energy Corporation to replace Nunavut's street lights with energy efficient light-emitting diode lights, which are commonly referred to as "LEDs."

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the installation process in Taloyoak and Kugaaruk has been completed. Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm approximately how many new LED units are currently operational in each of the two communities that I represent? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Joelle Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you to the MLA for enquiring about that matter. Mr. Speaker, under that program, currently there are two types of systems. The first group has six communities where all the updates have been completed. This is what I believe the member wanted to find out, and to date, there are six communities that have received preliminary work in fiscal year 2020-21 and 2021-22. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Winter is on its way and our days are growing shorter. I have received a number of concerns from my constituents in Taloyoak that there is an insufficient number of street lights in the community.

Mr. Speaker, well-lit streets are very important, as they contribute to increased public safety and decreased vandalism.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify the process by which the Qulliq Energy Corporation determines when to add additional street lighting fixtures to a community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Joelle Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, for that question. As I indicated earlier, we have completed some of the communities, and it does reduce vandalism, and it's the same situation in my community. There are 20 communities that are currently being reviewed to make changes to the streetlights. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My colleague from Kugluktuk has asked a number of questions concerning the status of this community's new power plant, and I will have similar questions at a later date for the new minister concerning the same issue in respect to Kugaaruk.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister commit to undertaking a tour of the Kitikmeot communities in the coming months to familiarize himself with our needs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Joelle Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that question and thank you for that invitation. I would like to go to the communities to look at the status of the streetlights, but I can't tell you exactly which dates I'll be able to do a review of the Kitikmeot communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 549 – 6(2): Support for NTEP Graduates

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to follow up on my questions from Friday, regarding the employment of Nunavut Teacher Education Program graduates. Although today, I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, in my member's statement from Friday, I addressed the need for the Department of Education to work with the Nunavut Arctic College to ensure that graduates from the Nunavut Teacher Education Program are identified by their strengths and interests for teaching positions within Nunavut's education system.

I would like to ask the minister to describe how the Department of Education works to recruit graduates from the Nunavut Arctic College's Teacher Education Program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana*, to the member for the question. The Nunavut Teacher Education Program is one area that the Department of Education funds

Nunavut Arctic College for as a recruitment strategy to enhance Nunavut teachers in our schools, and to have Inuit employed in those positions is very important for us to have as many teachers that are home-grown, Mr. Speaker.

So, some ways that we work to recruit our teachers is, first of all, by supporting that program and having funds go directly to Nunavut Arctic College. We also work with Nunavut Arctic College, through the practicum process, and the students get direct access and learn directly from current teachers that are in the schools, and we also work with them and help them in terms of recruitment, and we do job fairs, and we've done numerous ones all across the country, but I think it's safe to say that having Inuit teachers and Nunavut teachers directly from the program, there are 15 Nunavut Teacher Education Programs across the territory, and we do hope that we can have as many of those students in our schools in the future when they do graduate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has come to my attention that graduates from Nunavut Teacher Education Program have been invited to interview for teaching positions but are not successful in the competition and therefore not being offered teaching positions in our schools.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time that I have heard of this type of situation occurring to Nunavut Teacher Education Program grads and I had actually corresponded with the previous minister of education a number of years ago on this exact issue.

Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that we utilize the investments that we put into Arctic College accordingly. I would like to ask: can the minister describe how her department works with district education authorities, principles and the Nunavut Teachers Union to promote employment of Nunavut trained, home-grown teachers to work in Nunavut schools? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* to the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education does work closely with our partners. The district education authorities are in our communities as the advocates for our schools in terms of what they would like to see in the programs that the community members want in our schools. They are advocating on a daily basis for our schools to be enhanced and work closely with the senior staff of the schools and meet regularly.

In terms of the other partners that the member had discussed, our department is always continuing to meet with our partners and stakeholders that advance our Nunavut education. We work to bring up matters for Nunavummiut, for our students, and work to determine any issues that are out there and solve them together. It's a community. Mr. Speaker. The school system is a community of various different agencies and we do have various things that happen.

For the principal matter that he brought up, we just had a principals conference here in Iqaluit. In the past several weeks we had all of our principles come and gather and work. It is the first of its kind to happen again after COVID-19.

In terms of working with the Nunavut Teacher Education Program students, as I mentioned, they do have practicum, so they are working directly in our schools. We work on that process with the Nunavut Arctic College and with the school leaders and principals to have those students learning directly from teachers.

In terms of the interview process that is noted from the member, and I will work closely with our new colleague, the new Minister of the Nunavut Arctic College to see how we can have the interview process incorporated, for example, into the practicum process for the Nunavut Teacher Education Program students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the minister's response and commitment to work with the Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, and addressing the interview process to ensure that all a grads will be offered an opportunity to teach in our schools.

Mr. Speaker, in response to my questions on Friday, the Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, indicated that the college has produced 6 teacher education grads in the 2022-23 academic year and 19 grads in the 2021-22 academic year.

I would like to ask: Can the minister update the House on how many of those grads have applied, been invited to an interview, and subsequently been hired and offered teaching positions in our schools? Understanding that the minister may not have this information on hand, and if so, I invite the minister to provide that information in her Return to the Oral Questions. Thank you.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker and *quana* to the member for the questions. I do have some of that information, but to answer the member's question in full detail, I can share right now what I do have and will provide the rest through oral response.

Mr. Speaker, this school year, this academic school year 2023-24, we have hired a total of 12 Nunavut Teacher Education Program graduates. That doesn't mean that they are all from this academic year, Mr. Speaker, as our colleague noted that there were six graduates this past academic year, and to further answer that, there are four of those are new hires that graduated this past academic year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Members be aware, time allotted for question period is now over. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to extend question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays? There are none. Question period is extended for another 30 minutes.

Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Question 550 – 6(2): Remote Work Policy

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hello to Arviarmiut.

(interpretation ends) I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Human Resources on the minister's Remote Work Policy minister's statement from last week and quote some of the stuff.

“The Department of Human Resources introducing an interim remote work hiring policy...” and it goes on to say that “...remote hiring policy is aimed to providing government departments and public bodies with temporary recruitment tools to hire a limited number of highly specialized professionals and positions.”

Mr. Speaker, just for the record, I fully support remote work within Nunavut, but also, my position is I do not support remote work outside of Nunavut. I feel that remote work should stay within the territory.

Mr. Speaker, my first question to the minister is; how many employees are currently working outside of Nunavut under remote work, and how many are Inuit? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, for the good question. (interpretation ends) I have to say, remote work has been very difficult because when we're talking about the tracking system, some departments have had different operations or some ministers may not have known, some joint appointments were outside of the territory in the previous government. At this current time, we have about 50 that are outside of Nunavut right now. I may be wrong in this number, but I can certainly get back to you on this.

In terms of how many are in Nunavut, I wouldn't know that number at this time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The second part of the was; how many of these remote workers outside of Nunavut are Inuit, and maybe the minister can get back

to me on that, because that is important because my feeling is that most of the employees that are working outside of Nunavut are not Inuit, but that's just my assumption, and the minister can either prove me right or prove me wrong.

Mr. Speaker, there should not be a problem on having exact numbers of how many employees are working remote out of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, every department knows how many casuals they have, I understand it fluctuates daily or weekly, but there's a report every year, how many employees are indeterminate, how many are Inuit, how many are non-Inuit, and how many casuals. It's all on paper, and the government has been working on this remote work policy for, I believe also three years now, at least the whole life of this government. So, we should be able to ask and we should be able to receive those numbers that are current for a certain time. There should be no issues about giving us a number. Mr. Speaker, I find 50 is awfully low for all of government on remote working. It seems awfully low. I believe the number is higher.

My next question to the minister is: limited number for highly specialized professionals and positions; if there is a remote worker outside of Nunavut, are they supervisor, manager positions? Are they supervising employees within Nunavut to make sure they show up on time and make sure their work is done? Are there remote workers outside of Nunavut that are under the "supervisor" category? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for the question. (interpretation ends) I will certainly get back to the member on the number of Inuit that are working remotely. There are a few that I can think of with Family Services; the client liaison officers that I have mentioned in the House before. All of those employees are Inuit that are based outside of the territory that work closely with foster care facilities or foster parents. They are based in Ottawa, Ontario, and Edmonton, but Ottawa, basically. Most of the casuals that we do have listed are nurses, short-term nurses.

When we are talking about other specialized positions that are being mentioned that would work remotely, some of them may be supervisors, but for the remote work policy that is coming into play, those positions would not be supervising employees. Again, when we are talking about how we can have better control of remote-work employees outside of the territory, they would all go through cabinet to be approved because in prior times, they were never recorded. For some of them, we may not have known that a department had approved it without the minister's knowledge. So these are things that were never brought forward, and these are things that we are trying to retrack and find out.

When we are talking about how many employees we have outside of the territory, I could certainly get back to the member on the numbers. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This last question should be a straight forward answer. I would like the minister's position on remote-work or remote workers that are working remotely outside of Nunavut; the minister's position on working remotely outside of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I'm not in a position to have people work... . We want more people to work in the territory, but because we don't have enough infrastructure that supports that need support and facilities, or in health care facilities, or Embassy West elders, we have no choice at this time when we don't have enough buildings to support our community members that need to be in specialized facilities.

It is very difficult for the member to ask me how I feel about this because I would prefer that we have our employees within the territory, but at this time we don't have that in some areas. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 551 – 6(2): Current Staffing Levels

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is also for the Minister of Human Resources.

A few weeks ago, we were in a televised hearing where the new Deputy Minister of Human Resources, I believe it might have been, or it was the Deputy Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, who stated there was 1.6 or 1.7 staff members per day leaving employment with the Government of Nunavut. I have often stated how important it is to staff the Department of Human Resources.

Last year I had asked this question, and again, I'm reminiscing, it was almost exactly a year ago that I had asked the question where the minister stated that the Department of Human Resources was staffed at 65 percent. I would like to ask the minister today: what is the current staffing levels of the Department of Human Resources? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for the question. (interpretation ends) At this current time, we have 62 percent and that is not very different from last time. When we are talking about how we record ingoing and outgoing employees, I know the numbers could be different if you are asking the Minister of Finance or Minister of HR, because some days it is different depending on the records coming in on the day, but in terms of 1.6, that is something that we are looking into.

Like I had mentioned, with the Department of Human Resources, we are looking at retaining our employees within, so it is 62 percent at this time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the minister's response on that because I have often stated in this House and a number of my colleagues have also picked up on it; as a central agency, the Department of Human Resources has an obligation to the rest of the civil service to be able to staff all of the departments across the Government of Nunavut.

When I look at the website, there are approximately a little over 100 job actions currently listed on the website, yet there are only four specifically under the Department of Human Resources. Like I said earlier, Human Resources needs to be staffed to ensure they are able to provide the central agency support to the overall Government of Nunavut. What is the plan to ensure that Human Resources can meet those expectations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the question.

(Interpretation ends) I totally agree that we do need a lot of support in HR to ensure that positions that positions are filled within different departments and also trying to ensure that our services are up to par. It is sometimes very difficult to ensure that we have that kind of support, especially when we are talking about job ads coming out, interviews, and all of that.

At this time, we have had to get more support from the outside; employee relations, is an example, and also for how we can better advertise job positions. We have had to rely on outside help. We have been very fortunate when we put out job advertisements, we sometimes put, just as an example; nine social workers in various communities will be posted in one job ad. Those are the kinds of things that we are trying to do within the department to try and ensure that job positions are going out and trying to ensure that we get more employees within the government. So that is an example that I'm giving. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Hickers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister, again, for that response. I do wish the minister all the best, and whatever we can do to try and support the Department of Human Resources in achieving those goals, I think we all need to take a step back and pay attention too.

Mr. Speaker, I have also raised, approximately a year ago, that one of the issues of recruitment are the salary ranges. We are not as competitive as we used to be in Nunavut from other jurisdictions for recruiting in the semi-professional and professional areas especially.

Mr. Speaker, I know there have been market adjustments that have been made under a couple of different professions, and then overall, the job evaluation of setting the salary ranges for positions; I had asked those questions about a year ago. I'm just wondering if the minister would be able to update us today if the department is looking at exploring other professions to look at market adjustments and, if so, what, in addition to how frequent job evaluations are going on to examine salary ranges of professions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for the question. (interpretation ends) I totally agree that we do want to look at how other jurisdictions look into salary reviews. For Nunavut we have been trying to review that and we are expecting a draft report by the end of November. So we are hoping to see how that will... . When we get that draft report, it will certainly help us with what we need to work on, and how we can better work on improving our benefits and pay within the government at this time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 552 – 6(2): Status of Coral Harbour's Sakku School Project

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. My question is for the Minister of Education regarding the Sakku School renovations. (interpretation ends) I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Education.

The Sakku School project in Coral Harbour has been on government's book for almost a decade. The project has finally gotten underway, but the community has expressed some concerns that the material to proceed with construction has not arrived in the community.

Can the minister provide an update on when the materials to begin construction on Sakku School will be brought to the community? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* to the member for the question. In terms of the Sakku School renovation, there is work that has been underway, and that is that the site is being graded, and there are piles being put in for the renovation.

In terms of the materials coming to the community, I would have to get back to the member on the details of that question, but I can say, Mr. Speaker, I was informed from the department that they have started the project, and with the site grating and the piles, as far as I know, on to what's happening with the renovation. In terms of the materials, I'll ensure that I do get back to the member specifically on that portion of his question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you and I will be expecting your response. (interpretation ends) The community of Coral Harbour has been anxiously waiting for the progress on their school. Can the minister clearly explain why the project has been delayed yet again? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* to the member for the question. As far as I'm aware, the project is not delayed, it's going ahead as scheduled. There is work that is happening, and we do anticipate that over the coming years, the completion of the school, the department anticipates that all of this work will be done by November, 2027. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. Can the minister explain if there's going to be any delays, why would it be delayed? This is the renovations that I'm asking about. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* to the member for the question. As far as I'm aware, there are no delays for the renovation of Sakku School, but if there are any renovation delays, I know that our department has worked closely with the community and our fellow colleague, and if there are ever any delays to the project, we will be informing the community, and we can inform the member, but I hope that there will not be any delays, and I won't have to do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 553 – 6(2): Base Rate Amendment Application

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, and they concern the announcement of this past Friday regarding the corporation's application for a base rate adjustment.

As the minister will recall, he stated in his announcement that the requested adjustment is related to the continuous increases in territorial fuel prices since the last Qulliq Energy Corporation general rate application.

For the record, can the minister confirm if the Qulliq Energy Corporation's board of directors formally approved this application prior to it being submitted to his office? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Joelle Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the member's question. As of last month, when I was just appointed for the cabinet here as minister, the board of directors for the Qulliq Energy Corporation have met, and still haven't seen their recommendation from the board of directors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, the Qulliq Energy Corporation's formal application indicates that it is, and I quote "Proposing an equal percentage rate increase of 9.4 percent to the base energy rates for all customer classes." However, the corporation's application materials also indicate that by terminating the current fuel rate rider, and rolling it up under the current approved base rates, the increase can now be captured in the Department of Finance's Nunavut Electricity subsidy program and mitigate the cost of electricity to the Qulliq Energy Corporation's customers.

I would like to ask, can the clearly indicate if the Qulliq Energy Corporation's proposal would result in average private residential customers' monthly bills going up or down? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Joelle Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, to my colleague for asking that question. The Qulliq Energy Corporation, after they have reviewed, it will be done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, for confirming that, minister. The Qulliq Energy Corporation's announcement this past Friday indicates that the base rate amendment application will now be submitted to the Utility Rates Review Council. As

the minister is aware, the Qulliq Energy Corporation's application to his office was signed by the corporation's interim president.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the position of the Utility Rates Review Council chair is currently vacant. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of work to fill the position of the Qulliq Energy Corporation's president, and the Utility Rates Review Council's chair position on a permanent basis? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Joelle Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to my colleague for asking those questions. I just want the member to be aware that the Utility Rates Review Council is an independent body, and when I became the minister of the department, I know I can't really speak for them because they are an independent body, that's the Utility Rates Review Council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 554 – 6(2): Ethics Officer

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for recognizing me a second time today. My questions are for the Minister of Human Resources.

When the House reconvened for its fall sitting, I had the honour of moving the motion to recommend the reappointment of our Legislature's Integrity Commissioner.

As the minister is aware, Part 6 of the *Territorial Public Service Act* contains provisions respecting the disclosure of wrongdoing in the public service, and the appointment of the ethics officer.

In June of this year, the minister's department issued a request for proposals to fill the position of ethics officer on a standing offer basis. This followed the departure of the previous ethics officer, who was recently appointed to the judiciary.

Mr. Speaker, the request for proposals closed in July, and indicated that the new ethics officer's term of office would begin on or before August 21, 2023, and Mr. Speaker, it's now the end of October. That's kind of hard to believe.

Can the minister confirm who has been appointed as the new ethics officer? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, for asking those questions. (interpretation ends) I'm glad you asked that. The expression of interest closed beginning of September, so we did have few applications come through,

and that will be announced when the time is appropriate, but I can't give you the timeline yet on that one, but it's near completion. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Minister, information published by the Department of Human Resources provides contact details for employees who may wish to file a disclosure of wrongdoing under the legislation.

In the absence of a current ethics officer, can the minister indicate how many disclosures have been filed over the past six months, and can she please clarify how they are currently being handled? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, for asking that question. (interpretation ends) At this current time, the DM for HR is receiving all the reports that are coming in for that.

I don't have numbers at this current time, but I will certainly get back to her on how many disclosure reports have come through in the last six months. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There was an important second part to that question, and I asked how many disclosures have been filed, and for clarification of how they're being handed in the absence of an ethics officer currently.

As the minister will recall, she tabled the 2021-22 annual report of the Office of the Ethics Officer during the Legislative Assembly sitting in November, 2022.

Mr. Speaker, I recently had COVID, so it's a little bit harder for me to read these without getting winded.

The report contained a number of observations and recommendations concerning such issues as disclosures from non-employees, anonymity for whistle-blowers, and the jurisdiction of the ethics officer in respect to municipalities and municipal employees.

Can the minister clarify if and when she will be introducing amendments to the *Public Services Act* in respect to any or all of these specific matters? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. Thank you for enquiring about that matter. (interpretation ends) I have to go back to that previous question because I

have to correct myself in how I responded to who is currently responding to any reports or wrongdoing. Currently right now, this is being handled by outside law firm, just to be clear on that.

In terms of how many or how these are being handled, like I mentioned, it's not within the Department of HR at this current time, and if we are going to make some changes to the amendments, we certainly need to have the newest ethics officer to be part of this, so we will have to work on that at a later time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 6. I have no more names under item 6. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Responses to Petitions. Item 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 172 – 6(2): Petroleum Products Division 2021-22 Annual Report

Hon. Minister David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the Petroleum Products Division 2021-22 Annual Report. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeegok.

Item 18: Second Reading of Bills

Bill 26 – Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act – Second Reading

Hon. David Akeegok: *Merci Monsieur le Président.* I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 26, *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act*, be read for the second time.

Le Présidente, this bill corrects inconsistencies and errors in the French version of certain Acts of Nunavut. *Merci le Présidente.*

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

Some Hon. Members: Question.

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

Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeegok.

Bill 28 – Opioid Damages and Health Care Cost Recovery Act – Second Reading

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 28, *Opioid Damages and Health Care Cost Recovery Act*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill creates a cause of action for the Government of Nunavut in its own right against manufacturers and wholesalers of opioid products and their consultants for the recovery of the cost of health care benefits caused or contributed to by an opioid-related wrong. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: Question.

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

Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeegok.

Bill 29 – An Act to Amend the Engineers and Geoscientists Act – Second Reading

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you. This is my last time standing for the day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 29, *An Act to Amend the Engineers and Geoscientists Act*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the *Engineers and Geoscientists Act* to align its terminology with the Northwest Territories' new corresponding enactment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: Question.

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

Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Bill 27 – An Act to Repeal the Area Development Act – Second Reading

Hon. Minister David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 27, *An Act to Repeal the Area Development Act*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill repeals the area development and the regulations made under it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: Question.

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

Second Reading of Bills. Hon. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Bill 30 – An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act – Second Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My French is not as good as my colleague's, so I will proceed in English.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 30, *An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill increases the authorized limit of the Petroleum Products Revolving Fund to \$350 million. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: Question.

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

Second Reading of Bills. Hon. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Bill 34 – Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 2022-2023 – Second Reading

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, that Bill 34, *Write-off of Assets and Debts Act, 2022-2023*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the write-off of assets and debts in accordance with sections 24 and 82 of the *Financial Administration Act*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: Question.

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

Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Bill 35 – An Act Respecting the Constituencies of Nunavut – Second Reading

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 35, *An Act Respecting the Constituencies of Nunavut*, be read for the second time.

This bill amends the *Nunavut Elections Act* to implement the recommendations of the Nunavut Electoral Boundaries Commission Report 2023. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Speaker: All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and as the bill is a House Bill, it is immediately referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Bill 36 – An Act to Amend the Nunavut Elections Act and the Plebiscites Act – Second Reading

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 36, *An Act to Amend the Nunavut Elections Act and the Plebiscites Act*, be read for the second time.

This bill amends the *Nunavut Elections Act* and the *Plebiscites Act* to reflect the implementations of online voters' lists, increase efficiencies, and to enable Nunavummiut who are outside Nunavut or their home communities because of medical needs to vote in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: Question.

Speaker: All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried and as the bill is a House Bill, it is immediately referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 31, 32, 33, 35, and 36 and Tabled Documents 1 – 6(2), 73 – 6(2), 120 – 6(1), and 163 – 6(2) with Mr. Hickes 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 16:09 and Committee resumed at 16:44*

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

Chairman (Mr. Hickes): Thank you. I would like to open the proceedings of the Committee of the Whole. I call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bills 31, 32, 33, 35, and 36 and Tabled Documents 1 – 6(2), 73 – 6(2), 120 – 6(2), and 163 – 6(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 2024-25 capital appropriation for the Department of Community and Government Services, followed by the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Are we in agreement that we deal with Bill 31?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 31 – Appropriation (Capital) Act, 2024-2025 – Community and Government Services – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasie, would you like to have any witnesses to appear with you?

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With your grace, I would. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree to have the witnesses appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Thank you. For the record, Minister Joanasie, can you introduce your officials to the committee?

Hon. David Joanasie: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I have here with me Deputy Minister Kyle Seeley as well as Mandy Hickey, who is the Director of Financial Services. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. We left off on Friday under Local Government Services, page J-3. \$90,879,000. Any questions? Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome back, minister and your officials.

Minister, in 2019 the federal government announced \$151 million in funding under the Rural and Northern Communities Infrastructure stream of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan for the Government of Nunavut's fibre project. As of today, how much of this funding has actually been received by the Government of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Hold on, Mr. Chairman, if you will give us a minute.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and my apologies for the wait. We claim back any expenditures regarding this pot of funds. So far, we have spent around \$10 million. That's how much funding we should be receiving from the feds to date. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, can you just elaborate on what you meant by "claiming back"? Is that because there were funds expended towards the project and you submitted claims for those funds? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that's how the agreement is structured where, if we're spending the money for this project, we claim back to the feds on the expenses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can you let us know a little bit more about what that \$10 million was expended on? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: If you will give a minute again.

Thank you. This has involved part of the planning of the project as well as contracted resources to look at routing, for example, and so it's to support us in getting to where we are today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. \$10 million so far has been expended on planning for the project, if I'm hearing that correctly. Does the department anticipate spending more money on planning? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. In our supp. sheets we do outline what we would like to spend under planning. A part of the \$10 million is also around part of the design of this infrastructure. I can't say for certain whether or not there is going to be additional planning dollars that will be needed at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, what does the Government of Nunavut need to do to receive the balance of the funding? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. We need to have a successful contract in place. So far, we haven't gotten to that yet, but going back to the planning, we have done a tremendous amount of planning on it and the scope has been laid out and we have done the RFP. If we are going to change any of that, that would have to go back to planning and that is where, if necessary, we will have to come back for additional dollars. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. It has been really hard to keep track of the number of RFPs and other procurement processes that the Government of Nunavut has issued regarding this fibre project. Can the minister clearly describe his department's next steps towards that fibre project. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies. The next steps are: basically, we have a pending application for this Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission to try to proceed with this project. We are anticipating to hear back in January 2024. That would largely allow us to plan forward on what our next steps would be. Until then, this project is still waiting on that approval. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, minister. What went into the request for review under the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications

Commission fund and how long is that process expected to take? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Basically, our department, through the IMIT branch has been...since this project...the best and final offer process... . There was no successful bidder. We have had to look for alternative funding to fund this project to move forward. One of them has been through looking at the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Broadband Fund in particular. We have an application submission for that. Again, we are anticipating to hear back on what those results will be in January, which will largely set the direction on where we will take this project forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister mentioned IM/IT. I think that's information management and internet technology. Just to be clear now, based on that last response, is this a new ask for funding through the Universal Broadband Fund in order to replace the Rural and Northern Communities Infrastructure stream of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure plan funding? Are we now going to a different source of funding for this project? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies if I am getting my colleague confused. The Information and Management and Information Technology division is IM/IT. My apologies for the acronym use.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, we have a separate application that is a separate project, but we are trying to maximize the funds that we have used and leverage it to hopefully have a connection to Nunavut. Iqaluit has been the main target, the top priority for my department to connect fibre to, since it is 75 percent of Iqaluit that draws satellite usage. However, we do want to try to connect to the Kivalliq. We do have a separate proposal in through the Universal Broadband Fund.

There are different phases that we would like to see moving forward through these fibre projects. At this point, we haven't been able to secure the funds needed to link one of multiple communities that we have here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that, minister. So we are talking about two different projects and two different funds. We've been at a standstill on the current fibre project.

If the minister could tell us how the application for the Universal Broadband Fund for connecting the Kivalliq communities is contingent on the other fibre project connecting Iqaluit going forward. If the current fibre project connecting Iqaluit does not go forward, what will happen with the project to connect the Kivalliq through the Universal Broadband Fund application? How much is that application for? That's a lot of questions. I apologize. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We welcome the questions. For the fibre project, we've been pushing along to try and get Iqaluit. That's been the target and top priority for the department to connect Iqaluit. We put out a tender for that, and it was not successful. We've had to relook at how we get there. We have submitted two additional applications or proposals to the Universal Broadband Fund on fibre.

In terms of hypotheticals, we're going to wait until January 2024 to get those certainties back into where we're going to take this, but at this point, again, we want to connect Nunavut to fibre. How we get there is we have to spend quite a lot of money and we're trying to tap into as many resources as we can around that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. It has been publicly confirmed that the Government of Nunavut has signed a form of non-disclosure agreement with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated concerning the fibre project. I'm wondering, Mr. Chairman, whether or not that non-disclosure agreement extends to the Kivalliq fibre project. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do have a non-disclosure agreement with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated specifically for the Katittuq project. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Mr. Chairman, taking into account that there is a non-disclosure agreement, I think it is really important that the minister describe to the extent that he can more clearly what Nunavut Tunngavik's role is in the Government of Nunavut's fibre plan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not sure if this is the right forum to be discussing non-disclosure discussions or what we discuss in those. Maybe we need to find the right path on sharing information with my colleagues on what is happening on

some of these tables that are quite crucial in trying to move forward on such a big project like this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that. I understand why non-disclosure agreements are important. However, I do think it is very important that we make it clear to the public that we've got these public funds that we're administering, really, on behalf of the federal government with this project in particular. It is really unclear to the public what Nunavut Tunngavik's involvement or what their role is. I guess I will give you the opportunity again, minister, to just give us a clear understanding of what Nunavut Tunngavik's role is in the Government of Nunavut's fibre plan one more time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Throughout the life of the Katittuq fibre project in particular, maybe I'll just say that, we have been trying to remain open to Inuit organizations on how we can work alongside each other on the magnitude of this project. To date, we have gone through the public tendering process, just as with any large, major infrastructure.

In terms of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, it will be involved in any level. We do try to fit that into or plug them into different situations where we're trying to proceed on the project. With that, I think we still remain open and we would like to move forward with this project and trying to get any and all options out there. We want to maximize those partnerships where we can. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just end this line with a comment and going back to the minister's assertion that he will go back and, perhaps, pursue a different avenue of "aware-ing" the regular members of what that partnership related to the fibre project is. I think it's really important that we have as much information as possible and I'll leave it at that. That's it for now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you. I'll take those comments and again, yes, we will try to find the right path to share information, whether it has to be in confidence or not. We do want to be open and transparent through this process and it is a lot of money that we're trying to expend here, but we're trying to be on the right path. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Your department's 2023-24 capital estimates include \$1.5 million for capital planning studies. In your letter to the Members of the Legislative Assembly dated October 18, 2022, you indicate that "No new projects will be added to the planning envelope in the next fiscal year. Instead, the 2023-24 funding requests for the planning of \$1.5 million will be targeted towards the projects already approved by the Financial Management Board prior to the fiscal year 2023-24."

Your letter includes a list of the 22 projects that are currently in the planning phase. Which of these planning studies have been completed? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: My apologies, Mr. Chairman. I think I'll have to get back to the member on that and through you, maybe through letter, I can commit to coming back to the House on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be expecting that. I would like to take a close look at it. (interpretation ends) Your department's proposed 2024-25 capital estimates include \$5.0 million for new projects titled "Design Funds – Local Government Priorities." Your department's five-year capital plan indicates that a total of \$20 million will be spent on this program between the 2024-25 and 2028-29 fiscal years. How was this amount determined? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We figure there is, looking at the number of projects that are currently in planning, what we can reasonably move forward into the design phase. We did provide a list to the committee on the type of local infrastructure that this design funding would be geared towards, so either there is easily a list that we can put towards design. We are hoping that went through with the blessing of this House, we can get those designs out and it would allow for up to at least six months additional time to do detailed design and make it that much better prior to construction. We think this is a manageable amount of funds for local government priorities to move forward into design. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Your department's capital projects substantiation sheet indicates that "establishing this program will allow the department to expedite design work on municipal projects already approved for planning to ensure that they are ready for construction in positions to

proceed at such a time that funding is available through the Government of Nunavut capital fund or proposal driven federal programs.”

What specific municipal projects are planned to move forward under this new program during the 2024-25 fiscal year? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that question. We do want to spend design funds towards things like fire halls, community halls, solid waste management facilities, hamlet offices, so those that are hamlet assets.

For 2024-25, we would like to move forward with the Arviat fire hall, Whale Cove fire hall, and the Igloolik maintenance garage. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Are the community hall and arenas included in this program? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, those are included. We would like to have those facilities as eligible projects to move forward from plan to design. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wrote to the minister regarding this. The Coral Harbour arena and the community hall have been closed due to fire and safety inspection issues. I wonder if there is funding available to support them. I definitely support them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank my fellow MLA for his letter regarding the arena in Coral Harbour. In our response, we indicated that the hamlet was assisted by inspectors to look at what renovations are required for the arena. If I recall correctly, they received assistance from the Sport and Recreation Division in the form of funding in the range of \$30,000 and \$40,000. However, the Hamlet of Coral Harbour is receiving assistance to deal with the issue that my fellow MLA had raised. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister for his response. My constituents in Coral Harbour are concerned, as the youth and children frequent the arena. They are concerned. Some of them have even expressed concern about moving to another community because the arena is not open and it should be open for the youth of the community. They use it to practise their skills and there are many great hockey players in Coral Harbour. I would like more funding to be provided so that a contractor can be hired to enable the facility to be open. Thank you. Will the minister support that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As it is a hamlet asset, we are trying to work with them in order for the facility to be open. The safety issues must be identified through an inspection. With the involvement of inspectors and the requirement of the Office of the Fire Marshal to conduct an inspection, the safety codes will be followed in moving forward with the necessary renovations. Further, if we receive a funding request from the hamlet, we would look at which pots of funds it could be geared towards and give it careful consideration. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister. As I said, the community hall and arena have been closed as they share one facility that is an aging building. They have also requested funding through (interpretation ends) infrastructure community planning. (interpretation) I wonder if it could be included in the plan. Thank you. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is infrastructure like that in every community that needs to be upgraded or renovated, where some communities don't have any arenas, or I'll use the fire incident in Sanikiluaq as an example. The Department of Community and Government Services provides the hamlet with some funds to make corrections, and on top of that, as to which community will be receiving an arena, we have not put that into our planning yet, but we've been turned more towards upgrading and renovating facilities. If I remember correctly, there was a new arena built in Rankin Inlet, and we have not requested for that kind of funding, but we've been turning more towards renovating and upgrading as a priority. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like my suggestion to be added into the planning process, especially the community hall and the arena, they were closed at the same time, I would really like to have that put into the planning. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasia.

Hon. David Joanasia (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The \$5 million in our proposal; let me explain it a little bit more. For capital projects by Community and Government Services, we generally help the hamlets for their infrastructure, if they need a new one, or if they need one that needs to be renovated, and I explained it in correspondence that there are different concerns about the fire marshal's concerns about the arena and hamlets and garages, and sewage pump out areas, and water trucking areas.

So, the funding can be used for different purposes such as those, to be used as a design funds. So, we've been putting them into the planning process so they can get into the design part, but we will consider other communities, although they request to be added into the planning process. We want to make sure that we finish what we have planned so far before we add more things into the planning process, and we will need to request for more funding on top of everything if we're going to do that. I hope I explained that better. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Your department's proposal, 2024-25 capital estimates of the Department of Community and Government Services include \$1.5 million for planning studies.

When will you provide the listing for new planning studies to the members of the Legislative Assembly? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasia.

Hon. David Joanasia: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies, my colleagues, doesn't have a copy. We did share a letter and information item from October 13 that outlines new planning fiscal year for 2024-25, and it has a list of eight projects that are proposed for planning.

If you want me to list them, I can. There's the Clyde River water treatment plant, Igloolik water treatment plant, Kugluktuk waste water treatment plant, Coral Harbour water treatment plant, Baker Lake health centre, Nunavut Arctic College Q units, Qitturungalinnut Units, Iqaluit Girls' Group Home and Cambridge Bay runway. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As of today, which municipalities have not submitted updated integrated community sustainability plans to your department. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasia.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have the list, but I do know we are allowing, since it is an election year, today is election day, we do require those integrated community sustainability plans to be submitted through council. With the new or re-elected mayors and council, we are extending the deadline for submitting their integrated community sustainability plans to December 2023. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On your September 16 correspondence to the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Community and Economic Development, on your planning studies regarding the community arena upgrades, the communities of Clyde River, Kimmirut, Kinngait, Kugaaruk, Naujaat and Sanirajak, have existing facility studies underway.

Would you be able to include Chesterfield Inlet as they've requested upgrades on their arena once they stop using it in the spring, so that building will be able to be used in the summer time to include concrete flooring. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That particular project, the arena community upgrades is bundle 1 and we do have a separate bundle that includes Chesterfield Inlet, Arctic Bay, and Gjoa Haven.

These are funded through Community and Government Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In that same correspondence on page 27, "Core studies for Kinngait, Pangnirtung, Whale Cove, Sanikiluaq and Baker Lake."

Would you be able to include Chesterfield Inlet too? They have been requesting for gravel for the longest time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I respect my colleague for bringing that issue forward time and again. It's a prioritized list in which those quarry studied were identified. We are mindful that Chesterfield Inlet does have challenges around securing and finding a source of their gravel quarry needs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We'll continue to work with the hamlet on this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I have no more names on my list. We're on page J-3. \$90,879,0000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page J-5. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have two questions on J-5. On August 12, 2021, the Federal Department of Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs announced that \$517.8 million is available for shovel-ready infrastructure projects for Inuit communities. This funding will help close the infrastructure gaps by 2030.

To what extent is the Government of Nunavut working with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami to identify specific projects? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, for the question. We do have a huge infrastructure deficit across our territory, and we do want to work with Inuit organizations, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and I think alongside, we've seen for Nunavut 3,000, we want to see houses built. It doesn't matter whose building them, just get them built.

I think along that line, we have these infrastructure deficits, I think we just want to make sure that we don't duplicate anything, but working with Inuit organizations, I have had a few meetings with the Vice President of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and discussed infrastructure needs, and I explained that we go through this process each year, and request funds from the Legislature, these are the priorities that we have time and again, we want to try to create synergies, and again, not duplicate our limited amount of funds, but complement each other. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On June 15, 2023, the chairperson of the Council of the Federations in correspondence to the Prime Minister of Canada concerning the replacement of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, the letter indicated that the position of the provincial and territorial premiers is that the federal government should provide, and I'll quote, "block infrastructure transfers."

On June 21, 2023, federal, provincial and territorial ministers of infrastructure held a meeting. What is the federal government's position concerning the replacement of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program with block infrastructure transfers to provincial and territorial governments? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That will be my last question and I'll have more questions when we get to J-7. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, for that question. As far as I'm concerned and understand, there have been no agreement to do block funding for infrastructures across the country, but I think, just looking at how infrastructure programs have rolled out throughout the years, we do try to make new gains or try to improve upon how the delivery of those programs to our communities, and we are anticipating a renewal of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program and provide feedback through our channels to our federal counterparts on, again, our infrastructure gap, how to reach out and address things, given we have a very tight construction season, for example.

These are some of the things we try to bring forward as our realities of working in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name on my list around infrastructure, page J-5, \$45,100,000. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just would like to follow up on that response. The minister mentioned, to see what are the restraints around that as a rationale for block infrastructure funding. I'd just like to hear from the minister a little bit more about what other issues of concern can justify block infrastructure transfers, specifically to Nunavut, knowing that often that block transfers are based on population. If the minister can just talk to us a little bit about that, I'd appreciate it.

Speaker: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. I think for block funding, it is trying to find the right justifications, because I think there are different factors at play. Things such as population, but again I think we try to showcase what the stark realities are that Nunavut faces in the infrastructure realm.

Again, we want to keep pace with the rest of Canada. It is always a catch-up game, but again we try to maximize how much infrastructure spending Nunavut gets at different tables.

We want to have, I guess, a net increase of spending too because our population is growing, our territory is vast, and we want to add to it. On top of all that, there are many things to factor into block funding, but today there has been no agreement on how to roll that out in line with other jurisdictions and in agreement with other partners we deal with regarding infrastructure.

I will leave it at that for now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for pushing the button earlier. It's getting late in the day.

I would just like to hear about, because we do talk about underserved communities on a regular basis here in this House and just by virtue of being Nunavut, if we were a community within Nunavut we would be underserved when we look at where we fit this country, or in relation to infrastructure.

So I would like to hear more about how that block transfer could help Nunavut address those historically underserved communities through a change that's being requested for those block infrastructure transfers. How is it taken into account when communities have losses to infrastructure due to fire, or other unforeseeable circumstances? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I appreciate the questions. However, we are working in a proposal-based reality and that's how we've had to come forward with our priorities based on needs. We try to looking at what's available within in the territory too, but yes, it's difficult to get into the block funding, how that would work in an ideal situation. I'm sorry, I didn't catch the second part of your question. I believe it had to do with fires, when we encounter losses of infrastructure due to unforeseen circumstances.

We, of course, have to react in those instances and I'll use Sanikiluaq as an example. They didn't have a hamlet office to work out of, and the Government of Nunavut diverted the attention there to build and expedite a brand-new hamlet office there. It's close to substantial completion now. It takes a few years, but we are getting there.

For fires, this House has heard of too many school fires. It's been a shame, very devastating losses. My own high school was one of them. Again, we have to come back here through the Department of Education having to come forward with a brand-new school for a community. It's case by case that we have to react in those instances. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. By proposal, minister, you mentioned that the rationales for new infrastructure are proposal-based. Just for absolute clarity, are we talking about proposals that are developed at the hamlet level? Or, are we talking about proposals that are developed by public servants?

What we know is that human resources are an issue at both levels of governance. I would like to hear about who produces those proposals and what kind of support is given to the hamlets for that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Maybe I'll just say that I think, for the most part, a good portion of infrastructure dollars are through the Government of Nunavut proposals based. This is in line with what we go through each year in the capital planning process. Each department submits their needs to this House and the planning, design, construction. That's the standard.

There are some federal dollars that get accessed directly from hamlets. I'll just say that and use one example that I'm aware of. Through the Ocean Protection Plan that is where, for example, in the Hamlet of Kinngait, had a proposal and submitted it to the feds. They were successful and are working with an Inuit organization now to move forward on that.

I think there are some hamlets that do manage some of their own directly to the feds. In terms of the supports that my department provides to hamlets in proposal writing, it's not to that level but we do try to make hamlets informed about if they're eligible around certain programs. If they want to submit directly, the City of Iqaluit maybe might be another good example where they tapped into disaster mitigation funding for the water infrastructure here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarification as well, is there an ongoing dialogue between the Government of Nunavut and our federal partners about projects or needs that the Government of Nunavut is unable, I don't want to say unwilling to fund, so that the appropriate federal agency is aware that there is, in fact, a higher need if they are getting proposals from underserved communities? What sort of support does the Government of Nunavut give to those underserved communities where we are in fact not investing in much-needed infrastructure, knowing that there is only certain amount of dollars available? We should be helping every community help to access as much funding for infrastructure as possible, regardless of whether or not its coming from the Government of Nunavut's coffers or from the federal government's coffers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for that question. She asked about whether there are ongoing discussions with our federal counterparts or other stakeholders around what our needs are that aren't being met. On the infrastructure deficit, there are things that go without saying. There are basic necessities and things that we are trying to meet like water and wastewater, my department has been trying to truck along on those two main fronts.

Alongside that, maybe if you'll have my deputy dive into a little bit more detail on what those discussions or what the member asks. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. The department, over the last couple of years, has introduced a variety of proposal-based programs to municipalities starting with the Municipal Parking Garage Program, later on the crusher program. That's in addition to some other proposal-based programs that municipalities can submit project applications for.

We've seen some success in that area, but the feedback from the municipalities, large and small, has been that completing these proposals takes a lot of time and administrative expertise that they don't have a lot of. This is a very similar refrain that the smaller provinces and territories have passed along to Canada on proposal-based programs.

We have tried to coordinate and put some measures in place to support municipalities in this regard. That includes things like making some of the technical service agreements that we have with contract engineering firms available directly to municipalities so that they don't have to search those firms, they can actually access the standing offer agreements.

In addition to that, the introduction of the new design fund that's being proposed this year, what that would do would advance projects from planning through to design so that a completed design is ready and is a shovel-ready project with a design in hand. So that when federal dollars are available, municipalities can present that and incorporate that into a proposal to demonstrate their capacity to advance that project and the viability of that project in real-time.

The minister has already spoken to a couple of the different federal programs that have been made available to help close that infrastructure gap in underserved communities, things like the Community Building Fund or the Green and Inclusive Community Building Fund, different projects or programs like that. We do think that advancing these municipal projects through to design and having them ready to present and incorporate into federal proposals is perhaps our best measure to ensure that those projects can advance and be considered viable and feasible by the federal government or here in the Assembly.

Those are a couple of measures that we have taken to make sure that those projects are ready to go when the opportunity arises. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Seeley stole my follow-up question.

>>*Laughter*

My follow-up question was going to be whether or not communities can avail of that for projects they want to submit to the Government of Nunavut. Just to be clear, has this project just begun and, if so, how many communities have availed of that ability to have a design in hand in order to submit proposals?

Part of the reason that I am following up on this is because Mr. Sammurtok spoke about their gravel crushing needs and you used that as an example just now. The minister committed during that conversation to continue to bring that need forward. However, after having said thank you for continually bringing this need forward, the member is left with just a promise in hand that someday his community might be able to access that kind of a program.

I'm just trying to get a clear understanding of how members can ensure that if the Government of Nunavut is not able to prioritize a project like, they will be able to avail of that support that you are talking about in order to bring infrastructure requests forward to other levels of government. Going back to my question, how many underserved communities have availed of that support? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies; I think there have been a few different topics brought up. Just to clarify around the design funding, I believe that was brought up again.

This is our first time requesting \$5 million for design funding for local government priorities. Once that is approved, we have three projects lined up for that. In addition to that, there are other ongoing proposal-based programs that my department avails to hamlets around annual grants and contributions. Regarding our colleague from Chesterfield Inlet, the new granular crusher equipment program, we did receive three proposals from Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, and Kinngait, and we will be reviewing those proposals.

I think there are many topics to discuss and if I didn't cover everything, I think it is an ongoing discussion we can continue onwards, but at this point, the local government design funding is trying to proceed as for the first time it is a brand-new line item with this budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, I do appreciate this discussion and I think I might need a little bit more time to marinate over follow-up questions. With that, I move that we report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Brewster. There's a [motion] to report progress on the floor. It's not subject to debate. All those in favour. Motion carried.

Witnesses, you can escort yourselves out of the witness table, and I will now rise to report progress to the Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Item 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Hickey.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been reviewing Bill 31 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I ask that the committee be agreed to. Thank you.

Speaker: There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Quqqiaq.

Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. There are none. Item 22. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a reminder that the Regular Members' Caucus meets tomorrow at 9 in the Nanuq Boardroom.

Orders of the Day for October 24:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 31

- Bill 32
- Bill 33
- Bill 35
- Bill 36
- Tabled Document 1 – 6(2)
- Tabled Document 73 – 6(2)
- Tabled Document 120 – 6(2)
- Tabled Document 163 – 6(2)

20. Report of the Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, October 24, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:58*

