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Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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Hon. Tony Akoak

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(Amittuq)

Mary Killiktee

(Uqqummiut)

Hon. Lorne Kusugak

(Rankin Inlet South)

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

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(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Hon. John Main

(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

*Minister of Health; Minister
responsible for the Qulliq Energy
Corporation;
Minister responsible for Suicide
Prevention*

Solomon Malliki

(Aivilik)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the
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(Pangnirtung)

*Minister of Family Services; Minister
responsible for Homelessness;
Minister responsible for the Status of
Women*

(Gjoa Haven)

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Hon. Karen Nutarak

(Tununiq)

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responsible for Nunavut Arctic
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(Hudson Bay)

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(Aggu)

Inagayuk Quqqiaq

(Netsilik)

Alexander Sammurtok

(Rankin Inlet North-
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(Arviat South)

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(Baker Lake)

Hon. David Akeeagok

(Quttiktuq)

*Minister of Economic Development and
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and Compensation Commission*

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(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)

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Hon. Pamela Gross

(Cambridge Bay)

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(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

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(South Baffin)

*Government House Leader; Minister of
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Uqausirmit Uqausirmut Inc.

Box 1200

Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0

Tel (867) 975-5000 Fax (867) 975-5190 Toll-Free (877) 334-7266

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Tuesday, May 28, 2024

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeeagok, Hon. P.J. Akeeagok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Ms. Janet Brewster, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Solomon Malliki, Hon. John Main, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Hon. Karen Nutarak, Hon. Daniel Qavvik, Ms. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Inagayuk Quqqiaq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtoq, 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. Malliki, can you say the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Good day. (interpretation ends) Welcome, everyone and colleagues. Enjoy your afternoon.

We find that our children are all so important to us. I think about them all the time, and yesterday I got a picture from my wife. She sent it to me and, as soon as I went on, my two youngest *irngutaak*, ages five and three, went up to the TV and gave me a big hug, so nice. They are so important.

Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nutarak.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 438 – 6(2): Graduation Season

Hon. Karen Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was in the middle of blowing my nose.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, it is with great joy that I rise to recognize the commencement of graduation season. This is a time to celebrate those students who completed their programs. As a former adult educator, I appreciate the dedication and resiliency of students working towards this milestone.

(interpretation ends) Several graduation ceremonies have already taken place in Cambridge Bay and Iqaluit, recognizing students from programs such as Adult Basic Education, College Foundations, Culinary Arts, Environmental Technology,

Interpreter/Translator, Office Administration, Social Service Worker, and Pathway to Adult Secondary School programs.

Looking ahead, there will be additional graduation ceremonies in Rankin Inlet, Iqaluit, and across the territory hosted by community learning centres. While some programs are still ongoing, we eagerly anticipate celebrating with graduates from our Nunavut Teacher Education Program, Early Childhood Education, Practical Nursing, Bachelor of Science, Pre-Health, Bachelor of Social Work, the Personal Support Worker programs, Computer Systems Technician, and a range of adult education programs.

I invite everyone to join me in recognizing the Nunavut Arctic College graduating class of 2024. We are so very proud of you. Well done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister's Statement 439 – 6(2): Canada Disability Benefit

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, my fellow MLAs and Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, last week I had the pleasure of meeting with Hon. Kamal Khera, Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities, to discuss the Canada Disability Benefit announced in Budget 2024.

Mr. Speaker, this benefit is of great importance to disabled Nunavummiut. It will assist government in its goal to reduce poverty and improve financial security of the people we represent. In our shared pursuit of that goal, I advised Minister Khera that Family Services will not claw back any financial supports we provide to our clients who will also receive the Canada Disability Benefit.

I also had the opportunity to discuss the challenges disabled Nunavummiut face in their daily lives, and I advocated for increased funding for our government. I plan to continue this discussion with the minister when we meet at the Ministers Responsible for Social Services Forum later this year. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

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

Minister's Statement 440 – 6(2): Nunavut Recovery Centre – Aqqusariaq

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

Mr. Speaker, my department has been working in collaboration with the Department of Health on the planning, design, and construction of the Aqqusariaq Recovery Centre. Aqqusariaq will have a widespread impact on Nunavummiut in providing support services within the territory.

Mr. Speaker, multiple studies have confirmed the need for healing facilities in Nunavut, and my department is proud to support the construction of this addictions and trauma treatment facility here in Nunavut. The building is designed to meet the needs of Nunavut-specific health services.

Mr. Speaker, construction of the Aqqusariaq Recovery Centre is underway and on schedule for completion in December 2025. The foundation work will be completed this summer and structural framework will begin this fall. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to returning with news of progress as construction continues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Minister's Statement 441 – 6(2): National Mental Health Week

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May 6 to 12 was Mental Health Week across Canada and an excellent reminder about the importance of mental health. Mr. Speaker, our mental health, just like our physical health, is vital to overall wellness and is an aspect of health that is sometimes overlooked.

Just as we would not hesitate to go to a nurse or doctor for physical pain or illness, we must also look after our mental well-being with the same care and compassion. Asking for help or support with your mental health is a sign of strength and is not something you have to suffer alone.

(interpretation ends) This year's Mental Health Week theme focused on healing through compassion, a call to be kind. Whether it is talking to a friend, confiding in a family member, or seeking professional support, there is always someone willing to listen, to understand, and to offer a helping hand.

We encourage all Nunavummiut to support their own mental wellness as well. This means taking the time to practice self-care and using positive coping skills to strengthen your mental health. This could be through spending time with loved ones, enjoying time out on the land, or reading a book. These are examples of activities that could contribute to improving an individual's mental wellness.

For those who require more assistance in their mental health journey, the Department of Health has programs and services to assist. Health centres and the Government of Nunavut website can help connect people to these services. There are also support lines, such as the Kids Help Line, Kamatsiaqtut Nunavut Help Line, and the Healing by

Talking Program that can offer support. Specifically for Government of Nunavut employees, there is the Government of Nunavut Family Assistance Program.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Nunavummiut to take time to care for their mental health, support each other and talk about mental health issues, because together we can work toward a more positive and healthy life. Let us continue to make mental health a priority, not just for ourselves but for the shared well-being of our community. Together we can break down barriers, challenge stigmas, and create a brighter, healthier, more compassionate future for all. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister responsible for the Status of Women, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister's Statement 442 – 6(2): Gender-based Violence Engagement in Cambridge Bay

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I have said it before: gender-based violence is one of the most pressing issues facing Nunavut families. As so many Nunavummiut navigate intergenerational trauma, difficulty understanding healthy relationships, and managing emotion and crises, it can often lead to violence, and this violence is disproportionately gender-based.

The Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council has begun to discuss gender and violence with Nunavummiut. That work expanded in March when Qullit held their first in-person community engagement session in Cambridge Bay. Participants from the departments of Family Services, Health, and Justice, an elder, and the Municipality of Cambridge Bay provided their perspectives, experiences, and insight. Their candour was appreciated and eye-opening.

Staff are also working on logistics for similar sessions in Arviat and Iqaluit that will enable youth to share their experiences and hopes for the future.

Qullit is hoping to hear from people of all backgrounds and ages through these community visits. These conversations really do matter.

Mr. Speaker, all Nunavummiut are entitled to a life free from violence, and this is especially true for the groups who experience it more often: women, girls, and gender-diverse people. Let's all work together to make Nunavut a territory free from harm, violence, and toxicity. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 589 – 6(2): Summer Student Employment

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As members are aware, I have frequently stood in this House and spoken on funding avenues for Nunavut students looking at post-secondary education opportunities and the struggles that go with that, whether it be accessing registered education savings plans, whether it be delayed in FANS funding, whether it be Inuit organizations cancelling funding until they get supported.

Another avenue I haven't discussed in this House is the summer student program. I think it's a very advantageous program. I've spoken previously on the importance of linking academic studies to the field of study to their employment opportunities within the departments.

I had anticipated asking some questions of some specific ministers on this, but the more I've discovered is that it's almost pervasive through all government departments right now where we've had students specifically here in Iqaluit that have been in town for nearly six weeks are still waiting for their summer student position to start. I know one student I'm aware of has had her start date delayed six times, and I encourage every one of the members of cabinet to follow up with their departments and make sure that these students are employed at the very earliest opportunity.

These funds help students succeed in their studies. They don't have to worry about part-time employment. Their parents don't have to worry with about supporting them as much as they would have to. They can actually fend for themselves. They can gain more independence, learn budgeting skills, and I think it's a very, very important initiative that deserves the focus of every one of the members of the cabinet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 590 – 6(2): First Polar Bear for Darnelle Attagutalukutuk

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to express my pride about a young girl. On March 26, she got her first polar bear. We're very proud of people who get a particular animal for the first time, and me as a mother, whenever my children get their first animal, I always cry. Darnelle Attagutalukutuk is 15 years old and caught her first polar bear. I'm very proud of her and hopefully she'll get more in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 591 – 6(2): Taloyoak High School Graduates

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today that on the date of May 24, 2024, four Taloyoak students graduated high school, and I want to acknowledge them. They are Andrew Panigayak Jr., David Totalik, Amiayak Totalik, and Carla Qavavau.

Mr. Speaker, also on the date of May 25, 2024, six Kugaaruk students graduated high school. I wanted to acknowledge them also. They are Abraham Niptayuk, Lucasi Qayaqsaq, Peter Iqqugaqtuq, Jada Tootiak, Blythe Angutingunirk and Colin Inuksaq Jr.

Mr. Speaker, as their MLA I want all the names I just mentioned to know that their MLA is proud of their accomplishments and know that the sky is the limit and opportunities are endless, and options will be great. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 592 – 6(2): Whale Cove Fishing Derbies

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

Now in Whale Cove they had a cod derby. They went after lake trout and cod at different times. The people of Whale Cove had a celebration, and I want to thank all the organizers. We had our first mini cod derby. I want to recognize the committee 13:49:29, Gerard Maktar, Marie Okalik, Maureena Itigaitok, Aaron Maktar and Sharlene Maktar. The helpers in the cod derby from the hamlet of Whale Cove and Agnico-Eagle Mines and the local HTO board in Whale Cove.

The winner was Aaron Maktar and second, Don Voisey and third was George Okalik. This was in the cod derby. I was envious of them. Whenever I tried to fish through a hole, I never caught one until now.

Also the lake trout fishing competition, Stanley Adjuk, Noreen Panika, Levinia Angutituar, and Morgan Payne. (interpretation ends) I didn't even know that Morgan had a last name. Everyone just calls him Morgan.

The sponsors for the trout committee were the Hamlet of Whale Cove, the Whale Cove Race Committee, as well as Whale Cove hunters and trappers.

The folks who won the trout derby, the top three; the top winner was Noah Matoo, Martha Arualak was the second place, and Martha Panika was third place.

A big thank you and *ma'natsiamiaq* to the committees as well as the sponsors. The fishing derbies are a real happy time for families to get out on the land and for the

community, and one of these years I'm going to get over there and try to compete in the Whale Cove fishing derby. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

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

Member's Statement 593 – 6(2): Recognition of Kimmirut Nurse

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say "good day" to the people of South Baffin.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today and I would like a person recognized. A nurse in Kimmirut got recognized for the good work she has done in Kimmirut since she arrived in 2016. Mr. Speaker, Anke is well known by the people of Kimmirut, as she has been living there for a long time, and I want to express my pride in her because she is trusted and very welcoming to the people of Kimmirut. She has been properly recognized by Indigenous Services Canada, who recognized three nurses in Nunavut for the good work that they have done.

Nurses and other people that come to our community who are welcoming really help the whole community. On behalf of the people of Kimmirut, I want to express my appreciation to Anke Krug and her assistants in the Kimmirut Community Health Centre, not just at the health centre but for helping with social issues as well.

(interpretation ends) On behalf of the people in Kimmirut and South Baffin, I would like recognize Anke Krug on the national award for nursing that she received and thank you for your service to Kimmirummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Item 3. Members' Statements. 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) It's a pleasure to have some friends visiting Nunavut. It has been over 20 years that I met this lady and we became really good friends back in the day, and it has been years I haven't seen her and the family. I'm so honoured to have them here today. As I say your names, please stand up. Lisa Stevenson, Eduardo Kohn, Benjamin Kohn, and Milo Kohn. Welcome to the House. (interpretation) Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to the Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Items 6. Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 869 – 6(2): Trades Training Opportunities at Community Learning Centres

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, all, and to the people in Baker Lake, good afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, today my questions are for the Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken many times about trades training, and a few days ago, I mentioned in the year 2023 the Government of Nunavut received \$12 million in taxes from the people working in the mining sector, also \$34 million in wages and benefits in the year 2023 for people working at Agnico Eagle.

Mr. Speaker, I firmly believe that more trades training at community learning centres should be offered for Nunavummiut, at local committee learning centres not just the regional hubs. This will foster more local jobs for local people.

I'm wondering: what is the minister's position on more trades training programs being offered at local community learning centres? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nutarak.

Hon. Karen Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. Right now when they are trying to have training programs in the communities, they have to look for third-party funding. We try to get all the communities to do that for the trades, but we have to look for third-party funding first. That's usually our blockage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister for that response. I do understand that the third-party funding is needed and required to offer more programs and courses at any of our college facilities.

Even at times, as I mentioned in this House before, a local contractor in Baker Lake, Peter's Expediting Limited did secure third-party funding to try to offer trades funding in Baker Lake for Baker Lake people, and they kept getting pushback from Nunavut Arctic College to even start that program.

The minister just said a minute ago that funding is an issue. This time it was not an issue at this one instance. I'm wondering will the minister commit to having the Nunavut Arctic College open their doors and make it available for trades training to happen, actually happen, outside of the regional hubs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nutarak.

Hon. Karen Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that question. Yes (interpretation ends) I will commit. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll make my last question a very simple question. On May 10 I texted the minister asking her when she would visit my community of Baker Lake to observe, to see and visit the community learning centre in Baker Lake. She texted back saying we'll get back to you later on.

I'm wondering if it's later on yet, and does she know when she will come to Baker Lake? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nutarak.

Hon. Karen Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are currently working with the departments of Economic Development and Transportation and Family Services in regard to travelling to the community for trades training as well as mine training. I will get back to you on when we will be able to travel to Baker Lake. Once I have looked at my workload, I will be able to get back to you in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

Question 870 – 6(2): Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Interpretation) I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Culture and Heritage regarding the Inuit language.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, in March of this year, an extremely unfortunate incident resulted in destruction by fire of a building in Iqaluit. The building housed several entities, including the Inuit Language Authority's office space.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the emergency responders for their quick response and management of the fire. I am most grateful that no one was hurt due to this incident.

Can the minister provide the House with an update on the status of Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit's office? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. David Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for bringing up the office space that was required by the building that was affected by the fire. Currently the translation bureau, or the employees that were utilizing the office space that was caught on fire, are currently office'd at the translation bureau building here in Iqaluit on a temporary basis. We will seek to find a suitable office space for that division. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister for your response. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the department's 2024-25 main estimates indicated that a total of eight positions are allocated to the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit.

Can the minister provide an update today on which of the eight positions are currently filled and which positions are currently vacant? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. David Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do have the statistics right in front of me. Bear with me if I do locate them.

Mr. Speaker, for the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit we have a total of five Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit that are currently vacant and five are vacant within the linguist; terminologist researcher; documentation specialist; manager, research and evaluation; manager, language and marketing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am hopeful that the Minister of Culture and Heritage was paying close attention to the question that I asked just yesterday in the House to the Minister of Environment.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House I asked the Minister of Environment to consider transferring some of the long-standing vacant positions to another community where there would be a greater chance of them being filled by qualified applicants. In return, new positions would be transferred to Igloodik, and efforts would be made to ensure that they were the types of positions that could be reasonably filled with local applicants.

Is the Minister of Culture and Heritage open to discussing with the Minister of Environment the idea of transferring some or all of Inuit Language Authority's positions

to Igloolik where there is no shortage of office space and no shortage of Inuktitut speakers? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Qavvik.

Hon. Daniel Qavvik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm amused by the question. I'm very thankful for that question. I've got a very close working relationship with the Minister of Environment, and certainly that's an area I will find ways to transfer positions to a different community.

At this time it can be an alternative way to seek transferring positions. It would require the Department of Environment, Department of Culture and Heritage to work together to see how we can transfer the positions to the community of Igloolik. If and when that happens, I'll commit to getting back to the member the opportunities for Government of Nunavut employees to the community of Igloolik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 871 – 6(2): Online Courses at Nunavut Arctic College

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to my fellow members, ministers and my constituents.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would direct my questions to the Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College.

Mr. Speaker, one impact of COVID pandemic was to increase online access to educational opportunities. Nunavut's school system quickly adapted to the situation by offering course work online so that the students will not miss too much of their schooling during lockdown.

Can the minister provide an update on what courses at Nunavut Arctic College are currently being offered online and how many students are taking advantage of opportunities to pursue their studies remotely? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nutarak.

Hon. Karen Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that question. I currently don't have access to that information; I will take your question as notice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Question is taken. Did you take the question as notice? Question taken as notice.

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

Question 872 – 6(2): Issues with Nunavut Teacher Education Program

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

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I have always advocated for educating our Nunavut youth to the most of their potential and getting on to careers, and in order to educate our youth we need teachers. Mr. Speaker, we have had a Nunavut teachers education program in Nunavut for a long time. I am going to ask some questions to the Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College.

Mr. Speaker, during the winter sitting MLA Nutarak asked the current Minister of Arctic College of the day this question and I quote from the *Blues*:

“Ever since the program’s affiliated university changed from McGill to other institutions, the program seems to have struggled. It no longer seems to be geared towards the learning needs of potential Inuit teachers. There are not enough instructors to deliver the program and there is very little support for the students.”

My first question is: what has the minister done to rectify the problem that was pointed out by herself? Thank you.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nutarak.

Hon. Karen Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much for asking that question.

>>*Laughter*

We have not yet begun work because there has to be some fine-tuning after the transfer from McGill to Memorial University.

Also, remote learning, we will be doing a review and make some changes for improvement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for the response. Going on to the second question, I’ll quote the member again. Member asked, and this is from the winter sitting, too.

“Mr. Speaker, I have been hearing for more and more Inuit students struggling with the Nunavut Teacher Education Program coursework, and many every them are dropping

out. Many of them are struggling with the coursework. None of them had struggled with it when it was McGill University. A lot of students need more support.”

I'll ask the minister: Is there any plans to take the program back to McGill? It seems obvious that it was running well under McGill and it's struggling now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nutarak.

Hon. Karen Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you for your question. No, we're rectifying...may be there to support students. It's something that will be considered further. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope that revisions or what needs to be done to help Nunavummiut become qualified teachers, we need as many as we can, will be done in a timely manner.

My last question is still on the same topic. And is still quoting from the Hansard. MLA at the time says: “Can the minister clarify how Nunavut Arctic College works with the Department of Education to determine how many teachers and language specialists are needed to fill positions in Nunavut schools?”

I would like to ask the minister what new efforts are made to recruit and retain Inuit students for the badly needed Inuit teachers that we need to have qualified Inuit teachers, what new initiatives have been done to retain and recruit Inuit teachers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nutarak.

Hon. Karen Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank you for your question. We are constantly collaborating and we will continue collaborating our working relationship. We have not met formally, but I have met with them constantly in preparation for this session, and I have been on a learning curve during my initiation to my post, and I know the amount that will reduce as I progress in my position. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 873 – 6(2): Granular Management

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon (interpretation) to the people of Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet, as well as the MLAs.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services. I want to follow up today on issues that I raised during our fall sitting concerning the issue of government management.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, concerns have been expressed by the Municipality of Chesterfield Inlet concerning the community's critical shortage of gravel and the need to identify new sources of material.

Mr. Speaker, the Municipality of Chesterfield Inlet submitted a proposal during the year 2023 to each department under the new gravel crushing program.

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of his department's review on the municipal proposal? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for continuing to press on this matter, which is very important for our municipalities to address when they're continuing to maintain the roads or build new houses or infrastructure. Having a healthy granular supply involves having equipment and being able to operate that equipment.

The crushing equipment, the granular program that we introduced, we did have high interest to this new program, and have awarded and are looking at providing the community of Baker Lake with new equipment on this. There are I think two other communities including the member's, one of the towns that he represents, that we're working with to see if we can make their application fit the eligibility according to what we have outlined in our policy program.

We're working with all communities to try to address the needs, but we hope to have more equipment and more granular supply for as many communities as we can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Thank you to the minister. (interpretation ends) Can he commit to having crushing program for Chesterfield Inlet?

As the minister will recall, I asked him questions during our recent fall sitting regarding the department's plan to undertake granular studies in a number of communities. Mr. Speaker, I support the department's efforts to undertake this work.

Can the minister confirm when the results of the quarry study will be ready to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly and provided to the mayors and MLAs? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are continuing, on an ongoing basis, looking at each community's needs. The survey that we conducted recently is to help inform how we're going to prioritize each community will get crushing equipment.

Mr. Speaker as for the particulars around the report that the member asked for, I will have to get back to him on that, but we continue to provide as much information to our municipal partners as well as Nunavut Housing Corporation, for example, as they try to build more houses in their communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister has recently spoke about the importance the of Nunavut Association of Municipalities and the work that his department is doing to review the *Territorial Planning Act*.

Mr. Speaker, our ability to construct new housing and other infrastructures in a timely manner depends on having access to adequate supply of high quality granular material.

Can the minister clarify how his department is working with Nunavut Housing Corporation to ensure that a shortage of gravel does not delay the implementation of Nunavut 3000 plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and again I thank the member for bringing this up again, time and again. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, we do continue to work with Nunavut Housing Corporation on this very matter to ensure what they're planning for up until 2030. There are targets that we want to build in all communities, and they are starting to flesh those housing targets out.

My department is working in conjunction to that plan to ensure that not just housing needs, but also major infrastructure projects that we're proceeding with, so those needs continue for them to continue to be met. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 874 – 6(2): Water Infrastructure

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon. Great. At this time I have a further question with the Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, I want to revisit and further ask questions regarding water infrastructure in my community of Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq. To begin, I note that the Government of Canada announced \$2 million in funding. That's for work to the develop proposals for

upgrading the drinking water treatment facilities in the communities that have been identified, Clyde River, Igloolik, and Coral Harbour.

As is, Mr. Speaker, the funding that was identified is very important. Mr. Speaker, my constituents need clear answers about the condition of water treatment infrastructure in the communities I serve.

(interpretation ends) Does the current water treatment infrastructure in Qikiqtarjuaq meet the current federal guidelines for Canadian drinking water quality, yes or no?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank my colleague for raising the issue on water treatment infrastructure, which has which has taken as a priority in our communities and hamlets in serving Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, we discussed this along with the minister of the federal government, Minister Fraser that recently visited in the new year. Some of the plans we have for a number of communities now, we started off with five communities, Grise Fiord, Kugluktuk, Pond Inlet, Rankin Inlet, and Sanikiluaq. On top of that, Clyde River and Igloolik was included in the current plan with the \$2 million as identified.

With regard to water treatment or facilities, if any needs to be rectified they will be reviewed. We are hoping that the water quality and standards and the need to meet the guidelines along with health department is going to continue to stay the same.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't hear with regard to your job. It's great that you have made some progress in communities and to include three additional communities that I've seen, but the question I had was the water, and what guidelines are required for safe drinking in Clyde River after tests are made? I didn't hear.

To add, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask similarly here on drinking water, the one in Clyde River and the number of federal guidelines that should be met for drinking water, and the quality that should be met, rather, is that quality good? Yes or no? That is my question, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the question. The water tanks or the infrastructure for water procurement in communities, some are much older infrastructure and we are still in development of trying to put together more modern infrastructure and we are constantly trying to keep ahead. We are also identifying these as

we move forward. If any new infrastructure is required, we are diligently working on that to ensure that we are meeting the needs by way of or if it's in water guidelines that need continual testing and we are not up to par, we are currently working to keep up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not really clear. This has to be more clearly identified with regard to my question on the samples or in testing that are required under federal guidelines, and the rollout by the Nunavut government and to ensure this is applied in all our communities that the water are tested regularly, and the need to have a regular tests.

For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear, in however you may, whether the water that is for the community of Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River sufficient for drinking? Are there hazards that may be of concern? Could the minister say yes or no to the question? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you. She's asking for further clarification. The daily water that is for the community is regularly tested on continuing basis to ensure there are no hazards in the water supply.

I can say at this time in Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River boiling advisories have not been in place to date yet, but if any hazards may be impending, we would notify the community to ensure they are not in that situation.

But to date the drinkable water, the quality of the water is something we are constantly working to provide for all the communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 875 – 6(2): Kugaaruk Power Plant

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to again revisit the issue of Kugaaruk's new power plant, which is a priority for the community that I represent in the House. Mr. Speaker, when I raised this issue in February of this year during our winter sitting, the minister confirmed that the Qulliq Energy Corporation is not proceeding at this time with the replacement of the community's power plant which is almost 50 years old.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide a clear update today on the status of the corporation's work to obtain additional federal funding that will enable the replacement of the power plant to go ahead? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the MLA's question. With regards to Kugaaruk as well as all of Nunavummiut, to ensure that power plants are there and stable, that they are efficient in terms of costs.

Today I rise to tell you that we are looking and seeking funding. That funding will come from the Arctic Energy Fund and that funding, that pool of money, that could be available. It will allow the \$175 million from the federal government that will be able to replace the power plants that are aging.

The MLA knows that in Cambridge Bay and Igloolik that there is still not sufficient to meet the needs of the communities, and I know Kugaaruk is also part of this. He's aware of that. We are seeking more support and additional funding that will alleviate some of these problems. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, the Qulliq Energy Corporation has recently issued request for proposals for the design and construction of new power plants in the communities of Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay, and Igloolik.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this year the minister informed the Legislative Assembly that the Qulliq Energy Corporation had been directed to enter into contract negotiations with the Kitikmeot Corporation for the construction of Kugluktuk's new power plant.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clearly explain why the Qulliq Energy Corporation has not also been directed to enter into negotiations with the Kitikmeot Corporation for the design and construction of new power plants for Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay, and Kugaaruk. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the MLA for asking the question. It's indeed an excellent question in terms of how we enter negotiations and in terms of how we design and construct new power plants. We're definitely in open communications and it's available for procurement of these and it's an open process. We will continue to use that in Kugluktuk. We were trying to enter that process, but we weren't able to close that process to reach contract negotiations, so we decided to speak to them at this time.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, to summarize, in case I'm not clear enough, the public procurement route is the default setting and it's the standard way that we procure goods and services. That's for Qulliq Energy Corporation, and that explains why that is the route that we are proceeding for Cambridge Bay, Gjoa Haven, and Igloolik at this time. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) Thank you, minister, for responding in Inuktitut. Thank you very much from Kugaaruk.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I recently had the opportunity to consult with constituents and community leaders in Kugaaruk.

Mr. Speaker, concerns have been raised with me that the proposed location for the new power plant is unsuitable, and that a different location is preferred by the community.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister assure me that the Qulliq Energy Corporation will work with the municipal council to determine a location for the new power plant that is acceptable to the community of Kugaaruk? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The Qulliq Energy Corporation highly values community input when it comes to planning around major projects. I can certainly direct my officials to engage with municipal leadership in Kugaaruk.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, due to the funding limitations, we don't have a clear timeline for when Kugaaruk could see a new power plant constructed. However, we were recently approved for a major project in the community where we will be replacing the oldest generator set in the community, which is G1.

With that approval from Utility Rates Review Council we are moving to make sure that for the time being, with the existing plant, that we are making efforts to replace one of those gen sets. We are anticipating it will be replaced in 2025 and it will ensure more efficient operations at the power plant, as well as better reliability.

I thank that member for raising those issues on behalf of Kugaarummiut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 876 – 6(2): Insurance on Government Assets

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions today to the Minister of Finance on the topic of insurance, as the Department of Finance is responsible for insurance for government-owned infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, I was quite surprised to learn yesterday in the dialogue from the member from Arviat South and the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, and I'll quote from the Blues from yesterday afternoon: "As for whether the buildings or whether that fuel tank and/or that building is insured, as members might know, all of our government buildings are self-insured."

Mr. Speaker, that came as quite a shock to me. I would like to ask the question, first of all: When was this practice implemented? How were appropriated funds for insurance allocated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is a pretty detailed question, so I will take that question as notice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Question taken as notice. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Question 877 – 6(2): Nutrition North Canada Program

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by expressing my support and solidarity with the member in respect to the statement that he made in the House yesterday regarding the recent actions taken by Canada Post and Amazon to discontinue affordable shipping to the remote communities which he represents. The cost of living is bad enough for my constituents in the capital, so I applaud the member for his advocacy for his constituents in the High Arctic.

Mr. Speaker, the minister's department is responsible for the government's country food distribution program, which is why I'm going to be asking him questions today about the Nutrition North Canada Program which impacts Nunavummiut in all 25 communities.

My first question is very simple: Does the Government of Nunavut consider the Nutrition North Canada Program to be achieving the objective of making healthy foods affordable to all Nunavummiut, yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the Nutrition North our government has voiced at various points in terms of whether the program is working or not, and it's one that we'll continue to monitor and to work together to ensure that that kind of federal program that's here will help benefit Nunavummiut.

There are aspects that we are concerned about, and there are aspects that does provide benefits to Nunavummiut, but our perspective is that there is definitely need for improvements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree there are definite improvements that need to occur, which is why I'm asking these questions today.

Mr. Speaker, as you will be aware the federal minister of northern affairs recently appeared before a House of Commons committee. During his appearance the federal minister announced that the Nutrition North Canada Program will be undergoing an internal review and an external audit. I'm sure the members are happy to hear that.

I strongly believe that the federal departments should be taken into account the observations and knowledge of northern residents and organizations.

Can the minister clarify the extent to which the Government of Nunavut will be participating or contributing to the reviews of the Nutrition North Canada Program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for raising this awareness in terms of the review that's going to be taking place. We welcome that review, and we will definitely provide our input.

In fact, just last month Minister Vandal was visiting Iqaluit when my colleagues for Family Services had the pleasure of meeting him, and he invited him to attend and be part of the Poverty Reduction Roundtable, which I think is a great forum in order to ensure that are great programs such as this helps reduce our food insecurity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for providing that response. What we know is that people who are food secure contribute better to society through work and through their lived lives, so I'm happy to hear that there is a lot of work to educate our ministers.

Mr. Speaker, our hard-working Member of Parliament used her time during the recent House of Commons committee meeting to hold the chief executive officer of the Northwest Company to account for the outrageous and egregious discrepancy between his annual salary of \$3.91 million and the amount paid to frontline staff at our local Northern stores here in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, questions of sustainable economic development, affordability, and basic fairness are intrinsically connected.

Mr. Speaker, I believe in a progressive tax system where large companies and wealthy individuals pay their fair share. There is a deep scepticism concerning the extent to which large corporations like the Northwest Company are fully passing on the Nutrition North subsidy to Nunavut consumers.

Is the minister open to working with the Minister of Finance to explore options involving the tax system to address this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for a well-said statement related to the concerns that is equally shared on our side, and one of the key factors as more companies are coming to Nunavut and providing more services, but their corporations are outside of the territory, that portion of providing tax to our territory where they serve is a long-term, continued discussions that we have.

I definitely will continue to work with my colleague from Finance trying to resolve some of these long-time issues related to corporate offices being outside of Nunavut, but how can we benefit tax-wise for the services that they deliver here in Nunavut. That work is still ongoing, and I applaud the member for raising this in this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 878 – 6(2): Review of Decentralization

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. I would like to direct my question to the premier, and it has to do with the questions I had previously more than once about decentralized communities. Both of my constituents that I represent are not like that.

The premier stated that there would be a study done on decentralization. It has been a long time now. Can the Premier update me now on what he has found? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to my colleague for always pushing about the jobs that he wants moved to smaller communities. It's true, I said I was going to have this reviewed about jobs that have been spread around when Nunavut was being formed, and the communities did not want all the jobs to come out in Iqaluit.

It was reviewed in 2011, the last time, but we just received a report on the new study, but we have not completely reviewed it yet, so that's why I cannot bring it up yet. After we have properly reviewed the report, we will be tabling it to the House in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) That is good news, because the smaller communities are way behind than the rest of Nunavut, and it looks like we're going to be even farther behind with the Amazon free delivery being discontinued.

Can the Premier tell us when the report will be tabled to the House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you again to the member. I completely agree with the member how important it is that jobs to the smaller communities are very important, and I completely agree with the member.

I directed an independent review on as to where we're at now, and how it has come to this, to see how we can learn more about the situation.

Right now, the report was just completed and it is under review. I expected to be able to table it at this session but it's not ready yet and I believe it can be ready at the next sitting in October. I will want to put out our considerations at that time.

I stated previously that I would be open to reviewing this, to relook the jobs outside of Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be expecting that. In the planning process and reports about the smaller communities, have the smaller communities been visited by your staff? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you again to the member. As to how it was reviewed, I will have to review the report, and I haven't looked at it all yet.

Mr. Speaker, we have not just been sitting idle, and I am proud that for the first time we are starting to do something about jobs, and the communities that my colleague represents will be able to apply for the jobs that are going to be created or moved.

We did not sit idly by. We are starting to complete them and settle them, especially the jobs. We know how important they are. We will base our next steps on the report, because all the jobs in the communities are very important. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 879 – 6(2): Tabling of Responses from Representative for Children and Youth

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Premier as well.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was asking questions about correspondence with the Representative for Children and Youth. I was specifically asking about correspondence from March 2023 and subsequent response from the Premier's office to the Representative of Children and Youth in March 2024.

In the response the Premier provided me yesterday I think there was a little bit of confusion. When the Premier took it as notice he mentioned "I'm just in the midst of writing back to Ms. Jane Bates as we speak, and as such, I would like to take this question as notice to ensure I have ample opportunity for me to provide the subsequent information."

Mr. Speaker, I wasn't aware that the minister was providing an additional response, and I've since been informed that Ms. Bates has received additional correspondence.

My question to the premier is: Will the Premier table those three pieces of correspondence or any related correspondence with the Representative for Children and Youth before the end of this week? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I thank the member, and my commitment to get back to the member on the question that he did, I did take that as notice and I understood that was in relation to the letter. I was just about to send that. I had sent this morning, so I apologize if there's a confusion in terms of the way the question was phrased. I understood it as such.

I could take a look at the correspondence I've had with Ms. Bates. I know I was just coordinating and e-mailing with Ms. Bates there just this morning, and I'm really looking forward to working with her.

I could look at the correspondence and see if those are things that we could table before end of this week. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 880 – 6(2): Nunavut Carbon Credit

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess we're on a roll for just seeking clarification. I have more questions today for the Minister of Finance concerning the Nunavut Carbon Credit.

Mr. Speaker, I want to provide the minister the opportunity to publicly clarify the responses that he provided last week to me when I asked him about the government's recent decision to amend the income tax regulations in respect to the Nunavut Carbon Credit.

Mr. Speaker, I will again remind the minister that he and his cabinet colleagues have already changed the law regarding the carbon credit by way of the recent amendments to the regulations.

Mr. Speaker, we know that these changes decrease the amount from \$308 to \$100, and we know that these changes come into effect on July 1 of this year.

Mr. Speaker, what we don't know is why this decrease was approved, so I will ask again the minister to provide a clear answer today which explains to this House and to the listening public why the amount is decreasing from \$308 to \$100? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question from my colleague.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government announced a three-year carbon exemption on home heating fuel for Nunavummiut. This has significantly reduced the GN's carbon tax revenues. The Government of Nunavut collects roughly \$4.2 million in carbon tax revenue from the sale of fuels in Nunavut, and after our own costs leaves \$3 million for programs such as the Nunavut Carbon Credit.

Mr. Speaker, the biggest reason for this reduction is because we are now exempt from the carbon tax on home heating fuel. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate that clarification.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, one of the government's public service announcements that it issued last year concerning the Nunavut carbon credit indicated that Nunavummiut who file their 2022 taxes will be immediately enrolled for the Nunavut Carbon Credit.

Those who have not filed taxes but who are eligible can update their personal information with the Canada Revenue Agency to ensure that they receive this credit and any other benefits to which they may be entitled.

Mr. Speaker, we know that there are many Nunavummiut, especially lower income Nunavummiut in vulnerable situations, who struggle to navigate the maze of federal bureaucracy and documents, so they are not necessarily always up to date on their tax filings, and I confess I haven't always been on time myself, Mr. Speaker.

Now that we know that the amount of carbon credit will be decreasing as of July 1. Can the minister confirm that Nunavummiut who are catching up on their tax returns will still receive the higher amount of \$308 in respect of the 2023 tax year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Most of the federal and territorial programs require filing of taxation to receive their childcare benefits and all the other benefits provided by the federal and territorial governments, so I would assume that almost everybody, whether they are less fortunate or not, files their taxes.

But on the case, if there is anybody that has not yet filed for the previous year's taxes and has not received their carbon tax credit from the previous years and are having issues with that, I would encourage them to contact their MLA or my office and we see what we can do about that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly hope that people are able to get those payments in full retroactively.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the taxation of carbon I often feel that Nunavut is caught between a rock and a hard place. On the one hand the arctic is feeling the impact of climate change faster than any other region on Earth, so we know we have to do our part to reduce emissions whenever and whenever possible. On the other hand, we can not unresponsive to the disproportionate impact that policies such as the carbon tax have on our remote communities.

Mr. Speaker, I would strongly support the minister introducing additional or enhanced tax measures in his next budget to incentivize consumer decarbonization, such as grants for homeowners, small businesses and not-for-profit organizations to improve energy efficiency.

Mr. Speaker will the minister commit to acting on this suggestion? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are some good suggestions in there in the comments from my colleague and it's something we could definitely at least look into. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 881 – 6(2): Federal-Territorial Support for Critical Mineral Development

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker for recognizing me again. This second round of questions I would like to direct to the Premier, and they concern the issue of federal and territorial support for critical mineral development in Nunavut. As you know, I think everyone knows that's one of my favourite subjects, I keep bringing it up in the House.

Mr. Speaker, information published at the recent Nunavut Mining Symposium makes it perfectly clear how important mining is to our territory's economy, communities, and people. In the premier's own region, Baffinland's Inuit employees and contractors collectively received over \$34.5 million in wages and benefits in the year 2023.

Mr. Speaker, on May 9, 2024, the three northern Premiers issued a news release which stated "When the energy, telecommunication, and transportation corridors required by modern mining operations are in place there will be greater opportunity for critical mineral development throughout our territories."

Can the Premier expand on what specific infrastructure improvements are required? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate my colleague for continuing to push the important issue of critical minerals and the importance of the mines, of what they do to our communities and the empowerment that they give through employment and contracting opportunities.

The member is correct, Mr. Speaker. I have been voicing my support for the issues of critical minerals with my colleagues of the NWT, but also Yukon as well. It has been one that has been in our agenda as a line item specifically in our Northern Premiers Forum,

and for us to continue to see the infrastructure gap that prohibits the access to these critical minerals and the incredible wealth opportunity our territories provide, not only for our citizens but that of all of Canada.

As such, I am very pleased just recently when we were up in Mittimatalik, in beautiful Mittimatalik. It was a focal point of our discussion of what more we need to do and what more we need to continue to lobby the federal government to provide infrastructure funding specifically to address that, whether it's the Kivalliq hydro-fibre link or whether it's the Grays Bay Road and Port Project that potentially could untap those. Those are two examples that I know have been pushed for by Inuit in our beautiful territory.

Absolutely the member's question is that we continue to push for it and we'll continue to voice our support and our continued lobby around seeing the infrastructure gap shrunk.

I'm pleased to note to the member that this is one of the topics that we will be discussing in just a few weeks at the Western Premiers Forum, and one I will continue to bring forward all the way to the council of federations as we continue the dialogue and discussions with our northern territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your first supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of Canada recently published the *Canadian Critical Minerals Strategy*, which indicates that:

“Although responsible regulations are vital, complex regulatory and permitting processes can hinder the economic competitiveness of the sector and increase investment risk for proponents. As such, the federal government remains committed to sustainable economic development and environmental protection, which go hand-in-hand, in collaborating with Indigenous peoples, as well as the provinces and territories.”

Can the Premier clarify the Government of Nunavut's position regarding regulatory reform in this sector? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I again thank the colleague and I, too, agree that we do have robust regulatory processes that are outlined in the *Nunavut Agreement*, and that is something that I have said here very clearly, my support for their important roles, whether it's the impact review board or the planning commission, among others.

With that, I was very pleased with the incredible leadership of Minister Akeeagok during recently the minister's statement where we are just launching the Nunavut Regional Energy and Resource Table that will focus the attention on the barriers that are faced and the incredible opportunities that we see in our territories. It is through these forums with our partners right around the table that we will find the solutions to those barriers that we hear, whether it's directed from the members across or the resource ministry.

However, I have full faith in the process and the launch we just did of those roundtables and it is through those that I have confidence that we will find solutions to address them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Premier will recall, I raised concerns during our recent winter sitting about the importance of critical minerals to the future of the Nunavut mining sector.

I have noted that serious concerns have been raised that the proposed Nunavut Land Use Plan in its current form will result in significant quantities of critical mineral deposits being stranded and unavailable for development.

Can the Premier clarify what direction he has given to the Ministers of Environment and Mining regarding the Government of Nunavut's review of the draft land use plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. That's a very good question as well, and the continued importance of finding a balance between the cultural practices of what we use with our environments and our animals, but also realizing the incredible wealth that's within our lands. For us to become self-sufficient, there's a balance to be had, and as such, I have been working very closely with my colleagues here to review the draft land use plan that was presented to us by the Nunavut Planning Commission.

As we have said many times in this House, it is something that we are taking very seriously and that we have worked very closely with the Department of Environment but also Economic Development and Transportation, but more importantly, the voices that we heard from those hearings came directly from Nunavummiut and came directly from industry. Subsequently, we did hear the concerns right at the mining symposium and the engagements we've had with some proponents throughout the process, but those are issues that are being reviewed very carefully by the department. We will make sure that when we come to a decision point after that thorough review that we hope to strike a balance.

As I had mentioned in the past, this is a plan that requires three partners to come together to endorse if it will continue to move forward, and I very much look forward to working with our partners of Nunavut Tunngavik but also the Government of Canada. It is through those partnerships that we will see a land use plan for Nunavut that really strikes that balance. With that, I look forward to in the coming weeks, hopefully, to come to a conclusion of that review that we have been in the process in the last few months to find those balances. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Members be aware that the time allotted for question period is now over. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to extend the time allotted for question period. Thank you.

Speaker: The member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays?

An Hon. Member: Nay.

Speaker: There is a nay. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Petitions. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to line Item No. 5 of the orders of the day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The member is seeking unanimous consent to return to Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Are there any nays? There are none. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Simailak.

Revert to Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to all my colleagues. I would like to recognize two very important people that are in my life. The first one, I have recognized her before and she's no stranger now to this House, my other half, Marilyn.

>>Applause

And the youngest of our boys, Darien Aqaniq. It's his first time in Iqaluit and it's quite an eye-opener for him to see such a big community in Nunavut and what's possible here in Nunavut. I would like all of my colleagues to help me welcome them into their House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Responses to Petitions. Item 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. I recognize the Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

Item 12: Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters**Committee Report 029 – 6(2): Report on the Review of the 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23 Annual Reports of Nunavut’s Representative for Children and Youth**

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present the Report of the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts on the Review of the 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23 Annual Reports of Nunavut’s Representative for Children and Youth

Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts held a televised hearing from April 22 to 23 of this year on the annual reports of the Representative for Children and Youth

Mr. Speaker, the hearing was held in the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly and televised live across the territory. The hearing was also open to the public and news media and was livestreamed on the Legislative Assembly’s website. Transcripts from the hearing are available on the Legislative Assembly’s website.

Mr. Speaker, witnesses appearing before the standing committee included the Representative for Children and Youth and her officials as well as a number of Government of Nunavut officials representing the Department of Family Services, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, and the Department of Justice.

Mr. Speaker, the standing committee notes its appreciation to all the witnesses for their participation and contributions.

Mr. Speaker, the standing committee’s report contains seven formal recommendations. Four recommendations are directed to the Government of Nunavut while three recommendations are directed to the Representative for Children and Youth. The recommendations address the following:

- The collection, use and presentation of data and statistics;
- The Government of Nunavut’s timeliness in its responses to the Representative for Children and Youth;
- The Department of Family Services’ plans to finalize and implement its Family Wellness Strategic Action Plan, its Matrix case management system, and its standards and practices to ensure that Nunavut’s children and youth are protected and supported;
- The involvement of children and youth in the activities of the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth; and
- The urgent need for a government-wide action plan to address child sexual abuse and sexual violence in Nunavut.

*See Appendix for full text of Committee Report 29 – 6(2).

Mr. Speaker, I wish to note for the record that the standing committee is requesting a comprehensive response to this report, pursuant to Rule 91(5) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I anticipate that the Representative for Children and Youth's responses to the standing committee's recommendations will be tabled in the House through you during our upcoming fall sitting.

With that, I move that the report of the standing committee be received by the House and entered into the record as read. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The member has moved that the report of the standing committee be received by the House and entered into the record as read. Do members agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: It is agreed.

Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 282 – 6(2): Planning Act Consultation Report

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the *Planning Act* Consultation Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Item 14. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Item 15: Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills

Bill 49 – An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act – Notice

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, May 30, 2024, I will move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 49, *An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Bill 48 – An Act Respecting the Constituencies of Nunavut – Notice

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, May 30, 2024, I will move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 48, *An Act Respecting the Constituencies of Nunavut*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Item 17: First Reading of Bills

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to waive the notice period so that Bill 49 can be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The member is seeking consent to allow for the bill to receive first reading. Do members agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: There is agreement. Please proceed, Mr. Savikataaq.

Bill 49 – An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act – First Reading

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sorry that I used the word "unanimous." It was to seek consent, but the consent has been given.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 49, *An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

First Reading of Bills. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek consent to waive the notice period so that Bill 48 may be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The member is seeking consent to allow for the bill to receive first reading. Do members agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: There is agreement. Please proceed, Ms. Brewster.

Bill 48 – An Act Respecting the Constituencies of Nunavut – First Reading

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 48, *An Act Respecting the Constituencies of Nunavut*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Item 18: Second Reading of Bills

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 49, *An Act to Amend the Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to provide for the appointment of a Special Information and Privacy Commissioner in certain circumstances. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: I'm just waiting for instructions.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe we will get it right this time; me.

Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to waive the notice period so that Bill 49 can be read for the second time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The member is seeking consent to allow for the bill to receive second reading. Do members agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: There is agreement. Please proceed, Mr. Savikataaq.

Bill 49 – An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act – Second Reading

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 49, *An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to provide for the appointment of a Special Information and Privacy Commissioner in certain circumstances. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members (interpretation): 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 Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek consent to waive the notice period so that Bill 48 may be read for the second time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The member is seeking consent to allow for the bill to receive second reading. Do members agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: There is agreement. Please proceed, Ms. Brewster.

Bill 48 – An Act Respecting the Constituencies of Nunavut – Second Reading

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 48, *An Act Respecting the Constituencies of Nunavut*, be read for the second time.

This bill amends the *Nunavut Elections Act* to rebalance a number of electoral boundaries in advance of the upcoming seventh territorial general election. 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.

>>Applause

Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 48 and 49 with Mr. Malliki in the Chair.

Before we proceed to the committee, we will take a 20-minute break.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House recessed at 15:24 and Committee resumed at 15:50

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

Chairman: I would like to call this committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bills 48 and 49. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to do a clause-by-clause review of Bill 49 and Bill 48, in that order. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 49?

Some Members: Agreed.

**Bill 49 – An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
– Consideration in Committee**

Chairman: I would like to ask the Speaker of this House, Mr. Akoak: do you have officials that you would like to appear before this committee?

Speaker: Yes, I do.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to let Speaker's official appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the official.

For the record, Minister Akoak, please introduce your official and then proceed to your opening comments. Mr. Akoak.

Speaker: Thank you. To my right is the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Quirke. I would like to also introduce in the gallery Mr. Tony Rose. He's sitting down now.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to have the opportunity to provide opening comments concerning Bill 49, *An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

As members are aware, section 26 of the *Integrity Act*, section 19 of the *Official Languages Act*, and section 11 of the *Representative for Children and Youth Act* contain provisions allowing for the appointment of a Special Integrity Commissioner, Special Languages Commissioner, and Special Representative for Children and Youth in cases of a real, apparent, or potential conflict of interest. These appointments are made by the Commissioner of Nunavut on the recommendation of the Management and Services Board.

At present, the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* does not include provisions to allow for the appointment of a Special Information and Privacy Commissioner in cases of a real, apparent, or potential conflict of interest.

The Information and Privacy Commissioner has requested that a House Bill be introduced to amend the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to provide for similar provisions concerning conflict of interest to that which exist in other pieces of territorial legislation respecting independent officers of the Legislative Assembly who provide oversight of government actions and have investigative powers.

Bill 49 provides for new provisions in the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* that broadly mirror those which are presently in the *Integrity Act* in respect to the appointment of a Special Information and Privacy Commissioner in certain defined circumstances.

It should be noted that responsibility for the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* is shared between the Legislative Assembly and the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. The Legislative Assembly's jurisdiction covers matters related to the appointment and remuneration of the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening comments. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Do any members have general comments before we proceed to detailed questions? Mr. Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I want to commend the Speaker for pointing this out and recognizing some of our appointments are more and more going to Nunavummiut and the realization that Nunavut is a very small jurisdiction, and these types of legislation require special recognition.

I just wanted to commend the Speaker for the wonderful work that he continues to do in this House in making sure that our legislations are very relevant and are real and that service Nunavummiut. Those are my general comments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Do any other members have general comments? If there are no general comments, go to Bill 49 in your legislative binder.

Bill 49, *An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Clause 1. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 49 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 49 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Closing comment, Speaker Akoak.

Speaker: I would like to thank the members for accepting this bill. This will help Nunavummiut for their future. Thank you.

Bill 48 – An Act Respecting the Constituencies of Nunavut – Consideration in Committee

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I now invite Speaker Akoak to make his opening comments on Bill 48. Speaker Akoak.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to have the opportunity to provide opening comments concerning Bill 48, *An Act Respecting the Constituencies of Nunavut*.

As members are aware, Part III of the *Nunavut Elections Act* provides, in part, that an electoral boundaries commission must be established for Nunavut every decade, commencing in the year 2022. The next electoral boundaries commission will be established in the year 2032, during the Eighth Legislative Assembly.

The most recent Nunavut Electoral Boundaries Commission was established by way of motion during the Legislative Assembly's sitting of October 26, 2022. The 2023 report of the Nunavut Electoral Boundaries Commission was tabled in the House on October 19, 2023. I again thank the members of the commission for their hard work.

Bill 35, *An Act Respecting the Constituencies of Nunavut*, received first reading on October 20, 2023. The bill implemented the recommendations of the Nunavut Electoral Boundaries Commission in their entirety. Following a recorded vote that took place

during the Committee of the Whole's clause-by-clause consideration of the bill on October 26, 2023, it was declared defeated.

Under the *Nunavut Elections Act*, the seventh territorial general election is required to be held on October 27, 2025. Bill 48 provides an opportunity to amend the *Nunavut Elections Act* to address the unbalanced constituencies of Aggu, Amittuq, Arviat North-Whale Cove, Arviat South, Iqaluit-Manirajak, Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu, Iqaluit-Sinaa, and Iqaluit-Tasiluk without altering the current boundaries of the remaining 14 constituencies.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening comments. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Do any members have any general comments on Bill 48 before we proceed to detailed questions? Seeing none, if there are no general comments, go to Bill 48 in your legislative binder.

Bill 48, *An Act Respecting the Constituencies of Nunavut*. Clause 1. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 2. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 3. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to the Schedule on page 2. Schedule Part 2, Map for Convenience of Reference. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Clause 4. Agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to Bill 48 as a whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree to put Bill 48 on the orders of the day for third reading?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Closing comments, Speaker Akoak.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the members for accepting this bill as put out. This is needed for our general election coming up. It is important.

I would like to thank my staff for making sure we get this through and that it can be accepted. I thank you again.

>>Applause

Chairman: As this concludes the business before the House, I will now rise to report progress. The officials may leave the table.

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

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bills 48 and 49 and would like to report that Bills 48 and 49 are immediately ready for third reading, pursuant to Rule 73. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Is there a seconder? Ms. Nutarak. The motion is in order. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

>>Applause

Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Item 21: Third Reading of Bills

Bill 49 – An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act – Third Reading

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 49, *An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried and the bill is ready for assent.

Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Bill 48 – An Act Respecting the Constituencies of Nunavut – Third Reading

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Rankin Inlet South, that Bill 48, *An Act Respecting the Constituencies of Nunavut*, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried and the bill is ready for assent.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: 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 Standing Committee on Legislation meets tomorrow at nine o'clock in the Nanuq Boardroom.

Orders of the Day for May 29:

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
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 Wednesday, May 29 at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 16:07*

Appendix – May 28, 2024



Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts

*Report on the Review of the 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 Annual
Reports of Nunavut's Representative for Children and Youth*

**2nd Session of the 6th Legislative Assembly of Nunavut
Spring 2024 Sitting**

Chair

George Hickers

Co-Chair

Alexander Sammurtok

Members

Bobby Anavilok
Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster
Mary Killiktee
Adam Arreak Lightstone
Solomon Malliki
Joanna Quassa
Joseph Quqqiaq
Joe Savikataaq
Craig Simailak

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Introduction and Background

Nunavut's *Representative for Children and Youth Act* was passed on September 17, 2013, by the 3rd Legislative Assembly of Nunavut. The Office of the Representative for Children and Youth officially opened on September 30, 2015.

Nunavut's second Representative for Children and Youth, Ms. Jane Bates, was appointed by the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut on June 6, 2019, for a five year term.

Section 35 of the *Representative for Children and Youth Act* requires the Representative for Children and Youth to prepare and submit an annual report to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly on the conduct of the office and the discharge of its duties during the preceding year. The Representative has a number of areas of responsibility related to the rights and interests of children and youth, including advocacy and advice regarding government services for children and youth, as well as the administration of the office.

The Annual Reports of the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth for 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 were tabled in the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut on November 19, 2021, October 26, 2022, and October 19, 2023, respectively.

Televised hearings on the annual reports of independent officers of the Legislative Assembly provide an opportunity for the issues raised in those reports to be discussed in a public forum.

The Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts held its televised hearing on the 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 Annual Reports of Nunavut's Representative for Children and Youth from April 22-23, 2024. The hearing was held in the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly and televised live across the territory. The hearing was also open to the public and news media and was livestreamed on the Legislative Assembly's website. Transcripts from the hearing are available on the Legislative Assembly's website.

Witnesses appearing before the standing committee included the Representative for Children and Youth and her officials as well as a number of Government of Nunavut officials representing the Department of Family Services, the Department of Education, the Department of Health and the Department of Justice. The standing committee notes its appreciation to all the witnesses for their participation and contributions.

During the proceedings, a number of commitments were made by government officials to provide additional information to the standing committee. The committee appreciated receiving follow-up correspondence from the Departments of Health and Family Services with further detail on the issues discussed.

A number of themes were addressed in detail during the standing committee's review of the Representative for Children and Youth's 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 Annual Reports to the Legislative Assembly. Issues discussed included the collection and use of data, standards and practices for service delivery, the need for collaboration and communication, concerns regarding sexual violence and abuse, and the need to better incorporate the voices of Nunavut's children and youth.

The standing committee makes the following recommendations:

- 1. That the Representative for Children and Youth ensure that any statistics published in the Office's annual report be consistent with respect to the year for which the data is reported and ensure that all supporting information is factual and current.**

All of the Representative's Annual Reports for 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 contain a key section entitled *Status of Young Nunavummiut* which contains data and information sets relating to government services impacting children, youth and families in Nunavut as well as the social context in which those services are delivered.

The introductory page to the *Status of Young Nunavummiut* section of the Annual Reports provides a set of general Nunavut statistics relating to population, housing and food security. During the committee's review, it was noted that the information depicted from year to year in each of the Annual Reports was being reported in an inconsistent manner. The Representative indicated during the hearing that some inconsistency could be clarified by small footnotes in the report indicating that the information being presented was from different years.

While members recognize that the sources for some of the data being presented in the Representative's Annual Reports may have been out-of-date at the time or had not been updated for some time, it should also be acknowledged that a certain level of responsibility for presenting clear and accurate data lies with the entity that is publishing it. The selection of what data to present and how to present it can have a significant impact in demonstrating links between specific indicators and conveying important messages. Inconsistencies or errors in the presentation of information can easily lead to misinterpretation and/or a loss of confidence in the correctness of a published report.

Members of the standing committee noted that the Nunavut Bureau of Statistics appears to have experienced some challenges in producing up-to-date statistics for the territory and look forward to improvements in this area to support the work of such entities as the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth.

2. That the departments of Education, Family Services, Health and Justice continue to collaborate with the Representative for Children and Youth to ensure that requests for information and data reports align more closely with the way data is collected at the departmental level and to include any additional data that may be relevant to the work of the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth.

The contents of the *Status of Young Nunavummiut* sections following the general Nunavut statistics page in the Representative's Annual Reports contain data sets from the Government of Nunavut's departments of Education, Family Services, Health and Justice.

The *Status of Young Nunavummiut* data section was first presented in the Representative's 2019-2020 Annual Report and the standing committee commends the Representative for her efforts in establishing a baseline of information which specifically addresses the impact of services provided to children, youth and their families in Nunavut.

The standing committee appreciates the importance of using data and statistical evidence to support the allocation of resources and the prioritization of programming as well as highlighting certain challenges and issues faced by Nunavut's children and youth and the services made available to help address them.

Over the period covered by the 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 Annual Reports, the contents of the *Status of Young Nunavummiut* section have evolved as the Representative and her staff worked with departments to better determine how their data was being collected and to report on it in a way that was relevant to the method of data collection.

In her testimony before the committee, the Representative noted:

"The goal of this section was to provide departments information that they could use to make decisions about programs or services that may be needed. It also informs potentially workload issues."

Testimony from departmental officials during the hearing described a number of initiatives taken to compile and standardize data sets to better inform this section of the Representative's Annual Reports.

The standing committee appreciates the efforts made at the departmental level to comprehensively address data requests from the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth.

3. That the Representative for Children and Youth ensure that analysis of the various data sets published in the Annual Reports is undertaken to determine trends and to inform service delivery providers of areas of growing concern or specific service delivery areas in need of improvement.

During the hearing, members of the standing committee addressed a number of issues relating to the collection, presentation and use of data and its role in informing the work of the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth. It was noted that taking the next step of conducting analysis of the data could not only better inform readers of what “story” the data tells but could also contribute to the Representative’s role in recommending changes and improvements to service delivery models.

Testimony from several witnesses during the hearing indicated that undertaking analysis of the data is being considered as a “next step”. The standing committee looks forward to reviewing this aspect of data reporting in future annual reports.

4. That the Government of Nunavut improve the timeliness of its responses to communications from the Representative of Children and Youth.

Earlier annual reports published by the Representative for Children and Youth indicated that the lack or unreliability of data being reported was often due to it not being recorded, tracked or reported at the departmental level. Additionally, it was further noted that government departments were often very slow in responding to information requests from the Office of the Representative, in some cases not responding at all. While the Representative’s most recent Annual Report appears to include more current departmental information indicating an improvement in the timeliness of responses, testimony during the hearing described a number of scenarios where the Representative did not receive communication from the Government in a timely manner.

For one specific case discussed during the hearing, respecting the placement of a number of Nunavut children in an unlicensed group home outside of the territory, the Representative noted that her initial correspondence to the government on this issue was sent on March 31, 2023. After learning from the media in February 2024 that a report had been completed in December of 2023, the Representative made a number of attempts to follow-up with the government and finally received a copy of the report on March 7, 2024. She stated:

“To answer your question, I did not think it was acceptable the length of time it took to, A, receive the report, or even to complete the report, quite frankly.”

5. That the Department of Family Services finalize its Strategic Action Plan without any further delay, implement its new Matrix case management system as soon as possible and ensure that its standards, policies and practices are up-to-date and effective in providing protection and support to Nunavut children and youth.

On May 30, 2023, the Office of the Auditor General of Canada's *2023 Report on Child and Family Services in Nunavut Services* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts held a televised hearing on the Auditor General's 2023 Report on September 19 and 20, 2023. The opening lines of the Auditor General's report declared:

"This audit report describes a crisis. It is a call for change. We are urging the Government of Nunavut to take immediate action to protect the vulnerable children and youth of the territory."

During the September 2023 hearings, witnesses from the Department of Family Services committed to implementing two critical tools to address the crisis, its *Strategic Plan* and the *Matrix case management software*.

In her opening comments to the standing committee on April 22, 2024, the Representative for Children and Youth stated:

"Although the Department of Family Services has publicly stated that they have made progress on several of the recommendations made by external entities, it is evident, based on our review and the problems that continue to be brought to our attention, that adequate action has not been taken to implement these recommendations."

The standing committee addressed a number of concerns respecting the Department of Family Services' progress in this area. As one member noted:

"What we have seen as well is that the strategic plan specifically for addressing the crisis within Family Services has been a moving goal post. We have heard a number of times it will be ready at a certain time, and then we get a framework instead of a strategic plan. We heard today again this morning about the development of a strategic plan, and to me, on the issue of communication, we have to ensure that our communication doesn't create mistrust, it doesn't create confusion or spread misinformation."

Recognizing that the Department of Family Services' *Family Wellness Strategic Framework 2023-2028* document was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on February 23, 2024, the standing committee strongly urges the department to operationalize this *Framework* and its attendant strategies, frameworks, systems and plans with no further delay.

In her testimony during the hearing, the Representative stated:

“In response to the Office of the Auditor General of Canada’s most recent report, the Department of Family Services tabled the Family Wellness Strategic Framework in February 2024. This framework does not reflect the current state of child welfare nor does it address the fundamental root problems in the department, which are:

1. the current service delivery model;
2. ensuring that there are clear expectations on documentation for all areas of service;
3. establishing clear and concise standards, procedures, and processes for all areas of service delivery; including children in care, family services, intake and investigations, adoptions, and foster care;
4. determining what information will be tracked and implementing a method of tracking that is not person dependent; and
5. accountability for actively ensuring current, open cases are in compliance with standards and procedures based on recommendations made.”

The standing committee further urges the Department of Family Services to give full consideration to the comments and recommendations made by the Representative for Children and Youth to ensure that the actions and objectives contained within the upcoming *Strategic Plan* address the root problems she has identified.

6. That the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth expand its communication and collaboration activities to involve more youth from across the territory.

Information provided in the Annual Reports showed that between 0% and 6% of new individual advocacy cases were brought to the attention of the Representative by a “young person” over the three years being reported on. The largest majority of cases were raised by service providers or parents and family members during this period. The small number of cases being identified by young people raises a concern regarding the level of awareness that children and young people in Nunavut have with respect to their rights and the level of care and service to which they are entitled.

The standing committee fully supports the Representative’s prioritization of the ‘voice of the child’ in the work of her office, especially when it comes to taking a young person’s opinion into consideration when decisions are being made about them. The committee notes that the Representative has continuously encouraged government departments to adopt a similar approach with respect to seeking the opinions of young people during decision-making processes.

The Representative’s approach was reflected in testimony from one government official who stated:

“I would like to go back to in 2021, Jane Bates asked me, and asked everyone “How you give a child a voice?” I reflected on it, and I was reluctant then to answer because what does that mean, really? When we can speak in multiple languages, when we are in our historical context, what does that mean?”

I do not know yet, but I am happy to say that many of our frontline workers who are teachers, classroom assistants, *ilinniarvimmi inuusilirijiit*, they are situated every day to listen to the voices of our children, and for that I thank you.”

During the hearing, the committee noted that the Representative’s *Self-Advocacy Workshop* was delivered in three Nunavut communities. Members encouraged the Representative to increase efforts to consult directly with youth, including students in schools, during all community visits conducted by her office’s staff. It was also noted that visits to the smaller communities would be valuable opportunities to engage with children and youth and hear their views and perspectives on some of the key issues of concern respecting services provided by government departments.

It was further suggested that the Representative for Children and Youth consider establishing a Youth Advisory Council that could function in a role similar to the Representative’s Elder Advisor group.

7. That the Government of Nunavut immediately develop a government-wide action plan to address child sexual abuse and sexual violence in Nunavut.

In her opening comments to the standing committee, the Representative for Children and Youth stated:

“The last time I was here I spoke about the child sexual abuse crisis in Nunavut. Let me make this very, very clear. Child sexual abuse is a crisis in Nunavut. On March 4, 2020, when asked how many children are making disclosures of child sexual abuse, the Minister responsible for Family Services stated in the House, “...pretty much guaranteed, maybe twice a week.” Two referrals per week is 104 referrals per year. Yet, in the Director’s Annual Report on Family Wellness for the ‘21-22 fiscal year, 518 sexual harm referrals were recorded.

In our Status of Young Nunavummiut section for the following year, the ‘22-23 fiscal year, the department combined sexual and physical abuse numbers together, which I’m unsure why, and reported 98 referrals without providing numbers for both the Kivalliq and South Baffin regions. In the year previous, South Baffin alone reported 458 referrals. Three years ago, I strongly believed it could not get worse, but it has. I cannot emphasize enough that child sexual abuse in Nunavut is an urgent situation; one that must be prioritized and given immediate and decisive action.”

The standing committee agrees that sexual abuse involving children and youth is a serious issue facing the territory. The Representative’s Annual Reports indicate that over the past three years a number of the issues raised through her Office’s systemic advocacy activities have still not been adequately addressed. While it is recognized that the Government of Nunavut has established the *Surusinut Ikajuqtigiit Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement*, it is unclear how effectively the agreement is being implemented by stakeholders to address concerns in this area.

During the course of the standing committee hearings, discussions relating to the functions of the Department of Family Services’ Family Wellness division with respect to investigating child welfare issues addressed a number of concerns including communication and awareness raising amongst children and youth, training of community social services workers, and standards and practices that focus on families as well as individual children and youth.

In conclusion, the standing committee commends the Representative for Children and Youth and her staff for their ongoing work on addressing the rights and interests of Nunavut's children and youth.

Members are encouraged by the steadily increasing spirit of collaboration and between the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth and Government of Nunavut departments. Throughout the hearings the standing committee appreciated the willingness on the part of all participants to work together to improve programs and services for young Nunavummiut.

The standing committee is requesting that a comprehensive response to this report be provided to the committee pursuant to Rule 91(5) of the *Rules of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut*.